

TAKE BACK SANTA CRUZ – 911 ACTION PLAN

Problem: We as citizens have a perception that 911 calls are only for dire emergencies. We have been trained to think that you have to be bleeding to call 911.

We need to change our perception

The police want us to call 911. "If we don't get called we don't know where to send our resources. No one should ever feel they are burdening the police. That's what we're here for." says Zach Friend, spokesman for the Santa Cruz Police Department.

If you are walking downtown and are threatened by a panhandler...call 911

If you see a drug deal going down...call 911

If you see somebody passed out on the street...call 911

If you see suspicious activity...call 911

If you have somebody taking recyclables out of your can...call 911 (it's the truth)

"So we just started calling the police--for everything. I got to know the officers, they got to know me. Pretty soon people were learning that if you deal drugs or break into homes on this street, the cops will show up, so they should take it somewhere else." states Helbard Alkhasadeh a resident of the 200 block of Broadway. According to the police their efforts have worked, there is a decline of crime on that block.

Action: Call 911 for everything...anytime, anywhere. You will be asked if it is an emergency and you can respond accordingly. Be aware of the situation and the perpetrators. The more information you can give the dispatcher the better. Be prepared to answer the following questions:

- What is the problem?
- Where is the problem?
- Is it still happening (in progress)?
- How many people are involved?
- Are there weapons involved?
- What do the people look like (sex, age, race, height, weight, what are they wearing)?
- Are there vehicles involved?
- Can you describe them (year, make, model, color, license plate)?
- Which way did they go?
- What is your name, address, and telephone number.

Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a family work, a neighborhood work, a city work, a civilization work.