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SCHOOL

Technical Assistance Manual

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142717

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This manual discusses how to assess an *individual* school gang problem and plan intervention. Schools mainly in low income, unstable, and socially isolated communities with high rates of school drop-outs, weak family structure, crime, and unemployment frequently have serious youth gang problems. The community gang problem most immediately spreads from the streets to the schools. Under conditions of gang intimidation and violence, it is difficult, if not impossible, *to carry out the school mission and educate all students. Primary academic competence objectives cannot be achieved unless social objectives are given attention.* That is, it is difficult, if not impossible, to educate all students in an unsafe environment.

The school must be active in the surrounding community and bear some responsibility for the problem. Yet, the school alone will have difficulty alleviating the problem. The entire community will need to mobilize to reduce gang violence and intimidation. While there are limits to what the schools can do regarding basic family and community factors, there is much that schools, in cooperation with community agencies and groups, can accomplish.

Schools that recognize the problem and take steps to control it are effective if they have committed and competent staff, high expectations for students, fair and consistent discipline, parental involvement, and a neat and graffiti free environment. Effective control and reduction of the school gang problem follows a process of assessment, defining goals, strategies, and objectives, implementation, and evaluation.

A complete assessment must include the assessment of the school and community gang problem, school characteristics, and the interrelationship of the school and community gang problem. There are three steps to carrying out an assessment; (1) establishing a School and Community Committee, (2) gathering information and making recommendations, and (3) defining goals and objectives.

It is crucial to obtain approval and support from central administration for efforts to reduce the school gang problem. The Principal must try to involve all segments of the community that will need mobilization to reduce the school and community gang problem. It is essential to involve all school personnel (school security, counselors, teachers, custodial and lunchroom staff, and secretaries) from the beginning of the assessment because they possess valuable information on student behavior, academic factors, and possibly characteristics of gang activity within and around the school.

The School and Community Committee will need to know the scope and seriousness of the community gang problem, community institutions that can be mobilized to alleviate the school gang problem, and the interrelationship of the school and community problem. It is important to determine whether the local school gang problem and community gang problem are emergent or chronic and to develop a consensus on the nature and scope of the problem. Such consensus will contribute to the effectiveness of program planning and implementation. In an emerging gang problem context, the school must take a leading role as part of a working coalition with community agencies and the police to reduce both the community and school gang problem. In a chronic problem community, the problem may be of such broad scope and severity that central responsibility may lie with a coalition of criminal justice agencies, youth agencies, churches, representatives from city government, local business, citizen groups, as well school representatives.

We recommend that the school anti-gang approach is built around five strategies; *(1) Social opportunities, (2) Social support, (3) Suppression, (4) Community mobilization,* and *(5) Organizational Development and Change.* The five strategies are reviewed in the introduction.

This approach proposes that primary academic competence objectives cannot be achieved unless social objectives are given attention. It is difficult, if not impossible, to educate all students in an unsafe environment. Therefore, *objectives of a special school program must be*; (1) Creation of a structure for flexible curriculum and insuring a safe school environment, (2) Application of consistent sanctions and means to protect school population and surrounding community from gang depredations, (3) Development of an opportunities provision, learning support system, (4) Appropriate training, staff selection, data retrieval systems, and evaluation to determine program effectiveness, (5) Early intervention to prevent and deter gang involvement, (6) Provision of vocational education, job preparation, and employment experiences, (7) Parental involvement, and (8) Liaison, coordination, and outreach to community agencies and programs.

The Principal will need to develop an internal organizational structure, a standing committee and case management team, for enhancing parental involvement, and the creation of a flexible curriculum and a safe school environment. The standing committee is responsible for monitoring the school gang problem, disciplinary policies, and school security and must meet on a regular basis to identify and solve problems related to school safety and reduction of the school gang problem.

In addition, The school must establish a school gang code and enforce it firmly and fairly. The Principal must communicate the gang school code to teachers, students and parents. In the classroom, teachers must know the school gang code and guidelines for appropriate intervention.

The case management team works directly with high-risk and gang youth and is responsible for parental involvement and flexible curriculum development. The case management team will become in-house experts on gangs within and around the school and will be useful in conflict or tense situations. Select qualified staff for the case management team; staff who has special skills working with gang or high risk youth. After selection, the case management team will need training before contact with gang youths.

Training must include; (1) *Orientation to the special program* - This introductory phase of training must focus on the program mission, procedures, policies, and goals and objectives, (2) *Gang specific information* - This training must focus on general information on gangs and specific information on school and local community gangs, (3) *Behavior and crisis management skill development* - Staff will also need training in methods and strategies to handle distinctive gang motivated disruptive and aggressive behavior. The ultimate goal is to help youths gain self-control and learn better ways to solve problems and cope with stress, frustration, and anger.

School security staff, with the help and support of teachers, staff, and the case management team and School Climate Committee, will need to eliminate conditions within and around the school that contribute to violence and disruptive acts with special attention to improved response to crises that involve gangs and potential violence.

The School Climate Committee in collaboration with the case management team must develop a response strategy for recognizing pre-crisis indicators. If the Principal

recognizes signs of an impending gang crisis, likely to erupt into violence, he or she must immediately mobilize security, teachers, staff, and contact law enforcement agencies. If a crisis erupts or a serious crime occurs, the students involved must be promptly and forcefully dealt by arrest and prosecution. The school will need to develop and maintain a good working relationship with law enforcement agencies, involve them in training, and consultation regarding gang crime and activity. In the event of serious injury or a gang homicide, the principal will need to inform all students and staff of the incident, have a mechanism to help students and staff cope with feelings, attend the funeral or visit the hospital, and express condolences to the family, and designate a spokesman to talk with the media to reduce confusion.

The School Climate Committee will need to develop criteria for identifying youth in gangs or at high risk of gang involvement and a centralized system for identifying gang members and tracking their progress. Do not confuse identification and tracking with destructive labeling or isolation of these youths from the mainstream school program. Gang related behavior may begin as early as elementary school. All school personnel will need to learn the high-risk factors and develop criteria for identifying youth at high risk and in gangs, but keep in mind that some gang youths do not exhibit such behavior. Yet, some non-gang youths sometime may display them. It will probably be necessary to obtain information from several reliable sources before confirmation of a particular youth as a gang member or a youth high risk. To minimize the danger of negative or inadvertent labeling; identify only the highest risk youths for purposes of the present program where early intervention and prevention are a priority.

In elementary schools, some schools use several methods to prevent gang activity, substance abuse, and to control youths who begin to engage in gang related behavior. They include the (1) Anti-Drug and Gang Curriculum, (2) Self-esteem and Values Change Curriculum, (3) Peer Tutoring, Counseling, and Conflict Resolution Teams, (4) Violence Reduction Program, and (5) Multicultural Diversity. Integrate new academic programs to prevent or control gang activity, where possible, into the existing curriculum (i.e., Health, Social Studies, or English classes).

In high school and middle schools, gang and gang-prone youth need to master the academic skills needed to finish high school and later obtain employment. Some of these youths can not cope with the rules and academic requirements in conventional schools and will require additional services. These students can achieve the mastery of basic skills in three possible ways, (1) Supplementing the academic core curriculum with remedial classes during and after school, (2) Targeting gang and gang prone youth for enriched program within their school, and (3). Placement of some gang and gang prone high school students into alternative educational programs.

A curriculum that combines academic and vocational preparation is particularly useful for gang and high risk youths. Strategies that provide economic opportunity for them will reduce gangs and gang violence. Legitimate jobs, as youths get older, are an alternative to street crime and hustling. The case management team, alternative school staff, or the vocational education staff need to introduce gang youth to the world of work responsibility and reward. Gang youth will need to become competent in the actual skills needed to obtain a job. Involve employers, in job workshops, on getting and holding jobs.

To effectively reduce the gang problem and fulfill the mission of educating all students, it is crucial to involve parents within the school. Yet, parents will vary in their acceptance of a school and community gang problem and in their commitment to the school and activism regarding the problem. The school, through the efforts of the Principal and case management team, will need to involve different types of parents. The school must involve parents in parent meetings, gang detection and prevention school activities, mentoring, and assistance on school activities (i.e., field trips). Parents who have successfully dealt with their own children with a gang or drug problem can be very helpful in a support group or calling or visiting parents to offer support. The Principal and case management can use two primary programs to involve parents; (1) Parents Patrols and (2) Mentoring programs (See Chapter 13).

Occasionally, the school will need to share information with community organizations or law enforcement agencies. The School Climate Committee must adopt procedures for maintaining a this list of gang and students at high risk of gang involvement and related records and files confidential. Generally, no outside agency, including the police, must have access to these files. An exception may be the informal sharing of information with law enforcement agencies necessary to effectively suppress serious gang activity within and around the school. When it is necessary to share descriptive information regarding the gang problem, make a distinction between statistical data and information on particular students. When possible, share only aggregate statistical data with outside agencies and actors.

In conclusion, the prevention and intervention programs will need evaluation. The school or an outside expert (consultant or academic) will need to obtain information to determine if the school has been successful in reducing the school gang or community gang problem. The school must use evaluation findings to determine which programs work and which do not, what needs improving, and new approaches to the reduction of the school gang problem.

SCHOOL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

- ■ Program Mission and Background
- ■ Purpose of the Manuals
- ■ Problem Statement
- ■ Discussion of Terms and Issues
- ■ Approach to the Problem
- ■ Overview of the Manual
- ■ Summary

Program Mission and Background

"There has been an increase in the Youth Gang problem and the need for information and guidance."

Criminal youth gang activity represents a serious threat to the safety and security of local citizens and impedes positive youth development. In recent years higher levels of youth gang violence and gang member related drug trafficking has been reported in an increasing number of neighborhoods, high schools, public housing projects, correctional institutions and other social contexts throughout the country.

In response the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Justice Department entered into a cooperative agreement with the School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago in October, 1987 to conduct the National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program. This program is a four stage Research and Development process: Assessment, Prototype/Model Development, Technical Assistance, and Testing.

"This Technical Assistance manual is part of a four stage Research and Development process."

Three of the four stages have been completed. Stage 1 included a comprehensive review of the research and program literature on youth gangs, a survey of programs in 45 cities, selected site visits, conferences, and special studies. During Stage 2 gang suppression and intervention models were produced for police, prosecutors, judges, probation, corrections, parole, schools, employment, community based youth agencies, grass-roots organizations. Additionally, separate manuals for comprehensive planning and for community mobilization were developed.

"Twelve manuals have been produced."

Stage 3 involved the creation of 12 technical assistance manuals which provide guidelines to implement the policies and procedures presented in the models. The ten agency manuals specify both organizational and community perspectives for dealing with the youth gang problem. The other two manuals outline specific procedures and processes of planning a comprehensive community approach to youth gang suppression and intervention. (See Appendix 3 for a list of documents.)

The program models and technical assistance manuals were based on the findings of the initial project assessment stage as well as extensive consultations with policy makers, administrators and practitioners at local and national levels. Two regional conferences were held with policymakers and administrators from 16 cities who contributed to the development of the final version of the manuals.

Purpose of the Manuals

"The purpose is to present a set of guidelines to reduce youth gang crime."

The purpose of the technical assistance manuals is to present detailed steps for the control and reduction of youth gang crime, especially gang-motivated violence. The manuals seek to provide governmental authorities, criminal justice organizations, social agencies, and community groups with strategies which encourage gang-prone and gang-involved youth to terminate criminal activity and participate in legitimate social, academic, and employment pursuits.

Broad preventive policies which deal with larger social issues such as poverty and racism, housing, education, jobs, and health care are addressed only on a limited basis in the manuals. Key issues of family breakdown, violence in the media, and the proliferation of sophisticated weapons need to be directly addressed as they contribute to the youth gang problem. They are dealt with here mainly as conditions within which special organizational policies and procedures and community mobilization must be developed.

"Administrators and policymakers are the primary audience."

Local administrators and policy makers are the primaryaudience, but the manuals should also be useful to other officials and personnel concerned with the problem, including agency supervisors, front-line workers, and community volunteers.

The manuals are not intended to serve in the place of more general models and manuals dealing with delinquent or troublesome youth in the criminal justice and human service fields; they are intended as a supplement to them. Even so, the manuals should be of value in dealing with youth crime more generally. This is so because the youth gang problem can be viewed as part of a larger set of crime and delinquency and youth socialization problems.

Problem Statement

"The gang problem has changed and grown more serious in most regions of the country."

During the 1980s and early 1990s, more criminally oriented and better organized gangs or cliques have become prevalent in many urban communities. More young people from diverse backgrounds and settings are joining gangs to meet social and economic needs not satisfied through existing institutions, e.g., family, school, and employment. The youth gang has become an alternative mainly anti-social institution for an increasing number of youth.

Why youth gangs have developed and become more criminal and complex organizations is not clear. The type and severity of youth gang problems may be largely a response to two conditions, poverty or limited access to social opportunities and social disorganization, i.e., the lack of integration and stability of social institutions including family, school and employment in a local community.

Certain factors exacerbate these two social conditions to produce varying gang subcultures and systems. They include:

♦ large and rapid population movement of low income minorities into a community;

♦ intergenerational gang traditions;

♦ defects of social policy and coordination of service delivery at local and national levels;

♦ institutional racism;

♦ insecurities of certain working and middle class populations "threatened" by newcomers; and

♦ the growth of criminal opportunities.

Examples are the following:

Violent youth gang subcultures often develop when gang-affiliated African American and Hispanic youth move from central cities to smaller cities and suburban areas without adequate social, family, economic, and educational supports. Violent gang subcultures may also develop when new waves of poor immigrants from Mexico, Central America, the Pacific Islands, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Korea, Philippines and other Asian countries arrive in urban communities. The newcomer groups are often met with hatred and resentment, sometimes manifested in physical attacks. Gangs may form and become rapidly entrenched, first as defensive, and then as offensive groups.

Furthermore, in ghetto, inner city African-American and Hispanic communities, a limited criminal opportunity system often develops. Gangs in these communities may change from status-oriented, conflict groups and assume a highly predatory, criminal-gain character. Over time, sophisticated instrumental rather than traditional or status-oriented youth gangs may develop, with special interest in drug trafficking and other economic criminal activity.

In some communities across the country, particularly in the western states but increasingly elsewhere, the influx of low income and working class Pacific-Islander and Asian groups e.g., Tongan, Filipino,

Hong Kong, Korean, Vietnamese, Laotian, or Cambodian, has resulted in other varieties of youth gang problems. Second generation youths, born in this country or who arrived as pre-teens, may seek protection, prestige, and income through gang membership. Some of these gangs adopt African-American or Hispanic gang patterns; others becomeclosely connected to traditional ethnic-based, adult criminal organizations. Criminal activities can include home invasions, business extortion, robbery, rape, intimidation and a range of racket activities.

These newcomer youth gangs, and the Asian communities upon which they prey, are difficult for local law enforcement, schools, and community organizations to penetrate or influence because of cultural, communication, and trust problems.

Some blue-collar or middle class communities are characterized by growing economic, social and cultural pressures as well as by increasing family or personal disorganization. Some of these formerly stable, predominately white communities have become centers for youth groups with a "nothing to lose attitude." Youth gangs or their equivalent such as Satanic, Stoner, punk rocker, hate, Neo-Nazi, or racist Skinhead groups may participate in a wide range of loosely organized criminal acts, characterized by perverse and negative behavior, including vandalism, drug use, homosexual assaults, and even homicides.

Additionally, in certain stable, lower middle class communities, whether African-American, Latino, Pacific Islander, Asian, white, or Native American, the gang problem may assume a more organized and usually less violent character. Youth may become relatively more involved in extortion, car theft, burglary, robbery, sophisticated drug trafficking, and various lucrative quasi-racket activities which are not necessarily conducted in the "home communities." Legitimate business and criminal interests may be relatively well integrated.

Furthermore, specialization of criminal youth gang patterns by race and ethnicity seemingly exists. Economic, social and cultural factors may, in fact, be the cause. Thus, some African-American youth gang or clique members may be heavily engaged in street level crack-cocaine trafficking; Mexican-American youth gang members may be relatively more involved in violent turf based activity, and Asian gang members may be more mobile and closely related to adult crime organizationsinvolved in crimes such as extortion, robbery, and international drug trafficking.

However, these youth gang subcultures also exist side by side, interact, integrate with, or succeed each other over time. In some communities youth gangs are inter-racial and inter-ethnic.

In spite of the many and changing varieties of gang subcultures which can be found, a common denominator among them is that most of these groups are comprised of youth who share somewhat similar values and a keen sense of personal failure and low self-esteem. For many gang youth, violence has become an acceptable way of life, partially

sanctioned by the larger society. Violence is seen on nightly newscasts, in the movies, on evening television and Saturday morning cartoons, and encouraged by certain "rap" stars. Violence is projected as a means of resolving authority, low self-esteem and race/ethnic problems.

Discussion of Terms and Issues

"Key components of the problem are the youth gang, youth gang member and the gang incident."

"Gang-motivated violence and not drug trafficking is the key but not exclusive concern of the manual."

It is important to accurately identify key components of the youth gang problem in order not to exaggerate, deny, or mythologize them. This is necessary in order to develop appropriate policies and procedures to deal with the different or varying street gang problems and subcultures encountered. The components: 1) the criminal youth gang, 2) the youth gang member, and 3) the gang incident.

The central focus of the manuals is control and reduction of gang-motivated violence. We are not primarily interested in highly organized drug trafficking by groups concerned only with profit, although there are often important connections between these associations and the youth or street gang. However, we are concerned with drug trafficking or predatory youth cliques to the extent they participate in, depend on, and influence the development of violent gang activities.

Youth gang members engage increasingly in both violent status-related as well as entrepreneurial or predatory criminal activities. If a youth group engages primarily in criminal entrepreneurial activity and participates periodically in serious violence, it falls within the scope of our concern.

Our concern is also with differences between emerging and chronic gang problem communities and the need for prevention and especially early intervention services.

1. Criminal youth gang

"The traditional youth gang is turf based and status-oriented, but other kinds of gangs have also developed."

This is a group often comprising both juveniles and young adults who engage in a range of social and anti-social behaviors. Cliques or members engage repetitively or at times spontaneously in violent, predatory, and criminal gain behaviors. The criminal youth gang may be located within a neighborhood or across neighborhoods and even cities. It may be loosely or well organized with established rules of conduct. The youth gang may have a name, turf, colors, signs, symbols and distinctive dress. The youth gang often promotes mutual support among members and conflict with competing gangs or established authority.

Many of these groups are traditional turf based gangs. Traditionally, the primary function of the youth gang has been to establish or protect the group's reputation and status within a framework of shared or communal values. This continues to be true for many youth gangs today. Some youth gangs, however, do not display colors and are

not primarily concerned with social status, but are more gain oriented and more rationally organized.

2. The Youth Gang Member

While the criminal youth gang includes some youth who conform primarily to conventional norms; most, however, engage in a range of criminal behaviors.

Most gang participants are in the age range of 12 to 24 years. However, some pre-schoolers as well as persons into their 50s have been reportedly engaged in gangactivities. However, the most serious and violent gang activity tends to be committed by older adolescents and young adults. Some gang members may join for period as short as a day, a week, or a month; others are members for years. Some members move from low to high gang status, from less serious to more serious criminal gang behaviors, and vice versa, sometimes in different gangs.

Far fewer females than males join youth gangs, although with the increase in number of gangs throughout the country more female members are probably involved in serious youth gang activities than in an earlier era. Available evidence indicates, however, that females usually join gangs later and leave earlier, and are usually involved in less violent or serious criminal behavior than males. About 9 times as many males as females are arrested for gang crimes according to several studies. Less than one percent of gang homicide offenders are female.

Female members typically are in groups affiliated with male gangs. Sometimes females are integrated directly as members into the gang proper, and are less frequently involved in independent all-female criminal youth gangs. There is some recent evidence that females have assumed leadership roles in certain gang or criminal group activities, such as drug trafficking, in a few cities. Special attention needs to be directed to high risk female gang members who are likely to be physically and sexually victimized, or who induce or facilitate male gang member assaults against other gangs.

Traditional gangs may have different type of members: identifiable leaders, core, regular, associate, soldier, peripheral, wannabe, floater, veteran or old-head members. The presence and definition of these categories of gang members, however, may be quite variable across the country. Of special interest, for purposes of control and prevention are two categories of gang youth: 1) the more serious, hardcore, often older gang youths, and 2) the younger, high risk, often less committed gang youths.

Agencies need to carefully identify gangs and gang members. This process should depend on use of multiplecriteria such as gang member self-identification, statements by reliable witnesses, verification by a second independent agency source, prior police records and the youth's regular association with a known gang member. Participation by the youth in certain serious gang-motivated criminal incidents such as

6

drive-by shootings must ordinarily precipitate a gang member identification process for gang suppression and intervention purposes.

3. The Gang Incident

A gang incident is the unit for classifying and reporting an event as a gang crime, especially for law enforcement purposes. Reported gang incidents become the basis for determining whether a gang problem exists and assessing its scope.

The gang homicide is usually the key and most reliable measure of the seriousness of gang crime. However, identification of gang incidents, e.g., homicide, assault, or robbery, is neither a simple nor a standard procedure. Two different procedures or variations of them, are currently employed to determine whether a gang incident has occurred and should be recorded for law enforcement, and, consequently, public policy purposes.

■ Gang-Motivated

In this procedure, a criminal act is defined as a gang incident if it grows out of gang motivation, interest, or specific circumstances which enhance the status or function of the gang. Examples include: inter-gang violence, gang retaliation, turf protection, intimidation, robbery, recruitment, or other criminal activity which affects the gang's reputation or interests as a whole. One or more members of the gang may be involved as a suspect, witness, offender or victim in these circumstances. In classifying the incident, focus is on the nature of the specific situation in which the illegal act occurs, such as a drive-by shooting or yelling a gang slogan in the course of the crime.

Crimes such as burglary, car theft, prostitution, and drugtrafficking by a gang member are problematic because it is hard to determine whether the act is gang-motivated. Many criminal acts serve individual member needs unrelated to gang interests. On the other hand, seemingly individual or self-serving crimes by gang or aspiring gang youth may be gang-motivated. For example, a youth may be required or feel compelled to commit a particular property or person crime because of pressures by the gang.

■ Gang-related

This procedure is based on the characterization of a crime or delinquent act as a gang incident when the suspect, offender or victim is a gang member, regardless of gang motivation or circumstances. Usually any serious criminal act, especially of a violent, predatory, or drug trafficking nature, in which a gang member is involved, can be classified as a gang incident. For example, the crime of a gang member who

"Different definitions of the gang incident exist."

"The gang-motivated definition focuses on the nature of the criminal act."

"The gang-related definition focuses on identification of the criminal suspect as a gang member."

steals from a store - even though that act has nothing directly to do with his gang membership -would be classified as a gang-related incident.

■ Which Definition to use

The argument in favor of using the gang-motivated definition is that it focuses sharply on the circumstances of the incident rather than the identification of the individual as a gang member. It may be more precise and valid than the gang-related definition. It withstands court challenges better. It also avoids excessive labelling or exaggeration of the gang problem.

The counter argument is that the gang-motivated definition minimizes the actual scope of the gang crime problem. It encourages organizational or community denial of the problem. A key assumption of the proponents of the gang-related definition is that a gang member is likely to engage in a wide range of serious crimes because gang membership predisposes him or her to do so. Evidence for this argument is not substantial,however.

Police and prosecutors generally believe that it is desirable to identify gang members and their activities as completely as possible. Police are particularly concerned that the full range of criminal activities of the gang member be available for efficient tracking and investigation purposes.

We recommend a procedure that avoids excessive labelling of youth but ensures protection of the community. A gang-incident procedure should be devised which records and distinguishes between gang-motivated and non-gang-motivated crime committed by the gang member. All serious criminal incidents by repeat gang offenders should be clearly "flagged" on criminal justice computer systems. An effective computerized information system permits use of either or both procedures to track gang-motivated incidents and gang member crime.

4. Gang Problem Contexts, Chronic and Emerging

With the growth and spread of the youth gang problem,a two-fold categorization of the problem context has come into use: Chronic and Emerging. Our manuals stress the differences in these contexts as a basis for the development of distinctive strategies, policies and procedures for gang suppression and intervention. Simply put, a more preventive or early intervention approach may be required in the emerging gang problem context, while a more elaborate and formalized suppression, intervention and prevention approach may be necessary in the chronic context.

■ Chronic Gang Problem Context

Such an organizational or community context is characterized by persistent or periodic crises of major gang member violence and sometimes related drug trafficking extending over a five to ten year or more period, or even decades. Youth gangs are usually better organized in such communities which are often located inlarger or older cities. These contexts are likely to be found in impoverished, ghetto, or transitional areas or ports of entry of inner cities, although they are increasingly found in smaller cities and suburban communities.

■ Emerging Gang Problem Context

This organizational or community context is characterized by less well organized and persistent but at times serious forms of gang violence and gang member drug trafficking. The gang problem has usually been present and/or recognized for about five years or less. To some extent, the development and spread of the problem may be traced to the influence of new settlers or gang crime entrepreneurs for example, drug traffickers, from chronic problem cities or contexts. Youth gangs in emerging problem areas tend to be fewer in number and most often evolve out of local delinquent, sometimes social groups under deteriorating economic or social situations for minority, newcomer, or socially isolated populations.

The distinction between the concepts of chronic and emerging gang problem communities, however, are not sharp. Indicators related to the onset of the problem, its duration, degree of gang organization, severity of gang violence and related gang member drug trafficking, as well as the appropriate response to the problem(s) are not neatly categorized by the terms "chronic" and "emerging".

Emerging gang problem communities may develop into chronic; and chronic gang problem communities may go through periods of sharply diminished gang activity before the problem re-emerges. Different parts of a community or jurisdiction may be characterized by different stages or degrees of severity of the problem at a given time.

5. Variability of Gang, Drug Trafficking and Crime Problems

It is important to understand for policy and program purposed that youth gangs involved in gang violence are not necessarily involved in drug trafficking. Somecommunities which have high levels of youth gang violence may have relatively low levels of drug trafficking; other communities with high levels of drug trafficking may have low levels of youth gang activity. Drug trafficking may succeed, or serve either to diminish or increase, patterns of youth gang violence.

Finally, high levels of general criminality in a community do not necessarily indicate high levels of gang activity. Some cities with the

highest levels of youth homicide and drug trafficking may have relatively limited youth gang activity.

6. Prevention

The focus of this and the other technical assistance manuals in our Research and Development program is on issues of intervention and suppression in contexts where the gang problem is clearly present. Here, prevention refers mainly to secondary forms of prevention, or early intervention, which reduces the likelihood that highly gang-prone or the younger gang member will commit or continue to commit gang crimes. This is to be accomplished through effective controls, direct treatment or services, and provision of legitimate opportunities. In our conception, prevention requires change and development both by the individual youth as well as within his or her social environment.

Most youth from low income and social problem ridden communities are not involved in delinquent gang activities. Finally, we note that a simple prevention model which emphasizes exclusive concern with younger youth may be unsuccessful. Such a model does not take into consideration system effects, including the influence of older youth on "wannabe" or younger youth. All key components of the systemic problem need to be addressed.

Approach to the Problem

The manuals specify five major lines of action or strategies: community mobilization, opportunities provision, suppression, social intervention, and organizational change and development. These strategies must be combined in different ways depending on the problem context, the specific mission of the organization, and the kind of youth targeted for special attention.

1. Community Mobilization

Community mobilization is necessary in socially disorganized communities. Social disorganization, which contributes to the development of criminal youth gangs, may be characterized by the weakness of existing legitimate institutions such as home, school, employment, the failure to integrate norms, values and roles of different social institutions, and the fragmentation of criminal justice or community service delivery systems, within and across communities.

Both local and federal interests and resources must be mobilized for the development of collaborative community and interagency activities and a cohesive community genuinely directed at the control and reduction of the youth gang problem. In times of restricted local

"Secondary prevention is included in the manuals' perspective."

"Different strategies of suppression and intervention have been identified."

"Community mobilization is critically important."

10

community resources, coordinated or agency consortium efforts are essential. These should include the full and productive use of local as well as state and federal resources, moral and political pressures as well as local citizen participation and action. (See also General Community Design and Community Mobilization manuals.)

2. Opportunities Provision

"The opportunities provision strategy focuses on the importance of education, training and jobs for high risk gang-prone and gang member youth."

The provision of additional social opportunities, i.e., the development of a variety of targeted educational, training, and employment programs, is the second most important component over the long term for the reduction and prevention of the youth gang problem, particularly in chronic contexts. The schools need to provide remedial and enriched educational programs for gang-prone and hardcore gang youths.

Education, training, and jobs are especially critical for older gang youth still in gangs who are not in school but who are at "positive risk" at a certain point in their social maturation for leaving the gangs, or for decreased participation in criminal gang activity. A key objective of these programs should be developing socially-competent youth, whether in or out of school. (See School and Employment manuals.)

3. Social Intervention

"Social intervention is based on an "outreach" and linkage approach of gang youth to the conventional society."

Youth serving agencies and grass-roots community groups must "reach out" and act as a link between gang youth and the conventional world. Staff or adult volunteers of these organizations must develop meaningful relationships with these youth. Community based youth agencies should facilitate access to pertinent opportunity systems and exercise social controls which contribute to socialization of gang youth. Special efforts are also required to coordinate services for these youth. (See Community Based Youth Agency manual.)

4. Suppression

"The strategy of suppression is defined in broad social control terms and requires more than the involvement of criminal justice agencies."

Social control procedures, particularly those of criminal justice but also of community based agencies, are essential for community protection and the prevention and reduction of the problem. Youth gang suppression involves not only law enforcement but a variety of other agencies and community groups in the targeting, monitoring, supervision, and if necessary, restraint of gang offenders. It requires the anticipation, prevention, and limitation of the effects of gang crime in particular situations to protect both youth participants and the community.

However, arrest, prosecution, imprisonment, and close supervision of gang youth are insufficient unless joined with other community oriented strategies to achieve long term impact on the problem. This means that community based agencies and local groups must accept and

"Criminal justice strategies must also include community mobilization, social intervention and opportunities provision."

collaborate with criminal justice agencies in patrol, surveillance, and certain information sharing under conditions which protect both youth and the community. Police, prosecution and other criminal justice agencies must develop a variety of social intervention, opportunities, prevention and community involvement programs to supplement their primary goal of suppressing gang crime. (See especially Police, Prosecution and Probation manuals.)

Furthermore, policy-makers, administrators and practitioners in the criminal justice system have a special responsibility to withstand pressures from the public and other units of the justice system to carry out an exclusive strategy of suppression to deal with the youth gang problem.

5. Organizational Change and Development

"Organizational development and change focuses on better use of internal agency resources to deal with the youth gang problem."

Finally, the above strategies need to be appropriately organized based on the nature and scope of the problem in the community and the mission of the particular organization. Organizational development and change require better use and reallocation of available resources with agencies and neighborhoods, but also across communities. Common definitions, improved communication, resident involvement and coordination within as well as across agencies and contiguous communities dealing with the problem are also required.

Both community mobilization and organizational development strategies whether in emerging or chronic gang problem contexts, should be closely interrelated to create efficient and cohesive system/community/regional arrangements for dealing with the gang problem.

"Targeting of certain communities, gangs, and gang members is necessary to make the best use of limited resources for dealing with the problem."

"High gang crime neighborhoods, certain types of gangs and gang members should receive priority attention."

"Key targets of community agency and grass-roots attention should be leadership and core gang as well as high risk gang-prone youths."

Targeting

To conserve resources and most effectively deal with the youth gang problem, it is important to target certain communities, organizational contexts, gangs and gang members or gang-prone youth. Special emphasis on community mobilization is required in both emerging and chronic gang communities. Opportunity provision must also be emphasized for chronic problem communities and contexts.

Neighborhoods and organizations, particularly schools, experiencing serious gang problems, should be priority targets for suppression and intervention efforts.

Certain youth gangs or gang-like groups clearly committed to violent and serious criminal activity should receive priority attention. This is to avoid unnecessary labelling and widening the net of gang delinquency and crime through inappropriate criminal justice and community based agency attention. It is also to concentrate resources on the heart of the presenting problem.

Finally, individual youth should be targeted in the following order of priority purposes:

✓ **first,** *leadership and core gang youths*--to disrupt gang networks, protect the community, and facilitate the reintegration of these youths through community based or institutional programming into legitimate pursuits;

✓ <u>second</u>, *high risk gang-prone youth who are often younger or aspiring gang members who give clear indication of beginning participation in criminal gang activities* -- to prevent further criminal gang involvement through early intervention, preferably community based services, and

✓ **third,** *regular and peripheral gang members*--to generally address their needs for control and intervention services.

Finally, a caution! The policies procedures and steps recommended in the manuals should be viewed as promising but not yet systematically researched through field testing.

Summary

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Justice Department, entered into a cooperative agreement with the School of Social ServiceAdministration, University of Chicago, to conduct the National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program. The scope and seriousness of the problem was analyzed from both an organizational and community perspective. Models or prototypes were developed. Technical Assistance manuals were created which focussed on the implementation of policies and procedures in emerging and chronic gang problem communities and contexts.

The manuals address the gang problem in terms of critical characteristics of the youth gang, its membership and the way the problem is defined. Focus is on controlling, reducing, as well as preventing gang-motivated violent and serious criminal youth gang activity. The mission of suppression and intervention is specified as requiring five key strategies: community mobilization, opportunities provision, social intervention, suppression and organizational change and development. Key targets of a program should be leadership and core gang as well as high risk gang-prone youth.

I.S.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION - SCHOOL MANUAL

- ■ What This Manual Will Do?
- ■ Problem Statement
- ■ Approaches That Work
- ■ Gang Control and Reduction Process
- ■ Summary

What This Manual Will Do?

"This manual will discuss how to implement a special school program targeting gang youth."

The purpose of this manual is to describe how to assess an *individual* school gang problem and plan intervention that will reduce it. This chapter will focus on defining the problem, factors that contribute to successful intervention in a school setting, and the effective control and reduction process.

The next chapter will provide steps to help school officials get started. These steps include a discussion of the purpose and characteristics of an assessment and more specifically how to find out if a gang problem exists in the school and surrounding community.

Subsequent chapters will go into specific detail regarding how to meet goals and objectives directed to the problem. The manual concludes with a glossary and bibliography that may be helpful in the implementation of strategies to reduce school gang problems.

Problem Statement

"Schools with serious gang problems are usually located in communities with many social problems."

Schools mainly in low income, unstable, and socially isolated communities with high rates of school drop-outs, weak family structure, crime, and unemployment frequently have serious youth gang problems. It is in this context of serious social and economic problems that gang youth seek to establish turf or some area of dominance and security in the community or school.

Also, gang youth may intimidate school officials, and community residents as well as students. Truancy rates are often high for both gang and non-gang youth, since students are afraid and therefore reluctant to travel through gang turf to get to school and once there find themselves threatened as well.

"School officials sometimes deny or minimize the scope and seriousness of the problem."

The community gang problem most immediately spreads from the streets to the schools. Students who are gang members, particularly in the middle schools, may be failing which leads to destructive gang attitudes and behaviors. The youths establish turf, deface school property with graffiti, and exert control through intimidation and assaults

15

on other students. Under these conditions, it is difficult, if not impossible, to carry out the school mission and educate all students.

Yet, school officials sometimes deny or minimize the scope and seriousness of the problem because admission of a serious problem may make them "look bad" (Chicago Safe School Study 1981). School, churches, and local community youth service agencies often operate independently of each other concerning the youth gang problem and seem unable to establish coalitions to deal with it.

The school must be active in the surrounding community and bear some responsibility for the problem. In school, most gang members are bored, feel inadequate in class, detach themselves from school, and drop-out as soon as possible. They experience academic and social failure at an early age and develop poor learning skills. Yet, the school alone will have difficulty alleviating the problem. The entire community will need to mobilize to reduce gang violence and intimidation.

In sum, the following factors contribute to and delay appropriate action regarding the problem:

♦ The failure of families and schools to properly socialize, educate, and meet the youth's psychological and emotional needs.

♦ The inability of agencies, churches, and schools to establish social control over gang youths.

♦ Denial of the scope and seriousness of the youth gang problem.
♦ Lack of coordination and cooperation between community agencies, churches, and schools.

Approaches That Work

Some schools successfully establish a positive school climate and do a remarkable job despite serious social problems in the surrounding community. In these schools, truancy rates are low and parents, administrators, and teachers invest in school programs.

Factors which account for these differences include:

♦ School leadership (School Board, Superintendent, District Administrators, or School Principal) that recognize the beginning of the problem and takes steps to prevent or control it.

♦ Administrators, teachers, and staff commit to the school and have positive relationships with students.

"The school must be active in the surrounding community."

"Factors that contribute to and delay action regarding the school gang problem."

"Some schools do a remarkable job despite serious community problems."

16

♦ Teachers who are competent and attentive to the academic and social needs of <u>all</u> students.

♦ School leadership creates fair and consistent expectations for achievement by all students.

♦ Discipline policy that insures clear and consistent treatment of all students.

♦ A strong parent organization invested and involved in the school.

♦ A good working coalition between school personnel, local churches and community agencies that insures good interaction, cooperation, and coordination.

♦ The schools are neat, attractive, and kept free of graffiti.

Effective Gang Control and Reduction Process

Dealing with the school's youth gang problem requires a series of interrelated and complex steps involving key people, groups, and organizations inside and outside the school. The approach may vary somewhat depending on the level and duration of the problem and whether it occurs in an emerging or chronic context. In sum, the reduction and control of the youth gang problem require that school and community builds coalitions, learn how to communicate, integrate their concerns, and take collective responsibility for dealing with the problem. In this process, the school must take leadership in reaching out to the surrounding community.

Effective control and reduction of the school gang problem require a five stage process (View Appendix 2, Table 1):

I.   Problem Assessment

II. Defining Goals and Strategies

III. Defining Objectives

IV. Implementation

V.   Evaluation

This manual will focus on the first three stages and offer suggestions and guidelines that must be helpful in assessing the school gang problem and planning intervention.

Summary

The key points of this chapter are:

1 This manual discusses how to assess an individual school gang problem and plan intervention.

2 Schools mainly in low income, unstable, and socially isolated communities with high rates of school drop-outs, weak family structure, crime, and unemployment frequently have serious youth gang problems.

3 The community gang problem most immediately spreads from the streets to the schools.

4 Under conditions of gang intimidation and violence, it is difficult, if not impossible, to carry out the school mission and educate all students.

5 The school must be active in the surrounding community and bear some responsibility for the problem. Yet, the school alone will have difficulty alleviating the problem. The entire community will need to mobilize to reduce gang violence and intimidation.

6 Lack of social control, denial, and lack of coordination between schools, churches, and community agencies contribute to the problem and delay appropriate action.

7 Schools that recognize the problem and take steps to control it are effective if they have committed and competent staff, high expectations for students, fair and consistent discipline, parental involvement, and a neat and graffiti free environment.

8 Effective control and reduction of the school gang problem follows a process of assessment, defining goals, strategies, and objectives, implementation, and evaluation.

CHAPTER 3

I. ASSESSMENT

- ■ Purpose and Characteristics of an Assessment
- ■ Establishment of School and Community Committee
- ■ School Level Assessment
- ■ Community Level Assessment
- ■ Chronic Versus Emergent School Gang Problem
- ■ Summary

Purpose and Characteristics of Assessment

Someone in the school hierarchy -- School Board, Superintendent, District Administrator, or School Principal -- must first decide to do something about the school gang problem. This usually occurs when they can no longer deny or minimize the problem following a crisis event, bad publicity, or expressed concern of principals, teachers, parents, community groups, and agencies.

Following the initial recognition often at the individual school level that a school gang problem may exist; the scope and seriousness of the problem must be systematically assessed to select suitable intervention strategies and programs. The shape of the assessment and intervention strategies used will depend on whether the school is an elementary school, middle school, or high school. The scope, nature, and seriousness of the problem will vary to a large extent dependent on the age of youth. The assessment process will serve as a basis for defining goal and objectives and decision-making regarding possible changes in curriculum, discipline policies, personnel changes, or changes in relation to the community necessary to alleviate the gang problem. A complete assessment must entail:

"Must systematically assess the scope and seriousness of the problem."

✓ *Nature and scope of the school gang problem?*

- Past responses to the gang problem.

- Why it exists in the school?

- What, if anything, can be done to reduce it?

- Who are the school gang members?

- What youth are at high risk of gang involvement?

- The relationship, if any, between gang involvement and academic performance.

✓ *Objective assessment must be made of school characteristics.*

- School climate

- Disciplinary policy

- Attendance

- School safety

- School security

✓ *The community gang problem and the interrelationship of the gang problem in the school to that in the community.*

- General nature and scope of the community gang problem?

There are four basic tasks in carrying out an assessment:

✓ **First**, establishing a School and Community Committee.

✓ **Second**, gathering information and making recommendations.

✓ **Third**, defining goals and objectives.

The first two steps are discussed in this chapter and the final step, defining goals and objectives, will be covered in subsequent chapters.

Prevention and intervention programs must be designed based uniquely on the results of the assessment.

Establishing a School and Community Committee

The impetus to assess the problem can also come from anywhere in the school hierarchy and take a variety of forms. This can include; (1) The School Board or Superintendent establishing a task force composed of administrators, teachers, staff, and outside experts, (2) School District Administrator establishing a district wide committee or School and Community Committee for a particular school or schools, or (3) A school Principal establishing a School and Community Committee within the school. The specific method chosen, of course, will depend on the focus of the assessment (entire school district or system wide gang problem or local school gang problem), the seriousness of the gang problem, and the source of the mandate. *This manual focuses, however, on the assessment of an individual school gang problem.*

From the individual school perspective, the Principal will need to give careful consideration to the composition of the School and Community Committee. The Principal must try to involve all segments of the community that will need mobilization to reduce the school and community gang problem. This committee or advisory group must include school administrators, teachers, staff, and parents. Also, the Principal will need to involve representatives of the police, youth agencies, and community groups, at least in a consultation capacity. Individuals in decision making roles within the school or outside agencies must serve on the School and Community Committee. This will greatly facilitate the planning and organizational changes necessary to address the school gang problem.

In addition, the Principal will to need to arrange for a thorough orientation on the mission of the School and Community Committee. This committee must also receive "gang specific" training as outlined in Chapter 7. Invite outside experts from the Police Department, academic settings, or from a local community organization to provide a training seminar on gangs.

The establishment of a School and Community Committee is an opportunity for the Principal to:

♦ Begin to develop an internal school structure and standing committee to address the school gang problem.

♦ Mobilize agencies and actors to address the problem and facilitate the school mission (educating students).

♦ Begin to build relationships, if they do not exist, with parents, community and law enforcement agencies, and churches.

It is essential to involve all school personnel (school security, counselors, teachers, social workers, truant officers, custodial and lunchroom staff, and secretaries) from the beginning of the assessment because they possess valuable information on student behavior, academic factors, and possibly characteristics of gang activity within and around the school. Their investment in organizational and curriculum changes will be central to successful intervention.

Ultimately, the Principal must resolve two other factors before an assessment can begin:

♦ How do you involve parents in the assessment and implementation process? This may be difficult for a school that does not have an active parent's group.

♦ How do you obtain the support from central office or district administrators of the plan to assess and reduce the gang problem?

It is crucial to obtain approval or support from central administration for efforts to reduce the school gang problem. The School and Community Committee will need to come up with a clear definition and outline of the problem. This careful documentation of a school gang problem will enhance the success of efforts to get central administration support.

School Level Assessment

<u>Nature and Scope of the School Gang Problem</u>

The School and Community Committee will need to thoroughly understand the scope and seriousness of the gang problem within and around the school. Therefore, the committee must collect specific information regarding:

> ► *What precipitating events or conditions led to the various incidents of gang activity that concern school officials, parents, and the community (e.g., recent influx of students from other cities or communities; youth banding together to feel secure and protect themselves, etc.)?*

> ► *Are students within or around the school engaged in intimidation of other students and staff, drug dealing, or violence?*

> ► *The past responses to the gang problem.*

> ► *What, if anything, can the school do to reduce the school gang problem?*

> ► *What students are in gangs and what are their ages, gender, race and ethnicity, and family structure?*

> ► *What youths are at high risk of gang involvement?*

> ► *What is the relationship, if any, between gang involvement and academic performance?*

"Must assess the relationship between gang involvement and academic performance."

In addition, the committee must collect information concerning where the gangs hang out within and outside the school, and gang characteristics such as leadership, size, and scope and seriousness of criminal behavior.

<u>School Characteristics</u>

A critical step is the assessment of school factors that are crucial to management of the problem. This must include assessing the school's

capacity to impose controls on gang member behavior and to insure the safety of other students, teachers, and staff.

The school committee must answer the following questions:

▶ *Does the school have policies and procedures, formal or informal, for dealing with gang youth?*

▶ *Are troublesome gang youths placed in special education programs or regularly suspended or expelled?*

▶ *Are gang members transferred from one school to another and encouraged to drop-out?*

In addition, the School and Community Committee will need to assess and evaluate the school climate, disciplinary system, attendance, personal safety issues, and school security. The National School Safety Center, Pepperdine University, publishes an excellent resource for evaluating the above factors entitled, <u>The School Safety Check Book (August 1990)</u>.

■ School Climate

Surveying teachers, custodians, bus drivers, lunch room and office personnel, students, and school security staff will begin to give the School and Community Committee an overview of the school climate. School climate can be defined as "the general tone or prevailing attitude within the school" (School Safety Check Book 1990). The idea is to get some general sense of the morale of teachers and the feelings of teachers, students, and personnel about the school. For example:

▶ *Did data collection uncover a pattern of fear and anxiety of gang activity throughout the school?*

▶ *Are students afraid to attend extra-curricular activities for fear of gangs?*

▶ *Is graffiti present throughout the school or on the outside walls of the school?*

▶ *What is the nature of the relationships between administration, staff, students, and teachers as well as parents and representatives of outside agencies?*

▶ *Have poor morale, anxiety, and fear of gangs directly or indirectly contributed to the school's inability to prevent or control the gang problem?*

▶ *Have poor morale, anxiety, and fear of gangs directly or indirectly contributed to the school's inability to carry out the school mission of educating all students?*

▶ *Do students look forward to attending school or do they seem to be afraid because of gang intimidation, extortion, or assaults?*

■ Disciplinary System

Equitable and competent discipline is a necessity if a school is to have a safe learning environment. The School and Community Committee must answer the questions:

▶ *Does the school have effective discipline policies for identifying youths who exhibit gang related disruptive behavior?*

▶ *Do administrators, staff, and teachers properly implement the policies?*

▶ *Does implementation of disciplinary policies result in successful reduction of this behavior?*

▶ *Are large numbers of students dropping-out or being expelled from school?*

▶ *Does discipline involve the parents in decision-making and follow-up?*

To be effective all students, teachers, and parents must be aware of school rules and discipline procedures. If gang violence, intimidation, or graffiti is escalating within the school, this may indicate the need to review and strengthen discipline policies and procedures.

■ Attendance

The School and Community Committee must analyze official attendance and drop-out data for underlying patterns and causes. There is some evidence that, when gangs are active in schools, they pose a serious obstacle to the fundamental goal of schools --education of all students (Chicago Safe School Study 1981). In victimization studies, boys report intimidation and attack from gang youth twice as often as girls. Also, the younger the student the more likely they are to express fear of gangs in school (Chicago Safe School Study 1981). Many students may fear attending school because of gang intimidation It may be useful to select some chronic truancy cases for further study to begin to assess if fear of gangs is a major factor in the schools attendance problem.

"Student fear and anxiety of gangs may show up in truancy and drop-out rates."

■ School Safety and School security

The School and Community Committee will need to evaluate school security, particularly if the school climate is one of fear and anxiety of gang activity. The committee will need to determine if there are flaws in the school security arrangement and problem areas of the school building, if any exist. (School Safety Check Book 1990).

School security and custodial staff will be aware of patterns of vandalism and intimidation. In addition, Official reporting systems of vandalism, theft, assaults, and extortion can serve as a basis for determining patterns and problems. Accurate reporting of school crime is essential to creating a safe learning environment (School Safety Check Book 1990). The committee will want to know:

"Will need to determine flaws, if any, in school security arrangements and problem areas of the school building."

  ► *If gang and drug control safety zones will need to be established outside of the school?*

  ► *If special liaison arrangements are needed between school security and the local police department?*

School security will be discussed in more detail later in the manual.

School Level sources used by the School and Community Committee to collect data on the scope and seriousness of the school gang problem and school characteristics include:

- School Security/Disciplinary Office
- Teacher and staff observations
- Parents
- Students
- Pupil Personnel Services
- School records
- Site visits to school programs targeting gang youth

School Security and Disciplinary Office

School security personnel or the Assistant Principal who may function as the school disciplinarian are likely to have information about the gang problem within and around the school. Also, the Disciplinarian or Assistant Principal is usually in charge of the disciplinary room and is likely to know the youths who frequently break school rules. Ideally, one Assistant Principal is responsible for overall building security and security staff. Usually, school security or school administrators receive reports of serious incidents of fighting, theft, extortion, or assaults. The School and Community Committee must analyze this data to detect patterns of "reported" incidents of victimization and the time, place, and circumstances of rule violations. The school will need to develop a system for reporting serious incidents, if one does not exist.

It is important that the School and Community Committee look at the quality of the data collected and spend some time answering the following questions:

  ▶ *Are the reporting procedures adequate?*

  ▶ *If not, how can the school improve the procedures?*

► *Are there accounts of victimization from other sources (teachers, staff, parents) that are not reflected in the official data?*

School safety and security are probably the first thing to address to begin to alleviate gangs within and around the school and to insure a safe learning environment for all students. Therefore, chapter 7 discusses safety and security in more detail.

■ Teachers and Other Personnel Observations

Teachers, hall and playground monitors, lunch room staff; custodian staff, bus drivers, and office personnel are in a unique position to have first-hand information about the characteristics of gang activity within and around the school. Occasionally, students may report incidents of theft, extortion, intimidation, or assault to teachers or support staff. Teachers must report this information to school security or the Dean of Students. Teachers also may know about gangs and gang members who are active in the school, especially those acting up in class or certain gang members who seek them out for advice and support. However, teachers and staff must receive some guidance and brief orientation regarding what constitutes a "school gang problem" and the difference between gang behavior and non-gang delinquency to avoid exaggeration or unnecessary concern.

School bus drivers may know of incidents of intimidation that occur on the way to school. Custodians know about vandalism of the school building including graffiti, breaking windows, and destroying school property. All school personnel have some information to contribute. It is the task of the School and Committee to aggressively seek out this information. The School and Community Committee will need to develop a way to gather this information. There are two ways to do this:

♦ Have teachers or representatives of the School and Community Committee interview teachers and all other school personnel to obtain their views regarding gang activity and related student

"School safety and security are probably the first thing to address to alleviate gangs within and around the school."

"Teachers have first-hand information about patterns of disruptive behavior and intimidation."

"Custodians know about vandalism of the school building including graffiti, breaking windows, and destroying school property."

29

academic performance problems and disruptive behavior. These discussions must focus on specific examples of gang presence (gang signs and symbols) in the school.

◆ Develop a brief questionnaire to distribute to teachers and all other school personnel asking for their perceptions regarding gang activity. This questionnaire must be in the form of a simple, concrete checklist that asks for factual information only. This checklist can be placed in their mailboxes to make it easy for teachers to quickly complete.

Examples of questions may include:

▶ *Have they noticed graffiti, students wearing colors, or "representing," fights between opposing groups, students writing gang signs on books, or gang related drug use or dealing?*

▶ *Have students reported incidents of theft, extortion, or intimidation by gang youth that may be gang motivated?*

▶ *Do students report pressure from gang members regarding joining gangs?*

▶ *Is most gang intimidation or violence by students who attend the school or individuals who do not?*

■ Parents

An element of successful intervention into a school gang problem is a strong parent organization invested in the school. If a parent organization exists, the Principal must ask a representative to serve on the School and Community Committee. This representative can ask parents at meetings for their perceptions regarding gang activity and if their children report gang activity, anxiety, fear, or intimidation. Parents are a good source for information regarding events within the community; e.g., intimidation that occurs while students travel to and from school. Sometimes, parents who have children active in gangs will deny knowledge of their involvement. Many of these parents are not involved in school affairs and need to be. Most parents on PTA's or

Parent's Councils will want to protect the good or non-gang kids and prefer to get rid of the gang members.

Usually, schools that have a serious gang problem will have a weak parent organization. This will make data collection difficult. The Principal can use this opportunity to begin to involve parents, make them aware of the school gang problem, and their obligation to deal with it. He or she may need to provide some special support and guidance to weak parent organizations around the gang problem.

One approach, is for support staff (Pupil Personnel Services or Truant Officers, etc.) or representatives of the parents organization to sit and talk with parents during home visits regarding their perceptions of the school and community gang problem.

In elementary school, a possible approach is to send a simple questionnaire home with each child asking for perceptions of the school or community gang problem. Once a questionnaire or checklist is complete it may be wise to field test it with parents who have contact with the school. Their comments will be helpful in revising the questionnaire to insure that it collects the needed data.

■ Students

Some schools and school systems have used victimization studies as a tool to obtain the perceptions of students of victimization within and around the school. The School and Community Committee or an outside consultant can survey students regarding their perceptions of gang activity. Yet, consider the following factors:

✓ Students are sometimes hesitant to complete questionnaires due to fear of retaliation. Such surveys usually must be anonymous.

✓ The younger the child (in elementary school), the greater the fear and anxiety may be. The gang problem, however, may become more severe as children get older.

✓ Survey sample -- It may be possible to select a stratified and representative sample of classrooms to survey. If done properly, this survey will reflect attitudes or perceptions of students on an age and gender basis in the entire school. This has a side benefit. Gang youth will begin to get the message that the school is interested in the gang problem and plans to do something about it.

✓ The classroom teacher generally should not administer the questionnaire in order to obtain the most objective answers.

✓ However, the teacher must spend some time talking about the topic of gangs following the filling out of a questionnaire.

■ Pupil Personnel Services

Data on the social needs of gang youth must be available from school records kept by Pupil Personnel Services. Pupil Personnel Services might include social workers, psychologists, counselors, psychiatrists, and special program personnel. Gang youths and members of their families are often known to school staff dealing with social, psychological, or physical problems of students. Specific gang related information such as gang membership and gang incidents may be on file. Also, they may possess unrecorded information on gang activity of the students that they can share. Due to confidentiality concerns, the focus must be on aggregate or overall statistical data and not specific information on individuals. Social service and adjustment data may also be available through community agencies and community organizations.

■ School Records

The school usually has some system for monitoring student misbehavior in and around the school such as a classification or code of school behaviors requiring school discipline that includes a range of offenses unique to the school setting. Some large school systems make

distinctions between gang and non-gang crime cases. Standard reporting procedures must be developed (Duke 1980). This data base can be very useful in assessing patterns of intimidation, students who are frequently involved in disruptive and inappropriate behavior, and patterns of rule breaking within the school, possibly including gang related incidents. However, it is important to remember as student cohorts change the dynamics of gang related incidents can also increase or decrease.

There is some evidence that "problems with school work sometimes lead to behavior problems." Therefore information on study habits, academic progress, and classroom attitudes may be useful in helping to identify patterns of disruptive behavior within the school (Duke, 1980). Yet, the School and Community Committee must be careful not to assume that youths who are doing poorly in class work or who are repeatedly involved in disruptive incidents within and around the school are automatically in gangs or gang related delinquent activity. Make every effort not to unfairly "label" a student as high risk or gang involvement or in a gang without sufficient evidence. Findings from a review of school documentation on patterns of disruptive behavior need to be corroborated with other evidence that identifies particular youth as gang members; for example:

✓ use of gang signs
✓ special clothing
✓ self-admission
✓ association with known gang members,
✓ gang members in the family,
✓ school failure
✓ drug use
✓ actual participation in gang conflict,
✓ identification by criminal justice agencies

"Visiting other gang school programs can save months of planning."

If resources are available, site visits to one or more schools or school systems that have dealt successfully, reputedly, with gang problems. Such visits can provide valuable information regarding desirable changes in curriculum or organizational structure and what works and does not work to reduce the gang problem. This may save months during later planning and program implementation.

Community Level Assessment

School administration must understand the connection of the gang problem in the school to that in the neighborhood. The School and Community Committee will need to know the scope and seriousness of the community gang problem, community institutions that can be mobilized to alleviate the school gang problem, and the interrelationship of the school and community problem. The outcome of the community assessment will have implications for how the school structures its organizational response. Therefore, they will need answers to the following questions, for example:

"Must also assess the gang problem in the surrounding community."

> ► *Does the community have a serious gang problem?*

> ► *Does the community have a chronic or emerging gang problem?*

> ► *Are the gangs in the community involved in serious rivalry, drug dealing, or serious gang violence?*

> ► *How specifically does the community gang situation affect gang problems in the school?*

> ► *Are gang members from the community involved in incidents around or in the school?*

Sources of Data

Sources used by the School and Community Committee to collect data on the community gang problem and the interrelationship of the school and community gang problem include:

■ Criminal and Juvenile Justice

■ New data, such as interviews with present or former gang members or surveys of agency or grass-roots.

■ Social service agency data

■ <u>Criminal, Juvenile Justice, especially Law Enforcement</u>

Criminal justice agencies, particularly police departments, but also probation and the prosecutor's office sometimes have gang crime units, youth divisions, or staff designated to handle gang crimes. Some police and probation departments designate special officers to work in the school and especially address gang problems. Therefore, these agencies have data regarding gangs in the community. Available data may include:

▶ *number of gangs in the community;*

▶ *their relation to gangs in the school and community;*

▶ *type and number of gang related incidents;*

▶ *age of gang members;*

▶ *identity of gang leaders*

▶ *number of gang members;*

▶ *rivalry between gangs;*

▶ *a hypothesis regarding the precipitating causes of the gang problems and gang violence in the community and school;*

▶ *number of times and why the police or probation were contacted by the school regarding incidents involving gang youth.*

Some police departments have special systems to distinguish gang and non-gang crime which occur in and around the school. This data should be available on a school or system basis and must be used so that the names of youths who are suspects, offenders, or victims are not divulged.

■ Social Service Data

Staff or representatives of these organizations not only can supply information about current gang problems in the community but are basic social resources who can aid in developing school or school and community based programs for gang youth. It is important, therefore, to develop a comprehensive directory of the services and opportunities that can be useful in planning an approach for resolving the school gang problem. The school gang problem is almost invariably connected to community circumstances.

"The quality of social service data may vary depending on collection methods."

These agencies include community based youth service agencies, public and private, grass-roots agencies, and church programs that sometimes target gang members or youth at high risk of gang involvement. These agencies or community groups sometime work with parents who are concerned about the gang problem or actively engaged in various activities to reduce the community gang problem.

The quality of this information may vary depending on the methods used to collect the data. Yet, the following information probably may be obtained:

▶ characteristics of the gang problem;

▶ types of services they provide to gang members;

▶ and the needs of gang members that are not being addressed.

■ Gathering New Data

The Principal can obtain some additional information about gangs and the gang problem by interviewing gang youths who are past or present students of the school. They may provide information regarding:

- ▸ *perceptions of the scope and seriousness of the gang problem;*

- ▸ *what to do about gang crises, especially gang conflict;*

- ▸ *ideas regarding causes of the school gang problem;*

- ▸ *how to generally make a school setting more responsive to the unique needs of gang members.*

Information from key neighborhood informants (parents, local ministers, store owners, grass roots organizations, etc.) will also provide important opinions and beliefs regarding scope, seriousness, and causes of the gang problem. This will, in addition, begin to develop a resource base of persons and organizations who can be useful in assisting with special school activities or school community events on behalf of gang youths or the school gang problem. Collect this information through face to face interviews or with a simple survey instrument.

- ✓ **First**, assemble a list of key types of informants from which to collect data.

- ✓ **Second** step is to develop a list of names and addresses.

- ✓ **Third**, prepare an interview guide (i.e., list of questions to ask) or a brief questionnaire.

- ✓ **Next**, mail questionnaires, deliver them directly to homes, businesses, and offices, or through bulk distribution (i.e., distributing large numbers of questionnaires and in key places in the entire community).

Holding public hearings is another way both to gather information on the gang problem and raise public awareness and concern for the problem.

Chronic Versus Emergent Problem

It is important to determine whether the local school gang problem is emergent or chronic. The Principal and the School and Community Committee must know:

▶ *If the problem is just starting and involves only a few youths?*

▶ *Have gangs recently been introduced by new transfers into the school?*

▶ *If only a few problem youths gotten together and decided to wear gang colors and also declare themselves to be gang members?*

When the problem is emerging, the school must move quickly to reduce or eliminate the problem becomes it becomes persistent and chronic. The problem is chronic when gang violence and gang related crime are serious and sustained over a long period. In a context that is clearly chronic, the school or community institutions may already know a good deal about the dynamics of the school gang problem. The school can expedite the assessment process by using existing knowledge and data.

At the elementary school level, it is less likely that a serious gang problem will be sustained over a long period, although if the community gang problem is chronic older gang youth may be involving younger youth at or from school in the distribution and selling of drugs. Juveniles will receive lesser criminal punishment than older youths and young adults. The gang or drug problems in the elementary school could develop rapidly. Middle schools and high school ordinarily provide settings for more serious gang problem because youths are older and more readily become committed gang members. These schools are likely to draw students from a wider area. Consequently, the representation of different gangs in the school population may increase the probability of gang conflict.

The interaction of a school and community gang problem can sometimes be complex. For example, a community may have a serious gang problem. Yet, the school has managed to keep the gang problem

38

out of the school. The reverse is also possible; gang problems may be evident in schools but not in the community because of the need of some youths to band together for security or for other reasons. However, the more common pattern probably will be a gang problem that affects both the school and community.

The primary source of the problem is more often the community. Therefore, it is important to determine if the local community gang problem is emergent or chronic. That is:

"Whether the community has an emergent or chronic gang problem needs to be determined."

▸ *How serious and how long has there been a gang problem in the community?*

▸ *How well organized are the gangs?*

▸ *How deeply ingrained is the gang system?*

The School and Community Committee will need to determine the history of the gang problem in the community in terms of how violent, criminal, and intractable the problem has been. This decision will later serve as a basis for planning and program implementation.

As indicated in Chapter 1, an emerging gang problem increasingly occurs in suburban communities and in smaller cities. Usually, gangs have been a problem for less than 5 years and involve fewer, usually younger youth. In an emerging context, there are not as many gangs and existing gangs are not as less organized or consistently involved in serious crime and violence. Gang related drug trafficking has only just begun at the street level. In this context, usually more community resources are available; families and institutions are more cohesive.

"In a chronic context, drug trafficking by gang and ex-gang members is often an established practice."

In contrast, in a chronic context; the gang problem is longstanding (more than 10 years), intractable, complex, and severe. There are many gangs, gang members, and a high level of organization. A defining characteristic is a high number of gang related incidents of serious crime and gang violence; particularly gang homicides. Drug trafficking by senior gang and ex-gang members is an established practice.

The data collection process will result in many opinions and information about gangs. It is important, however, to obtain objective, verifiable information. Research anecdotal accounts, opinions, and beliefs thoroughly for reliability and validity.

Conclusion

It is important to develop a consensus on the nature and scope of the problem. Such consensus will contribute to the effectiveness of program planning and implementation. Conflicting views regarding the existence of the problem can signal that appropriate strategies will not be selected or adequately implemented. The School and Community Committees will need, with the help of police and school system authorities, to establish clear and commonly acceptable criteria for operational definition of the terms: "youth gang", "gang member", and "gang incident". Avoid excessive labeling of youth as gang members.

Definition of the problem usually brings with it an explanation of the causes of gang presence and disruptions in and around the school. These explanations are key to selecting implementation strategies to reduce the gang problem. In an elementary school setting, we recommend a prevention approach with curricula influencing youth to stay out of gangs and suppression in the community targeting older youth who use elementary school youth to distribute and sell drugs.

In middle school and high school, the assessment may indicate the need to strengthen school security and cooperative arrangements with the police for swift identification and prosecution. Also, required may be improvement of disciplinary policies and procedures, the development of more positive school arrangements that emphasize closer relationships between students and teachers, and vocational training and job placement, particularly for non-academically inclined gang prone youth. Design interventions based uniquely on the results of the assessment.

"It is important to develop a consensus on the nature and scope of the problem."

"Excessive labeling of youth as gang members without adequate criteria must be avoided."

Summary

This manual focuses on the assessment of an individual school gang problem. The key points of this chapter are:

(1) A complete assessment must include the assessment of the school and community gang problem, school characteristics, and the interrelationship of the school and community gang problem.

(2) There are three steps to carrying out an assessment; (1) establishing a School and Community Committee, (2) gathering information and making recommendations, and (3) defining goals and objectives.

(3) It is crucial to obtain approval and support from central administration for efforts to reduce the school gang problem.

(4) The Principal must try to involve all segments of the community that will need mobilization to reduce the school and community gang problem.

(5) It is essential to involve all school personnel (school security, counselors, teachers, custodial and lunchroom staff, and secretaries) from the beginning of the assessment because they possess valuable information on student behavior, academic factors, and possibly characteristics of gang activity within and around the school.

(6) The School and Community Committee will need to thoroughly understand the scope and seriousness of the gang problem within and around the school.

(7) The School and Community Committee will need to know the scope and seriousness of the community gang problem, community institutions that can be mobilized to alleviate the school gang problem, and the interrelationship of the school and community problem.

(8) It is important to determine whether the local school gang problem and community gang problem are emergent or chronic.

(9) It is important to develop a consensus on the nature and scope of the problem. Such consensus will contribute to the effectiveness of program planning and implementation.

II. GOALS AND STRATEGIES

A set of recommendations and goals for intervention within the school or school district must emerge from the assessment process. The School and Community Committee must now know:

"The School and Community Committee now knows the scope and seriousness of the problem."

♦ the scope and seriousness of the gang problem;

♦ patterns of intimidation, fighting, disruptive behavior within and around the school;

♦ the educational and social needs of gang and gang-prone youths;

♦ the immediate factors that precipitated the gang problem;

♦ as well long range school factors that contribute to the problem (poor school security or unclear and inconsistent discipline).;

♦ important community causal factors;

♦ whether the problem is emergent or chronic in the school and community.

Goals and Approach

"There is much that schools, in cooperation with community agencies and groups, can accomplish."

While there are limits to what the schools can do regarding basic family and community factors, there is much that schools, in cooperation with community agencies and groups, can accomplish. Yet, the school alone will have difficulty alleviating the problem. The entire community will need to mobilize to reduce gang violence and intimidation. The school will need to contribute to a community wide plan to address the gang problem. The school must focus on the mission of educating all students. The school will need to create a safe secure environment where learning can take place. To accomplish this, the school can

provide strong support and control of gang youths, a flexible and
meaningful curriculum, positive role models, and meaningful
relationships with adults. They also need access to opportunities for
achievement at school, in work, and in the community. Schools can
provide important opportunities for youth development and control of
gang youth activity. This approach proposes that *primary academic
competence objectives cannot be achieved unless social objectives are
given attention*. That is, it is difficult, if not impossible, to educate all
students in an unsafe environment. Schools can and must control their
environment and significantly influence the academic and social
development of gang youths and those at high risk for 5 to 6 hours a
day, 5 days per week for much of the year.

Strategies

Build the school anti-gang approach around five strategies:

■ The key strategy is the provision of *social opportunities*.

♦ Gang youth and high risk youth must be targeted for
remedial and enrichment academic arrangements, alternative
education programs that include vocational training and job
placement.

Also, important are:

■ *Social support*

♦ Faculty respect for gang youth, formal counseling of
individuals and families, and development of positive
helping relationships by teachers and administrators with
gang youths.

■ *Suppression*

♦ Imposition by the school of effective formal controls and
enlisting of the assistance of outside agencies (law
enforcement), school security, teachers, and parents in the
supervision of gang youth.

*"Schools can
provide
opportunities for
youth development
and control of
gang youth."*

◆ The school needs to insure the safety of both gang and non-gang youth in and around the school.

■ *Community mobilization*

◆ The school needs to become involved in the community and work with outside agencies including police, youth agencies, grass-roots groups, parents, and others to deal with the school related gang problem.

◆ Since the gang problem most often arises and is sustained through community institutions including family, church, employment, and education, these institutions must be strengthened and better related to each other.

◆ A collaborative approach is required in which the school plays a key role; especially for younger youth.

■ *Organizational Development and Change*

◆ Leadership for school changes must come from and be sustained by the School Principal.

◆ The school may need to change its structure and curriculum to facilitate the above strategies, including the introduction of anti-drug/gang curricula (elementary school) or the expansion of alternative education programs (middle and high school). Different mechanisms may be required for decision-making about curricula and gang youth problems; training for teachers and staff and mechanisms to integrating community and school efforts.

In an emerging gang problem context, the school must take a leading role as part of a working coalition with community agencies and the police to reduce both the community and school gang problem.

In a chronic problem community, the problem may be of such broad scope and severity that central responsibility may lie with a coalition of criminal justice agencies, youth agencies, churches, representatives from city government, local business, citizen groups, as well school representatives. The schools have an important role but

"In a chronic context, may need a broad based coalition involving all agencies and actors."

44

perhaps not a central responsibility, especially with older gang youth who are no longer at school.

Summary

The key points of this chapter are:

(1) While there are limits to what the schools can do regarding basic family and community factors, there is much that schools, in cooperation with community agencies and groups, can accomplish.

(2) *Primary academic competence objectives cannot be achieved unless social objectives are given attention.* That is, it is difficult, if not impossible, to educate all students in an unsafe environment.

(3) Build the school anti-gang approach around five strategies:

◆ Social opportunities

◆ Social support

◆ Suppression

◆ Community mobilization

◆ Organizational Development and Change

(4) In an emerging gang problem context, the school must take a leading role as part of a working coalition with community agencies and the police to reduce both the community and school gang problem.

(5) In a chronic problem community, the problem may be of such broad scope and severity that central responsibility may lie with a coalition of criminal justice agencies, youth agencies, churches, representatives from city government, local business, citizen groups, as well school representatives.

III. OBJECTIVES

This approach proposes that primary academic competence objectives cannot be achieved unless social objectives are given attention. It is difficult, if not impossible, to educate all students in an unsafe environment.

"Primary academic competence objectives cannot be achieved unless social objectives are given attention."

Objectives of a special school program must be:

✓ Creation of a structure for flexible curriculum and insuring a safe school environment.

✓ Application of consistent sanctions and means to protect school population and surrounding community from gang depredations.

✓ Development of an opportunities provision, learning support system.

✓ Appropriate training, staff selection, data retrieval systems, and evaluation to determine program effectiveness.

✓ Early intervention to prevent and deter gang involvement.

✓ Provision of vocational education, job preparation, and employment experiences.

✓ Parental involvement.

✓ Liaison, coordination, and outreach to community agencies and programs.

CHAPTER 6

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

CREATION OF A STRUCTURE FOR FLEXIBLE CURRICULUM
AND A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

■ School Administrative Leadership
■ Internal Organizational Structure
■ Summary

School Administrative Leadership

The school Principal must accept the challenge of easing change
within the school and insuring a safe and caring social climate for
education. The principal must:

*"The Principal
must accept the
challenge of easing
change and
insuring a safe and
caring social
climate for
education."*

◆ be aware of the need for change (Berkhard and Harris 1977);

◆ have a good diagnosis of the set of conditions causing the need for
change (Berkhard and Harris 1977);

◆ have a clear and explicit description of the desired state of affairs
after the change (Berkhard and Harris 1977);

◆ a clear and accurate picture of present dynamics(Berkhard and Harris
1977);

◆ begin by showing personal sensitivity in support of individual gang
member and high risk youth

◆ acquire knowledge of gangs and gang activity within and around the
school.

◆ be actively involved with the School and Community Committee throughout the assessment process.

◆ maintain follow-up communication with outside agencies; particularly the police department. This is a quick way for the Principal to become educated about the gang problem.

◆ overcome resistance and barriers to change within and outside the school to change.

In addition, the Principal must communicate the need for change and the desired "end state" to all school personnel. The following suggestions will enhance the Principal's effectiveness at organizational change and development targeting gang youth.

✓ The Principal must clearly articulate goals and objectives to personnel targeting gang youth and the specific programs and means for intervention with respect to:

"Principal must clearly articulate goals and objectives to personnel targeting gang youth. "

▶ Development of an internal organizational structure for creating a flexible curriculum and a safe school environment.

▶ An early intervention program to prevent and deter gang involvement and drug abuse in the elementary school: and a flexible program structure to include remedial education, enriched programs, alternative education, vocational training, and job placement in the middle school or high school.

▶ Develop and communicate expectations of school wide social support of high risk and gang youth to all teachers and staff.

▶ Develop criteria for identifying youth to receive special attention; e.g., a small number of youth will be defined as troublesome gang members in most schools and a larger group defined as high risk based on indicators reviewed in Chapter 10.

▶ Develop a plan for monitoring the implementation of changes and provide needed training for teachers and staff.

▶ Create rewards for teachers and staff; effective change happens when staff "buy" into the process and believe in what is being done (Anti-Drug/Gang Violence 1990).

To maintain educational integrity, the school will need to provide not only support to high risk and gang youths, but reward students throughout the school who do well academically and are not involved in disruptive behavior or gangs. Also, the school will need to impose strong, fair controls on disruptive behavior that insures the safety of all students.

Internal Organizational Structure

The Principal will need to develop an internal organizational structure for enhancing parental involvement, and the creation of a · flexible curriculum and a safe school environment.* This is a way to insure that teachers, staff, and administrators work together as equal partners to alleviate the school gang problem. A standing school committee and a case management team will accomplish the above goals (See Appendix 2, Table 2). The standing committee is responsible for monitoring the school gang problem, disciplinary policies, and school security. The case management team works directly with high-risk and gang youth and is responsible for parental involvement and flexible curriculum development. Involve faculty and staff from the School and Community Committee on the standing committee.

"Will need an internal organizational structure."

School Climate Committee

This committee, composed of teachers, staff, and administrators, should meet on a regular basis to identify and solve problems related to school safety and reduction of the school gang problem. The overall misson of the committee is to reduce the gang problem in the school and develop a positive, safe, rewarding, and satisfying atmosphere for all students and staff. An Assistant Principal responsible for school security should chair the committee. It is responsible for:

"The overall mission of the committee is to reduce the gang problem in the school."

* The idea of a School Climate Committee was suggested to me by Dr. C. Edward Lawrence, Director, Department of School Accountability and Support, Milwaukee Public Schools.

49

► Monitoring the school gang problem, disciplinary policies, and school security.

► The development of criteria for identifying youth to receive special attention.

► The implementation, and monitoring of a case management team that works directly with high-risk and gang youth. This committee functions as their problem solving and advisory board.

► The development and implementation of a flexible curriculum.

Case Management Team

Successful intervention will require staff designated and trained to work with gang and high risk youth. A useful approach is the development of a case management team of teachers and staff who work with high risk (elementary school) or gang and high risk youth (middle and high school) over time. This will facilitate an integrated pattern of academic education, social support, and social control. There is evidence that strongly suggests the academic and social competence of gang and high risk youths are dependent on their ability to form warm, "real" relationships with school staff. This case management team can establish relationships with the youths and encourage both academic and conforming behavior.

The School Climate Committee in consultation with the Principal will need to designate a leader for the case management team; a counselor or Assistant Principal with a commitment and experience working with gang youth. He or she must be able to establish warm, accepting but clear rule setting relationships with gang youths.

Over time, the leader and case management team must become a resource for teachers, staff, security on gang related problems within the school. They can establish good relationships with high risk and gang youth and gain knowledge regarding gang activity within the school and community. In addition the case management team is responsible for enhancing the parental involvement of high risk and gang member parents.

"A useful approach is the development of a case management team of teachers and staff to work with high risk and gang youth."

This sensitive and skilled team will be useful in conflict or tense situations. Avoid giving the case management team special classes that serve as a dumping ground for gang members and high risk youths. To the extent possible, mainstream the youths in regular classes.

Summary

The key points of this chapter are:

(1) The school Principal must accept the challenge of easing change within the school and insuring a safe and caring social climate for education.

(2) Also, the Principal must be aware of the need for change, have a good diagnosis of the set of conditions causing the need for change, have a clear and explicit description of the desired state of affairs after the change, and a clear and accurate picture of present dynamics.

(3) The Principal must communicate the need for change and the desired "end state" to all school personnel and clearly articulate goals and objectives to personnel targeting gang youth and the specific programs and means for intervention.

(4) To maintain educational integrity, the school will need to provide not only support to high risk and gang youths, but reward students throughout the school who do well academically and are not involved in disruptive behavior or gangs.

(5) The Principal will need to develop an internal organizational structure, a standing committee and case management team, for enhancing parental involvement, and the creation of a flexible curriculum and a safe school environment.

(6) The standing committee is responsible for monitoring the school gang problem, disciplinary policies, and school security.

(7) The case management team works directly with high-risk and gang youth and is responsible for parental involvement and flexible curriculum development.

(8)   There is evidence that strongly suggests the academic and social competence of gang and high risk youth are dependent on their ability to form warm, "real" relationships with school staff.

(9)   The case management team will become in-house experts on gangs within and around the school and will be useful in conflict or tense situations.

(10)   Avoid giving the case management team special classes that serve as a dumping ground for gang members and high risk youths.

STAFF SELECTION AND TRAINING

■ Staff Selection
■ Training
■ Summary

Staff Selection

"Select case management team staff carefully."

Select qualified staff for the case management team, including those who have special skills working with gang or high risk youth. The case management team will need teachers, a counselor, support staff, and security. Security and other staff who work in close contact with gang youth must not necessarily be former gang members.

Personnel who work with gang youth must have the following characteristics:

"Case management team staff must have a commitment to working with gang youth and special skills."

- ◆ Qualified professionally and technically for the particular position.

- ◆ Ability to keep the best interest of gang youths in mind.

- ◆ Possession of knowledge about gangs, in general, and local gang problems, in particular.

- ◆ Possession of skills in relationship building techniques.

- ◆ Ability to exhibit warmth, friendliness, and a sense of humor.

- ◆ Possession of good communication skills.

"Team members must be able to deal with the difficult testing behavior of gang youths."

- ◆ Patience

- ◆ Ability to deal with the difficult testing behavior of gang youths and not be intimidated.

- ◆ Awareness of community resources available for gang youth.

♦ Ability to stand firm on rules, regulations that they can justify and clearly explain.

♦ Understanding of adolescent development, gang subculture, gang related behavior at school and in the local community.

♦ Ability to establish relationships with parents and representatives of key local organizations (i.e., community youth agencies and law enforcement).

Previous experience working with gangs, living in the community with gang members, and a commitment to reducing gang violence would, also, be helpful.

Training

After selection, the case management team will need training before contact with gang youths. Training must include:

✓ Orientation to the special program

✓ Gang specific information

✓ Behavior and crisis management skill development

■ Orientation to the special program

This introductory phase of training must focus on the program mission, procedures, policies, and goals and objectives. The Principal must:

► give written documentation of the key program elements to teachers and staff;

► discuss the rationale behind the case management team and proposed curriculum changes;

"Training will enhance the knowledge and abilities that teachers and staff bring to the job."

54

▶ encourage staff to ask questions, share opinions, and give input regarding the development of specific rules for gang member and high risk youth.

▶ discuss extensively how to handle rule infractions and establish behavioral expectations;

▶ summarize specific documentation and record-keeping requirements;

▶ explain how record-keeping will serve as a basis for systematic testing of program effectiveness a year or two later.

■ Gang specific information

Training must focus on general information on gangs and specific information on school and local community gangs. Where can you locate this information? First, carefully review the bibliography of this manual and select readings that give a good summary of gangs and gang characteristics. Next, consult outside experts (police, probation, parole, school, corrections, professors, or agency staff) and invite them to participate in a training seminar on gangs. Also, the findings of the comprehensive community assessment are a good source of information about the local gang problem. Include the following information in a training seminar on gangs:

◆ Gang history and understanding of gang and gang subculture.

◆ Causes of gang formation.

◆ Factors which motivate individual gang members.

◆ How to identify local gangs; including gang symbols, language, attire, graffiti, and methods of gang recruitment.

◆ Patterns of inter group rivalry and violence in the particular community.

- ◆ Particular nature of gang crimes, related violence, property crimes, and drug use and trafficking.

- ◆ Establishing appropriate communication and productive relationships with gangs.

- ◆ How to collect information on gangs and gang structure; including how to tell who is a leader, hard-core, or fringe member.

- ◆ Methods of crisis intervention and gang mediation between gang members.

- ◆ How to develop ways to enhance the self-esteem and self-discipline of gang youth.

- ◆ When and how to use other members of the team in the school and outside school sources around problems of social support and provision of additional social opportunities.

- ■ Behavior and crisis management skill development

"Staff will also need to be trained in methods and strategies to handle disruptive and aggressive behavior."

Teachers and staff will also need training in methods and strategies to handle distinctive gang motivated disruptive and aggressive behavior. It is important to prevent or handle problems or crisis situations at as early a point as possible. The following guidelines are suggested:

Judgment, Timing, and Self-Control

When disruptive behavior, a crisis, or physical confrontation happen, events can escalate quickly. Therefore, the program must have a crisis plan and staff must be self-controlled and able to make good, sound decisions under pressure. It is important to move in to deal with a situation at an appropriate time. To delay can contribute to things getting out of hand. To act hastily or overreact to minor situations can impede the development of effective relationships with and social control of youths.

Maturity

Sometimes individuals work with others to meet their emotional needs. Teachers and staff who are authoritarian or passive will probably be ineffective in a crisis. Also, staff must not collude with youths or unintentionally give permission for youth to act irresponsibly.

All staff, including teachers, must have the capacity to intervene and set limits and not avoid intervening due to their excessive insecurity or personal "hang ups."

Relationship Building

Relationship building is the foundation that supports constructive change and growth. Youths are more likely to follow directions and listen to adults that they respect and have a positive relationship with. This is very important in crisis situations.

Antecedents of Gang Related Tension

The antecedents of aggressive behavior often include community tensions, drug use, interpersonal problems, including arguments with a girl friend, ill health, and situational events such as crowding, boredom, arguments with teachers, staff or peers, and frustration over a previous class. Gang tensions in the community, police raids, and family disruptions often create insecurities in the youth during school. They are particularly likely to occur on weekends; Mondays may be "flash" points. Teachers and staff must be sensitive to what is occurring both inside and outside that may precipitate gang related behavior.

Assessment of Individual Youth

Staff must develop sound knowledge about each youth helped by the case management team and current gang structure and process. They need to be sensitive to the cultural traits and behaviors of each

"Staff who are authoritarian or passive will probably be ineffective in handling a crisis."

"The antecedents of aggressive behavior include a variety of community, personal, and situational factors."

ethnic group. It is a good idea during the early part of the school year to assist teachers to do an intake assessment on each targeted student's ability to control impulses, his position in the gang hierarchy, or susceptibility to gang membership. This knowledge, who are the leaders and followers, will help staff assess who may be provoking or demanding inappropriate behavior from others. Staff must also assess the "macho" or status needs of all youth in the program.

Roughhousing and Physical Intervention

Staff must avoid playful roughhousing, grabbing youth, and behaving provocatively. Security and staff must also avoid holding or cornering a youth when physical confrontations happen. Grab or hold youth only to keep the youth from clearly harming himself, another youth, a teacher, or staff. Avoid developing a culture that permits physical aggression or retaliation.

Unsupervised Settings

Staff must know what is "going on" in the classroom and in other parts of the school that precipitate gang behavior. They must not leave students unsupervised for long periods of time. If staff is positively interacting with youth, they will be able to intervene quickly and redirect inappropriate behavior. Most disruptive behavior and aggressive outbursts involve other youth and begin with insults or flashing gang signs. Eliminate all unsupervised settings. For example, in an elementary school, have staff rotate to the next class, while students remain seated and supervised.

Structuring Time

When designing the program and scheduling activities, teachers must structure the participant's time as much as possible. Avoid having scheduling gaps where youths will have nothing to do for long periods of time. When they have unstructured time just to sit

around and talk, the probability increases that someone might say or do something to start a problem.

Boredom and Stress

Since boredom is an antecedent to aggression, make teaching experiences meaningful. Avoid long lectures and focus on participatory exercises like role-playing.

In addition, avoid over stressing the cognitive and emotional capacity of youths. Tailor the material to the learning level of the group. When the material is too difficult, some youths will become frustrated. Occasionally, change to something that gives them a sense of accomplishment.

Rule Selection and Consequences for Infractions

Rules must be simple and clear. Select rules that are most important and post them prominently throughout the classroom and building. Select the consequences that fit the situation. Orient youths regarding the rules, program expectations, and potential consequences for rule infractions. At a minimum, do not permit wearing gang clothing and many athletic or starter jackets, flashing gang signs, writing gang graffiti, having weapons, or violence and physical confrontation. A graded series of rule infractions must result in a range of consequences, from warnings to temporary suspension from the class or termination from a program, or school expulsion. However, hold out reinstatement as possible at a future time.

Ideally, termination from class or school must occur only with youth arrest or commitment of a delinquent act of a felonious nature. The ultimate goal is to help youths gain self-control and learn better ways to solve problems and cope with stress, frustration, and anger. Teachers and staff must therefore try to rely on rewards and not negative consequences, but make consequences clear so that youths can learn to anticipate consequences and internalize self-control. The

"Try to make learning experiences meaningful and do not over stress the cognitive and emotional capacity of youths."

"Rules must be simple, clear, and significant!"

"Wearing gang clothing, writing gang graffiti, flashing gang signs, having weapons, or violence must not be permitted."

best approach is to provide a learning and training situation in which each youth develops a sense of accomplishment and self-esteem.

In the event of a physical confrontation:

✓ Intervene quickly to calm the situation.

✓ State clearly and specifically what is best for the personal interests of the youth involved and the negative consequences that may follow.

✓ Have at least three staff intervene. One to work calming down youth involved and the other staff to supervise the remaining youth. Teachers and staff must remain clam and in control.

✓ Require that all youth not involved return to program routine. Contagion must be avoided or controlled.

✓ The goal is not only to resolve the immediate confrontation but to keep it from spilling over into the rest of the school or the streets. The police may need be alerted if this is about to occur.

✓ Security staff assigned to the case management team must be available to respond quickly when needed.

✓ Do not send suspended youth home in the middle of the day through dangerous gang turf. Designate a study area in school.

✓ Communicate with the parents first and arrange, if possible, for them to pick them up. This way, parents know immediately that a youth is being suspended and why. Failure to inform parents of a suspension will allow youth to manipulate the situation and tell his parents that he or she is attending school while actually leaving the house and hanging out on the streets.

Although initial training will focus on case management team members, eventually all teachers, administrators, and staff within the school will need to complete this training program as part of staff development in a school or community where the gang problem is emergent or chronic.

All staff, including teachers, must have responsibility for dealing with gang members and potential gang problems. The school must know view the case management team as a dumping ground for difficult children, but mainly as a specialist advisory group.

Summary

The key points in this chapter are:

(1) Select qualified staff for the case management team; staff who has special skills working with gang or high risk youth.

(2) After selection, the case management team will need training before contact with gang youths.

(3) Training must include:

    (1) *Orientation to the special program* - This introductory phase of training must focus on the program mission, procedures, policies, and goals and objectives;

    (2) *Gang specific information* - This training must focus on general information on gangs and specific information on school and local community gangs;

    (3) *Behavior and crisis management skill development* - Staff will also need training in methods and strategies to handle distinctive gang motivated disruptive and aggressive behavior.

(4) The antecedents of aggressive behavior often include community tensions, drug use, interpersonal problems, including arguments with a girl friend, ill health, and situational events such as crowding, boredom, arguments with staff or peers, and frustration over a previous class.

(5) Teachers and staff must develop sound knowledge about each youth helped by the case management team.

(6) Rules must be simple and clear. Select rules that are most important and post them prominently throughout the classroom and building. Select the consequences that fit the situation. Orient youths regarding the rules, program expectations, and potential consequences for rule infractions.

(7) At a minimum, do not permit wearing gang clothing and many athletic or starter jackets, flashing gang signs, writing gang graffiti, having weapons, or violence and physical confrontation.

(8) The ultimate goal is to help youths gain self-control and learn better ways to solve problems and cope with stress, frustration, and anger.

CREATING A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- ■ School Discipline
- ■ School Security
- ■ Summary

School Discipline

To effectively carry out the school mission of educating all students, the school will need to create a safe and secure environment for learning. Therefore, the school must carefully review and, if necessary, improve discipline policies and school security. The School Climate Committee, a standing committee responsible for monitoring the school gang problem, disciplinary policies, and school security, must meet on a regular basis to identify and solve problems related to school safety and reduction of the school gang problem. In addition, this committee is responsible for the development and implementation of a school gang code. The Principal and School Safety Committee must then communicate the gang school code to teachers, students and parents. The school must establish the school gang code and enforce it firmly and fairly.

Schools that are disruption prone have the following characteristics (Gottfredson 1983):

"School rules need to be clear, fair, and firmly enforced."

- ◆ Rules are not clear, fair, or firmly enforced.

- ◆ Teachers and administrators do not know the rules and don't agree on responses to student misconduct.

- ◆ Students don't believe in rules.

- ◆ Responses to misconduct are ambiguous (e.g., lowering grades because of misbehavior).

- ◆ Cooperation between teachers and administrators is poor or administrators are inactive.

- ◆ Teachers tend to have punitive attitudes.

On the other hand, common elements associated with well-disciplined schools are (Learning Intervention Report 1988):

- ◆ Clear rules and procedures.

- ◆ Minimum delay in processing infractions.

- ◆ Consistency, fairness, and certainty regarding enforcement, with emphasis on due process considerations.

- ◆ Quick feedback to students, teachers, and parents regarding discipline decisions.

- ◆ Reducing future infractions.

- ◆ Cooperation between school and home; between teachers and administration in response to student misconduct.

"Parents, teachers, and students must receive quick feedback on discipline decisions."

Schools with good discipline do not permit gang attire, symbols, signs, graffiti, the sale or possession of drugs, or possession of weapons. They establish punishment guidelines in advance with punishment fitting the severity of the rule infraction. Some schools are trying dress codes to stop the wearing of gang attire or metal detectors to insure that weapons do not enter the school.

Although gangs may be responsible for some disruptive behavior in the school, not all anti-social behavior is group or gang oriented. In cases where rule infractions are individually motivated, gang control strategies are not appropriate. Due to the changing nature of gang problems, adjust interpretations of serious behavior and intervention to these changes.

In the classroom, teachers must know the school gang code and guidelines for appropriate intervention. To the extent possible, teachers must attempt to handle disruptive behavior without assistance unless

"Gang attire, symbols, signs, graffiti, the sale or possession of drugs, possession of weapons must not be permitted in school."

physical danger is imminent. Make provisions in advance to insure quick response and firm control of the problem.

School Security

The assessment process identified strengths and weaknesses of the school security system. During the assessment process, records were analyzed (i.e., the examination of the time, place, and circumstances of rule violations and the systematic deployment of security to situations where problems may occur) to uncover patterns of rule breaking and gang intimidation within and around the school. This careful analysis is the basis for an effective school security. Compliment security personnel for what they do well. Yet, if improvements are necessary to make the school more secure, include security personnel in a careful planning and implementation process (School Safety Check Book 1990).

"Record analysis is the basis for the effective assignment of school security personnel."

School security staff, with the help and support of the case management team and School Climate Committee, will need to eliminate conditions within and around the school that contribute to violence and disruptive acts with special attention to improved response to crises that involve gangs and potential violence. The following suggestions may be helpful (School Safety Check Book 1990, pages' 193-200):

✓ Make school perimeters safer by minimizing blind spots and removing exterior door handles or locking doors to make them inaccessible to intruders.

"School perimeters must be made safer by minimizing blind spots."

✓ School security must provide a daily law enforcement presence. They can patrol grounds, parking lots, bathrooms and hallways, check student and visitor identification, to investigate criminal complaints, and provide support to school staff during disturbances.

✓ The Principal, school security, and custodians must collaborate in the early detection and removal of gang graffiti, preferably with the required assistance of the culprits or youths involved.

✓ Gang members occasionally have females hold weapons for them. The school will need to develop a mechanism to insure that no weapons enter the school.

In addition, the School Climate Committee in collaboration with the case management team must develop a response strategy for recognizing pre-crisis indicators (Brooks 1981). Some pre-crisis indicators are (Brooks 1981):

♦ the clustering of rival gangs,

♦ movement of gangs from their normal turf,

♦ isolated racial fights,

♦ gang fights or gang homicides in the surrounding community,

♦ the discovery of weapons in or around the school.

♦ increased gang related incidents on buses and along bus routes,

♦ warnings from students, law enforcement, or school staff,

♦ increase in gang graffiti,

♦ changes in gang graffiti which indicate the presence of rival gangs,

♦ parents coming to school to withdraw their children out of fear of a gang fight or gang retaliation,

♦ students wanting to leave school to go to another school.

Furthermore, if the Principal recognizes signs of an impending gang crisis, likely to erupt into violence, he or she must immediately mobilize security, staff, teachers, and contact law enforcement agencies. Parents and parents groups must also be immediately alerted to protect children on the way home from school or become visible on bus stops near their homes(Brooks 1981).

"Must have a mechanism for identifying impending crisis."

66

If a crisis erupts or a serious crime occurs, the students involved must be promptly and forcefully dealt with by administrators. Students who break the law, must be arrested and prosecuted. To aid in the reaction to crisis and crime, the school will need to develop and maintain a good working relationship with law enforcement agencies, involve them in training, and consultation regarding gang crime and activity. Informal information sharing may be necessary to target repeat "offenders" for appropriate suppression. In the event of a serious injury or gang homicide, the principal will need to:

✓ Have a mechanism to inform all students and staff of the incident.

✓ Have a mechanism to help students and staff cope with feelings surrounding the incident.

✓ Visit the hospital to provide support and arrange for special support social services.

✓ Attend the students funeral and express the school's sympathy verbally or through a card or flowers.

✓ Have a person designated as the school spokesman to talk with the media to reduce confusion.

"The school will need to collect data on gang related activity and other disruptive acts."

In conclusion, the school will need to collect data on gang related activity and other disruptive acts, develop standard reporting procedures, and assign someone primary responsibility for data control (Duke 1980). Examples of the type of data to collect include (Duke 1980):

► Annual number of suspensions of high risk and gang youth and reasons.

► Breakdown of number and type of gang related behavior problems.

► Number of gang related incidents occurring "in class" and "out of class" (before school, between classes, cafeteria, travel to and from school, after school).

► Number of students who exhibit gang behavior who recently transferred to the school.

► Breakdown of punishment applied, their effectiveness, and the rate of repeated offenses.

► Specific attention to student behavior problems in programs that target high risk and gang youth (alternative school, special education, prevention curriculum).

► Sources of referral to Disciplinarian office for gang related problems.

► Comparative data on gang related incidents from previous years and nearby schools.

Summary

The key points in this chapter are:

(1)   The School Climate Committee, a standing committee responsible for monitoring the school gang problem, disciplinary policies, and school security, must meet on a regular basis to identify and solve problems related to school safety and reduction of the school gang problem.

(2)   The school must establish the school gang code and enforce it firmly and fairly. The Principal must communicate the gang school code to teachers, students and parents. In the classroom, teachers must know the school gang code and guidelines for appropriate intervention.

(3)   Rules must be clear, fair, or firmly enforced.

(4)   Schools with good discipline do not permit gang attire, symbols, signs, graffiti, the sale or possession of drugs, or possession of weapons. They establish punishment guidelines in advance with punishment fitting the severity of the rule infraction.

(5)   School security staff, with the help and support of teachers, staff, and the case management team and School Climate Committee, will need to eliminate conditions within and around the school that contribute to violence and disruptive acts with special attention to improved response to crises that involve gangs and potential violence.

(6)   The School Climate Committee in collaboration with the case management team must develop a response strategy for recognizing pre-crisis indicators.

(7)   If the Principal recognizes signs of an impending gang crisis, likely to erupt into violence, he or she must immediately mobilize security, teachers, staff, and contact law enforcement agencies.

(8)   If a crisis erupts or a serious crime occurs, the students involved must be promptly and forcefully dealt by arrest and prosecution. The school will need to develop and maintain a good working relationship with law enforcement agencies, involve them in training, and consultation regarding gang crime and activity.

(9)   In the event of serious injury or a gang homicide, the principal will need to inform all students and staff of the incident, have a mechanism to help students and staff cope with feelings, attend the funeral or visit the hospital, and express condolences to the family, and designate a spokesman to talk with the media to reduce confusion.

(10)   The school will need to collect data on gang related activity and other disruptive acts, develop standard reporting procedures, and assign someone primary responsibility for data control

DEVELOPMENT OF A SCHOOL WIDE LEARNING SUPPORT SYSTEM

■ Introduction
■ Classroom Teacher Support
■ Classroom Expectations
■ Small Student Work Groups
■ Support Staff
■ Summary

Introduction

"Gang youth need strong support and control."

At the elementary school level, students at high risk of gang involvement or in gangs need school wide support and all staff working to educate them about the dangers of gang life or drug abuse. Likewise, for middle and high school gang and high risk students, the distractions and emergencies created by gang activity will impede the learning process. There is evidence that strongly suggests the academic and social competence of gang and high risk youths are dependent on their ability to form warm, "real" relationships with school staff.

"Organizational change that designates and trains particular staff to work will gang and high risk youth will be required."

The school, whether elementary, middle, or high school, must not leave the development of positive relationships to chance. Gang and high risk youth need extra support from the entire school. This will require all members of school staff to reach out and provide special interest and attention to gang youths social and academic needs. A school cannot achieve academic competence objectives unless social objectives are given attention.

Classroom Teacher Support

The Principal will need to communicate to regular classroom teachers the expectation that they offer support to gang and high risk youth. Evidence suggests that positive adult relationships with gang youth decrease violence and disruptive acts. Yet, teachers must remain firm regarding rules and expectations for academic performance and avoid co-optation or intimidation by gang or high risk youths. At one time or another all teachers may need to fulfill the roles of teacher, policeman, and social worker. To teach gang youths effectively, teachers must become more involved in the lives of high risk and gang youth.

Classroom Expectations

Poor academic performance is related to delinquent and disruptive behavior (Gold and Mann 1984). The assessment process probably will show that some youths high risk or in gangs do poorly academically. Yet, other youths at high risk or in gangs will do well academically. Therefore, it is important to assess each youth and individualize intervention and instruction. The case management team will have to assist classroom teachers to alter their approach to enhance the academic achievement and reduce disruptive behavior by gang youths.
The following suggestions may be helpful:

► The teacher must not only emphasize performance standards but the nature and quality of the learning process. Also, teachers must focus on student's individual progress and not necessarily on the comparison with other students.

► A behavior modification, point or credit system, may be useful, particularly in elementary school. This approach must focus on rewards and not punishment. It must reward students' personal progress, actual progress, and contribution to group achievement. The focus on rewards enhances self-esteem and has the potential to increase the student's commitment to the school (Gold and Mann 1984).

"Evidence indicates that relationships with gang youth decreases violence and disruptive act."

"Poor academic performance is related to delinquent and disruptive behavior."

"Nature and quality of the gangs learning process must be addressed."

► The school will need to develop situations to reward high risk and gang youth. They may be unable to achieve status in the usual areas. Yet, they may show responsibility in a variety of school citizenship areas such as security, traffic patrol, and tutoring the younger youth. Weak academic students will need to receive status and rewards in other ways. Award them with certificates or commendations for involvement in school and community projects (e.g., graffiti expunging, good behavior on a field trip, etc.). Give the top academic students and best behaved students summer jobs or additional responsibility during the school day. Make persistent efforts to help youths feel positive about school; avoid punishment, failure, and blame because it induces high-risk and gang youths to reject school and defy authority.

"Situations need to be developed to reward high risk and gang youth."

Small Student Work Groups

Small student groups are a way to offer support to gang and high risk youth, confront gang activity, and teach high risk youth the dangers of drug abuse or gang involvement. This approach builds on the youth's need for group identity and collaboration and can accommodate different learning styles and rates. In discussions of drug or gang involvement small groups composed of gang and non-gang youth may bring peer pressure on youth to reevaluate their behavior. Careful composition of the membership of such a group is important so that the influence of non-gang social peers out weigh that of the gang members.

"Small work group can be used to teach high risk youth the dangers of drug abuse or gang involvement."

Support Staff

Support staff not assigned to the case management team, whether social workers, tutors, psychologists, or security personnel, can supplement efforts by specialist teachers on the case management team. The case management team leader can facilitate regular meetings with support staff and the regular teacher to review youth progress and current strategies used to help in youth's academic and behavioral progress.

"Case management team can supplement efforts of regular teachers and staff."

In addition, the case management team and support staff, particularly counselors and social workers, must assume leadership by becoming more involved in gang youths' lives after school. Periodic home visits, assistance to families (job referrals and education of parents) can benefit parents directly and students indirectly by reducing pressures at home.

Summary

The key points in this chapter are.

(1)   Students at high risk to gang involvement or in gangs need school wide support and all staff working to educate them about the dangers of gang life or drug abuse.

(2)   Evidence suggests that positive adult relationships with gang youths decrease violence and disruptive acts.   To teach gang youths effectively, teachers must become more involved in the lives of high risk and gang youth.

(3)   Poor academic performance is related to delinquent and disruptive behavior (Gold and Mann 1984). The assessment process probably will show that some youths at high risk or in gangs do poorly academically. Yet, other youths at high risk or in gangs will do well academically. Therefore, it is important to assess each youth and individualize intervention and instruction.

(4)   The school will need to develop situations to reward high risk and gang youth.

(5)   Make persistent efforts to help youths feel positive about school; avoid punishment, failure, and blame because it induces high-risk and gang youths to reject school and defy authority.

(6)   Small student groups are a way to offer support to gang and high risk youth, confront gang activity, and teach high risk youths the dangers of drug abuse or gang involvement.

(7)   The case management team and support staff, particularly counselors and social workers, must assume leadership by becoming more involved in gang youths' lives after school.

IDENTIFICATION OF HIGH RISK AND GANG YOUTH

"The school will need to identify and track at risk and gang youth."

The School Climate Committee will need to develop criteria for identifying youth in gangs or at high risk of gang involvement and a centralized system for identifying gang members and tracking their progress. Targeting high risk or gang youth is useful and relevant "if" it focuses on the most vulnerable youth. Do not confuse identification and tracking with destructive labeling or isolation of these youths from the mainstream school program.

Gang related behavior may begin as early as elementary school (Inglewood United School District 1990). The following items can be useful in developing the criteria for identifying high risk and gang youth. Yet, some gang youths do not exhibit such behavior. High risk factors (Inglewood United School District 1990; Gottfredson 1983; Learning Intervention Report 1988) include a combination of multiple *factors* or *indicators:*

"Identification must not be confused with destructive labeling and isolation of youth as gang members or potential gang members."

■ Exhibiting behavior problems in the early grades.

■ Use of gang signs.

■ Dressing in traditional gang clothes.

■ Putting gang related tattoos on the body.

■ Drawing graffiti and insignias on walls or school notebooks, books, etc.

■ Association with known gang members.

■ Poor academic performance:

    ◆ Poor academic achievement
    ◆ Frequent truancy from school

- ◆ Little effort expended to school work.
- ◆ Weak attachment and dislike for school.

- ■ Classroom management/discipline problem.

  - ◆ Defiance of rules and authority figures
  - ◆ Acting disruptively to gain approval from gang peers.
  - ◆ Lack of belief in the legitimacy of rules.

- ■ Actual participation in gang conflict, intimidation, extortion, or assault.

- ■ Substance abuse (Alcohol and/or drug abuse)

- ■ Frequent negative contact with police.

- ■ Gang members in the family.

- ■ Weak attachment to parents.

- ■ Growing up in a troubled home (violence, substance abuse).

- ■ Self-report by youth that he or she is a gang member.

"Must obtain information from many sources before confirmation of a particular youth as a gang member."

It will probably be necessary to obtain information from several reliable sources before confirmation of a particular youth as a gang member or a youth high risk. Also, some appropriate orderings or weighing of the above risk factors may be necessary with subcategories identifying high, medium, and low high risk and gang prone youth. Different categories of youth must receive different kinds and degrees of attention. To minimize the danger of negative or inadvertent labeling; identify only the highest risk youths for purposes of the present program where early intervention and prevention are a priority. Chapter Fourteen, Liaison, Coordination, and Outreach with Law Enforcement and Community Agencies, discusses guidelines and suggestions for information sharing.

Summary

The key points of this chapter are:

(1) The School Climate Committee will need to develop criteria for identifying youth in gangs or at high risk of gang involvement and a centralized system for identifying gang members and tracking their progress.

(2) Do not confuse identification and tracking with destructive labeling or isolation of these youths from the mainstream school program.

(3) Gang related behavior may begin as early as elementary school.

(4) Learn the high-risk factors and develop criteria for identifying youth at high risk and in gangs, but keep in mind that some gang youths do not exhibit such behavior. Yet, some non-gang youths sometime may display them.

(5) It will probably be necessary to obtain information from several reliable sources before confirmation of a particular youth as a gang member or a youth high risk.

(6) To minimize the danger of negative or inadvertent labeling; identify only the highest risk youths for purposes of the present program where early intervention and prevention are a priority.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

■ Prevention
■ Summary

Prevention - Early Intervention to Prevent and Deter Gang Involvement and Drug Abuse

"Elementary school high risk youth need to be targeted for a prevention curriculum."

After staff have been selected and trained to work with high risk and gang youths, a structure (case management team) developed, and high risk youths identified for services. Focus must shift to specific academic programs to prevent or control gang activity and drug abuse. Integrate new academic programs to prevent or control gang activity, where possible, into the existing curriculum (i.e., Health, Social Studies, or English classes). This chapter will review program options targeting high risk youths as early as 5th and 6th grade.

Some schools use several methods to prevent gang activity, substance abuse, and to control youths who begin to engage in gang related behavior (e.g., hanging out with gang members, drug distribution and selling for older gang youth):

▶ Anti-Drug and Gang Curriculum

▶ Self-esteem and Values Change Curriculum

▶ Peer Tutoring, Counseling, and Conflict Resolution Teams

▶ Violence Reduction Program

▶ Multicultural Diversity Curriculum Emphasis

The case management team must have primary responsibility for program development and work with elementary school teachers around the problem of high risk youth. This responsibility will extend beyond the boundaries of the school day. For example, when a youth is absent, a member of the case management team may go to the home or search the neighborhood to bring the youth to school. When suspended, the case management team may supervise or assist the youth in the completion of missed class work.

There are two general ways for assigning youths to the special curriculum program in an elementary school with gang problems:

► All children in the particular schools can receive the Anti-Drug and Gang Curriculum. This approach has the advantage of mixing high risk youths with youths not at risk and encourages peer pressure. Youth not at risk will confront high risk youth regarding attitudes related to gang and drug activity.

► Students who commit gang related infractions must attend a special curriculum conducted by the case management team, at which social, stable, and articulate youth may also be present. This special curriculum will encourage enhancement of self-esteem and positive role-modeling.

■ <u>Anti-Drug and Gang Curriculum</u>

Many cities have targeted high risk youths for a variety of discussion and lecture programs on the dangers of drugs and gangs and ways to avoid gang membership. Programs include DARE (Drug Awareness Resistance Education)*, SANE (Substance Abuse Narcotics Education), GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training), "Life Choices", and "Say No" programs. They have certain similarities:

♦ They are preventive and guide youth from neighborhoods with serious drug use and gang activity toward pro-social attitudes.

♦ They provide discussion opportunities for youth to examine and make correct decisions.

♦ Other goals include enhancing self-esteem, increasing awareness of alternatives to gang membership, the ability to make responsible choices and solve problems without violence or negative behavior, and the improvement of communication skills. They encourage skills that help the youth learn assertiveness to resist the peer pressure of gang recruitment and gang involvement.

♦ They focus on peer pressure to avoid experimentation that contributes to drug use and joining gangs.

♦ However, most programs emphasize drug prevention with limited attention directed to gang prevention and control. The program needs a balanced focus on drugs and gangs.

♦ Staff introduces creativity and enthusiasm in the programs through special curriculum materials and teaching aids; posters on gang or drug themes, media presentations, and discussion of newspaper articles.

Evaluations of such programs indicate some changes in attitudes and values, but results on behavioral changes are mixed and unclear. Follow-up studies on the effects of such programs over extended periods have not yet occurred.

■ Self-esteem and Values Change Curriculum

Unlike the structured Anti-Drug and Gang Curriculum programs, the values change curriculum induces spontaneous disclosure from high risk youth regarding personal values and pressures. The teacher establishes trust, promises confidentiality, and encourages the children to open up and discuss sensitive issues. The teacher functions as a role model and use a trusting relationship to influence youth value formation and

hopefully subsequent behavior. The teacher introduces contemporary topics to ease disclosure and discussion. The general goals are:

- ◆ Establishing a safe, secure classroom environment where students will take risks

- ◆ The students discussing home life, pressures of street life, and issues related to drug or gang involvement.

- ◆ the enhancement of self esteem through the students developing an appreciation of their uniqueness and value.

- ◆ Increases in self-esteem that help students avoid gang involvement or drug abuse.

- ◆ With the help of the teacher, students learning critical thinking that is expected to lead to good decision-making and the avoidance of drugs and gangs.

"The children are encouraged to open up and talk about sensitive issues."

■ Peer Tutoring, Counseling, and Conflict Resolution

The "Conflict Manager Program" trains selected students to intervene and resolve conflicts between students. San Francisco introduced this approach in elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools in 1982. In elementary schools, the primary focus is on problems that occur during recess and lunch periods. School staff or a case management team is responsible for training the student counselors or mediators and supervising intervention and conflict resolution.

In middle and high schools, after training, peer counselors arrange conflict resolution sessions and resolve conflict with little staff intervention and support (Anti-Drug/Gang Violence 1990).

"Conflict managers resolve conflict during recess and lunch."

Peer tutoring is another way to increase the resources available to high risk and gang youths. Students who do well in an academic area provide after school or in school tutoring.

■ Violence Reduction Program

This approach uses small work groups or therapy groups to help students learn and practice anger self-control strategies and techniques. The focus is on students learning to better manage the physical, emotional, behavioral, and thinking related to becoming angry or violent. Sessions include role-playing, homework, and video taping.

■ Multicultural Diversity

This approach uses culturally diverse material to improve students' understanding of cultures and histories of diverse groups that comprise American society. Teachers individualize instruction to fit different cultural learning styles and use material of particular interest to a cultural group. In addition, particular cultural groups learn about their culture and history. The goal is to help students learn more about themselves and their history and culture and therefore increase their self-esteem.

Summary

The key points of this chapter are:

(1) Integrate new academic programs to prevent or control gang activity, where possible, into the existing curriculum (i.e., Health, Social Studies, or English classes).

(2) The case management team must have primary responsibility for program development and work with elementary school teachers around the problem of high risk youth.

(3) There are two general ways for assigning youths to the special curriculum (1). All children in the particular schools can receive the Anti-Drug and Gang Curriculum and (2) Students who commit gang related infractions must attend a special curriculum conducted by the case management team.

(4) Some schools use several methods to prevent gang activity, substance abuse, and to control youths who begin to engage in gang related behavior. They include the (1). Anti-Drug and Gang Curriculum, (2). Self-esteem and Values Change Curriculum, (3) Peer Tutoring, Counseling, and Conflict Resolution Teams, (4). Violence Reduction Program, and (5).Multicultural Diversity.

(5) Anti-Drug and Gang Curriculum - Target high risk youths for a variety of discussion and lecture programs on the dangers of drugs and gangs and ways to avoid gang membership. Programs include DARE (Drug Awareness Resistance Education), SANE (Substance Abuse Narcotics Education), GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training), "Life Choices", and "Say No" programs.

(6) Self-esteem and Values Change Curriculum - The values change curriculum induces spontaneous disclosure from high risk youth regarding personal values and pressures. The teacher establishes trust, promises confidentiality, and encourages the children to open up and discuss sensitive issues.

(7) Peer Tutoring, Counseling, and Conflict Resolution - The "Conflict Manager Program" trains selected students to intervene and resolve conflicts between students. Peer tutoring is another way to increase the resources available to high risk and gang youths. Students who do well in an academic area provide after school or in school tutoring.

(8) Violence Reduction Program - This approach uses small work groups or therapy groups to help students learn and practice anger self-control strategies and techniques. The focus is on students learning to better manage the physical, emotional, behavioral, and thinking related to becoming angry or violent.

(9) Multicultural Diversity - This approach uses culturally diverse material to improve students' understanding of other cultures and histories. Teachers individualize instruction to fit different cultural learning styles and particular cultural groups increase their self-esteem through learning about their culture and history.

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

- ■ Delivery of a Flexible Curriculum
- ■ Alternative Educational Programs
- ■ Vocational Education, Job Preparation, and Placement
- ■ Summary

Delivery of a Flexible Curriculum

"Some of these youth can not cope with the rules and academic requirements and will require additional services."

Gang and gang prone youth need to master the academic skills needed to finish high school and later obtain employment. Some of these youths can not cope with the rules and academic requirements in conventional schools and will require additional services. These students can achieve the mastery of basic skills in three possible ways.

✓ *Supplement the academic core curriculum with remedial classes during and after school.*

Pay special attention to the development of a remedial curriculum for slow or deficient learners. This approach must focus on individualized instruction in reading and mathematics to help the youth improve basic academic skills.

✓ *Target gang and gang prone youth for enriched program within their schools.*

"Remedial education, enrichment programs, or alternative school placement may be required."

This will require additional resources and enrichment programs that offer academic and social educational opportunities for high risk and gang youth at grade level or above. Some of these youths will require college preparation courses and counseling regarding college. Special resources may include computer aided instruction, guest speakers, workshops in relevant areas (teenage pregnancy prevention, alternatives

to gang involvement, or vocational training), and support through individual and family counseling.

> ✓ *Placement of some gang and gang prone high school students into alternative educational programs.*

Alternative Educational Programs

Gang and gang prone youth may exhibit serious disruptive behavior that interferes with the education of other students and their own ability to learn. This disruptive behavior may include attempts to intimidate other students and staff, overt defiance of authority, and possibly physical violence. Due to their difficulty living up to academic demands, gang and gang prone youth often truant or simply drop-out of school. Therefore, it may not be possible to manage their behavior and educate them in a conventional school setting. At the high school level, schools must be able to refer certain gang and gang prone students to alternative educational settings.

In a study of alternative programs, Gottfredson (1983) found that alternative school programs are effective. They reduce delinquency around the school, reduce suspensions, increase attendance and academic success, and improve the transition to work and post secondary education. Also, students and teachers felt safer, teacher commitment increased, and there was a reduction in teacher victimization. In addition, Gold and Mann (1984), in an evaluation of alternative programs for seriously disruptive youth found similar evidence.   When students return to the regular school, they often manifest improved attitudes and commitment to learning.

It is possible to introduce many of the principles and practices of alternative schools into regular middle and high school programs that target gang youth. Successful alternative school programs seem to have the following characteristics (Gold and Mann 1984; Alternative Schools for Disruptive Youth 1989):

♦ Educational tasks are appropriate to student's level of skill.

♦ Content appeals to students own interest.

♦ Allow students to master content at their own pace.

♦ Education is based on individualized progress; with comparisons made with their own earlier progress -- not the norms for age and grade level.

♦ Student choice from several options provided by the school.

♦ Schools keep daily attendance and progress reports.

♦ Monitoring, evaluation, and formalized passage occur from one step of the program to another.

♦ Staff directly supervise all activities of the students.

♦ There is strong administrative and community commitment to the program and to its financial support.

♦ Parent and child counseling are mandatory.

♦ Require full day attendance with rigorous workload and minimal time off.

♦ Set high standards and expectations for performance.

♦ Curricula address cultural and individual learning styles.

♦ Clear and consistent goals exist for students and parents.

♦ Motivated and culturally diverse staff.

♦ The school climate is democratic.

♦ Gold and Mann (1984) believe that the capacity to bend rules and arrangements to the needs of the disruptive students may lie at the core of effective flexibility.

Finally, a key factor to the success of alternative school programs is the development of more informal, personal relationships between students and teachers.

Conclusion

Youths most committed to the gang and can no longer adapt to the conventional school setting must receive priority placement in alternative school programs. Many of the these students can return to the conventional school setting but will continue to need special services and support. Yet, use of alternative programs for gang-affiliated youth may not be appropriate, if placement in an alternative program or a special class stigmatizes the youth for being in a "loser's" group. The success of a particular placement depends on the perceptions of the youths, school administrators, teachers, and parents in the particular setting as well as the availability of good alternative school programs.

Provision of Vocational Education, Job Preparation, and Placement

A curriculum that combines academic and vocational preparation is particularly useful for gang and high risk youths. Strategies that provide economic opportunity for them will reduce gangs and gang violence. Legitimate jobs, as youths get older, are an alternative to street crime and hustling.

This curriculum must include work acclimation. Work acclimation is a process of preparing gang youths for eventual job placement. Youth at high risk of gang involvement or actively involved in gangs may have had only limited contact with the world of work and with people who are full-time employees. Therefore, they will require instruction in how to feel, think, and act as a worker. This instruction will include knowledge of organizational procedures, relationship skills, job interviewing, and filling out application forms, and interpersonal relationship skills.

The curriculum may include the following work acclimation objectives:

✓ Exposing the gang youth to the world of work and helping him assess his skills in relation to specific jobs.

✓ Helping the youth develop the belief that legitimate jobs can be rewarding.

✓ Preparing the youth for job placement.

"Must target the most committed gang youth for placement."

"Strategies which provide economic opportunity for gang and gang prone youths will reduce gangs and gang violence."

"Legitimate jobs, as youths get older, are an alternative to street crime and hustling."

✓ Job placement while still at school.

■ <u>Exposure to the world of work</u>

The case management team, alternative school staff, or the vocational education staff need to introduce gang youth to the world of work responsibility and reward. This can be done in many ways:

1. Use of curriculum materials that focus on attitude training and the world of work in terms of expectations on the job, careers, etc.

2. Direct observational experiences; including field trips to work sites, communication with employers, visits from workers who can serve as role models to talk about careers and activities on the job. This will help the gang youths understand the tasks, requirements, and constraints of the work place. Such exposure must help them learn that work can be meaningful and aid them in assessing their skills and aptitudes for particular jobs.

■ <u>Preparing the youth for job placement</u>

Gang youth will need to become competent in the actual skills needed to obtain a job. Involve employers in job workshops, on getting and holding jobs, on the following topics:

"Will need to learn interviewing skills, filling out application, and other skills needed to obtain a job."

▶ Filling out application forms.

▶ Proper job interviewing (including correct dress, personal hygiene, speech, and appropriate behavior at the interview).

▶ Role playing and use of practice videotaped interviews if resources are available.

► Special attitude training regarding how to relate to authority figures and peers who may be gang members from the same or different gangs.

In sum, successful work acclimation must be comprehensive and individualized, based on individual needs and interests. Staff must expose the youths to the world of work, train them in specific skills, and give feedback that leads to modification of gang attitudes and behaviors that interfere with successful job preparation and placement.

■ Job placement

After exposure to a brief work acclimation curriculum, high risk or gang youth will need work experience. He or she needs to begin to establish a work record, obtain references for further career development, and understand skills needed in present and future areas of vocational interest.

Before or during placement, give a staff person responsibility for job development, placement, and follow-up. A useful approach would be the development of cooperative education agreements with businesses in the surrounding community for the training and joint preparation of high risk and gang youth. This can help create a variety of part-time or summer job arrangements in cooperation with probation officers, Chambers of Commerce, and the public employment service.

It is important to match the "right" youth to the "right" job, with more limited, less demanding training and job opportunities provided for younger youth and more substantial skill and career opportunities provided for older youth.

■ Integration of work and educational experiences

Pay special attention to the support of students through adequate work supervision arrangements on the job. There is evidence that good supervision at the work site not only helps youths do a good job but also helps them maintain interest and involvement in class work. Class and job attendance must be maintained in some interdependent fashion. Therefore, a liaison teacher must maintain contact with supervisors and

88

insure the integration of work with educational experiences. A close relationship between school and the work site will help counter the tendency of some youth to "slack off" or retain close ties to gangs. The goal is to insure that these youths do not manipulate school and the work site.

Summary

The key points of this chapter are:

(1)   Gang and gang prone youth need to master the academic skills needed to finish high school and later obtain employment. Some of these youths can not cope with the rules and academic requirements in conventional schools and will require additional services.

(2)   These students can achieve the mastery of basic skills in three possible ways, (1) Supplementing the academic core curriculum with remedial classes during and after school, (2) Targeting gang and gang prone youth for enriched program within their school, and (3). Placement of some gang and gang prone high school students into alternative educational programs.

(3)   In a study of alternative programs, Gottfredson (1983) found that alternative school programs are effective. They reduce delinquency around the school, reduce suspensions, increase attendance and academic success, and improve the transition to work and post secondary education. Also, students and teachers felt safer, teacher commitment increased, and there was a reduction in teacher victimization.

(4)   A key factor to the success of alternative school programs is the development of more informal, personal relationships between students and teachers.

(5)   A curriculum that combines academic and vocational preparation is particularly useful for gang and high risk youths. Strategies that provide economic opportunity for them will reduce gangs and gang violence. Legitimate jobs, as youths get older, are an alternative to street crime and hustling.

(6) The case management team, alternative school staff, or the vocational education staff need to introduce gang youth to the world of work responsibility and reward.

(7) Gang youth will need to become competent in the actual skills needed to obtain a job. Involve employers, in job workshops, on getting and holding jobs.

(8) Successful work acclimation must be comprehensive and individualized, based on individual needs and interests. Youths must be exposed to the world of work, trained in specific skills, and given feedback that leads to modification of gang attitudes and behaviors that interfere with successful job preparation and placement.

(9) A useful approach would be the development of cooperative education agreements with businesses in the surrounding community for the training and joint preparation of high risk and gang youth. This can help create a variety of full and part-time arrangements in cooperation with probation officers, Chambers of Commerce, and the public employment service.

(10) Pay special attention to the support of students through adequate work supervision arrangements on the job. There is evidence that good supervision at the work site not only helps youths do a good job but also helps them maintain interest and involvement in class work.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- **Parent Patrols**
- **Mentoring Programs**
- **Inducements**
- **Summary**

"The involvement of parents is essential if any strategy is to be effective."

To effectively reduce the gang problem and fulfill the mission of educating all students, it is crucial to involve parents within the school. Parents, with the aid of the school and community agencies, can help children internalize norms and values that aid youth in education and avoidance of drugs and gangs. However, Due to their own personal or family problems or pressures, many parents of gang youth may be unable to participate in the efforts of programs.

The safety and security of their children, while they are in school or traveling to and from school, are a major concern for most parents. Yet, parents will vary in their acceptance of a school and community gang problem and in their commitment to the school and activism regarding the problem. The school must make a distinction between parents of gang and non-gang children, or victims of crime or intimidation. Most parents want protection from the children of gang member families and prefer not to deal with parents of gang youth.

"The school, through the efforts of the Principal and case management team, will need to involve parents."

The school, through the efforts of the Principal and case management team, will need to involve different types of parents. The school must involve parents in parent meetings, gang detection and prevention school activities, mentoring, and assistance on school activities (i.e., field trips). The more effective or "stronger" parents can assist and reach out, e.g., through home visits, to support the more problem ridden parents. These parents will need support, understanding, and pressure to exercise better social control on their gang prone youth. A proactive and persuasive group of parents can also have a calming influence on students and teachers.

Parents who have successfully dealt with their own children with a gang or drug problem can be very helpful in a support group or calling or visiting parents to offer support. Their experience would be beneficial in special parent's committees that assist in the control and prevention programs, the assessment School and Community Committee, or other school or community efforts to reduce the gang problem.

The Principal and case management can use two primary programs to involve parents; (1). Parents Patrols and (2). Mentoring programs.

Parent Patrols

A parent patrol is a group of dedicated parents who volunteer to work within the school. Used primarily in elementary and middle schools, parents patrol the halls during the school day, supervise recess, and monitor special activities. The school rewards the parents by providing office space and awarding certificates and trophies. The school usually provides funds for transportation to the school, free lunch, and jackets, hats, and badges. This core group of dedicated parents recruits other parents for the patrol and becomes a recognized structure within the school.

Mentoring

Parental support in other areas is crucial to effective gang reduction. Mentoring is a useful way to involve parents or siblings within the school and in after school programs. A mentor is a person who is "a wise and trusted teacher, guide, friend." The key is the development of a positive, mutually respectful relationship between a mentor and a particular high risk or gang youth. Base mentor selection on specific criteria. Mentors should have (Mission Impossible 1990):

▶ A willingness to volunteer on a long-term basis.

▶ An understanding of /or experience with parenting.

▶ An ability to listen and hear what person is saying.

- Maturity and the ability to handle conflict.

- Honesty and sensitivity to personal privacy.

- Respect for the confidential nature of the relationship.

The school must recruit mentors, train, and supervise them. Recruit mentors through community outreach, relatives or neighbors of gang members, or former gang members. Designate a staff member of the case management team to supervise the mentor or volunteer program. Reward the volunteers in some way. Hold yearly luncheons, award programs, place notes in local newspapers or agency newsletter, to give them recognition and express your appreciation for their efforts. Orientation should also include some appropriate training or advice on effective listening and counseling skills.

"Must try to involve males (brothers, uncles, or fathers)."

The case management team or Principal, with the aid of parents groups, must strive to get more male involvement (brother, uncle, or father) in school related activities. Recruiting male mentors to volunteer in after school programs is a way to expose high risk and gang youth to positive role models.

Inducements

The Principal and case management team must develop a variety of inducements, in addition to those of the parent association, parent patrols, or mentoring programs:

- To target and engage passive and reluctant parents in school activities and in efforts to reduce the school and community gang problem.

- Meet the personal needs of the parents by involving them in activities of personal or social interest to them. For example, field trips, computer classes, parent education classes, issues related to child care and child development, and their own education and job placement.

93

In addition, the school must have meetings at convenient times, involve parents in the planning process, and insure a safe, non-threatening environment (Anti-Drug/Gang Violence 1990). Reward parents who volunteer with part-time jobs as school aides and during the Christmas holiday hold raffles and fundraising activities. Teachers, the Principal, and the case management team must treat all parents with respect and recognize the knowledge and skills that parents can bring to problem resolution.

Also, if the school has the resources, a 24 hour hotline is a good way to obtain information about gang activity and school related problems in an anonymous and non-threatening manner. Parents can call to share any information with the school at any time.

Summary

The key points of this chapter are:

(1) To effectively reduce the gang problem and fulfill the mission of educating all students, it is crucial to involve parents within the school.

(2) Yet, parents will vary in their acceptance of a school and community gang problem and in their commitment to the school and activism regarding the problem.

(3) The school, through the efforts of the Principal and case management team, will need to involve different types of parents. The school must involve parents in parent meetings, gang detection and prevention school activities, mentoring, and assistance on school activities (i.e., field trips).

(4) Parents who have successfully dealt with their own children with a gang or drug problem can be very helpful in a support group or calling or visiting parents to offer support.

(5) The Principal and case management can use two primary programs to involve parents; (1). Parents Patrols and (2). Mentoring programs.

(6)   A parent patrol is a group of dedicated parents who volunteer to work within the school. Used primarily in elementary schools, parents patrol the halls during the school day, supervise recess, and monitor special activities.

(7)   Mentors is a useful way to involve parents or siblings within the school and in after school programs. A mentor is a person who is "a wise and trusted teacher, guide, friend." The key is the development of a positive, mutually respectful relationship between a mentor and a particular high risk or gang youth.

(8)   Recruiting male mentors to volunteer in after school programs is a way to expose high risk and gang youth to positive role models.

(9)   Teachers, the Principal, and the case management team must treat all parents with respect and recognize the knowledge and skills that parents can bring to problem resolution.

(10) If the school has the resources, a 24 hour hotline is a good way to obtain information about gang activity and school related problems in an anonymous and non-threatening manner. Parents can call to share any information with the school at any time.

LIAISON, COORDINATION, AND OUTREACH WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES

■ Community Outreach
■ Information Sharing
■ Summary

Community Outreach

"Schools must and can become more involved in the surrounding community."

In most deprived communities, the school is one of central, legitimate institutions for socializing youth. Yet, sometimes the school is isolated from the community and avoids dealing with community gang problems. Schools must and can become more involved in the surrounding community and work with community agencies and parents to reduce the more general gang problem that usually spills over into the schools.

"This approach m ay require that some agencies locate services directly in the school and the school expands the school day. "

A variation of the notion of outreach is the use of the school as a community base or anchor to provide to students and parents with a whole range of preventive, remedial, education, training, and employment services. This approach may require that some agencies locate services directly in the school and the school expands the school day. A team of youth agencies, social workers, health care workers, parents, businesses, police, and probation would be available to deal with a variety of youth problems, including the gang problem. These agency teams, in addition to or in place of the case management team can become active in the school and work collectively to reduce the school and community gang problem. Interagency agreements and regular interagency conferences are mechanisms for insuring communication and cooperation.

"Businesses and the media can participate through cooperating in joint community -- school efforts. "

Local businesses and the media can also participate through cooperating in joint community -- school efforts. Businesses by giving jobs and/or job training and the media through giving recognition for contributions by gang or high risk youths to the community; e.g.,

showing leadership in community clean-up efforts, participation in graffiti expunging campaigns, mural projects or other activities sponsored by the school and community.

Information Sharing

Occasionally, the school will need to share information on a certain youth with community organizations or law enforcement agencies. The School Climate Committee must adopt procedures for maintaining this list of gang and students at high risk of gang involvement and related records and files confidential. The following suggestions are in order:

♦ Only appropriate school personnel must have access to these files.

♦ Generally, no outside agency, including the police, must have access to these files. An exception may be the informal sharing of information with law enforcement agencies necessary to effectively suppress serious gang activity within and around the school.

"Only appropriate school personnel must have access to these files."

♦ Parents and youth must complete forms that authorize the release of specific types of information to other agencies.

♦ School administrators, teachers, and other staff must not abuse the list of names and use it to exclude students from school, subject them to harassment and stigmatization, and violate normal student rights and privileges. The school must develop and communicate due process procedures to all parents and students.

♦ *Review the list of high risk youth frequently for reliability and validity.* Purge the list of gang youth periodically and add names only after a careful assessment. The case management team must have exclusive responsibility for file maintenance.

◆ When it is necessary to share descriptive information regarding the gang problem, make a distinction between statistical data and information on particular students. When possible, share only aggregate statistical with outside agencies and actors.

Summary

The key points of this chapter are:

(1) Schools must and can become more involved in the surrounding community and work with community agencies and parents to reduce the more general gang problem that usually spills over into the schools.

(2) A variation of the notion of outreach is the use of the school as a community base or anchor to provide to students and parents a whole range of preventive, remedial, education, training, and employment services. This approach may require that some agencies locate services directly in the school and the school expands the school day.

(3) Interagency agreements and regular interagency conferences are mechanisms for insuring communication and cooperation.

(4) Local businesses and the media can also participate through cooperating in joint community -- school efforts.

(5) Occasionally, the school will need to share information with community organizations or law enforcement agencies. The School Climate Committee must adopt procedures for maintaining a this list of gang and students at high risk of gang involvement and related records and files confidential.

(6) Generally, no outside agency, including the police, must have access to these files. An exception may be the informal sharing of information with law enforcement agencies necessary to effectively suppress serious gang activity within and around the school.

(7) School administrators, teachers, and other staff must not abuse the list of names and use it to exclude students from school, subject youth to harassment and stigmatization, and violate normal student rights and privileges. The school must develop and communicate due process procedures to all parents and students.

(8) Review the list of high risk youth frequently for reliability and validity. Purge the list of gang youth periodically and add names only after a careful assessment.

(9) When it is necessary to share descriptive information regarding the gang problem, make a distinction between statistical data and information on particular students. When possible, share only aggregate statistical with outside agencies and actors.

V. EVALUATION

Program evaluation is the process by which the school or an outside expert (consultant or academic) obtains information to determine if the school has been successful in reducing the school gang or community gang problem. It must measure the extent to which victimization within and around the school has decreased, truancy and drop-out rates reduced, and the school climate improved (reduction of fear and anxiety) in consequence of the special anti-gang efforts undertaken. Therefore, it is important to define program goals and objectives in measurable ways to assure the quality of programs. The school must also determine the validity of classifications of high risk and gang youths Major evaluation questions to answer are:

"Need to evaluate outcomes to measure intervention effectiveness. "

♦ How many youths who received targeted services did not drop-out or continue disruptive behavior?

♦ Did the academic performance of gang and high risk youth change?

♦ Has the school climate improved and do the teachers and students report a reduction of fear and anxiety?

♦ How many times have the police and school security been called to deal with gang problems?

♦ Have graffiti writing and other gross indicators of gang presence and activity declined?

♦ Has there been a reduction in the community's gang problem?

"Good record-keeping are essential to effective evaluations. "

Ideally, the school must plan a long term as well as short term outcome evaluation. Good documentation and record-keeping is essential to effective evaluations. The school must use evaluation findings to determine which programs work and which do not, what needs improving, and new approaches to the reduction of the school gang problem.

Summary

The key points of this chapter are:

(1)   Program evaluation is the process by which the school or an outside expert (consultant or academic) obtains information to determine if the school has been successful in reducing the school gang or community gang problem.

(2)   Define program goals and objectives in measurable ways to assure the quality of programs.

(3)   Good documentation and record-keeping is essential to effective evaluations.

(4)   The school must use evaluation findings to determine which programs work and which do not, what needs improving, and new approaches to the reduction of the school gang problem.

TABLE 1 - EFFECTIVE CONTROL & REDUCTION OF GANG PROBLEM

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                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │  School Mission │
                    └─────────────────┘
                             ↓
                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │ School Principal│
                    │        or       │
                    │ Central Office  │
                    └─────────────────┘
                             ↓
                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │ School/Community│
                    │    Committee    │
                    └─────────────────┘
                             ↓
┌─────────────────┐         ┌─────────────────┐
│ Sources of Data │ ← ←     │ I. Assessment   │
└─────────────────┘         └─────────────────┘
         ↓                           ↓
┌─────────────────┐         ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Chronic or      │   →     │ Know Scope of        │
│ Emerging        │         │ Seriousness          │
└─────────────────┘         │ of Gang Problem      │
                            └──────────────────────┘
                                     ↓
                            ┌──────────────────────┐
                            │ II. Translation to   │
                            │     Goals &          │
                            │     Strategies       │
                            └──────────────────────┘
                                     ↓
                            ┌──────────────────────┐
                            │ III. Translation     │
                            │      To Objectives   │
                            └──────────────────────┘
                                     ↓
                            ┌──────────────────────┐
                            │ IV. Implementation   │
                            └──────────────────────┘
                                     ↓
                            ┌──────────────────────┐
                            │ V. Evaluation        │
                            └──────────────────────┘
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Assessment
1. School Gang Assessment
2. School Characteristics
3. Community Gang Problem
4. Interralationship of School & Community Gang Problem

Suggested Strategies
1. Prevention
2. Social Opportunities
3. Social Support
4. Community Mobilization
5. Organizational Change & Development
6. Suppression

102

TABLE 2

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

School Principal → **School/Community Committee** → **School Climate Committee** → **Case Management Team** ↔ **Classroom Teachers** → **Work With Gang and High Risk Student**	**Implementation Objectives** 1. Building A Structure For Flexible Curriculum & & Safe School Environment 2. Consistent Discipline & A Safe School Environment 3. Training & Staff Selection (Case Management Team) 4. Parental Involvement 5. Prevention of Gang Involvement (Elementary School) 6. Vocational Training, Job Preparation, & Placement (Middle & High School) 7. Liaison, Coordination, & Outreach to Community Agencies

Case Management Team ← → **Liaison With Community and Criminal Justice Agencies**

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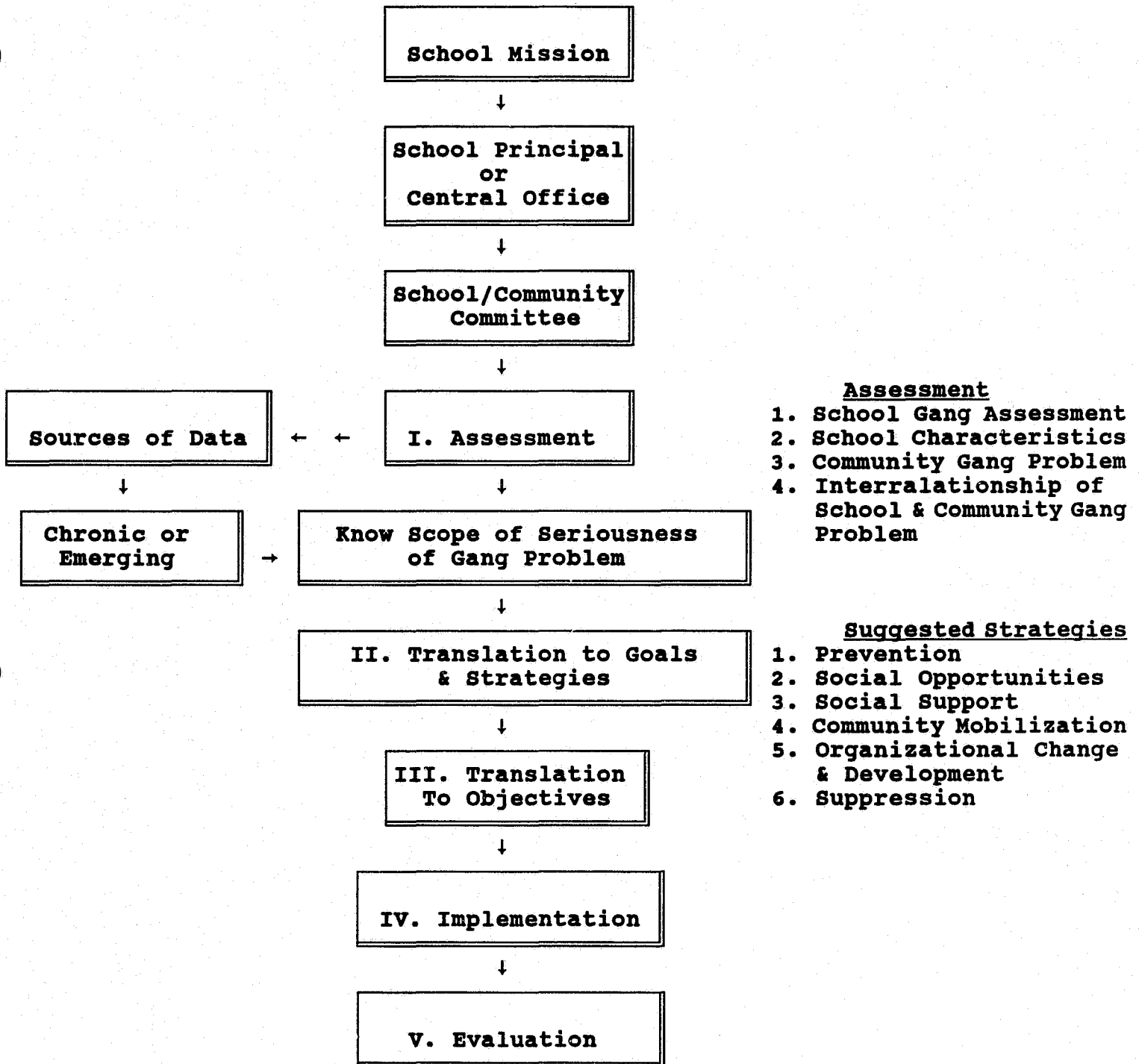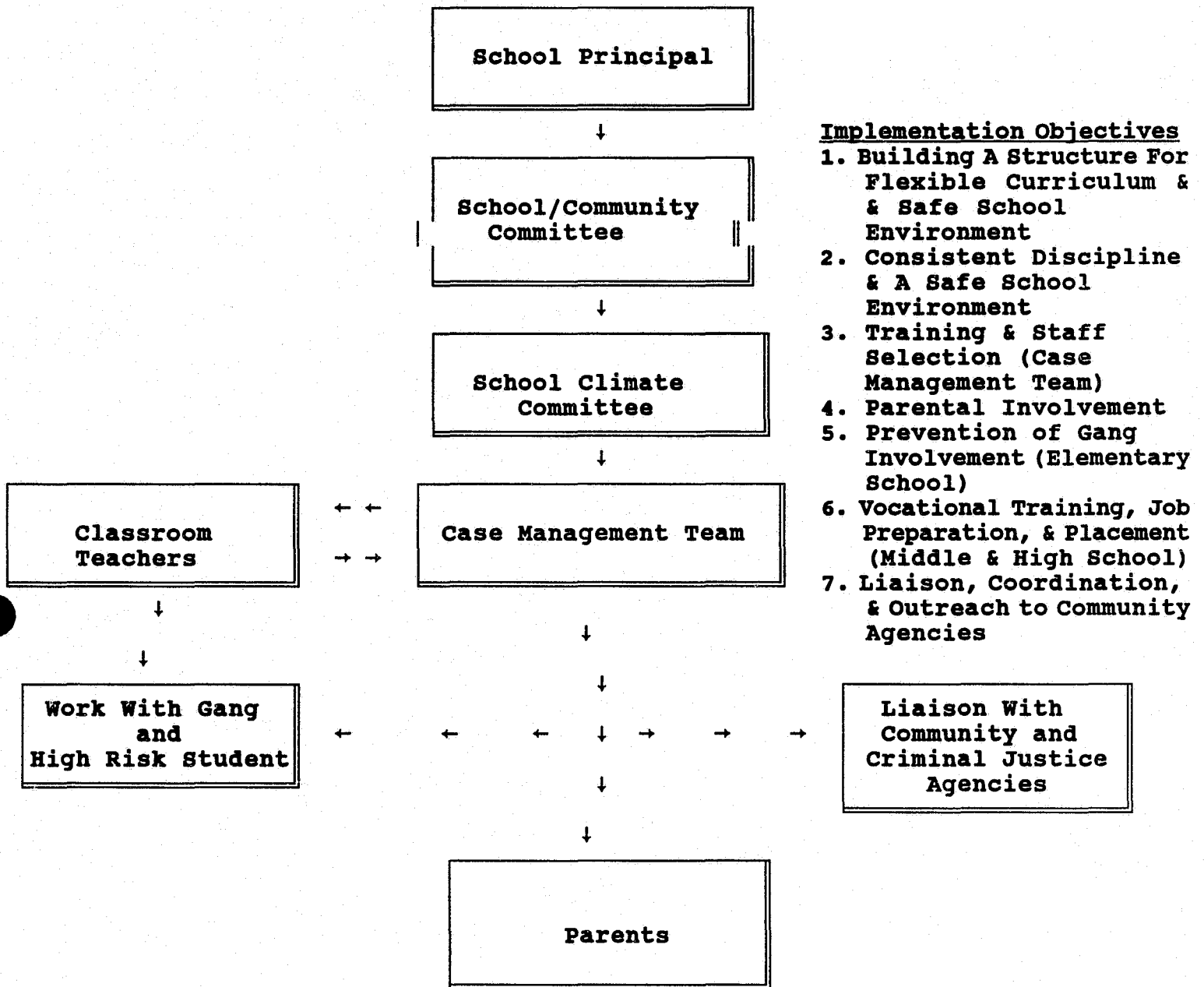**Parents**

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* The idea of a School Climate Committee was suggested to me by Dr. C. Edward Lawrence, Director, Department of School Accountability and Support, Milwaukee Public Schools.