

OFFICE OF THE  
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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

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**Santa Barbara County DA Visits State Capitol  
to Seek Support for At-Risk Youth  
Early Childhood, After-School Programs Cited as Top Priorities**

SACRAMENTO – Members of the nonpartisan anti-crime organization Fight Crime: Invest in Kids were funded to visit the Capitol today to urge legislators and administration officials to protect state-funded programs scientifically proven to steer children away from crime.

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce Dudley, one of nearly 400 police chief, sheriff, district attorney and crime survivor members affiliated with Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, participated in individual meetings with 15 key policymakers and administrative staff.

“Law enforcement leaders and crime survivors from all over the state are invited annually because they understand that prevention is essential to a balanced crime-fighting strategy,” said Brian Lee, California State Director of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. “Keeping youth engaged in school and on track for graduation is essential to keeping California safe and prosperous.”

In her meetings with both legislators and administration officials, District Attorney Dudley called on elected officials to increase state funding for programs that have been proven to keep kids away from crime. Such initiatives include high-quality after-school programs, early childhood programs, such as home visiting and state-funded preschool, and alternatives to suspension and expulsion.

Research demonstrates that kids who receive high-quality early care and education are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to ever become involved in crime. A child's early years of learning create large gains in brain development and socialization skills; one study found that at-risk kids who did not participate in a high-quality preschool program were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18. Another study shows that preschool saves the public more than \$16 in corrections and welfare costs for every \$1 invested.

Increasing funding for the After School Education and Safety (ASES) will also go a long way towards keeping kids off the streets and away from crime. Research has consistently shown that young people are more likely to experiment with drugs, alcohol and associate with gang

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members when left unsupervised after school. District Attorney Dudley joined Brian Lee in stating, "Law enforcement leaders are well aware that the prime-time for juvenile crime is between the hours of 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. After-school programs keep kids engaged in constructive activities that keep them out of harm's way in the short term, and can help them graduate in the future."

Dudley further stated, "These programs can make a significant difference in the lives of Santa Barbara County children, as well as our public's safety."

To review Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California's complete 2017 legislative agenda, or to arrange an interview with a member of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, please contact Meghan Moroney at [mmoroney@calfightcrime.org](mailto:mmoroney@calfightcrime.org).



*(Left to Right) District Attorney Anne Marie Schubert, Sacramento County; Chief Hector Rodriguez (Ret.), Santa Ana Unified School District Police Department; District Attorney Joyce Dudley, Santa Barbara County; California Attorney General Xavier Becerra; Deputy District Attorney Laura Tanney, San Diego County; Marc Klaas, Founder and President of Klaas Kids Foundation*



*Chief Hector Rodriguez (Ret.), Santa Ana Unified School District Police Department, Senator Hannah- Beth Jackson, District Attorney Joyce Dudley and Griffin Dix*



*Chief Hector Rodriguez (Ret.), Santa Ana Unified School District Police Department, Griffin Dix, District Attorney Joyce Dudley and Assembly member Monique Limon*



*District Attorney Joyce Dudley and Attorney General Xavier Becerra*

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