



# Best Practices To Address Community Gang Problems

OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model



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Office of Juvenile Justice  
and Delinquency Prevention



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## Foreword

**S**ince 2002, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has attempted to strengthen the reach and breadth of its work on gangs. With the initiation in 2003 of OJJDP's Gang Reduction Program (GRP), millions of dollars have been invested in working in communities with large and growing youth gangs. Experience has shown us that gangs are, in part, a response to community dysfunction. Thus, a primary focus of OJJDP's anti-gang initiatives is to support community efforts to provide their citizens, especially their young people, with a safe and prosocial environment in which to live and grow. Gangs often lure youth with the promise of safety, belonging, economic opportunity, and a sense of identity. OJJDP is dedicated to helping communities replace this false promise with real opportunities for our Nation's youth.

GRP brings three new ingredients to the classic Comprehensive Gang Model. First, in accord with the President's faith-based and community initiative, GRP prioritizes the recruitment of faith community members and representatives from small community organizations. Clearly, we must always recognize the value large organizations bring to any endeavor; however, it is the local churches and charitable organizations that will continue to live on in these communities long after the Federal Government or large organizations end their work. Indeed, many of the most successful large organizations now partner with small community and faith-based providers for that reason. These small local organizations are often very efficient, raise their own funds, have existing personal relationships with those in need, and understand the culture and language of the local community to a degree that may be difficult for outsiders to emulate. All of that translates into lower cost, faster impact, and longer lasting presence.

Second, GRP emphasizes multiagency collaboration, not only locally in neighborhoods and communities, but across Federal agencies as well. Work on GRP was substantially easier because funding was extremely flexible. Funds used in this program came from flexible funding streams at OJJDP, as well as the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Labor, and Health and Human Services. Grantees were able to fit dollars to need, instead of need to money available. While agencies continue to work to collaborate and use funds in concert, it is my wish that Congress will see the value in improving grantee ability to blend funds and maximize their use.



Third, GRP stresses the importance of partnering with the private sector. At the outset of this effort, we recognized that success would benefit not only those children who did not become members of gangs, but the community at large, including businesses. When crime and violence are reduced, the business community—especially small businesses that suffer most from theft and vandalism—experience significant benefit. Examples abound, but in Richmond, VA, one can point to large-scale improvements and investments in the physical condition of public housing. Because increased safety meant more stable tenants and better tenant care of property, the private sector operator of those units saw a business reason to contribute to the Richmond GRP effort. Additionally, using OJJDP’s planning and resource tool allows communities to see their town or neighborhood as resource rich instead of poor. In many conversations with residents over these past years, I have heard them express their amazement that their community had strengths, had resources, and had people in their own midst who could help.

When we started GRP with demonstration programs in Richmond, VA; Los Angeles, CA; North Miami Beach, FL; and Milwaukee, WI, more than 5 years ago, the evidence was strong that we would succeed at least at the start. I could not have envisioned the success that these four communities have attained, and where progress was not as sure, we learned important lessons. To the people who gave life to this effort and the communities that now serve as examples to others that it can be done, I wish them continued success and hope that others will follow their lead.

J. Robert Flores  
Administrator  
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention



# Acknowledgments

*In 2002, President George W. Bush directed Federal Executive branch agencies to undertake a review of programs and resources available to disadvantaged youth and families. The final report of the White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth included several recommendations to increase support to needy children and families and to reduce duplication and waste so that more resources would become available. The Task Force also recommended expanding collaborative efforts among Federal agencies to improve service delivery and increase efficiency. Under the Department's leadership, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) began an aggressive and intensive pilot program in 2003 to test the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Gang Model developed by Dr. Irving Spergel and his colleagues at the University of Chicago.*



OJJDP's Gang Reduction Program (GRP) is the work of many people and colleagues at OJJDP, the National Youth Gang Center, and prosecutors, police, and community leaders at every level of government. Moving from theory to practice, however, cannot be done without the assistance of key individuals. OJJDP wishes to thank William B. Woodruff, former OJJDP Deputy Administrator, for his early leadership on the GRP; Phelan Wyrick, Ph.D., OJJDP's first Gang Program Coordinator; Bobby Kipper, Esther Welch, and Mark Fero, who, as part of the GRP leadership team under Virginia Attorneys General Jerry Kilgore and Bob McDonnell, took a vision and brought it to life in Richmond, VA; Los Angeles Gang Coordinator Mildred Martinez, who has helped lead changes under Mayors Hahn and Villaraigosa; and Governors Jeb Bush of Florida and of Jim Doyle of Wisconsin, whose willingness to support this program made it possible to see progress and learn important lessons in North Miami Beach and Milwaukee.

Many people contributed directly and indirectly to this report. Dr. Spergel and his colleagues conducted the research and guided the early development of the Comprehensive Gang Model. With funding and leadership from OJJDP, the Model has been tested in various forms in nearly 20 sites. Hundreds of community members have contributed their vision, energy and leadership to the planning and implementation processes in their communities. They also shared with us the practices that were most helpful to them along the way. Space does not permit listing them

individually, but this report would not have been possible without the vision and hard work of these partners. Finally, we would like to recognize the contributions of the staff of the National Youth Gang Center, who provided technical assistance and training to the communities demonstrating the Model, and who prepared this report.





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## Purpose and Organization of the Report



**T**his Report provides guidance for communities that are considering how best to address a youth gang problem that already exists or threatens to become a reality. The guidance is based on the implementation of the Comprehensive Gang Model (Model) developed through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and most recently tested in OJJDP's Gang Reduction Program.

The Report describes the research that produced the Model, notes essential findings from evaluations of several programs demonstrating the Model in a variety of environments, and outlines "best practices" obtained from practitioners with years of experience in planning, implementing, and overseeing variations of the Model in their communities.

The Model and best practices contain critical elements that distinguish it from typical program approaches to gangs. The Model's key distinguishing feature is a strategic planning process that empowers communities to assess their own gang problems and fashion a complement of anti-gang strategies and program activities. Community leaders considering this Model will be able to call on a strategic planning tool developed by OJJDP and available at no cost. OJJDP's Socioeconomic Mapping and Resource Topography (SMART) system is available online through the OJJDP Web site (go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp>, and select "Tools").

The main section of the report presents best practices for the Comprehensive Gang Model and highlights results of a National Youth Gang Center survey and a meeting of practitioners regarding their experiences in implementing the Model. This section contains specific practices that work best in a step-by-step planning and implementation process for communities using the Comprehensive Gang Model framework and tools.





## Section 1:

# Development of OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model



## Research Foundation of the Comprehensive Gang Model

**T**he Comprehensive Gang Model is the product of a national gang research and development program that OJJDP initiated in the mid-1980s. A national assessment of gang problems and programs provided the research foundation for the Model, and its key components mirror the best features of existing and evaluated programs across the country.



### National Assessment of Gang Problems and Programs

In 1987, OJJDP launched a Juvenile Gang Suppression and Intervention Research and Development Program that Dr. Irving Spergel of the University of Chicago directed. In the initial phase, the researchers conducted the first comprehensive national assessment of organized agency and community group responses to gang problems in the United States (Spergel, 1990, 1991; Spergel and Curry, 1993). It remains the only national assessment of efforts to combat gangs. In the second phase, Spergel and his colleagues developed a composite youth gang program based on findings from the national assessment.

In the research phase of the project (phase one), Spergel's research team attempted to identify every promising community gang program in the United States based on a national survey. At the outset, this study focused on 101 cities in which the presence of gangs was suspected. The team found promising gang programs in a broad range of communities across the Nation. Once programs and sites were identified, the team collected information on the magnitude and nature of local gang problems from representatives of each agency or organization that other

participants identified as being affiliated with or being a partner in each local program. Spergel and his team of researchers interviewed program developers and reviewed all available program documentation.

The more demanding project goal was to identify the contents of each program and self-reported measures of success. The team made an effort to identify the "most promising" programs. In each of the most promising community programs, the research team identified the agencies that were essential to the success of the program. Finally, Spergel and his team made site visits to selected community programs and agencies.

Spergel and Curry (1993, pp. 371–72) used agency representatives' responses to five survey questions<sup>1</sup> to determine the strategies that communities across the country employed in dealing with gang problems. From respondents' answers to these questions, the research team identified five strategies—community mobilization, social intervention, provision of opportunities, organizational change and development, and suppression (see "Five Strategies in OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model" on page 2).<sup>2</sup>

## Development of the Comprehensive Community-Wide Gang Program Model

Spergel and his colleagues (Spergel, 1995; Spergel et al., 1992; Spergel and Curry, 1993) developed the Comprehensive Community-Wide Gang Program Model as the final product of the gang research and development program that OJJDP funded. From the information gathered through its multimethod study in phase one (Spergel, Curry, et al., 1994), the Spergel team developed technical assistance manuals for each of the 12 types of agencies that should be part of a successful local community response to gangs, including organizations that range from grassroots child-serving agencies to law enforcement, courts, and prosecutors' offices (Spergel, Chance, et al., 1994).

Spergel and his colleagues also offered the general community design of an ideal Comprehensive Community-Wide Gang Program Model. An ideal program should undertake several action steps (Spergel, Chance, et al., 1994, pp. 2–5):

- **Addressing the problem.** A community must recognize the presence of a gang problem before it can do anything meaningful to address the problem.
- **Organization and policy development.** Communities must organize effectively to combat the youth gang problem.
- **Management of the collaborative process.** In a typical community, the mobilization process evolves through several stages before fruition.
- **Development of goals and objectives.** These must include short-term suppression and outreach services for targeted youth, and longer term services, such as remedial education, training, and job placement.
- **Relevant programming.** The community must systematically articulate and implement rationales for services, tactics, or procedures.
- **Coordination and community participation.** A mobilized community is the most promising way to deal with the gang problem.
- **Youth accountability.** While youth gang members must be held accountable for their criminal acts, they must at the same time be provided an opportunity to change or control their behavior.
- **Staffing.** Youth gang intervention and control efforts require a thorough understanding of the complexity of gang activity in the context of local community life.
- **Staff training.** Training should include prevention, intervention, and suppression in gang problem localities.

## Five Strategies in OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model

**Community Mobilization:** Involvement of local citizens, including former gang-involved youth, community groups, agencies, and coordination of programs and staff functions within and across agencies.

**Opportunities Provision:** Development of a variety of specific education, training, and employment programs targeting gang-involved youth.

**Social Intervention:** Involving youth-serving agencies, schools, grassroots groups, faith-based organizations, police, and other juvenile/criminal justice organizations in "reaching out" to gang-involved youth and their families,

and linking them with the conventional world and needed services.

**Suppression:** Formal and informal social control procedures, including close supervision and monitoring of gang-involved youth by agencies of the juvenile/criminal justice system and also by community-based agencies, schools, and grassroots groups.

**Organizational Change and Development:** Development and implementation of policies and procedures that result in the most effective use of available and potential resources, within and across agencies, to better address the gang problem.

Source: Spergel, 1995, pp. 171–296.



- **Research and evaluation.** Determining what is most effective, and why, is a daunting challenge.
- **Establishment of funding priorities.** Based on available research, theory, and experience, community mobilization strategies and programs should be accorded the highest funding priority.

In 1993, Spergel began to implement this model in a neighborhood in Chicago. Soon thereafter, OJJDP renamed the model the Comprehensive Gang Prevention and Intervention Model (Spergel, Chance, et al., 1994, p. iii).

## OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model

The 1992 amendments to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act authorized OJJDP to carry out additional activities to address youth gang problems. An OJJDP Gang Task Force outlined plans for integrated office-wide efforts to provide national leadership in the areas of gang-related program development, research, statistics, evaluation, training, technical assistance, and information dissemination (Howell, 1994; Tatem-Kelley, 1994).

This background work led to the establishment of OJJDP's Comprehensive Response to America's Youth Gang Problem. The Comprehensive Response was a five-component initiative that included establishment of the National Youth Gang Center, demonstration and testing of OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model, training and technical assistance to communities implementing this Model, evaluation of the demonstration sites implementing the Model, and information dissemination through the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse. Implementation and testing of the Comprehensive Gang Model were the centerpiece of the initiative. OJJDP prepared two publications specifically to support demonstration and testing of the Model: *Gang Suppression and Intervention: Problem and Response* (Spergel, Curry, et al., 1994), and *Gang Suppression and Intervention: Community Models* (Spergel, Chance, et al., 1994).

Communities that use the Comprehensive Gang Model will benefit from the simplified implementation process that OJJDP has created. OJJDP synthesized the elements of the Comprehensive Gang Model into five steps:

1. The community and its leaders acknowledge the youth gang problem.
2. The community conducts an assessment of the nature and scope of the youth gang problem, leading to the identification of a target community or communities and population(s).
3. Through a steering committee, the community and its leaders set goals and objectives to address the identified problem(s).
4. The steering committee makes available relevant programs, strategies, services, tactics, and procedures consistent with the Model's five core strategies.
5. The steering committee evaluates the effectiveness of the response to the gang problem, reassesses the problem, and modifies approaches, as needed.

These steps have been tested in several settings. Information on those initiatives is provided in appendix A.

## The Comprehensive Gang Model in Action—OJJDP's Gang Reduction Program

Over the years, OJJDP has tested and refined the Comprehensive Gang Model to meet new challenges and address gang problems in new locations. Most recently, OJJDP developed and funded the Gang Reduction Program.

Gangs are often the result of system failures or community dysfunction. So, to address youth gang violence, the OJJDP Administrator decided to test whether the Model could be used to initiate community change in certain cities. In 2003, OJJDP identified four demonstration sites: Los Angeles, CA; Richmond, VA; Milwaukee, WI; and North Miami Beach, FL. Each test site faced a different gang problem.

Once sites had been identified, OJJDP held meetings with senior political and law enforcement officials and made an offer: OJJDP would provide resources to support a test of the Comprehensive Gang Model if the city agreed to change how they currently addressed youth gang problems. Each city would now focus on balancing gang prevention with enforcement and commit to using community organizations and faith-based groups to ultimately sustain the work. Additionally, each site would have a full-time coordinator, funded by OJJDP, with direct access to senior political and police leadership. This coordinator would be free from substantive program responsibilities and would ensure that each participating agency or organization met its obligations. He or she would also ensure and that the data and information generated by the effort would be collected and shared. Each participating agency remained independent, but was under the oversight of the gang coordinator, who had the ability to obtain support or intervention from OJJDP leadership and local authorities (e.g., mayor, police chief, or governor).

In addition to reducing gang violence, the goal of GRP was to determine the necessary practices to create a community environment that helps reduce youth gang crime and violence in targeted neighborhoods. Because of this, GRP focused on two goals: to learn the key ingredients for success and to reduce youth gang delinquency, crime, and violence. GRP accomplishes these goals by helping communities take an integrated approach when targeting gangs:

- **Primary prevention** targets the entire population in high-crime and high-risk communities. The key component is a One-Stop Resource Center that makes services accessible and visible to members of the community. Services include prenatal and infant care, afterschool activities, truancy and dropout prevention, and job programs.
- **Secondary prevention** identifies young children (ages 7–14) at high risk and—drawing on the resources of

schools, community-based organizations, and faith-based groups—intervenes with appropriate services before early problem behaviors turn into serious delinquency and gang involvement.

- **Intervention** targets active gang members and close associates, and involves aggressive outreach and recruitment activity. Support services for gang-involved youth and their families help youth make positive choices.
- **Suppression** focuses on identifying the most dangerous and influential gang members and removing them from the community.
- **Reentry** targets serious offenders who are returning to the community after confinement and provides appropriate services and monitoring. Of particular interest are displaced gang members who may cause conflict by attempting to reassert their former gang roles.

The program has several key concepts:

- Identify needs at the individual, family, and community levels, and address those needs in a coordinated and comprehensive response.
- Conduct an inventory of human and financial resources in the community, and create plans to fill gaps and leverage existing resources to support effective gang-reduction strategies.
- Apply the best research-based programs across appropriate age ranges, risk categories, and agency boundaries.
- Encourage coordination and integration in two directions: vertically (local, State, and Federal agencies) and horizontally (across communities and program types).

Highlights of activities from each of the Gang Reduction Program sites—Richmond, VA; Los Angeles, CA; North Miami Beach, FL; and Milwaukee, WI—are presented in the next section.

## Section 2:

# Best Practices for Planning and Implementing the Comprehensive Gang Model



**T**he best practices presented in this report are based on years of demonstration and evaluation in many sites across the country. Appendix A provides an overview of these demonstration initiatives, beginning with the initial implementation of the Model in the Little Village neighborhood in Chicago in the early 1990s, through OJJDP-sponsored demonstrations of the Model in five sites in the mid-1990s, to OJJDP's current efforts to implement its Gang Reduction Program (GRP).



To determine which practices would be most beneficial to communities intent on implementing the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model, the National Youth Gang Center (NYGC) collected data from these sources:

- **Comprehensive Gang Model Survey.** A Comprehensive Gang Model Survey (see appendix B) was conducted in July 2007. It collected information pertaining to several sites in the original demonstration program (Spergel Model), the Rural Gang Initiative, the Gang-Free Schools and Communities Initiative, and the Gang Reduction Program, and from selected projects and programs in Oklahoma, Utah, Nevada, and North Carolina that used the OJJDP Model, but OJJDP did not fund. The survey included questions about the assessment and implementation processes, program coordination, the lead agency, administrative structure, prevention, intervention and the intervention team, suppression, reentry, organizational change and development, and sustainability.
- **Practitioner Meeting.** The preliminary survey results were used to develop an agenda for a meeting that

OJJDP sponsored in November 2007. Representatives from OJJDP, NYGC, the initial demonstration sites, Gang-Free Schools and Communities programs, Gang Reduction Program projects, and programs in Oklahoma, Utah, Nevada, and North Carolina met to discuss and record best practices based on their experience with comprehensive anti-gang programming. The meeting also produced a timeline for use by communities that are considering implementing such efforts.

- **Evaluation Reports and Staff Observations.** “Best practices” of demonstration programs (described in appendix A) and observations of OJJDP and NYGC staff who have worked with these programs for 15 years were noted in the evaluations.

The best practices identified from these sources are organized into seven categories—convening a steering committee, administering the program, assessing the gang problem, planning for implementation, implementing the program, selecting program activities, and sustaining the program—and are described below.

## Convening a Steering Committee

How a community begins to address gang problems differs depending on the event or events that draw public attention to the issue. In some cases, a high-profile, often tragic event occurs that galvanizes the community and stimulates mobilization to address gangs. In other cases, a groundswell of public support to deal with gangs builds more gradually and lacks only an individual or agency to serve as a catalyst. At some point, key agencies and community leaders begin to openly discuss and address gang issues. At that point, a standing task force, committee, or organizational structure (henceforth referred to as the steering committee) should be convened and begin to work on next steps. Ideally, this group oversees an assessment of the local gang problem and, using data obtained through the assessment, develops strategies to combat it.

In virtually every demonstration of OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model, the effectiveness of its steering committee has been crucial in determining the success or failure of the community in implementing a comprehensive approach.

To be effective, the steering committee should:

- Include, at a minimum, representation from the following groups: law enforcement, corrections, probation/parole (juvenile and adult), schools, social services agencies, local units of government, faith-based organizations, religious institutions, employment programs, and community residents.
- Make and oversee policy for the project.
- Oversee and provide general direction to the agencies collaborating in conducting an assessment of the gang problem and planning/implementing the project.

The membership of the steering committee is an essential element in determining program success. Steering committees with well-respected leaders (chairs or cochairs) who have a reputation for problem-solving and objectivity have proven most successful.

Best results have been obtained when the steering committee mixes two groups:

- Individuals from upper-level management in key partnering agencies who can effect organizational change within their own agencies.

## OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model

### Core Strategy: Community Mobilization Critical Elements

- ◆ Local citizens, including youth, community groups, and agencies, are involved, and programs and functions of staff within and across agencies are coordinated.
- ◆ A steering committee is available to initiate the project by involving representatives of key organizations and the community and to guide it over time by responding to barriers to implementation, developing sound policy, lending support to the project where and when appropriate, and taking general ownership of the community-wide response.
- ◆ The steering committee also is charged with creating and maintaining interagency and community relationships that facilitate program development. For example, the committee could create coordinated outreach and law enforcement policies and practices and facilitate the development of community groups such as block watches, neighbors/mothers against gangs, or other community alliances and coalitions.
- ◆ The program is supported and sustained across all levels (top, intermediate, and street/line) of the criminal and juvenile justice systems, schools, community-based and grassroots organizations, and government.

- Individuals with influence within the community, including residents, and representatives of grassroots community groups, neighborhood associations, religious organizations, and advocacy groups.

Steering committees have been most successful when they have established a formal structure, such as adoption of bylaws describing how the committee would function. Using an approach such as Robert’s Rules of Order provides a way to consider opposing opinions and can assist the committee in reaching consensus on difficult issues. Execution of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) among key agencies commits them to assessment tasks and long-term roles in implementing comprehensive strategies to address identified gang problems.

### Highlights From the Field—Convening a Steering Committee

**Richmond, VA.** *The organizational structure in Richmond includes an executive committee, leadership committee, and four subcommittees to help with oversight, strategic planning, and implementation. Even though membership remained consistent for the most part, there were some major changes in top leadership during the funded period. These changes included a change in governor, two attorneys general, a mayor, and a new police chief. The strength of the collaborative partnership initially formed allowed for a smooth transition during these changes and allowed staff to remain on task.*

**Pittsburgh, PA.** *Pittsburgh’s Gang-Free Schools program initiated memorandums of understanding between steering committee members and key agencies that enabled the project to maintain momentum during a citywide financial crisis and sustain participation from agencies that withdrew from other initiatives.*

## Administering the Program

Selecting the appropriate lead agency and program director are crucial steps in ensuring program success.

## Lead Agency

Unlike other initiatives, the lead agency in these multidisciplinary programs does not assume control of the initiative, but instead provides an administrative framework to facilitate the work of the intervention team and the steering committee. A wide variety of agency types have led these initiatives. No matter which agency assumes primary responsibility for this initiative, its credibility and influence within the community are directly correlated to the success of planning and implementation activities.

The lead agency has a number of important responsibilities:

- Providing a secure location to house client intake information, consent forms, and intervention plans.
- Tracking the activities of the partnering agencies.
- Coordinating the activities and meetings of the intervention team and the steering committee.
- Providing an administrative framework for hiring staff, if necessary.
- Administering funds and grant contracts as directed by the steering committee.

As set forth in table 1, experience has shown that each type of agency has its advantages and disadvantages. Each community has varying needs based on existing community dynamics (e.g., local politics, existing collaborations, agencies’ management capacities, and the location of the target area), which will inevitably influence the selection of the lead agency for the program.

Lead agencies will incur significant costs when building and administering the multiagency infrastructure of the program. These costs are closely associated with the gang coordinator’s position. In OJJDP’s GRP demonstration, approximately \$150,000 was budgeted for the position and necessary support. Although no site used all of those funds in any given year, the value of a full-time employee’s ability to focus partners on the message,

**TABLE 1: Lead Agency Advantages/Disadvantages: Program Implementation Characteristics**

| Lead Agency                                     | Advantages   | Disadvantages   |
|---|--|---|
| Law Enforcement                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law enforcement involved in planning and implementation</li> <li>• Processes in place for crime and gang information sharing</li> <li>• Greater access to daily updates regarding criminal activity</li> <li>• Access to financial and business management support</li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community members may not understand the role of program personnel</li> <li>• It may be difficult to overcome distrust between outreach staff and law enforcement, resulting in obstacles to information sharing</li> </ul>  |
| Prosecutors and Other Criminal Justice Entities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to leverage the participation of law enforcement agencies</li> <li>• Access to police incident reports and law enforcement data</li> <li>• Access to financial and business management support</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They may be perceived as interested only in prosecuting/incarcerating gang members</li> <li>• They may not have a strong connection to the target community</li> <li>• There may be historic distrust between criminal justice entities and service providers</li> </ul>             |
| City Government                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to key personnel in city departments and elected officials</li> <li>• Access to sensitive data from law enforcement</li> <li>• Credibility and buy-in from city agencies</li> <li>• Access to financial and business management support</li> <li>• Ability to set policy for key agencies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shifts in political leadership can destabilize the program</li> <li>• City policies and/or budget constraints may make it difficult to hire personnel</li> </ul>   |
| School Districts                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy-in from school administrators to ensure local school participation in the intervention team</li> <li>• Access to educational data</li> <li>• Large enough to absorb the program once other funds are spent</li> <li>• Access to financial and business management support</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They may be unwilling to provide services to youth not enrolled in school</li> <li>• Decisionmaking may be bogged down by district policies</li> <li>• Hiring policies may make it difficult for school districts to employ outreach staff</li> </ul>                                |
| Local Service Providers                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working knowledge of the target area</li> <li>• Experience with community planning and action</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agencies may lack experience in working with gang-involved clients</li> <li>• Gang programming may not be given a priority</li> <li>• They lack administrative structure to manage funds/grants</li> </ul>   |
| State Agencies                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources and credibility</li> <li>• Expertise in grant management and administration</li> <li>• Access to financial and business management support</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lead agency may be located well away from the actual program activities</li> <li>• State agencies may often be perceived as outsiders without a strong connection to the target community</li> <li>• They have less awareness of local politics and historical issues</li> </ul> |



# The Comprehensive Gang Model in Action— OJJDP’s Gang Reduction Program Richmond, Virginia

The Richmond project (Gang Reduction and Intervention Program [GRIP]) target area consists of two police reporting sectors in south Richmond. The target area is a suburban-type community of single-family homes and apartments. The area is transitioning from a middle-class to a working-class population, with an increase in Hispanic residents. Traditional “homegrown” African-American gangs also reside in the area. Currently, law enforcement is reporting representation and activity by members of Hispanic gangs with roots in the western United States and Central America. Law enforcement is concerned about gang crime and delinquency directed against Hispanic workers in the area, who are often reluctant to report crimes. The traditional African-American gangs are the prevalent gang presence in membership and activity.

**Prevention activities** are aimed at the broad population of families and youth who are at risk of becoming involved in gang and delinquent activity. Prevention activities include:

- ◆ One-Stop Resource Center—an information and referral case management entry point to prevention services.
- ◆ Prenatal and infancy support.
- ◆ English as a Second Language for Hispanic residents.
- ◆ Spanish as a Second Language, with an emphasis on providing language skills to those serving the Hispanic population.
- ◆ Class Action Summer Camp.
- ◆ Richmond school resource officers train the Class Action curriculum in target-area schools under the auspices of the Gang Reduction Program.
- ◆ Public awareness programs and community events.
- ◆ School-based educational and family wraparound services.
- ◆ Sports and life-skill activities and training.
- ◆ Theater group to showcase issues involving gang-involved youth.
- ◆ Gang awareness training to community and service providers.
- ◆ Hispanic liaison to link the program to local Hispanic residents.

- ◆ Mentoring/tutoring for youth at risk of gang involvement.
- ◆ Immigration services to Hispanic residents.
- ◆ Afterschool and summer programs for elementary and middle school youth.
- ◆ Arts and recreation for at-risk youth.

**Intervention activities** are supported by a multidisciplinary intervention team that conducts case-management activities, including street outreach to support gang-involved youth, with the goal of providing an alternative to gang membership. Activities with individual youth are targeted toward that goal and tracked via case-management software. Related activities include:

- ◆ Job training development and placement through public/private partnerships.
- ◆ Entrepreneurial training for at-risk youth.
- ◆ Role modeling and mentoring.
- ◆ Truancy and drop-out prevention programs.
- ◆ Mental health and substance abuse services.
- ◆ Educational support and GED services.
- ◆ Tattoo removal.
- ◆ Community service projects.

**Suppression activities** include directed police patrols, community policing, community awareness, supporting increased law enforcement intelligence sharing, establishing a multiagency law enforcement and prosecution response to target gang leaders, increasing the number of school resource officers in target area schools, and expanding neighborhood watch teams in partnership with the Richmond Police Department and community members. GRIP also supports police department review of crime data for evaluation purposes.

**Reentry activities** are closely tied to the multidisciplinary intervention team and include self-sufficiency skill training and job training and placement. Support services—such as food, transportation, and other services—are available.

keep promised work on schedule, and assure that problems were quickly brought to the attention of senior political or operational leadership far exceeded the cost in dollars. Moreover, in Los Angeles and Richmond, the site coordinators have become part of their employing agencies, because their leadership does not want to return to their prior way of doing business. In North Miami Beach, the coordinator and others are forming a nonprofit organization to raise money and continue the work with support from their law enforcement partners.

### **Highlights From the Field—Lead Agency**

**Richmond, VA.** *Richmond's GRP demonstration designated the Virginia Attorney General's office as the lead agency, allowing the project to interact with a larger number of partners. The experience and credibility offered through oversight by the attorney general's office allowed the project to leverage greater support.*

**Los Angeles, CA, and Houston, TX.** *The lead agency for both the Los Angeles and the Houston demonstrations was the mayor's office. That office was able to influence and coalesce the community around the project.*

**Miami-Dade, FL.** *The Miami-Dade County Public Schools served as the lead agency for its community's Gang-Free Schools project. This agency was able to provide consistent and wide-reaching school district support that enabled the project to set up a community-based facility where key partners utilized an existing school district property to co-locate.*

**Pittsburgh, PA.** *The Pittsburgh Gang-Free Schools project benefitted from the Pittsburgh Public Schools serving as lead agency because it allowed project staff to access crucial school-level data about clients involved in the program and leverage district-wide services.*

## **Program Director**

The gang coordinator or program director is the key to successful implementation of the Comprehensive Gang Model. Selection of a program director with specific skills and abilities is of paramount importance. Best results have been obtained where the steering committee and the lead agency jointly develop a written job description

for this position and, in concert, select the program director. This step may be difficult, especially where funding for that position is being raised through joint contributions or as a result of a grant. In Los Angeles, the GRP coordinator position was of great interest to the police department and mayor's office. While each agency attempted to exercise substantial control on the selection process, OJJDP, by virtue of its funding control, mediated the discussions. The result was that both agencies have been well served by a talented and committed coordinator who has remained in place during the entire 4-year program.

Program directors with these skills have produced the best results:

- The skills to understand and work within complex systems such as criminal justice, education, and social services.
- An understanding of data collection and analysis protocols, as well as how to read, interpret, synthesize, and clearly explain data orally and in writing to a wide range of audiences.
- The skills to understand and develop short- and long-term plans for implementation.
- The skills to move flexibly among a variety of complex tasks—from public speaking and writing grants to managing program funds and effectively supervising personnel.
- The skills to work well with personnel at different levels of responsibility, from agency heads to grassroots personnel, and from a variety of disciplines: law enforcement, education, social services, justice systems, and outreach.
- Meeting facilitation, conflict resolution, and consensus-building skills that enable the program director to serve as an intermediary between agencies, resolve differences of opinion during meetings, and effectively address potentially inflammatory and emotional topics.

- The skills to understand the risk factors leading to gang involvement, local gang activities and gang research, community dynamics and history, and prevention/intervention/suppression strategies; and to explain these concepts to others from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds.
- The skills to supervise, engage, and motivate staff from a variety of agencies and racial/cultural/economic backgrounds, including staff over whom the director may not have direct supervisory authority. This is especially important when working with outreach staff who may have prior offending histories, prior gang affiliation, and unstable work histories.

Program directors who generate passion and enthusiasm, and who inspire others, achieve solid results. The importance of the program director's role cannot be overstated.

## Assessing the Gang Problem

Conducting a comprehensive assessment of the community's gang problem is the foundation for planning and implementing the Comprehensive Gang Model.

Where assessments were done methodically and comprehensively, efficient and effective targeting resulted. The assessment process helped projects determine types and levels of gang activity, gang crime patterns, community perceptions, and service gaps. The assessment also assisted steering committees in identifying target populations to be served, understanding why those populations merited attention, and making the best use of available resources.

Members of the steering committee must share power and influence during the assessment phase. Real power-sharing among key agencies at this juncture has not only been shown to have an influence on data collection, but

## OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model

### Core Strategy: Organizational Change and Development Critical Elements

- ◆ Policies and procedures that result in the most effective use of available and potential resources within and across agencies are developed and implemented.
- ◆ The policies and practices of organizations, particularly of agencies providing intervention team staff, are adapted to conform to the goals and objectives of the project as identified through the strategic planning exercises.
- ◆ Each program, agency, or community representative on the steering committee ensures that its internal units are cooperating with and supporting the work of the intervention team.
- ◆ Various agencies learn not only to understand the complex nature of the gang problem and cooperate closely with each other in the development and implementation of the program, but also to assist other organizations, particularly agencies involved with the intervention team, to achieve their respective mission objectives.
- ◆ In the process of collaboration, a team approach means a maximum sharing of information about targeted youth such that activities of team members are modified in a generalist direction (e.g., police take some responsibility for social intervention and outreach workers assist with the suppression of serious crime and violence).
- ◆ A case management system and associated data system are established so that contacts and services by all members of the intervention team can be monitored for purposes of effective targeting, tracking youth entry into and exit from the program, and measuring outcomes at individual and program area levels.
- ◆ Staff development and training for the intervention team are conducted for the different types of team participants separately and collectively, especially regarding data sharing, joint planning, and implementation activities.
- ◆ Special training, close supervision, and administrative arrangements are established, particularly for youth outreach workers and law enforcement, to carry out their collaborative roles in a mutually trustworthy fashion.
- ◆ Organizational policies and practices become inclusive and community oriented with special reference to the interests, needs, and cultural background of local residents, including the targeted youth.

has been particularly beneficial in forming and maintaining the partnerships needed for success over the life of the project.

Communities should make sure that each participating agency benefits from collaboration. Clear communication is critical. Simply assuming that overall goals will be meaningful to all partners may result in some partners feeling discouraged or that they are being asked to do work that only benefits other groups or interests. Since partners interested in addressing gangs share many interests in helping the at-risk population, and almost all work that improves the community or situation of at-risk kids adds to anti-gang efforts, finding shared goals need not be difficult. Once each partner identifies their interest and goals, they should keep a record of how well those

interests are met. Meeting goals may involve raising funds to help a service provider, increasing the number of volunteers who provide specific aid, or increasing local or national media exposure. Finally, collecting base line data will help demonstrate the value of each partner's work and the collaboration's ability to leverage resources.

Selecting representatives from a cross-section of agencies to work on each assessment task will produce stronger coalitions. The steering committee should designate an agency to coordinate the assessment process.

Prior to beginning work on the assessment, the steering committee should identify the scope and extent of the assessment. Will the assessment be conducted communitywide? If a smaller area of the community is to

## ■ ■ ■ The Comprehensive Gang Model in Action— OJJDP's Gang Reduction Program Los Angeles, California

The Los Angeles Gang Reduction Program site is located in the Boyle Heights area, 3 miles east of downtown Los Angeles. It is home to a large immigrant population made up mostly of residents from Mexico and Central America. Five major gangs inhabit the target area, including White Fence (established in the 1930s), Varrio Nuevo Estrada "VNE" (established in the 1970s and inhabiting the Estrada Courts Public Housing Development), Indiana Dukes, Opal Street, and Eighth Street (inhabiting Wyvernwood Apartments). A number of street-front, grassroots community organizations, health providers, churches, and youth centers are located in the neighborhood and have a history of involvement in gang prevention and intervention activities. Five public elementary and middle schools are located in the target area, with more than 5,000 students enrolled. The Los Angeles Police Department's Community Law Enforcement and Recovery (CLEAR) Program is a targeted gang suppression program and operates as a partner in the Boyle Heights community.

**Prevention activities** focused on providing youth with alternatives and support to prevent or resist gang involvement include:

- ◆ Early College Awareness and Literacy Program for fifth grade students and their parents.
- ◆ Afterschool programs for elementary and middle school youth at high risk of gang membership.

- ◆ "The Story Project"—an afterschool multimedia communication program to encourage school attendance and increase students' grade point average.
- ◆ Prenatal and infancy support for high-risk mothers to reduce risk factors related to gang involvement.
- ◆ Intensive case management for youth and families residing in the target area, including mentoring for high-risk males ages 10–14.
- ◆ Gang awareness training for schools, residents, local businesses, and parents.

**Intervention and reentry activities** are primarily case managed by a multidisciplinary team. Other intervention services for gang members in the Los Angeles plan include:

- ◆ Individual and group counseling for behavior, substance abuse, and other needs.
- ◆ Educational and vocational training.
- ◆ Tattoo removal.
- ◆ Anger management and conflict resolution.

**Suppression activities** are conducted in the target area by the CLEAR program. CLEAR involves targeted gang enforcement, prosecution, and community awareness.

be assessed, some preassessment work should be done, including a scan of overall violent crime statistics, to identify an appropriate target area.

OJJDP's recently developed the Web-based Socioeconomic Mapping and Resource Topography (SMART) system, which provides a substantial amount of community-level data, from the U.S. Census to Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data, and a Community Disadvantage Index (a research and data derived index that provides a way to compare the strength of one community against another). The SMART system is free of charge and available online (go to the OJJDP Web site, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp>, and select "Tools").

Because of the importance of the assessment, it is critical that the steering committee allots sufficient time to conduct data collection and analysis. The more extensive the assessment, the more time-consuming and expensive this process will be. Because most communities do not have unlimited funds, best results were produced when the steering committee identified and prioritized critical data to be collected and set a reasonable timeline for these activities. This timeline may range from 3 months to more than a year, depending on the scope of the assessment.

Data collection was initiated more quickly and proceeded more smoothly when the steering committee established written agreements with the key agencies. These written agreements identified the types of data to be collected, specified whether an archival record review was needed, and indicated the time frame within which the review should be conducted. If analysis and explanation of the data are required, the written agreement should also set forth these responsibilities. Furthermore, based on experiences at multiple sites, the written agreement ensures that the data, once collected, are available to all parties and cannot be hidden or removed from the assessment. Progress is enhanced when the steering committee agencies agree to underwrite or conduct pieces of the assessment and to create contracts for specific tasks that the assessment requires. Ideally, these written agreements will also commit key agencies to ongoing data collection.

To ensure that data are collected consistently and without discrepancies, and where State law does not define these terms, the steering committee must establish definitions of "gang," "gang member," and "gang crime."

In many cases, it may be necessary to conduct a manual archival record review of law enforcement data during the initial assessment. Most sites found these manual archival record reviews to be a necessary, but expensive and time-consuming, process. They also found it best to identify protocols that, when key agencies and the steering committee put them into place, would make it easier to collect data in the future. Some sites ultimately amended computerized police incident reports to include a "gang-related" check box. Other sites established protocols to channel specific types of reports to the gang unit for regular review.

Assistance from a local research partner trained in statistical analysis can benefit an assessment greatly. Some data, such as gang crime data, community demographic data, and school statistics, can almost certainly be collected without a research partner. But sites planning to interview gang members; conduct focus groups with parents, community residents, or school staff members; or use in-depth survey instruments should consider engaging a research partner with some expertise in data analysis. That partner can work through processes such as obtaining consent and ensuring and protecting confidentiality. The research partner also should perform more complex data analyses, as required. As with other service providers, staff should establish a detailed scope of work or a job description for the research partner. The scope of work may include a summary of the data reports to be developed and a timeline for completion. The scope of work also should include a process for addressing issues that may arise with the research partner's quality of work and timeliness.

In addition to collecting the data mentioned above, sites that conducted comprehensive assessments found that they were better equipped during the planning and implementation process to design appropriate responses,



target appropriate populations to serve, and implement program activities if they did the following:

- Investigated underlying demographic factors that affect local gang problems.
- Measured the extent of gang activity in schools.
- Included qualitative educational factors affecting local youth.
- Surveyed residents and youth about perceptions of gangs.
- Inventoried community resources to address gangs.

### **Highlights From the Field—Assessing the Gang Problem**

**Los Angeles, CA.** *The Los Angeles GRP project identified gaps in services by conducting a community resource assessment and holding focus groups in the community. This information helped the project in the development of the strategic plan and mapping out funding levels for each of the program's components—primary prevention, secondary prevention, intervention, re-entry, and suppression.*

**Richmond, VA.** *An assessment of police incident reports for gang-affiliated offenses led to a change in the way that the police department captured gang-related incidents. Reports now require officers to input any information that assists with identifying gang affiliation.*

**Pittsburgh, PA.** *In Pittsburgh, the assessment process used in the Gang-Free Schools project led to extensive changes in the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police's methods of capturing gang crime data and the creation of a new gang intelligence collection system. Pittsburgh Public Schools surveyed all students in three grades (5, 7, and 9) across the entire school district. These student surveys helped the community address widespread denial.*

**Houston, TX.** *In Houston, the GFS demonstration conducted an archival review of police incident reports that revealed that more than 80 percent of police incidents involving gangs were missed in the existing data collection system, and has led to routine record reviews by the gang enforcement squad in the target community.*

## **Planning for Implementation**

The steering committee serves as the primary decision-making body for implementation planning. It should use the assessment as a guide in formulating a strategic plan to mitigate the community's gang problem.

The steering committee should synthesize data collected from the assessment into a usable form for planning purposes. Specifically, the steering committee needs to know the following information:

- Types of gang-related crime.
- Patterns of change in gang incident rates.
- Locations of gang crime.
- Increases/decreases in numbers of gangs and gang members.
- Level of citizen concern about gang activity.
- Community perceptions of gang activity.
- Gang-related activity in schools.
- Changes in community demographics.

Planning objectives are used to:

- Determine the criteria for targeting clients that this multidisciplinary approach will serve (age, race, gender, gang affiliation, etc.).
- Determine a geographic area of the community to be served (if necessary).
- Determine the goals of the program; intervention, prevention, and suppression strategies; and types of services to be provided. Activities, goals, and objectives also are identified based on the problems described during the gang assessment.
- Determine the targets for intervention by the multidisciplinary team and the composition of the team itself.



- Assign staff members to an intervention team to coordinate provision of services to clients and manage client cases.

Practices that have proved helpful to the planning process include:

- Providing steering committee members with a copy of the assessment report and thoroughly discussing the data and the problems identified as a result of the data review.

- Conducting training on the program model with each of the partnering agencies prior to the planning process.

- Introducing the model in a formal manner with multimedia materials, such as OJJDP's online Strategic Planning Tool (<http://www.iir.com/nygc/tool/>), which helps identify programs and compare existing community resources with existing needs.

## ■ ■ ■ The Comprehensive Gang Model in Action— OJJDP's Gang Reduction Program North Miami Beach, Florida

The North Miami Beach Gang Reduction Program, known as PanZou (reclaiming the community), target area comprises the city of North Miami Beach, which is located in northeast Miami-Dade County, FL. The area was originally a middle-class retirement area with few services for youth and families. The community has changed over the last 20 years to a working-class area populated by a largely Haitian population, and residents have to rely on services provided in other areas of Miami-Dade County. Transportation is an issue, as is the lack of service providers who are familiar with the primary Haitian language, Creole. Local law enforcement reports indicate that the city population is approximately 50 percent Haitian, with undocumented Haitians representing an estimated additional 10 to 15 percent. The city economy is primarily service-oriented without the presence of any major industries.

**Prevention activities** are aimed at the broad at-risk population, with several appropriate activities also available to gang youth being served at the intervention level. The project also is involved in various community awareness activities. A One-Stop Resource Center is operating in the target area. Prevention activities include:

- ◆ Mentoring for youth at risk of gang involvement.
- ◆ Early literacy for Haitian youth.
- ◆ Youth empowerment (life skill classes) and midnight basketball.
- ◆ Strengthening Families Program, focused on parenting skills and reducing substance abuse and behavioral problems in youth ages 10–14.
- ◆ Intensive case management.
- ◆ Alternatives to suspension for middle and high school youth.

- ◆ Truancy interdiction.
- ◆ Developing Intelligent Voices of America (DIVAs) for young women (ages 8–18) to develop social, emotional, and behavioral competence.
- ◆ Man-Up! For young men between the ages of 12–18 to develop social, emotional, and behavioral competence.
- ◆ Increased recreational opportunities for elementary and middle school youth.
- ◆ Self-sufficiency training.

**Intervention activities** are centered on a multidisciplinary team providing intensive case management and street outreach to gang members and their families. Activities include:

- ◆ Substance abuse counseling.
- ◆ On-the-job training.
- ◆ Referrals to community agencies, including counseling and tattoo removal.
- ◆ Six Rounds to Success Boxing Program (mentoring and physical and boxing skills).
- ◆ Community service opportunities.

**Suppression activities** involve additional directed foot and bike patrols in “hot spot” gang-crime areas, identification of gang leaders, and coordination with juvenile probation on gang activity. In partnership with the Gang Reduction Program, the North Miami Beach Police Department created a specialized gang unit, increased gang intelligence gathering, and increased participation with the local Multiagency Gang Task Force.

- Engaging representatives from other communities that have successfully implemented comprehensive models to provide training and guidance on program planning and implementation.
- Attending neighborhood association, chamber of commerce, and other community meetings on a regular basis to hear their ideas on gang programming.

### Highlights From the Field—Planning for Implementation

**Gang Reduction Program.** All GRP projects found that involving individuals from experienced sites was effective in training on implementation activities such as the operation of the multidisciplinary intervention team.

**Richmond, VA.** Richmond invited approximately 100 people to participate on their four working subcommittees broken down into the following groups: prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry. The subcommittees consisted of State and local government, nonprofit, for-profit, faith-based, and community organizations. They determined gaps in community services and made recommendations. Participation by these large groups allowed for greater input from the community and a commitment to seeing the program succeed.

**Los Angeles, CA.** The Los Angeles GRP used the community resource assessment and focus groups to help develop their strategic plan and map out funding levels for each programmatic area of the project.

**Riverside, CA.** Riverside, one of OJJDP's initial demonstration sites, placed emphasis on training steering committee members on the Model and the importance of their roles as decisionmakers and in oversight of the project. An orientation on the project was also implemented for each new steering committee member.

## Implementing the Program

The implementation process is accelerated when the steering committee agencies, the lead agency, and the program director conduct startup and capacity-building activities prior to beginning services. These activities include:

- Developing contracting protocols and/or requests for proposals.
- Developing program policies and procedures.
- Selecting intervention team members.
- Determining what training is needed for key agencies to serve gang-involved youth and how and by whom this training will be conducted.
- Determining sources of clients and referral processes.
- Creating a consent and intake process for clients.
- Determining how outcome data from clients will be collected, stored, and analyzed.
- Developing job descriptions for key personnel.
- Training intervention team members on their roles and responsibilities.

## Maintaining the Steering Committee

The role of the steering committee during program implementation may include:

- Making decisions regarding program changes or expansion.
- Ensuring that the program is responsive to the needs of program clients and the community.
- Ensuring that key agencies continue to participate in and support the program.
- Conducting training and activities to increase community awareness of the program.
- Identifying ways to ensure long-term sustainability.

The members of the steering committee should be champions of the program as a vehicle for change within the community. The chair and/or cochair should be passionate and committed to the program and should work to ensure that the steering committee maintains its momentum.

As the steering committee's role shifts from planning to implementing gang strategies, it may be difficult to keep committee members engaged. Strategies used to maintain effective steering committees have included:

- Holding meetings consistently at a regular time/date.
- Developing a newsletter for program partners.
- Engaging steering committee members in gang awareness education and community mobilization activities.
- Identifying an active and committed chairperson with positive visibility in the community.
- Providing a formal orientation process for new members.
- Holding annual retreats to identify future activities and reinvigorate the group.
- Making personal contact with all members periodically (program director).
- Acknowledging members' key contributions.
- Providing members with written materials and reports on program activities in advance of meetings.

- Using meeting time productively—not to report on activities, but for decisionmaking.

It is also the role of the steering committee to plan for sustaining the program. Sustainability planning should begin during the assessment and planning phase and continue throughout the life of collaboration. Ideally, the implementation plan developed during the initial planning stage should include goals related to sustainability, such as ensuring ongoing data collection and analysis for the purpose of self-evaluation.

In FY 2008, OJJDP pilot tested two faith-based and community organization sustainability training events. (Information from these trainings is available on the OJJDP Web site.) Any program targeting children, youth, or families must be able to sustain efforts over time. Failure to sustain a program may do harm—it might inhibit personal action or reaffirm the notion that no one is willing to make a long term commitment to the child or the community.

As partners come on board, they should be asked what they plan on doing to sustain their involvement for the long term and whether they can help other partners do the same. In Richmond, VA, OJJDP partnered with the

## ■ ■ ■ OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model

### Core Strategy: Provision of Opportunities

#### Critical Elements

- ◆ The community, through an appointed steering committee, develops a variety of educational, training, and employment programs or services targeted to gang youth and those at high risk of gang involvement.
- ◆ Special access to social and economic opportunities in the community is provided for gang-involved youth and youth at high risk of gang involvement.
- ◆ Opportunities and services are provided in such a way that they do not encapsulate, segregate, or alienate gang youth or those at high risk from mainstream institutions.
- ◆ Mechanisms for identifying and addressing youth at risk of gang involvement are in place in the elementary, middle, and high schools within the targeted area(s).
- ◆ Education, training, and job opportunity strategies are integrated with those of social services, particularly youth outreach work, along with close supervision and social control, as necessary.
- ◆ Local residents and businesses are supportive and involved in the provision of educational and training opportunities and job contacts for targeted gang youth and those at high risk.
- ◆ Access to social opportunities also is provided to other gang members and associates of targeted youth.

Virginia Attorney General and the Mayor of Richmond to hold a public education campaign for local organizations that support local programming and social services. The event brought partners together with funders and individuals with access to a wide variety of resources. While OJJDP did not play any role in matching partners' needs to resources, this sort of public education often has that effect. Partners should consider how they will keep their communities aware of their work and of their needs.

New members should be trained prior to attending steering committee meetings. Providing orientation to new members is vital to ensuring that the multidisciplinary gang program remains true to identified problems and long-term goals. This orientation should include providing new members with copies of the assessment, the implementation plan, and an overview of current activities.

Other ways to keep stakeholders engaged in the steering committee include:

- Holding periodic elections for chair and/or cochair.
- Conducting refresher training on program goals and the program model.
- Ensuring that regular steering committee attendance is addressed in MOUs between the key agencies.
- Directing contacts by the chair and/or cochair(s) with key agencies that are not regularly participating.

Elections and subsequent turnover in political offices can affect the steering committee. Agency responsibilities may shift under new administrations. Changes in political leadership may also mean shifts in programmatic and funding priorities. OJJDP encountered this situation in both Los Angeles and Richmond. From the outset, the OJJDP administrator supported addressing as early as possible the leadership issue, both on the community and political level. Both Los Angeles and Richmond leadership were told that they had to agree up front to do business differently in the pilot areas and to recognize and accept

that by focusing on a particular area the project would probably have some impact on surrounding areas. This is because gangs will respond to increased attention in the pilot area by moving away. Leaders must also accept that funding was limited to filling gaps in existing programs and not creating new "mouths" to feed. Leaders also committed to develop ways to sustain what they built during the program with their own funds or private community resources.

These discussions took substantial time and required high-level involvement. In Los Angeles, the police and mayor had significant input about whether to accept the funding under the conditions offered, and the city council weighed in and considered the issue for nearly 4 months.

Having existing MOUs or written agreements can help these multidisciplinary programs remain a priority despite changes in administration. Other activities that have been shown to be helpful in maintaining momentum include:

- Ongoing data collection.
- Self-evaluation to show program success.
- Regular reporting on outcomes to steering committee members and elected officials.
- Recognition of the achievements of individual clients.
- Regular awards ceremonies to highlight the contributions of key individuals and agencies and the accomplishments of program clients.
- Regular briefings by program staff to key agencies and elected officials.

Planning for personnel and leadership changes must be part of any long-term endeavor. One of the most important reasons for continuing any program or effort is if it saves money or effectively leverages limited resources. No one will end programs that can document that they are saving taxpayer dollars and increasing public safety.

### Highlights From the Field—Maintaining the Steering Committee

**Riverside, CA.** During implementation, many steering committee members stopped attending meetings because they did not feel they were needed at the table after the planning stage. The project director held face-to-face meetings with former and current members to provide current information about the project and their role.

**Pittsburgh, PA.** Steering committee members were provided a packet of meeting materials prior to meetings to ensure that time was not wasted during the meeting. The steering committee chair ensured that the meeting time was reserved for substantive issues impacting the project.

**Richmond, VA.** Staff are extremely dedicated to maintaining and growing partnerships. In addition, staff receive requests from organizations and persons who wish to become involved in the collaborative partnership.

### The Intervention Team

The intervention team is a primary component of the comprehensive approach. The steering committee should determine the composition of this team and assign representatives to serve on it. Because the intervention team brings together individuals from disparate disciplines and experiences, building a functional team is probably the most complex aspect of the model.

The intervention team:

- Identifies appropriate youth/clients/individuals for this program.
- Engages these people to work with the team.
- Assesses them on an individual basis to determine their needs, goals, and issues.
- Develops an individualized intervention plan for each client.

## OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model

### Core Strategy: Social Intervention Critical Elements

- ◆ Youth-serving agencies, schools, grassroots groups, faith-based and other organizations provide social services to gang youth and youth at high risk of gang involvement as identified through street outreach and driven by the problem assessment findings.
- ◆ Social intervention is directed to the target youth individually and not primarily to the gang as a unit, although understanding and sensitivity to gang structure and “system” are essential to influencing individual gang youth and providing effective intervention.
- ◆ All key organizations located in the target area are encouraged to make needed services and facilities available to gang youth and youth at high risk of gang involvement.
- ◆ Targeted youth (and their families) are provided with a variety of services that assist them to adopt prosocial values and to access services that will meet their social, educational, and vocational needs. Mental health services are a critical ingredient.
- ◆ Street outreach is established to focus on core gang youth and later on high-risk youth, with special capacity to reach both nonadjudicated and adjudicated youth.
- ◆ The primary focus of street outreach services is ensuring safety while remaining aware of and linking youth and families to educational preparation, prevocational or vocational training, job development, job referral, parent training, mentoring, family counseling, drug treatment, tattoo removal, and other services in appropriate ways.
- ◆ Outreach activities such as recreation and arts are carefully arranged so as not to become a primary focus but a means to establish interpersonal relationships, develop trust, and provide access to opportunities and other essential resources or services.
- ◆ In-school and afterschool prevention and education programs such as Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.), anti-bullying, peer mediation, tutoring, and others are offered within the target area(s), as are community programs to educate parents, businesses, and service providers.

- Ensures that multiple services in the individualized intervention plan are integrated.

The team should work together to determine whether referred individuals are appropriate for their services and then work as a team to serve these clients.

Key agencies should quantify and clarify their participation on the intervention team through MOUs (previously discussed under steering committee). These memorandums should address information sharing/confidentiality issues, the role each member will play in the team, the member's participation level on the team, and other responsibilities the member's agency may have in intervention team activities.

At a minimum, the following key agencies that are crucial to an effective intervention team should be represented on the team:

- Law enforcement representatives involved in gang investigation and enforcement.
- Juvenile and adult probation/parole officers who will have frequent contact with program clients.
- School officials who can access student educational data for program clients and leverage educational services.
- Appropriate social service and/or mental health providers who can leverage services and provide outcome information to the team.
- A representative who can assist in preparing program clients for employment and find them jobs.
- Outreach workers who can directly connect to program clients on the street, in their homes, or at school.

Other agencies may be asked to participate on an as-needed basis, including faith-based organizations, recreational programs, community development organizations, and grassroots organizations.

Based on data collected during the assessment process, screening criteria for clients should be regulated by the

steering committee. The screening criteria are designed to help the team narrow down possible referrals to ensure that they serve the most appropriate clients for gang intervention. Items to consider when developing target criteria include a demographic profile from police incident reports, an aggregate demographic profile of known gang members from gang intelligence files, and information collected from student surveys and school data. The screening criteria should be strictly adhered to; otherwise, the program risks losing its desired focus and effect.

The intervention team should develop protocols for client intake assessments, obtaining consent/releases to serve clients, and sharing information across agency boundaries.

Sharing data across service areas and with law enforcement raises many issues. Successful efforts are characterized by solid relationships, clear protocols, and a commitment that information sharing is done to help individuals and not law enforcement. Other data and information sharing protocols already exist for law enforcement purposes, and judicial warrants are always available in the appropriate case.

## Outreach Staff

The outreach component of this model is critical to program success. An outreach worker's primary role is to build relationships with program clients and with other gang-involved youth in the community. Outreach workers typically work in the community, connecting with hard-to-serve youth. These workers often constitute the primary recruitment tool for the program and serve an important role in delivering services. Outreach workers are the intervention team's eyes and ears on the street, giving the team perspective on the personal aspects of gang conflicts and violence and how these affect the team's clients. In addition to relationship building, outreach workers' responsibilities include:

- Identifying appropriate clients and recruiting them for the program.



## Highlights From the Field—Intervention Team

**Richmond, VA.** At the beginning of the GRP project, the project coordinator recognized that many organizations had come together on the team that were not used to sharing information or strategizing together. Professional bonds and the ability to communicate across agencies have been strengthened through the collaborative process, which resulted in the free exchange of information between organizations. The project has recognized and responded to the growing Hispanic population of the target area by providing culturally appropriate activities to that population. The Richmond intervention team has recommended funding for more than 50 programs, many of which can be used as referral sources to the intervention team.

**Los Angeles, CA.** Establishing policies and procedures, such as an information sharing protocol, helped to clearly define members' roles and boundaries, which facilitated the team's functioning. Establishing individual relationships among team

members by participating in team trainings and team retreats helps build rapport and trust among members, which in turn helps the functioning of the entire team.

**Riverside, CA.** Information shared by outreach workers and probation during intervention team meetings helped provide missing links in investigations or follow-up with cases. The team also worked together to identify gaps in services and participated in joint staff training that focused on how to work effectively with gang-involved youth.

**Pittsburgh, PA.** The team was able to bring together representatives from law enforcement, probation, and outreach, along with school representatives, from agencies that had a long history of distrust and hostility. The relationships of mutual respect established by the intervention team led to widespread support among participating agencies.

- Identifying youths' needs and goals to help the team develop a more comprehensive intervention plan.
- Coaching and providing role models for each youth.
- Coordinating appropriate crisis responses to program clients following violent episodes in the community.
- Providing assistance to families in distress, ranging from accessing basic needs to helping resolve family conflicts.
- Visiting clients who are incarcerated and helping to reconnect them to services when they are released from custody.
- Resolving conflicts and/or mediating between clients, their families, other youth, and/or agencies.
- Acting as a liaison between program clients and service providers/schools to facilitate client access to services.
- Working with clients who are seeking employment, from helping these youth develop résumés, to

identifying their skills and qualifications, to helping them apply for jobs or work with workforce services programs.

- Conducting gang awareness presentations in schools.

Developing written job descriptions for outreach staff helps ensure that all parties are aware of the role of outreach workers within the team and the community. Some programs have hired former gang members. The rationale behind hiring individuals with previous gang connections is their perceived ability to gain street credibility. However, these previous ties may cause strained relationships between the outreach workers and other partners such as schools, law enforcement agencies, and other criminal justice entities. One option to ensure that outreach workers have street credibility is to hire individuals from the target community who do not have gang ties. If programs hire former gang members, it is extremely important that local law enforcement vet these hires to ensure that the prospective outreach workers' gang ties are indeed broken. Further, outreach workers need to understand that their conduct in the community must be

**TABLE 2: Comparison of Advantages and Disadvantages of Internal Versus Contract Outreach**

| Lead Agency                                  | Advantages   | Disadvantages  |
|--|--|--|
| Outreach Staff Employed by Lead Agency       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater control and accountability over the job performance of outreach workers</li><li>• Opportunities for intensive professional development</li></ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Many lead agencies may resist hiring individuals who have a criminal history</li><li>• Outreach workers must maintain boundaries to avoid being considered police informants</li><li>• Outreach workers may not have a strong connection to the community, and it may take time to develop these connections</li></ul> |
| Outreach Staff Employed by Contracted Entity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Often have a long-standing history working with high-risk populations in the community</li><li>• May have an existing client base that can be leveraged for this program</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Steering committee and/or lead agency may have less control over the job performance of outreach workers</li></ul>   |

above reproach, or else the entire program’s integrity can be compromised. Agencies that hire former gang members need to monitor these employees’ behavior on and off the job to ensure that they stay true to their mission in the program.

Outreach workers may be employed by the lead agency, or the steering committee may contract outreach services from an existing program. Table 2 illustrates the pros and cons to both of these approaches.

Almost all communities that have implemented comprehensive initiatives have found that intensive professional development will likely be needed. Most skilled outreach workers have excellent relationship-building skills with youth, as well as indepth knowledge of the community and the youth who live there. However, outreach workers may have difficulty interacting with partners from other disciplines and navigating the educational and/or criminal justice systems. Outreach workers will likely need training on administrative requirements of the job, such as managing a caseload, maintaining appropriate professional boundaries with clients, communicating effectively, and documenting client contacts.

Building trust between street outreach workers and law enforcement officers must begin with the first meeting of the team. Outreach workers must understand that they are not police officers and should be discouraged from riding in police vehicles, attending meetings in police stations, or carrying police radios. Whether he or she has had prior law enforcement experience or has a concealed carry permit, an outreach worker cannot carry weapons on his person or in his or her vehicle. Similarly, law enforcement officers need to understand that the outreach worker is not a police informant. With the exception of information that could prevent bodily harm, law enforcement should not expect street outreach workers to provide police officers with gang intelligence.

Outreach worker turnover can affect the program’s process. Program staff should develop a contingency plan when an outreach worker position is vacant to ensure that client services are not disrupted and that client referrals are processed according to program policies. Projects that do not have a contingency plan will experience difficulty maintaining contact with active intervention clients and will have a waiting list for referrals.

### Highlights From the Field—Outreach Staff

**Los Angeles, CA.** The Los Angeles GRP outreach provider provided a “one-stop shop” for job training and preparation, job placement, counseling, and case management. The outreach provider also partnered with the mentoring program working with prevention clients to complete a mural project. Successful intervention clients spoke to prevention clients about their experiences and ways to avoid similar pitfalls.

**Richmond, VA.** Richmond partnered with the high school located in the target area that was experiencing behavioral challenges with at-risk and gang-involved youth. The school allowed Richmond staff to conduct meetings and bring resources directly to the school. These resources included the outreach workers and mentors. Richmond staff’s involvement in the school has led to ongoing conversations with State and private organizations to bring a free health clinic directly into the high school.

**North Miami Beach, FL.** Outreach staff in North Miami Beach were selected based on their professional experience and their ability to work with the Haitian population, the program’s primary target population. In addition to staff being bilingual and having experience working with the Haitian population, they also provide support and education to program clients by facilitating participant self-help groups.

**Pittsburgh, PA, and Houston, TX.** Outreach workers for the Gang-Free Schools programs in Pittsburgh and Houston worked with law enforcement and school representatives to identify potentially volatile situations following violent incidents in the community, and to keep the peace on school campuses in the target area. Outreach workers routinely were involved in mediations between rival gangs in the target area and counseling with program clients.

**Miami-Dade, FL.** Outreach staff from the Miami-Dade Gang-Free Schools project identified families of program clients that were in need of food and basic assistance and built relationships with these families by providing gift baskets at the holidays and ongoing food delivery.

## Law Enforcement Personnel

The selection of law enforcement personnel is crucial to the success of the program. Law enforcement officers selected to work with the program should have:

- A strong connection with the community and the ability to build trusting relationships with community members, outreach workers, and other intervention team members.
- A clear understanding of the gang culture.
- The ability to communicate effectively with gang members.
- An understanding of the need for a comprehensive approach to address the gang problem.
- The respect of their peers, which may have a positive impact on the entire agency’s perception of the program.

Program staff may face significant challenges initially engaging law enforcement in the program. There may be historical distrust between law enforcement and other program partners. Staff may have to use unconventional strategies to initially engage law enforcement, such as providing overtime pay to conduct gang-crime analysis and to target and expand suppression strategies, recognizing their participation, and bestowing awards.

Consistent representation from law enforcement agencies is crucial to program success. This ensures that officers understand their roles, are familiar with program clients, and have established relationships with program partners. Some programs found that establishing a periodic rotation for law enforcement representatives gave the program greater exposure within law enforcement agencies, resulting in an improvement in the agency’s understanding and attitudes toward the program.

### Highlights From the Field—Law Enforcement Personnel

**Los Angeles, CA.** The Los Angeles GRP partnered with the Los Angeles Police Department CLEAR suppression program to participate on the intervention team. The project developed a simplified referral system using a “ticket book” for street patrol officers to make referrals to the project for youth and their families.

**Richmond, VA.** The Richmond GRP intervention team included sector patrol officers and gang unit representatives. The project partnered with the police department as they initiated a new gang unit by providing equipment, gang member tracking

software, and arranging technical assistance from existing gang units in other communities to provide feedback and consultation. They supported overtime for directed patrol in high-risk areas of the target community.

**Miami-Dade, FL.** Using information provided by the intervention team, gang enforcement officers in the Miami-Dade Gang-Free Schools project adjusted schedules and officer coverage to address immediate gang-related issues in the community. As a result, gang incidents dropped substantially on and around school campuses in the target area.

## The Comprehensive Gang Model in Action— OJJDP’s Gang Reduction Program Milwaukee, Wisconsin

In 2004, the Milwaukee Gang Reduction Program was launched in the target area comprising three neighborhoods located in the central area of the city: Metcalfe Park, Midtown, and Amani. The area is economically depressed, with high unemployment and school dropout rates, and has a history of gang crime and violence, including Chicago-influenced gangs. Several middle and elementary schools, including two charter schools, are located in the communities; however, many of the area students do not attend public school in the target area.

**Prevention activities** were a priority for the Milwaukee program, given the population and nature of the target area. Activities included:

- ◆ “Finding Paths to Prosperity”—a primary prevention program that included financial literacy.
- ◆ Truancy intervention.
- ◆ “Positive Alternatives to Violence”—afterschool career development program.
- ◆ Vocational life skills for youth ages 12–17 at risk of gang involvement.
- ◆ Parental support (first-time single mothers).
- ◆ Subsidized youth employment.
- ◆ Family empowerment program to help families with high-risk youth access health care.
- ◆ Behavioral health program targeted at youth with signs of early delinquency.
- ◆ Community mobilization to direct residents to programs.

**Intervention and reentry activities** were centered on a multidisciplinary team approach to case management for gang members. Street outreach was provided to recruit and support youth assigned to the team. The “Wrap-around Milwaukee” model, an identified best practice, was used to establish a service-vouchering system to support the multidisciplinary intervention team’s services to clients. Service vouchers were available for training, counseling, skills training, or other identified needs that promote and support self-sufficiency, including job training and placement and related concerns—such as tattoo removal and work attire—for gang members and those returning to the community from confinement.

**Suppression activities** were coordinated and tracked through a community prosecutor with the Milwaukee County District Attorney’s Office and the Milwaukee Police Department officers assigned to the project. The community prosecutor coordinated prosecution decisions regarding gang-related and other crime and abatement procedures aimed at reducing crime. The community prosecutor also coordinated a suppression team that targets gang leaders and habitually violent offenders for suppression activities. The Milwaukee Gang Reduction Program supported an information system with assistance from the local High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area to assist community prosecution in compiling and sharing gang intelligence among the local police district, the police department’s gang intelligence unit, and other levels of local law enforcement.

The Milwaukee site ceased operations in spring 2007.

## Selecting Program Activities

Selecting the appropriate program activities is an important step to ensure program goals are achieved. Activities fall into four general categories—intervention, prevention, suppression, and reentry.

### Intervention Activities

The intervention team, especially the outreach workers, is a primary service-delivery mechanism in this comprehensive approach. Some best practices include the following:

- Intervention team members should review each client at referral; obtain consents to serve the client; perform an intake evaluation (one or more members can be assigned to this task); and then, as a team, discuss the client's needs and issues and brainstorm together to create an appropriate intervention plan for each client.
- If referrals to services at specific agencies will be made by the team, the agency receiving the referral needs to follow up with the team to provide updated information on the client's behavior and participation. Service providers need to be readily accessible and culturally competent and should regularly participate in intervention team meetings to ensure that they can provide client status updates and are aware of client service needs.
- Types of services that most teams will need to provide include employment assistance, vocational training, remedial/alternative education assistance, group counseling, individual counseling, substance abuse services, mentoring, and services for families (such as support groups and/or parenting classes).
- It is important to clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of each member of the team, as well as rules about information sharing prior to accepting clients.
- Setting a consistent meeting place, time, and day of the week will help to ensure regular participation by

key agencies. Another strategy to ensure that the meeting does not go past the scheduled end time is to establish a client rotation schedule.

### Highlights From the Field—Intervention Activities

**Richmond, VA.** *The most successful programs were those that were either offered directly in the target area or where transportation was provided. Even though Richmond has public transportation, the community readily engaged with groups that brought services to them. An example is the One-Stop Resource Center, which is located in the middle of an apartment complex with more than 4,000 residents. Many of Richmond's programs are housed in the center, including a free health clinic and computer lab for area youth.*

**Los Angeles, CA.** *The GRP program's outreach provider is a well-respected and established service provider within the target community. The provider offers the majority of the project's intervention services, including job readiness, job placement, counseling, and case management services.*

**Riverside, CA.** *The intervention team created services that did not exist previously. They established a job training program for clients that covered topics such as how to fill out job applications, how to conduct an interview, and appropriate interpersonal skills on the job site.*

**Houston, TX.** *Good communication and trust building with clients and their families were the biggest factors to successfully targeting gang members and at-risk youth. Providing the services directly and through referrals to other agencies showed the clients that the project staff were serious about offering help.*

**Miami-Dade, FL.** *Miami-Dade created an on-the-job training program by partnering with a local home-builder. With the assistance of school personnel and outreach staff, this program provided an incentive to engage youth from the target area in gaining needed job skills, improving social interactions, and boosting school attendance.*

### Prevention Activities

Even if their initial strategies did not include prevention, most comprehensive gang programs have eventually incorporated prevention programming. These prevention



strategies should have a direct connection to the problems identified in the assessment process (and through ongoing data collection) and also should be specific to gang issues to accomplish the desired effect of reducing gang violence. Primary prevention strategies focus on the entire population in communities. Secondary prevention strategies are activities and services targeted to youth ages 7–14 who are at high risk of joining gangs.

Primary prevention activities undertaken by these initiatives have included conducting workshops and trainings to increase community awareness about gangs, hosting communitywide events, and working to change conditions contributing to gang involvement within the targeted community. Targeted prevention activities successfully utilized by these types of initiatives have included tutoring, mentoring, and afterschool care.

Secondary prevention programming is often focused on the families, siblings, or associates of intervention clients. The steering committee may also identify the need to increase access to secondary prevention programming or to expand the types of services available after program implementation begins as a result of gaps in services, extended service waiting periods, and changes in community dynamics. To avoid duplication, a survey of existing resources should be undertaken to identify available prevention activities and services.

Just as with intervention programming, both primary and secondary prevention service providers must understand the gang culture and possess experience working with at-risk youth and their families.

## OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model

### Core Strategy: Suppression

#### Critical Elements

- ◆ There are formal and informal social control procedures and accountability measures, including close supervision or monitoring of gang youth by agencies of the criminal and juvenile justice systems, and also by community-based agencies, schools, and grassroots groups.
- ◆ Gang suppression or control is structurally related to community- and problem-oriented policing and to gang enforcement and tactical units.
- ◆ Police administration and police officers on the intervention team assume key roles in the development and implementation of important aspects of the program, not only through suppression but through gang prevention, social intervention, and community mobilization.
- ◆ Gang crime data collection and analysis (i.e., crime analysis) are established to accurately and reliably assess the gang problem and its changes over time. Definitions of gang-related incidents, gangs, and gang members are maintained. Gang intelligence is routinely collected and analyzed. It is also highly desirable to have gang crime data geo-coded and analyzed, preferably using automated “hotspot” mapping techniques.
- ◆ Police contact with targeted youth is regularly and appropriately quantified, shared, and discussed with other members of the intervention team for purposes of team planning and collaboration. Contacts should be generally consistent with the philosophy of community and problem-oriented policing.
- ◆ Aggregate-level data bearing on the gang problem are regularly shared with all components of the project, particularly the steering committee.
- ◆ Professional respect and appropriate collaboration between police and outreach workers and other team members are essential.
- ◆ Tactical, patrol, drug/vice, community policing, and youth division units that have contact with targeted youth and gang members provide support to the intervention team through information sharing and mutual collaboration and support.
- ◆ Targeted enforcement operations, when and where necessary, are consistent with program goals and are coordinated with the intervention team to have the maximum impact.



## Highlights From the Field—Prevention Activities

**Richmond, VA.** Through meetings with community representatives, project staff learned that there was a need for a number of programs that ultimately led to the funding of more than 50 programs. For example, community members identified the need for longer afterschool hours and options for summer activities. The project expanded their partnership with Boys and Girls Clubs, and also entered into a partnership with the faith-based Richmond Outreach Center to provide additional activities and longer hours. A viable One-Stop Office has been a key part of integrating services to clients. The ability of the Office of the Attorney General to reach out to all partners and successfully communicate the overall goals of the project has contributed to successfully integrating services for clients.

**Miami-Dade, FL.** The main prevention efforts were a direct response to a student survey that asked students what would keep them from getting involved in gang activities. The response was “something to do or a job.” The project designed an on-the-job training program that has been a main draw for students. The greatest success of the on-the-job training component of the project was the resulting level of pride and commitment that the youth showed while participating in the program. This component provides long-term effects and knowledge that the youth can use for career advancement and entrepreneurship.

**Houston, TX.** Gang awareness presentations resulted in more calls from residents to report suspected gang-related crime according to reports from police.

## Suppression/Social Control Activities

Suppression in these comprehensive programs goes beyond law enforcement activities. Ideally, all program partners work together to hold the targeted youth accountable when necessary. Law enforcement’s role in these programs includes:

- Ongoing crime data analysis.
- A high level of information sharing between agencies and across disciplines.
- Participation in the intervention team and steering committee.

- Suppression activities tailored to address specific gang-related problems.
- Apprising other intervention team members of unsafe situations.

Gang crime data should drive gang suppression strategies used in the target community and should also be responsive to the local community, the intervention team, and the steering committee. These strategies should be viewed as part of a larger whole, rather than as singular, one-time-only activities.

Some examples of successful suppression strategies include:

- Participating in joint police/probation activities, including conducting probation searches of the homes and vehicles of gang-involved probationers.
- Targeting enforcement to the times, places, and events where data analysis and historic gang enforcement patterns indicate gangs are active.
- Designing investigative strategies to address specific gang-related crimes.
- Executing directed patrols of locations where gang members congregate.
- Conducting community forums to address incidents.
- Establishing community prosecution and/or vertical prosecution strategies to prosecute gang crime more effectively.
- Making informal contacts with targeted youth and their families.

Program partners should work together with law enforcement to enforce community norms for youth behavior. These activities may be used in concert with suppression strategies to address less serious antisocial, gang-related behavior. Examples of ways that other partner agencies can assist with suppressing gang activity include:

- Use of in- and out-of-school suspensions, when needed.
- Tracking and reporting of attendance/grades.
- Tracking of program participation.
- Being aware of and supporting conditions of probation/parole.
- Reinforcing program requirements and supporting other programs' rules.

In the best programs, suppression is integrated with services. Even outreach workers play a significant role in addressing negative behaviors with program clients and requiring accountability.

## Reentry Activities

Reentry within these comprehensive programs is often handled as an overlapping function with intervention. Because gang-involved individuals are almost constantly entering or leaving one system or another, and because

many of them are frequently incarcerated for brief periods of time, intervention clients are generally served during incarceration through regular contacts and pre-release planning.

Program staff should develop a policy for serving clients who become incarcerated during the program. The length and location of incarceration may affect the program's ability to maintain contact and services to a client. In general, clients serving sentences of less than 6 months to 1 year should receive at least monthly contacts from outreach workers or other team members—face-to-face or by e-mail or telephone. The intervention team may consider closing the cases of clients serving long-term sentences, but it should remember that any contact with a client during incarceration may have a positive impact.

Beyond maintaining intervention clients, it is recommended that the program be aware of the influence of incarcerated gang members returning to the community and develop policies to address these individuals. For instance, the program may want to establish a relationship

### Highlights From the Field—Suppression/Social Control Activities

**Richmond, VA.** The directed patrol program used crime statistics and crime data logs to determine high crime days and times in the target area. Additional foot, bicycle, motorcycle, and walking officers were added during those times. This resulted in a significant decrease in crime during those periods. During the funded periods, Richmond dropped from being the 5th most dangerous city to the 15th. More recently, it has dropped to 29th.

**Riverside, CA.** Any proposed suppression strategies were discussed at the intervention team meeting and brought to the attention of the steering committee for their guidance and approval.

**North Miami Beach, FL.** North Miami Beach partnered with the local police department to implement directed patrols and the continuation of a truancy interdiction program.

**Houston, TX.** The law enforcement and criminal justice partnership assisted in providing more visibility and presence of gang unit officers to deter youth on probation from committing more crimes. The police improved their gang intelligence process through getting to know youth and families on a personal level and interaction with other criminal justice agencies. This strategy also helped prevent gang shootings or fights around schools and parks. Police initially started out with a "suppression only" mentality, but soon understood the benefits of establishing a relationship with gang members that would then lead to information that could help solve or prevent crimes.

**Miami-Dade, FL.** Changes were made to the field interview cards officers used to more effectively capture gang information and gang crime data. This change was a result of the direction of the steering committee's leadership and their commitment to communicate with law enforcement.

with probation/parole authorities, and also with corrections personnel, to identify gang members who are due to be released. Outreach staff can visit these inmates prior to release to help develop a supportive plan for their return to the community and to recruit them into the program.

Common needs for clients reentering the community include housing, drug and alcohol treatment, and job training and placement. Especially critical are job training and placement opportunities for convicted offenders, and programs should consider ways to make these opportunities economically feasible for both intervention and reentry clients. Transportation assistance that addresses safety issues for these clients is also important.

Probation/parole representatives who serve on the intervention team can also ensure that clients receive needed services and supervision. Probation and parole officers are familiar with reentry services within the community and can educate the team members on available services. Programs may want to augment existing services in communities where reentry programs are inadequate for the target population or are scarce.

### **Highlights From the Field—Reentry Activities**

**Houston, TX.** Outreach workers in Houston maintained regular contact with incarcerated clients, and developed prerelease case management plans to help individuals transition back into the community.

**Richmond, VA.** Richmond funds two programs with two agencies to provide offender reentry programs to inmates prior to release back into the community. These programs help incarcerated youth deal with issues such as completion of high school education, drug and alcohol abuse, and family and parenting issues. In addition, Richmond has partnered with faith-based programs that offer residential programs for reentering offenders.

## **Sustaining the Program**

Programs should begin planning for long-term sustainability during the initial stages of implementation. Programs that were sustained long-term had two key practices. First, they standardized and institutionalized data collection to show program outcomes. Access to these data was invaluable for leveraging funds and resources. Second, these programs utilized strong and engaged steering committees that shared ownership and responsibility for the programs among the key agencies. The importance of these two factors in sustaining multi-agency programs cannot be overstated.

Other successful strategies included:

- Participating in statewide efforts to further develop anti-gang strategies backed by Federal and State funds. Programs that can demonstrate positive outcomes and that have a good reputation in the target community are more likely to be funded as a part of larger efforts.
- Seeking the local business community's support for specific elements of the program such as the intervention team, outreach staff, or specific prevention programs.
- Pursuing commitments from key agencies to dedicate staff time to the project prior to implementation through the use of MOUs or letters of commitment.
- Leveraging funds from other agencies or planning for the program to be absorbed within an established agency.
- Requiring sustainability planning from contracted agencies. This may enable program partners to identify resources to sustain that element of the program after the original funding expires.

## Table 4: Timeline for Implementing a Comprehensive Gang Program

This timeline provides a general idea of the activities in each phase and, based on experiences of other comprehensive projects, the approximate length of time it takes to complete the activities in each phase. Each community's administrative structure and practices, community politics, and community readiness will dictate the actual length of each phase.

### Assessment and Planning (6–12 months)

- ◆ Identify key stake holders.
- ◆ Form a steering committee.
- ◆ Establish gang definitions.
- ◆ Hire a project coordinator.
- ◆ Solicit a research partner.
- ◆ Conduct a comprehensive community assessment (including the community resource inventory).

### Capacity Building (3–6 months)

- ◆ Complete the contract procurement process for program services.
- ◆ Develop program policies and procedures.
- ◆ Advertise, hire, and train new staff to provide services.
- ◆ Develop a client referral and recruitment process.
- ◆ Select intervention team members.
- ◆ Conduct intervention team training.

- ◆ Provide gang awareness training to project service providers.
- ◆ Develop a community resource referral and feedback process.
- ◆ Develop a program referral process.
- ◆ Train project partners on the project referral process.
- ◆ Develop a data collection and analysis system.

### Full Implementation (12–18 months)

- ◆ Initiate program services.
- ◆ Initiate client referral process.
- ◆ Begin client intake process for prevention and intervention clients.
- ◆ Begin conducting client reviews during intervention team meetings.
- ◆ Begin providing focused suppression efforts.
- ◆ Begin conducting community prevention activities.
- ◆ Reach program caseload capacity.

See table 4 for a timeline that provides a general idea of the activities in each phase and, based on experiences of other comprehensive projects, the approximate length of time it takes to complete the activities in each phase. Each community's administrative structure and practices, community politics, and community readiness will dictate the actual length of each phase.

See "Implementation Tools" for a list of publications, tools, and other resources to help communities assess

their gang problems, develop implementation plans for addressing gang problems and establish intervention teams, plan strategies for reaching out to and intervening to change the risky behaviors of gang-involved youth, and develop management information systems for capturing program referral and individual client and contact data. Many of these resources can be customized for individual communities.

## Highlights From the Field—Sustaining the Program

**Los Angeles, CA.** The mayor has identified six additional zones to implement the comprehensive anti-gang model. The mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development was created and a deputy mayor was chosen to oversee the city's gang prevention, intervention, and reentry efforts.

**Richmond, VA.** Richmond has hosted meetings on sustainability for its service providers in partnership with the Department of Justice. Most of the organizations providing services through funding have agreed to sustain their programs beyond the funded period. Richmond's staff is committed to seeking out private and foundation funding to continue to

sustain other programs as needed. Richmond has also been asked to share the OJJDP Model with other jurisdictions across the Virginia Commonwealth.

**North Miami Beach, FL.** North Miami Beach incorporated as a nonprofit entity after Federal funds were exhausted. Incorporating as a nonprofit allows the project to apply for grants they would not have been eligible for under a state agency.

**Miami-Dade, FL.** The strong level of support for the project from agencies on the steering committee led to the project being sustained by existing agencies once Federal funding was exhausted.

## Implementation Tools

**A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem** contains a blueprint for conducting an indepth assessment of the gang problem in the community and tools for the assessment process. It describes the data variables, sources of data, and data-collection instruments. It also provides suggestions on how to organize and analyze the data and guidelines for preparation of an assessment report that will present the results of the data-collection effort. For users' convenience, individual chapters or the entire document can be downloaded at <http://www.iir.com/nygclacgp/assessment.htm>.

**Planning for Implementation** provides a guide to development of an implementation plan for comprehensive gang programs. It also describes the work of an intervention team, including street outreach workers' roles. For users' convenience, individual chapters or the entire document can be downloaded at <http://www.iir.com/nygclacgp/implementation.htm>.

**Strategic Planning Tool**—This electronic tool was developed to assist in assessing a community's gang problem and planning strategies to deal with it and can be found at [www.iir.com/nygc/tool](http://www.iir.com/nygc/tool). The tool has four interrelated components. The "Planning and Implementation," "Risk Factors," and "Program Matrix" components provide

information for all communities, but the "Community Resource Inventory" component can be customized for any community.

**Helping America's Youth Community Guide**—This Community Guide steers community representatives through key steps in forming partnerships and in providing customized strategic planning tools and informational resources to enhance youth serving efforts. It provides information about programs that successfully deal with risky behaviors and can be found at <http://guide.helpingamericasyouth.gov/programtool.cfm>. Programs can replicate these strategies to meet their local needs. The Program Tool database contains risk factors, protective factors, and programs that have been evaluated and found to work.

**Client Track**—This free management information system was developed by the National Youth Gang Center to assist comprehensive programs with capturing client and referral data. The Access-based database captures program referral information, individual client data (including a detailed intake assessment), program service data, contacts with clients by length and agency, and intervention plans. It is available on compact disc upon request from the National Youth Gang Center.





## Notes



1. The five survey questions were: (1) What are your units' or organizations' goals and objectives in regard to the gang problem? (2) What has your department (or unit) done that you feel has been particularly successful in dealing with gangs? (3) What has your department (or unit) done that you feel has been least effective in dealing with gangs? (4) What do you think are the five best ways of dealing with the gang problem that are employed by your department or organization? and, (5) What activities do gang or special personnel perform in dealing with the problem?

2. Individuals and collective factors were identified as having community mobilization as a strategy based on their use of one or more goals and/or activities from a list of options in Spergel's research that led to formulation of the Comprehensive Gang Model. For example, any strategy that attempted to create community solidarity, education, and involvement was viewed as

using community mobilization strategies. Prevention efforts involving multiple agencies were treated as community mobilization. All references to meetings with community leaders and attending meetings of community associations were regarded as reflecting a community organization strategy.

Networking was considered the most basic community mobilization strategy as long as networks were not restricted exclusively to justice system agencies. Creating networks of law enforcement agencies only was classified as another strategy: suppression. Advocacy for victims was subsumed under the community mobilization strategy when the programs attempted to integrate offenders back into the community or to repair relations between victims and offenders. Victim advocacy was labeled suppression when the program was clearly a strategy of crime control.





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## Appendix A:

# Demonstration and Testing of the Comprehensive Gang Model



**T**hroughout the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Gang Model, OJJDP has attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of the Model through a variety of demonstration initiatives. Evaluation findings from these initiatives are presented here.



### Little Village Implementation of the Comprehensive Gang Model

With funding that the U.S. Department of Justice (Violence in Urban Areas Program) provided in March 1993, Spergel began implementing the initial version of the Comprehensive Gang Model in the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago, a low-income and working-class community that is approximately 90 percent Mexican-American (Spergel, 2007). Called the Gang Violence Reduction Program, the project lasted 5 years. The program targeted and provided services to individual gang members (rather than to the gangs as groups). It targeted mainly older members (ages 17–24) of two of the area’s most violent Hispanic gangs, the Latin Kings and the Two Six. Specifically, the Little Village program targeted more than 200 of the “shooters” (i.e., the influential members or leaders of the two gangs). As a whole, these two gangs accounted for about 75 percent of felony gang violence in the Little Village community—including 12 homicides in each of the 2 years before the start of project operations (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2006).

The primary goal of the project was to reduce the extremely high level of gang violence among youth who were already involved in the two gangs. Outreach youth workers—virtually all of whom were former members of the two target gangs—attempted to prevent and control

gang conflicts in specific situations and to persuade gang youth to leave the gang as soon as possible. Drug-related activity was not specifically targeted. Instead, outreach activities included a balance of services, such as crisis intervention, brief family and individual counseling and referrals for services, and surveillance and suppression activities. (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2006).

As seen in table A1 (page 43), the process evaluation of the Gang Violence Reduction Program (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2006) revealed that it was implemented very well. Altogether it achieved an “excellent” rating on the following 8 (of 18) program implementation characteristics: interagency/street (intervention) team coordination, criminal justice participation, lead agency project management and commitment to the model, social and crisis intervention and outreach work, suppression, targeting (especially gang members), balance of services, and intensity of services.

Spergel (2006) examined the effects of the Little Village project on the approximately 200 hardcore gang youth targeted for services during the period in which they were served by the program. The following are some of his findings:

- Self-reports of criminal involvement showed that the program reduced serious violent and property crimes, and the frequency of various types of offenses includ-

ing robbery, gang intimidation, and drive-by shootings.

- The program was more effective with older, more violent gang offenders than with younger, less violent offenders.
- Active gang involvement was reduced among project youth, mostly for older members, and this change was associated with less criminal activity.
- Most youth in both targeted gangs improved their educational and employment status during the program period.
- Employment was associated with a general reduction in youth's criminal activity, especially in regard to reductions in drug dealing.

Spergel (2006) next compared arrests among project youth versus two control groups, one that received minimal services, and the other that received no services from project workers. This comparison revealed the following:

- Program youth had significantly fewer total violent-crime and drug arrests.
- The project had no significant effect on total arrests, property arrests, or other minor crime arrests.

Because the Little Village project specifically targeted the most violent gangsters and the common presumption is that such youth are typically drug involved, Spergel examined program effects on subgroups of offenders with violence and drug involvement and with violence and no drug involvement, using the comparison groups. Program effects were strong for both of these groups, but slightly stronger for the violence and no-drug subsample.

Spergel (2006) also compared communitywide effects of the project on arrests in Little Village versus other nearby communities with high rates of gang crime. His analysis compared arrests in the periods before and during which

the program was implemented and revealed the following:

- The project was less effective in its overall impact on the behavior of the target gangs as a whole, that is, changing the entrenched pattern of gangbanging and gang crime among the target gangs than in reducing crime among targeted members. Gang violence was on the upswing during the project period (1992–1997) in this general area of Chicago—one of the deadliest gang-violence areas of the city—but the increase in homicides and other serious violent gang crimes was lower among the Latin Kings and Two Six compared with the other Latino and African-American gangs in the area.
- Similarly, the increase in serious violent gang crimes was lower in Little Village than in all other comparable communities. Residents and representatives of various organizations perceived a significant reduction in overall gang crime and violence in Little Village during the program period.

In summary, although the outcomes for the Little Village project are mixed, the results are consistent for violent crimes across analyses at all three impact levels: (1) individual, (2) group (gang), and (3) community (especially in the views of residents). A similar impact was not seen on gang drug activity, although drug selling was reduced among older gang members when the project helped them get jobs. Given that the project targeted gang violence, not drug activity, this result was not completely unexpected.

The evaluation suggested that a youth outreach (or social intervention) strategy may be more effective in reducing the violent behavior of younger, less violent, gang youth. A combined youth outreach and police suppression strategy might be more effective with older, more criminally active and violent gang youth, particularly with respect to drug-related crimes. The best indicators of reduced total offenses were older age, association with probation



officers, and spending more time with a wife or steady girlfriend. The best predictors of reduced violent offenses were a youth's avoidance of gang situations, satisfaction with the community, and more exposure to treatment for personal problems.

Interactive and collaborative project outreach worker efforts, combining suppression, social support, and provision of social services, were shown to be most effective in changing criminal involvement of gang members. Larger program dosages (multiple providers and greater frequency and duration of services) proved to be important and were associated with reduced levels of arrests for violent crimes. Four types of services or sanctions predicted successful outcomes among program youth: suppression (particularly by police), job referrals by youth outreach workers, school referrals (mainly by outreach youth workers), and program dosage (contacts by all workers together).

## Initial Demonstration Sites

In the first of its initiatives, OJJDP competitively selected five sites that demonstrated the capacity to implement the Comprehensive Gang Model: Mesa, AZ; Riverside, CA; Bloomington-Normal, IL; San Antonio, TX; and Tucson, AZ. Each of these projects was funded in 1995, and OJJDP anticipated that these sites would be funded for 4 or 5 years and would adopt the two main goals of the Model:

- To reduce youth gang crime, especially violent crime, in targeted communities.
- To improve the capacity of the community, including its institutions and organizations, to prevent, intervene against, and suppress the youth gang problem through the targeted application of interrelated strategies of community mobilization, social intervention, provision of opportunities, organizational change and development, and suppression.

OJJDP emphasized the five strategies in the implementation process described above. Brief descriptions of each of the projects follow.<sup>a</sup>

## Mesa Gang Intervention Program

The target area for the Mesa Gang Intervention Project, coordinated by the City of Mesa Police Department, was defined by the service areas of two junior high schools that were home to approximately 18 gangs with an estimated 650 members. The project intervention team comprised the project director, a case management coordinator, two gang detectives, one adult and three juvenile probation officers, two outreach workers, and a youth intervention specialist—all of whom were housed in a central location in the target area. The project team used a case-management approach to ensure that progress was made with each youth in accordance with an intervention plan. Gang detectives and probation officers held program youth accountable through surveillance and routine monitoring and support, while outreach workers and staff from community-based agencies ensured delivery of services such as counseling, job referrals, drug and alcohol treatment, and other social services.

In general, both program and comparison youth reduced their average levels of arrests (and self-reported offenses). However, program youth had an 18-percent greater reduction in total arrests than comparison youth (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005a). The reduction in total arrests was greater for the oldest age group (18-year-olds and older) and the youngest age group (12- to 14-year-olds) than it was for 15- to 17-year-olds. Females in the program showed a significantly greater reduction in arrests than did males.

Project success was also evident at the program area level. Total incidents of crime that youth typically committed (including violent, property, and drug-related crimes and status offenses) declined 10 percent more in the program area than in the average of the three comparison areas. Furthermore, the program was more effective with gang youth who frequented the target area as compared with program gang youth who associated with gangs in the comparison areas.

The evaluators observed that the Mesa Gang Intervention Project did not incorporate all of the elements of the

Comprehensive Gang Model in program development, particularly the use of outreach workers in the neighborhood and collaboration with grassroots organizations (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005a).

The program evaluators identified the major factor that contributed to the project's success as highly skilled community and lead agency staff who were committed to a balanced social intervention and control approach, particularly the provision of social intervention services to moderately delinquent, nonviolent, and at-risk youth (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005a). However, the evaluators noted that the program should have included more seriously delinquent youth in the target group.

### **Riverside Building Resources for the Intervention and Deterrence of Gang Engagement**

Officials changed the original name of the Riverside (California) Comprehensive Gang Model to Building Resources for the Intervention and Deterrence of Gang Engagement (BRIDGE) in 1999 and focused its 5-year (1995–2000) operation on two areas of the city with high rates of gang crime—Eastside and Arlanza (Burch and Kane, 1999; Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005b). A steering committee that consisted of public, private, grassroots, and faith-based organizations guided the project. The project director and the steering committee shifted the project focus to the development of an intervention team to deal directly with gang youth referred by the Riverside County Juvenile Probation Department. Reducing incidents of youth gang violence became the main program goal. Gang-involved youth ages 12–22 years old in the two communities were targeted for intervention.

Formation of an intervention team was a key factor in the success of the program (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005b). The intervention team consisted of several core members, including the project coordinator, police officers, probation and parole officers, the outreach worker, the social service provider, and others. In daily

meetings, the team shared information that provided opportunities for intervention with project youth. Case management involved the development and implementation of a treatment plan by the intervention team. Eligible clients had to meet several criteria: being a known gang member, residing in or engaging in gang activity within the target area, having a history of violence, and warranting intensive supervision by police and probation working as a team. Police and probation officers made home visits, performed area surveillance, made arrests, and maintained other controls on project youth.

The project effectively reduced arrests for both serious and nonserious violent crimes after program participation and in comparison with a control group (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005b). Program youth also had fewer repeat drug arrests. The largest reduction in total violent crime arrests occurred when probation officers, police officers, outreach workers, and job and school personnel integrated their services for youth. Total services—that is, a combination of individual counseling, job services, school-related services, suppression activities, family counseling, group services, and material services—accounted for much of the reduction in arrests. Youth who received services for 2 years or more showed the greatest reductions in number of arrests. However, there was no evidence that the project reduced either program youth's involvement in gangs or the size of gang membership in the project area.

### **Bloomington-Normal Comprehensive Gang Program**

This project included all of Bloomington and Normal, IL, in its target area, where eight gangs with 640 members were located. These twin cities are centrally located within the State in McLean County, midway between Chicago and St. Louis. (Burch and Kane, 1999; Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005c). The lead agency was Project Oz, a youth-serving organization with many years of experience meeting the social service needs of youth and

families. The Community Youth Liaison Council (formerly the Bloomington Mayor's 1990 Task Force to Study Gangs) served as the project's steering committee. Key day-to-day management staff and personnel included the project director, the project coordinator, the crime analyst and, to some extent at the beginning, the local evaluator. These central figures operated largely within the framework of perspectives, intentions, and interests of the Community Youth Liaison Council and its principal constituent organizations. Gang-suppression tactics were given the highest priority by the Bloomington-Normal gang program.

The program evaluation concluded that the Bloomington-Normal gang program did not follow the Comprehensive Gang Model. The evaluators found that the program focused extensively on suppression and failed to implement several key components of the Model:

It emphasized a suppression approach. It did not include grassroots groups, and did not develop an adequate outreach worker approach. Little attention was paid to an appropriate mix of strategies for different youth, to the modification of the roles of the different types of workers, and to how different agency workers were to function together to create an improved, interorganizational, street-level-worker structure and process to meet the interests and needs of gang youth, and the needs of the community, within the framework of the Model. (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005c, pp. 14–15, 17)

In summary, the evaluators found that, when appropriate statistical controls were used, the program had no effect in steering individual youth away from gangs and delinquency, as compared with similar youth in the comparison site (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005c). Rather, the program was associated with an increase in arrests for program youth, particularly those without prior arrest records. However, there was evidence (based on self-reports) that parts of the program were useful in reducing subsequent offenses for certain youth.

## San Antonio Gang Rehabilitation, Assessment, and Support Program

The target community of the San Antonio (Texas) Gang Rehabilitation, Assessment, and Services Program (GRAASP), located on the outer limits of the southwest side of the city, was home to 15 gangs with an estimated 1,664 members. The program area initially included three small neighborhoods (Burch and Kane, 1999; Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005d). The San Antonio Police Department was the lead agency. The project coordinator, outreach staff, and job developer operated out of a project office near the target area. Street-based outreach workers assisted other social service agency employees, probation officers, a job developer, Texas Youth Commission staff, city police assigned to community policing and tactical units, and others to provide services, opportunities, and support to youth in the program, while also instituting sanctions, including arrest, for criminal or delinquent acts. Outreach workers met monthly to discuss coordination and case management.

A lack of management attention and oversight hindered efforts to establish an intervention team and provide outreach services (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005d). GRAASP focused on individual program youth (and to some extent their families) using a case-method approach. There was no structural or systematic means for providing services to, and establishing interrelated controls for, program youth. Coordination of services, if it occurred, was on an ad hoc basis, at the request of GRAASP outreach workers. It is likely that the absence of a significant GRAASP effect was because the police department, local agencies, and grassroots groups did not adequately support the Model.

The evaluators observed that the leadership may never have come to understand the nature of the Comprehensive Gang Model initiative and the structure required to develop and implement it in San Antonio (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005d). Unfortunately, the dimensions of San Antonio's gang problem were never specifically defined. Gang suppression strategies lacked a targeted focus.

GRAASP essentially became an outreach, social-service support program to gang-involved youth who were referred mainly by juvenile probation and parole officers. An integrated interagency approach to the gang problem that focused on provision of opportunities to gang members was needed but never developed. In the end, the limited efforts to meet the social-development and social-control needs of program youth were inadequate. Although arrest levels for program youth were generally lower than for comparison youth (except for drug arrests), none of the differences in arrest levels was statistically significant. The evaluators observed an increase in the total number of arrests was for both program and comparison youth.

### Tucson Comprehensive Gang Program

The Tucson (Arizona) project focused on four neighborhoods where four main gangs with an estimated 350 members were located. The project operated from offices in a Boys & Girls Club in the target area. Street outreach workers, probation officers, a police gang unit officer, and others worked daily to provide youth with services and opportunities, to encourage youth to pursue constructive and positive activities, and to hold youth accountable for negative or criminal acts. Weekly meetings of the entire project team to review progress and reevaluate community needs supplemented weekly outreach staff meetings. The Our Town Family Center was designated as the lead agency, although its interest was limited largely to service delivery, and it had little experience in dealing with gang youth who were juvenile offenders (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005e).<sup>b</sup>

Key findings from the evaluation that compared outcomes for youth in the program with outcomes for a comparable group of unserved youth (and also compared outcomes among program youth) include the following:

- Although program youth showed a decrease in yearly total arrests versus nonprogram youth, the difference was not statistically significant.
- There was less of an increase in arrests for serious violent crime for program youth than for comparison

youth, but the difference was not statistically significant.

- The program may have decreased more yearly arrests among 15- and 16-year-olds than with the youngest age group (10- to 14-year-olds).
- Behavioral improvements among females involved in the program were marginally better than among program males. The researchers speculated that the greater number of contacts that outreach youth workers and case managers had with program females may have made this marginal difference.

In summary, a comprehensive communitywide approach to the youth gang problem did not develop in Tucson (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2005e). Existing organizational, interorganizational, and community interests and structures prevented the program from adopting the Comprehensive Gang Model. The focus of the lead agency was on an early intervention program, particularly addressed to younger youth, using mainly its own social services. The Tucson Police Department became only peripherally involved in support of the program, and key community agencies and grassroots organizations were not integrally involved in program development. Lastly, and most significant, the project had few discernable positive impacts on the delinquent behavior of youth who were served.

### Process and Impact Evaluation Findings

To develop a composite picture of the process and impact outcomes of the initial Comprehensive Gang Model implementations, the evaluators combined the Chicago Little Village evaluation with the studies of the five demonstration sites (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2006). The evaluations across the five sites—Mesa, Tucson, Riverside, San Antonio, and Bloomington-Normal—were simultaneous and interrelated, but not interdependent, requiring extensive collaboration among local projects.

Spergel and his colleagues assessed (a) program elements, (b) strategies, and (c) operating principles in terms of their importance to successful implementation of the

**TABLE A1: Program Implementation Characteristics:  
Degree of Importance and Levels of Implementation**

| Program Implementation Characteristics |  | Degree of Importance to Program Success <sup>†</sup> | Levels of Implementation by Project Site <sup>‡</sup> |      |           |                    |             |        |
|--|--|--|---|------|-----------|--------------------|-------------|--------|
|  |  |  | Chicago   | Mesa | Riverside | Bloomington-Normal | San Antonio | Tucson |
| Program Elements (Structure)           | City/County Leadership   | ***  | 2   | 4    | 4         | 1                  | 1           | 1      |
|  | Steering Committee   | **   | 1   | 4    | 3         | 1                  | 1           | 0      |
|  | Interagency Street Team/Coordination   | ***  | 4   | 4    | 3         | 0                  | 0           | 0      |
|  | Grassroots Involvement   | *  | 3   | 1    | 1         | 0                  | 1           | 0      |
|  | Social Services: Youth Work, Individual Counseling, Family Treatment, and Recreation | **   | 3   | 3    | 3         | 2                  | 3           | 3      |
|  | Criminal Justice Participation   | ***  | 4   | 4    | 4         | 1                  | 1           | 0      |
|  | School Participation   | **   | 1   | 3    | 3         | 3                  | 2           | 0      |
|  | Employment and Training  | **   | 3   | 1    | 4         | 3                  | 1           | 0      |
|  | Lead Agency/Management/Commitment  | ***  | 4   | 4    | 4         | 0                  | 0           | 0      |
| Strategies                             | Social Intervention: Outreach and Crisis Intervention                                | **   | 4   | 3    | 3         | 1                  | 1           | 0      |
|  | Community Mobilization: Interagency and Grassroots                                   | **   | 1   | 3    | 2         | 1                  | 0           | 0      |
|  | Provision of Social Opportunities: Education, Job, and Culture                       | **   | 3   | 2    | 2         | 2                  | 1           | 0      |
|  | Suppression  | ***  | 4   | 4    | 3         | 0                  | 0           | 0      |
|  | Organizational Change and Development  | ***  | 2   | 4    | 4         | 0                  | 0           | 0      |
| Operating Principles                   | Targeting Gang Members/ At-Risk Gang Youth   | ***  | 4   | 2    | 3         | 1                  | 3           | 3      |
|  | Balance of Service   | ***  | 4   | 3    | 3         | 0                  | 0           | 0      |
|  | Intensity of Service   | *  | 4   | 3    | 3         | 1                  | 0           | 0      |
|  | Continuity of Service  | **   | 2   | 1    | 2         | 2                  | 0           | 2      |

Source: Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2006, pp. 216–217

†Importance of characteristic to success: \*\*\*=extremely, \*\*moderately, \*=somewhat

‡Levels of implementation: 4=excellent, 3=good, 2=fair, 1=poor, 0=none

Comprehensive Gang Model. This assessment was based on interviews with program staff and youth, service tracking records, and field observations (see table A1). Although none of the sites fully implemented these three critical program implementation requirements, the three sites (Chicago, Mesa, and Riverside) that showed the largest reductions in violence and drug-related crimes implemented more of them.

Three of the communities (Tucson, San Antonio, and Bloomington-Normal) either made fatal planning mistakes (such as selecting a lead agency that failed to perform) or involved key agencies in the community that were unwilling to work together. But when it was well-implemented in three of the sites, the Comprehensive Gang Model effectively guided these communities (in Chicago, Mesa, and Riverside) in developing services and

strategies that contributed to reductions in both gang violence (Chicago, Mesa, and Riverside) and drug-related offenses (Chicago and Mesa) (Spergel et al., 2006). At the successful sites, a key factor was length of time in the program. When youth were in the program for 2 or more years, there were fewer arrests for all types of offenses. In general, arrest reductions were greater among older youth and females than among younger youth and males. General deterrence effects (across the project area) were not as strong as the program effects for individual youth. Nevertheless, these three sites were somewhat successful in integrating police suppression with service-oriented strategies. In summary, the evaluation indicates that, when properly implemented, a combination of prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies was successful in reducing the gang problem (Spergel, Wa, and Sosa, 2006).

## Rural Gang Initiative

In 1999, OJJDP launched the Rural Gang Initiative in response to feedback from the field that a gang violence reduction approach was needed for rural communities and findings from the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey that the number of gangs and gang members in rural areas was growing. This initiative was the first attempt to adopt the Comprehensive Gang Model in a nonmetropolitan area and served as a test case to determine whether rural communities can successfully implement (or need to implement) such a resource-intensive approach.

Through a competitive process, OJJDP selected four communities to participate in the Rural Gang Initiative: Glenn County, CA; Mt. Vernon, IL; Elk City, OK; and Cowlitz County, WA. Each of the four sites completed the first-year assessment and implementation plan, both activities required by the OJJDP grant.

OJJDP determined that the assessment in two sites (Cowlitz County and Elk City) did not indicate an ongoing gang problem serious enough to merit an

intensive approach such as the Model. However, OJJDP did agree that the communities needed to address various risk factors through prevention strategies and create interventions for use when gang behavior did occur. OJJDP made suggestions to guide these sites in writing a new proposal to obtain reduced funding to address their particular gang problems. In one site, data from the assessment served as a basis for successful grant applications to support services and activities identified in the assessment.

Mt. Vernon and Glenn County received approval for an additional year's funding to implement the Model. Both communities operated an intervention team and provided services to clients for an additional 2 years. Steering committees were also active in both sites. However, turnover in the project coordinator position in both sites hampered a consistent understanding and application of the Model strategies over time. In 2002, grant funds had expired and neither site could sustain the project with local funding or new grants.

The national evaluation of the Rural Gang Initiative was not completed because of staffing issues with the national evaluators, and OJJDP elected not to continue the evaluation. Nonetheless, the evaluation team had prepared an interim process evaluation report and cross-site analysis for the first year of the program. The interim report examined three activities—community mobilization, assessment, and implementation planning—and revealed the following (National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2000, pp. 54–56):

- Each of the four sites had a catalyst who envisioned the community as a viable candidate for the process, essentially initiating the process.
- The significant role that the project coordinator played cannot be overstated. This role is pivotal to the orchestration of the project.
- The support of law enforcement in the project had a positive effect in each site.



- There appears to be a direct correlation between the intensity of efforts expended to ensure appropriate agency representation on the steering committee and resultant gains in inclusiveness.
- Lack of automated gang crime data can hamper data collection for the assessment.
- Mobilizing and educating agency representatives who will collect the information facilitates the assessment process.
- The movement from assessment data to development of an implementation plan proved challenging to the steering committees.
- Steering committees struggled with prioritizing problems and determining appropriate target populations using the assessment data.

## Gang-Free Communities and Schools Initiative

In 2000, OJJDP began the Gang-Free Communities and Schools Initiative, comprising two programs—the Gang-Free Communities Program and the Gang-Free Schools Program.

### Gang-Free Communities Program

The Gang-Free Communities Program was funded in six sites in 2001: Broward County, FL; Lakewood, WA; East Los Angeles, CA; Louisville, KY; San Francisco, CA; and Washington, DC; although the Louisville and Washington, DC, sites soon dropped out of the program.<sup>c</sup> The Federal funds were seed money for Model implementation startup, and communities were to leverage local resources in addition to Federal funds to continue demonstrating the Model.

The remaining four sites were successful in conducting assessments and developing implementation plans for the chosen target areas. Each site began implementation

of the Model, some more successfully than others. Lakewood, WA, and Broward County, FL, began implementation immediately, including serving clients through an intervention team. The remaining two sites were unsuccessful in fully coalescing their communities and key agencies to fully participate in the steering committees, to develop viable intervention teams, and to enroll clients. In late 2003, OJJDP announced that it would not invite the sites to apply for continued funding, and by early 2004, all sites had expended Federal funding and could not continue the projects with local funding or other grants.

Although there was no evaluation of the Gang-Free Communities Program, OJJDP did request the National Youth Gang Center to develop a “process description” of the four active sites during the assessment and planning phases. This process description provided a limited number of lessons learned (National Youth Gang Center, 2003, pp, 46–48):

- Key project personnel—such as the project coordinator, staff from the lead agency, and key steering committee members—should be on board before plans for conducting the assessment are completed.
- Complicated hiring processes and layers of bureaucracy in large cities complicate a timely selection of staff and disbursement of funds.
- Having a capable, full-time project coordinator is critical to the successful operation of the project.
- The project coordinator must have frequent contact with the lead agency for the effective and timely execution of the tasks associated with the Gang-Free Communities process.

### Gang-Free Schools Program

In 2000, as part of the Gang-Free Communities and Schools initiative, OJJDP provided funding to fully develop a school component to the Comprehensive Gang

Model. The distinctive features of the Gang-Free Schools Program is the planning and implementation of special or enhanced programs within the school setting and the linking of the school component to community-based gang prevention, intervention, and suppression activities. Four sites—Houston, TX; Pittsburgh, PA; Miami-Dade County, FL; and East Cleveland, OH—participated in this program.<sup>d</sup>

Several best practices and/or lessons learned were identified in the evaluation report on the Gang-Free Schools projects. The following excerpts from the report address key factors that influence the success (or failure) of a project.

### **Community Capacity**

If communities do not have services in place and prior existing relationships (with memorandums of understanding [MOUs]) in place, [then they] will not be able to provide the necessary interventions to their clients. A community capacity assessment should be part [of this effort]. When . . . cities . . . are beleaguered with financial problems, . . . the financial issues tend to impede the level of services, programming, and activities that are available to youth and their families. [These programs] need the support of surrounding community organizations and police departments in order to be completely successful. . . . Additionally, local budget constraints may hamper the institutionalization and sustainability of the program in the future.

(COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. xiv)

### **Role of the Project Coordinator**

The role of the project coordinator is one of the most critical elements contributing to the success of the project. The title “project director” would perhaps be more reflective of the duties and responsibilities of this individual. . . . Traits of successful project coordinators include having an ability to network and effectively communicate the issues; being integrated within the city’s existing organizational infrastructure (e.g., within the school system, mayor’s office, etc.); having

in-depth information about key project issues; maintaining a deep long-term commitment to the project; and an understanding of basic research principles. Because this role requires the project coordinator to serve as the liaison to various oversight entities (the steering committee, the intervention team), the project coordinator should have outstanding interpersonal skills and an energetic and outgoing personality.

(COSMOS Corporation, 2007, pp. xiv–xv)

### **Project Location**

Intervention programs of this nature may be more productive when situated and managed within school systems (e.g., board of education), as opposed to law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement agencies naturally tend to focus on suppression components rather than embracing a more broad-based approach, leading to uneven pursuit of activities.

(COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. xv)

### **Range of Intervention Activities Offered and Age Span of Clients Eligible To Participate**

Programs like the [Gang-Free Schools] project may have long-term success with juveniles and young adults if intervention strategies are intermingled with prevention strategies and are offered to both younger and older clients. More and more youth are getting actively involved in gang-related and juvenile delinquent activities at a younger age, especially in elementary school. Thus, a model that incorporates both prevention and intervention strategies that are age appropriate (e.g., 8 to 24 years old) may yield greater benefits over time for society generally and the youth population specifically.

(COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. xv)

In addition to the more common and obvious youth interventions, such as employment and educational opportunities, . . . [communities] should be urged to customize intervention programs according to the cultural issues and needs of the individuals in each

city. Some young people . . . needed extra help with learning and understanding the English language, and others needed major assistance with drug, alcohol, and mental [health] problems. Furthermore, some of the youth lacked positive role models, so they may benefit from a strong mentoring component in an intervention program.

(COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. xvi)

### **Parental and Community Member Involvement**

Parents' and community members' involvement in the steering committee and intervention team may be key to learning the true tone and inner workings of a community and to getting young people to actively participate in the intervention programs.

(COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. xvi).

### **Role of Outreach**

It may be imperative to have community members who have been active in the project neighborhood to serve as outreach workers because young people seem to relate to, respond to, and respect these individuals more. Outreach workers from the participating neighborhoods have a strong record and seem to be better predictors of referring youth who will benefit from the intervention programs and who will stay active in the program.

(COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. xvi)

### **Project Title**

Two cities involved in GFS created different project names that did not include the word "gang." . . . The term "gang" being used in the project name or during school or community discussion seemed to be a hindrance when seeking youth involvement in the program . . . A project name that does not use . . . "gang," but reflects that the purpose is to diminish juvenile delinquency through intervention and/or prevention may increase youth enrollment in the project.

(COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. xvii)

The four sites enrolled more than 400 clients in their programs during the more than 4-year project period. The majority of youth remained enrolled in the program for more than 2 years. During their time in the program, outreach workers made frequent contact with the youth, with the average length of each contact ranging from 33 to 41 minutes. Analysis shows that the more time the outreach workers spent per contract, the more likely the youth would remain in the program. It was also noted that greater length of time per contact was positively related to less alcohol use and fewer arrests at the Houston site.

Evaluation data show that youth currently attending school were less likely than their peers who were not attending school to be rearrested and to use drugs and alcohol over the duration of the study. Also, youth who were more involved in their gangs were more likely to be expelled more often from school, to receive disciplinary infractions at school, and to be jailed more often.

(COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. xx)

## **Gang Reduction Program**

As part of U.S. Department of Justice's Anti-Gang Initiative, OJJDP's Gang Reduction Program is designed to reduce gang activity in targeted neighborhoods by incorporating a broad spectrum of research-based interventions to address the range of personal, family, and community factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency and gang activity. The program integrates local, state, and Federal resources to incorporate state-of-the-art practices in prevention, intervention, and suppression. The program was implemented in four demonstration sites—Richmond, VA; Los Angeles, CA; North Miami Beach, FL; and Milwaukee, WI—beginning in 2003.

As part of the initiative, the Urban Institute (UI) is conducting a 3-year evaluation to assess program implementation, examine outcomes related to reductions in crime and gang activity, and identify improvements in prosocial activities and protective factors in the lives of high-risk

youth. The following excerpts provide a summary of preliminary findings from the evaluation (Cahill, Coggeshall, et al., 2008).

The brief strategic planning process was the first major challenge faced by all sites. The short time allowed for Phase I planning permitted the implementation of some activities, but these were generally extensions of programs already in place. In all sites, much or most of Phase I was actually devoted to further problem identification and information gathering in an effort to understand the nature of local problems, resources, and relevant evidence-based practices.

Much of the progress achieved to date at each of the sites is attributable to the leadership of each site's coordinator. Coordinators, however, would have benefited from more direction and technical assistance on organizing local efforts. Sites independently developed similar organizational designs: steering committees (termed 'advisory' in Los Angeles) representing broad community interests. Coordinators relied on steering committees for management and decision-making support. The inclusive committees were a mixed blessing: while they represented diverse interests related to gang reduction, some participating organizations expected to secure substantial funding from GRP, and disrupted planning and implementation because of individual agency priorities rather than participating to fulfill the mission of GRP. Early in the process, competition for funds, political infighting, and unrealistic expectations had occasional negative effects on collaboration, communication, and committee functioning. These effects diminished over time.

Substantial variation in the levels of collaboration and communication existed. Stakeholders focused on suppression efforts, especially in Los Angeles and Richmond, seemed to function more collaboratively and effectively because of prior experience working together. Where functioning was more problematic, member attrition and turnover was more prevalent.

However, over the course of implementation, collaboration improved, as did local committee functioning.

Conforming to strict procurement rules had negative effects on implementation. The time required to get programs up and running in target communities was longer than anyone anticipated. Also, some capable providers with little experience in the competitive bidding process were disqualified due to missed deadlines or submission of incomplete applications. In other cases, complicated application procedures discouraged providers from applying.

Significant implementation successes were observed in all sites. Sites developed strategic plans approved by OJJDP and consistent with target area needs and problems; local governance and communication have steadily improved and partnerships among members have developed; coordinator outreach resulted in a broad participation in GRP planning and implementation; a significant number of specific programmatic activities across all GRP components were operational by late 2007; and GRP has improved communication about gang issues within the target areas and among participating organizations.

The findings on the effects of GRP in each site were mixed. The results revealed that only one site, Los Angeles, showed a significant reduction in crime rates, with levels of serious violence, gang related incidents, gang-related serious violence, and citizen reports of shots fired all decreasing significantly after the implementation of GRP there. Smaller drops in those measures were found in the comparison area, and no evidence of displacement was identified. In Milwaukee and North Miami Beach, no significant changes in the measures were found after GRP implementation, and in Richmond, the period after implementation actually saw a modest increase in serious violence and gang-related measures. While the comparison area in Richmond also saw increases in two of the measures, those increases were to a smaller degree than in the target area. Increased crime awareness and reporting

of gang crimes among target area residents may help to explain the unexpected increases in some crime measures that were found in Richmond.

While very little strategic planning for sustainability had taken place at any of the four sites at the time of the previous report in 2006, by late 2007, three of the four sites had undertaken significant steps towards sustaining at least portions of the initiative beyond the federal funding period. In Los Angeles, the GRP model was implemented city-wide with local funding and termed ‘Gang Reduction Zone Program.’ In North Miami Beach, after struggling to find a government-based fiscal agent to sustain the partnership, the initiative was incorporated as a non-profit organization in late 2007. In Richmond, the close relationship that developed between the Virginia Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the Richmond Police Department (RPD) through the GRP effort had ensured that a significant portion of the efforts undertaken by the RPD would be sustained, and the OAG was also planning an expansion of the model into other parts of the city.

The UI evaluation is continuing, and final evaluation findings will be made available by OJJDP as soon as they are released.

## Notes

a. These project descriptions are adapted from the OJJDP Fact Sheet, “Implementing the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model” (Burch and Kane, 1999), and also refer to information provided in the more comprehensive project and evaluation reports.

b. It is noteworthy that the Tucson Police Department had previously organized a community policing effort in the Las Vistas/Pueblo area—the original program area. In 1995, a separate citywide coalition of agencies was formed, known as TASK 1 (Taking a Stand for Kids)—a consortium of many organizations with an interest in reducing violence and addressing the gang problem. Our

Town attempted to use this group as the project’s steering committee, but this did not materialize. At the same time, the Mayor’s Task Force on Youth Violence—comprising criminal-justice and other agencies and community leaders—seemed to be taking a different, more suppression-oriented approach to the gang problem than either the TASK 1 or Our Town leadership.

c. The Louisville site dropped out of the program shortly after an assessment was completed in 2001, stating that the data collected were not conclusive enough to support implementing such a comprehensive program. They were also concerned that the impending merger of city and county governments posed significant issues that affected the viability of the project. After September 11, 2001, homeland security and related activities took precedence in Washington, DC, for several months. The grantee was the Metropolitan Police Department, which was focusing all its attention on more immediate problems. Further, the grantee and the lead agency could not find compatible ground on which to launch this initiative. Consequently, the Washington, DC, site was unable to complete an assessment.

d. The lead agency for the Gang-Free Schools project in Houston was the Mayor’s Anti-Gang Office, a division of the Mayor’s Office of Public Safety and Drug Policy. The lead agency convened a steering committee composed of members from several key agencies, including the Houston Police Department, Houston Mayor’s Office, Houston Independent School District, and Harris County Juvenile Probation (COSMOS Corporation, 2007, pp. 3.14–16). The steering committee, in conjunction with the Mayor’s Anti-Gang Office, selected Houston’s target area for the Gang-Free Schools initiative (COSMOS Corporation, 2007, pp. 3.14, 18). This area—directly east of downtown—originally included five police beats commonly referred to as the Greater East End, populated primarily by residents of Mexican origin. This target area included five distinct neighborhoods: Magnolia, the Second Ward, Lawndale, Eastwood, and Idylwood. Between 2003 and 2007, 128 youth were enrolled as clients by and received services from the project.

The School District of Pittsburgh served as the lead agency for the Pittsburgh project (COSMOS Corporation, 2007). The steering committee and the assessment team initially assessed the entire city of Pittsburgh because crime was so widely dispersed over many areas of the city. The steering committee considered 23 areas from four regions of the city (north, south, east, and central), ultimately selecting the east region as the target area. From 2003 to 2007, 93 youth were enrolled as clients by and received services from the project.

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools served as lead agency for the Miami project, with the Miami-Dade County School Police Department performing most of the administrative functions (COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. 6.11). The steering committee was composed of key agencies that provided services throughout metropolitan Miami-Dade County. It selected a project coordinator who would work directly with the school police but not within the local law enforcement agency. Northwest Miami-Dade County was selected as the target area for implementation (COSMOS Corporation, 2007, pp. 6.18–19, 22). From the period 2003–2006, 150 youth were enrolled in and received services from the project.

The Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) Prosecutor's Office served as the East Cleveland Gang-Free Schools project's lead agency. A steering committee composed of key agencies that pledged their support to the initiative was convened, and the steering committee selected the entire city of East Cleveland as the target area rather than attempting to target particular neighborhoods. (COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. 5.9, 5.12). The project encountered numerous difficulties during the assessment process, including the failure of research partners to attend steering committee meetings, turnover in the project coordinator role, and an assessment report that was judged inadequate (COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. 5.11, 5.15). However, despite staffing problems and external issues, the project completed the assessment phase with a core group of participants who were willing to contribute

time and resources to implementing the Gang-Free Schools project (COSMOS Corporation, 2007, p. 5.15). During the period 2003–2006, 98 youth were enrolled in and served by the project.

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# Appendix B:

## Multistrategy Gang Initiative Survey

**T**he purpose of the survey is to gather information regarding multistrategy gang initiatives in your community and to solicit observations pertaining to several types of anti-gang initiatives funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Not all topics and questions apply to every project. Follow-up interviews will be conducted with some respondents to help gather further information on trends identified through the survey. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Kimberly Hale at 800-446-0912, extension 248.

Site you represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a written response to each question:

### Assessment/Implementation Planning

1. Did your project conduct a communitywide assessment of your gang or youth violence problem? Yes      No
  
2. What data were most useful in developing the implementation plan?
  
3. Describe the process your project used to select a target area of the community.
  
4. Describe how the project identified service gaps in the target community and how those service gaps were addressed.

5. What suggestions do you have for strengthening the data collection process to assist in program planning and implementation?
  
6. If applicable, describe the roles and responsibilities of your project's research partner during the assessment and implementation process.

### Project Coordinator Role

7. Describe the critical skills and characteristics project coordinators should possess to successfully direct a multistrategy gang initiative.
  
8. What significant obstacles did the project coordinator encounter during assessment and/or implementation? How did the project coordinator overcome the obstacles?

### Lead Agency

9. Describe your project's administrative structure, including the type of lead agency, if any (e.g., city government, law enforcement, school district).
  
10. What were the advantages and disadvantages of your project's administrative structure and lead agency?

### Steering Committee/Advisory Board

11. Did your site use a committee made up of partner agencies, such as a steering committee/advisory board?  
If not, skip to the Prevention Services section.    Yes        No

12. Describe the steering committee/advisory board's formal and informal roles in the project (e.g., leadership, types of decision making, resource development).
  
13. Describe the process used to select representatives for this group.
  
14. Describe the process used to establish and update formal agreements regarding this body's functioning (e.g., bylaws, memorandums of understanding).
  
15. What major challenges did your project encounter in developing and maintaining your site's steering committee, and what strategies did your project use to address them?
  
16. What strategies should be used to create and maintain a successful steering committee or advisory board?

## Prevention Services

17. Describe the main prevention efforts your project engaged in for youth at high risk of gang involvement and their families.
  
18. How did your project identify prevention strategies that were used?
  
19. Describe successes and challenges that your project experienced in implementing prevention strategies.

## Intervention Team

20. What main agencies participated on your intervention team?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
21. Which agencies were most critical to the effective functioning of an intervention team? Describe their roles in ensuring that clients receive optimum case management and services.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
22. In what ways was the intervention team able to create a positive impact, beyond providing case management and services to clients (e.g., institutional change, resource development)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
23. What agencies were most difficult to engage in the intervention team and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
24. Describe challenges that your intervention team encountered in becoming organized and operational, and discuss the strategies used to address the challenges.

## Suppression

25. What types of suppression strategies were utilized in conjunction with this project?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
26. What role did law enforcement/criminal justice agencies play on the intervention team?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
27. Describe how new or existing suppression strategies were implemented by the project.



28. What other social control mechanisms were utilized by agencies participating in the project to address clients' negative behaviors?

## Reentry

29. Describe program services that were provided to previously incarcerated clients returning to the community.

30. What challenges did your project face in providing services to this population?

## Organizational Development

31. Describe policy and procedural changes that participating agencies made as a result of their participation.

32. Describe the strategies that your project used to engage nonfunded partners in activities. How effective were those strategies?

## Resources

33. List and describe the resources your project used for guidance in planning and implementing the project.

34. What additional resources and support would have been helpful to your project for planning and implementing the project?

## Sustainability

35. Is your project working to sustain the multistrategy gang initiative model long-term? If no, skip to the Lessons Learned section.      Yes      No
36. Describe the plans your project is exploring or has in place to sustain the project.
37. Describe the funding or collaboration challenges your project has encountered in sustaining your multistrategy gang program.

## Lessons Learned

38. How successful was your project in targeting gang members and at-risk youths?
39. What factors contributed most to successfully targeting these groups in your project?
40. How successful was your project in integrating services for clients or “wrapping” them around youth and their families?
41. What factors contributed most to successfully integrating services for clients?
42. How successful was your project in providing a balance of prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies?

43. What factors contributed most to successfully providing a balance of prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies?

If you are interested in participating in a follow-up interview, please include your name, e-mail address, and phone number below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_





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