

YCWA, Broward and Miami-Dade Schools host 2nd International Youth Crime Prevention Conference

The 2nd Annual International Youth Leaders Crime Prevention Conference was held at the Renaissance Miami Biscayne Bay Hotel (the old Omni) from 10-13 April 2003.

More than 1500 youth leaders from around the world attended. Eight foreign countries and about 35 states sent their young representatives and adult supervisors to this annual event.

Sponsoring and hosting this huge undertaking were Youth Crime Watch of America (YCWA), and Broward and Miami-Dade County Public Schools. The Conference Planning Committee was co-chaired by the wives of the two school superintendents, Barbara Till and Judy Cannon Stierheim.

Citizens' Crime Watch of Pembroke Pines provided two people to plan this event. One was Rudy Tamayo, Vice President, and the other was Lou Manfra, Director of Crime Watch. Manfra was assigned the position of Assistant Conference Coordinator. Both Tamayo and Barbara Till are on the YCWA's Board of Directors.



The theme this year was "Listening to youth, we can change the world." During the conference the participants had the opportunity to meet and interact with other attendees from around the world.

They all shared the same vision of making our world a safer place in which to live.

During the four days there were workshops and seminars on many diverse crime prevention topics. Youth in action to make schools safer, stopping bullies, preventing drugs, conflict resolution, and life skills training were some of the subjects covered. There was even a three hour mini-summit on the role of Youth Crime Watch in homeland defense.

The highlight of the conference was the youth rally on Friday. About 1600



youths and adults marched from the hotel to Pace Park overlooking Biscayne Bay. Leading the parade was Crime Watch's McGruff the Crime Dog. Along with him were the mascots Billy the Marlin of the Florida Marlins and T.D. of the Miami Dolphins. At the park there were short motivational speeches, music from Power 96, and box lunches for all.

The rally's goal of unity and working together was met. It showed that youth can make a difference in our world if we listen to them.