

Pre-Kindergarten Sought To Stop Future Crime

(CBS 3) PHILADELPHIA With 171 homicides in Philadelphia so far this year, officials are reaching out to the city's youngest residents in hopes of preventing future crime.

District Attorney Lynne Abraham and Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson were urging state legislators to offer additional funding for pre-kindergarten services during a news conference Tuesday.

Officials are asking for \$75 million to invest in a pre-kindergarten initiative for children in underprivileged and abusive households.

The funding would aid in providing a positive learning environment at a young ages since 90 percent of the brain is developed by the age of five.

"If you start with a child that comes from that kind of a background, where he or she is humiliated, yelled at, beaten, when they go to school – if they go to school – they react to the children in a reaction of the way that they were treated at home. They become bullies," District Attorney Lynne Abraham said.

Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson said many violent crimes stem simple confrontations.

"The majority of our homicides, the cause is arguments. It isn't drugs, it isn't gangs, it's arguments," he said.

The hope is children will not only get a decent education, but will learn conflict resolution while they are still at a young age in hope of stemming future violence.

Johnson said because so many crimes are performed by repeat offenders, it is better to build children than repair adults.

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