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**Community-Based Youth Agency Model**

Irving Spergel and Candice Kane

National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program  
School of Social Service Administration  
University of Chicago

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4301 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 730  
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## Statement of the Problem

There has been a long tradition of youth agency, settlement house, and community center interest and concern with the socialization of youth, particularly in low income, newcomer or transitional communities. Services and activities, usually of a recreational, informal educational, and social developmental nature, have been offered to youth and sometimes their families to acculturate them to the norms and values of American society, especially middle class society. Despite the long history of youth work, services have generally been directed to younger children, particularly between the ages of 6 and 14 years. Historically and still today, most community-based youth programs have been directed to conforming or, "normal" children and youth in a particular area of the city.

At various times and places, youth agencies such as YMCAs, Boys Clubs, and Settlement Houses have developed programs addressed to delinquent or predelinquent youth. While many youth service programs have attempted to prevent delinquency, very few have sought to deal with or reach out to older delinquent youth, particularly those who generally do not frequent youth agencies. Some special outreach programs have been established to deal with delinquent groups and youth gangs. However, evaluative research of some of these programs, which have generally emphasized recreation, individual counseling, group work, or case management, have reported no effects or, in a few instances, increased levels of delinquency for program youth. Delinquent groups inadvertently may have been made more cohesive by youth outreach or gang workers.

A few exceptional examples of youth work of a broad community character have shown some promise. They include the Chicago Area Projects in the 1930s and 1940s and the Philadelphia Crisis Intervention Network in the 1970s, a coalition of East Los Angeles public and private agencies, and a combined Boys Club and police department program in El Monte, California during the 1970s and 1980s. Each of these projects was associated with a reported reduction in delinquency or gang violence rates. The distinctive character of these promising and apparently successful programs -- none of which was subjected to a rigorous evaluation -- was the combination of strategies employed: community resident mobilization, youth agency social intervention, social opportunities or the provision of jobs to targeted youth, and the integral involvement of criminal justice system units, particularly police, probation, and parole.

Despite such evidence, many youth agency and powerful community leaders continue to insist that all that is required to deal with group delinquency, particularly the youth gang problem, is a little counseling or constructive activity "to keep idle hands busy." The historical record, however, indicates quite clearly that a youth agency program which emphasizes only a social intervention or recreational approach does not work. Delinquent or gang youth are often not adequately targeted, and the results are poor.

All of this is not to deny that youth agencies can provide a meaningful and possibly effective service to gang youth. But this requires first, that youth agencies make a commitment to serving gang youth, including older adolescents and even young adults; second, that community-based youth agencies adopt a combined social intervention and deterrence or suppression strategy; third, that youth service agencies engage local citizens or influentials in dealing with the problem. This means resurrecting an older tradition of social advocacy, community organization, and local leadership development; and fourth, that adequate public funding be provided under conditions of strict accountability. Youth services and community-based agency programs often "skim" or "cream" more promising or conforming youth and fail to target more difficult youth.

In the past two decades, community-based youth agencies may have decreasingly served gang youth because youth gangs have grown increasingly more violent and criminal. They are more difficult to deal with. Some older gang youth are now heavily engaged in drug trafficking. On the other hand, youth agencies with the aid of federal and state funds, in recent years, have focussed on runaway, status offender, mental health, and alternative educational and training programs.

#### **A Community-based Youth Agency (CBYA) Approach**

No agency or organization alone can deal appropriately with the problem of youth gang crime. Only a comprehensive community-based approach involving other community-based, criminal justice and grassroots organizations interested in both preventing and controlling youth gang crime, including gang-related violence holds promise of effectiveness. An essential component of a broad scale approach is a local community-based youth agency (CBYA) which provides a continuum of many services to gang and gang prone youth as well as to other youth, family, and community residents. The agency must have a board which contains local residents and represents the expressed needs and interests of its community.

A CBYA, furthermore, must closely coordinate its services with criminal justice system units including police, court, probation, detention, parole, and correction institutions as well as with local schools, business and industry. The CBYA may have to engage in advocacy, not only on behalf of particular individual gang youth, but, generally, on behalf of gang youth especially in chronic gang problem communities where youth have been underserved. Such social advocacy should be directed to the development of a whole range of essential opportunities, especially improved educational training, and job programs targeted to gang youth as a category.

A CBYA should engage in a variety of youth outreach service and grassroots mobilization efforts. It should attempt directly to mediate differences among warring gang groups. At the same time it should assist local community resident groups and agencies in the area to support the positive efforts of gang and gang prone youth

while deterring their criminal activities, including drug trafficking. In other words a highly complex, pro-active and generalist role is envisioned for the CBYA interested in developing its capacity to deal with the youth gang crime problem.

Proposed is a six fold mission for those youth agencies intending to serve gang youth: socialization, education, family support, training and employment, social control, community mobilization and agency coordination. This mission must target and serve different types of gang youths, problem families, and communities in different ways. This variation is largely related to degrees of poverty and social and personal disorganization, particularly as represented in emerging and chronic gang problem communities.

We have identified emerging gang problem communities or cities generally as those with a changing population, where low income minority populations, usually African-American and Latino, Mexican-American or Puerto Rican, have become somewhat socially isolated and bereft of social resources. Youth gang problems, sometimes of a serious nature, have emerged in these changing or increasingly economically depressed low income communities, particularly under the tutelage of a few older gang-wise youth who may have moved into the community. In general such areas have relatively adequate access to educational, employment, and recreational resources.

The chronic gang problem city or community has been identified as an inner city, highly impoverished and/or disorganized community. The relative numbers and severity of gang problem youth and families are much greater in comparison to emerging problem communities. Gang crime and criminality are well established and have been endemic, with acute phases, for decades. Many in the community are discouraged, hopeless, and resigned to a fate of victimization, violence, drug trafficking, illness, poor housing, and unemployment. Membership in gangs is often generational, although there are many families whose children lead conventional lives and become successful working and middle class citizens.

This approach assumes that the CBYA will serve a range of children, youth, and families in a given community. It assumes that residents in the community will represent a range of social, economic, and racial or ethnic groups. Even in relatively segregated communities, it is expected that the CBYA will serve residents of diverse class and status to meet a broad range of interests and needs. To the fullest extent possible the agency must represent and cater to a complex community. However, the CBYA which proposes to serve gang and gang prone youth must identify them in specific terms and provide them with appropriate and distinctive programs.

The types of gang youth and their families will also vary somewhat by emerging or chronic problem community. Priority services should be provided to those younger youth who are gang prone based on specific risk criteria and to those usually older youth who have already been adjudicated for gang related crimes. More specifically, gang prone or high risk youth admitted to the special youth gang program should be between age 12 to 16 years who

meet at least four of the following criteria: associate regularly with acknowledged gang youth; have family members who are or were gang members; occasionally wear gang colors, use gang symbols, or flash gang signs; are performing poorly in school or if out of school are unemployed; have one or more arrests; or use drugs. Adjudicated or convicted gang youth, 12 to 21 years include those who are on probation, served time in detention or in a correctional setting, and/or have been on parole for a felony gang related offense. At least 70 percent of gang prone or gang member youth to be targeted should probably be males (Available statistics indicate that at least 80 or 90 percent of youth arrested for gang offenses are male, although recent sources indicate that the number of females in gangs is increasing).

The CBYA program should target a different mix of youth in emerging and chronic problem communities. Relatively more gang prone youth should be targeted in emerging gang communities; relatively more committed and adjudicated gang members should be targeted in chronic gang localities to reflect the varying scope and nature of the problem. The greater cohesion of youth gangs in chronic problem communities would probably require relatively greater attention to older gang youths than in an emerging problem community. The specific proportions of each type of youth in the special CBYA youth gang program should also vary with specific neighborhood and agency resource factors, for example types of facilities available, quality of staff, and their experience with gang youth.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The key goal of the program is the reduction of the incidence and prevalence of youth gang crimes. This would include a reduction in the number of violent and serious youth gang crimes, particularly homicides, assaults, and drug trafficking as well as reduction in the number and size of gangs. The gang-related incident should be defined in narrow group interest or motivational terms to avoid excessive labelling of youth. The focus of the CBYA gang program should not be the wide range of criminal activities committed by the youth gang member, but mainly (not exclusively) those which grow specifically out of gang structure and process.

The primary strategies of the special CBYA youth gang program should be intervention and suppression at various levels. For purpose of the U.S. Justice Department mission, emphasis should not be on a prevention strategy which would target youth who are not at high risk of gang membership or gang crime, i.e., who do not meet gang prone risk criteria identified above. The purpose of the specific programs is also not to serve serious offenders who are not gang members but who may be members of criminal organizations.

Special attention in the formulation of objectives should be given to redirecting the interests and capacities of gang members and gang prone youth toward improved performance at school, in training, and on the job. Development is required of attitudes and social skills which assist youth to avoid gang membership,

participation in gang related conflict, or criminal activities. A key objective should be to help youth understand the meaning and value of social controls as well as to directly implement such controls as appropriate. Close relationships and coordination must be established with the families of gang prone and youth gang members as well as with schools, police, probation, parole and other justice system representatives.

Program objectives should vary depending on whether focus is on older hardened gang youth or younger "wannabees" and fringe members. Closer supervision and coordination with justice system units, training and employment settings will be required for older youth. Relatively more home and school contact will be required for younger youth, with special attention to the development of those social and athletic activities which emphasize social control and conflict resolution skills.

### **Organizational and Program Structure**

Both the strength and the weakness of the community-based youth services approach is its broad scale yet residual character. The community-based agency responds to the basic and often changing interests, needs, and problems of the local population. The CBYA must be able to adapt quickly and sensitively to individual as well as social problems as they evolve, usually before other established institutions have been able to readjust their strategies and programs. In the face of traditional organizational lag, the CBYA should and often does attempt to fill in the gaps of other institutional programs. At the same time it should assist the established institution itself, e.g., family, school, employment, or criminal justice agency, to modify its approach. In this context, the CBYA is temporarily required to perform certain functions which should in the long term be better accomplished by these other institutions.

This means therefore that the CBYA structure and program for dealing with gang prone youth and gang members should be closely linked to an established institution. It should operate as a partner and enabler particularly to the school in respect to the emerging youth gang problems and as partner and enabler to some public authority, probably a justice system unit, in the chronic gang problem community. In both cases, a special collaborative or team arrangement between organizations should be established. The program structure created in each of these problem contexts should require the participation of local residents in decision-making, program development, and operations. The programs should result in the achievement of three goals: 1) reduction of the gang problem; 2) strengthening of primary institutions, particularly the family, school, and employers in their efforts to deal with gang prone and gang member youth; and 3) increased local community capacity to address its youth gang problem.

A continuum of services, which focus on six programmatic areas should characterize the CBYA's effort: socialization, education, family support, training and employment, social control, and

community mobilization and agency coordination. In both emerging and chronic gang problem cities, the CBYA should play a special case management role. In the emerging problem context, the CBYA should contribute primarily to the school's institutional mission of academic and social development of youth. In the chronic problem context, the CBYA should contribute significantly to the justice system's mission of social control of gang youth and protection of the community.

**Case Management Role.** The CBYA can assume case management responsibility for each youth in the program. This should be done in conjunction with the schools in an emerging gang problem context and probation in a chronic gang problem context. Variations in structure will be required where both gang prone and gang member youth are served in the same program. The CBYA should receive referrals of youth identified as gang prone from sources such as schools, police, court diversion units, other human service agencies, community organizations, families, self-referrals, and the outreach agency worker. Referrals to the CBYA's adjudicated gang member program should be restricted to court, probation, parole, corrections, and the prosecutor's office.

The CBYA should directly supply or broker a variety of services including the following: intake screening, crisis intervention, advocacy/mentoring, short-term out of home placement (court determined), educational remedial classes and activities; vocational training; job apprenticeships; part and full time employment; drug/alcohol assessment and treatment; individual/group/family counseling; medical assessment and treatment; parent/guardian training; a full range of community center social and recreational activities; educational and employment referral services for family members of gang and gang prone youth; community service activities which can be utilized by the gang member and gang prone youth for repayment of debts to society; in-home detention programming; special gang patrol services; monitoring and other community support services.

The special coordinative interagency unit (CBYA and school; CBYA and probation) or community committee should meet at regular intervals with the case manager for the purpose of 1) clarifying case plan responsibilities; 2) reviewing the youth's progress; 3) recommending a change in the plan of services, e.g., increase or decrease the level of restriction for the youth; 4) resolving problems of interagency coordination and resource development; 5) engaging in community service planning and policy advocacy; and 6) promoting resident involvement and community development issues related to the gang problem.

### **Emerging Gang Problem Cities**

In emerging gang problem cities, the six core categories of services are intended to address: the gang prone youth's special needs for status, his lack of academic skills, difficulty relating to others in positive ways, lack of an adequate support system, and

need for supervision. It is also important to address the community's inability: to recognize the gang problem; structure programs adequately to deal with it; and determine what services and activities would most benefit the particular youth and target population. Each program youth should participate directly or indirectly in an intake assessment interview in due course. Such an assessment would have to come in many instances after the youth worker has contacted the gang member and his group on the streets and established a positive preliminary relationship with them. Follow-up information would be supplied by the school on performance, attendance, and social adjustment or behavior problems as well as by the police, court, family, peers, and other organizations in the community. In the development of a service and community action plan, it is assumed not only that the youth and his family will be voluntarily involved but, in some cases, that participation in the program may be mandated by the court, probation, or the school.

### **Socialization**

Of primary importance in emerging gang problem contexts is the ability of the CBYA worker to reach out to youth on the street not yet involved in existing agency programs. Such youth constitute a recruiting pool for gang membership. They may also comprise a new membership pool for agencies in those communities where the established population has aged or changed and no longer uses the facility. The agency may need to reach out to a group of youth new to the community to fulfill its socialization mission.

Special efforts may be required, however, to change the style and content of existing programs to meet the interests and needs of newcomer ethnic, racial, and cultural groups. Citizen leaders of the local community and even former gang members may need to be brought into the agency as staff or even board members to assist in the development of appropriate programs and agency practices. Special linkages will need to be developed in conjunction with schools to provide recreational, social, and after school activities for those youth who are particularly vulnerable to gang membership and crime. Simple introduction or modification of existing programs for younger youth is possible, either through special arrangements for transporting youth from school to the agency or transfer of CBYA activities to school facilities.

More complex socialization efforts will be required in regard to the small group of older committed gang youth who may be present in the emerging gang problem community, particularly those who are unemployed and no longer attending school. Since they are likely to be present on the streets, CBYA workers again must reach out to them where they are to establish contact and assist them to join and become integrated in existing agency programs, if possible. The CBYA may be required to establish new program outposts, or simply develop a variety of non-facility based recreational, athletic, and informal educational programs. Field trips, camping, and other programs that bring gang youth into contact with other

physical and social environments are also advisable.

In the course of many of these activities, it is important for the CBYA worker to be aware and concerned that he not inadvertently become a focus for organizing or cohering a loose knit youth group into a gang. The CBYA worker should use a variety of devices to insure that the delinquent group or gang is diffused and that key gang "linkage," influential or leadership youth are helped to leave the "scene" through jobs, referral to special educational or training programs, or even removal to correction institutions.

The CBYA worker should be skilled in helping gang prone and gang member youth to learn conflict resolution skills and avoid violence in settling interpersonal arguments and intragroup or intergang conflicts. Individual group counseling as well as structured courses at the CBYA facility or school may be used to instruct targeted youth in how to handle personal value conflicts, resolve potential gang fights, avoid gang membership, and leave gangs. Team sports and social affairs such as dances and camping trips can be vehicles for mixing youth from different neighborhoods and gang factions; but extreme caution needs to be exercised in structuring such experiences to avoid increasing interpersonal and intergroup tension and conflict, gang intimidation and recruitment. On the other hand, there are limits to the value of social and athletic activities. Often the most needy, frustrated, and violent youth do not participate in these experiences.

Finally, it is especially important to involve parents, neighborhood residents, and even former gang members or leaders in the supervision of these social and athletic events. Sensitive and trained volunteer or paraprofessional staff can quickly identify potential trouble spots and trouble makers and neutralize them through use of their interpersonal skills, often based on personal and neighborhood status and prestige. They can also serve as role models, teach and demonstrate social skills essential to the development of mature and socially conventional behavior by youth.

## **Education**

A major emphasis with gang prone youth 12 to 16 years should be assisting school administrators and teachers to appropriately meet the educational and social needs of vulnerable yet troublesome youth. A primary task will be to assist such youth to improve their performance at school and at the same time curb or limit their actual or potentially disruptive gang related behavior. Additional resources may be required to provide extra school time teaching or tutoring during and after regular school hours to upgrade the youth's reading, writing, mathematic, and general problem solving skills. In this process, teachers, tutors or mentors must be assisted, presumably by streetwise and experienced CBYA staff, to understand gang culture and identify gang related behaviors which may be disruptive of the school learning process, e.g., signing, wearing colors, intimidating other youth, and gang recruitment. The CBYA worker will have to work closely with teachers and administrators in the development of specific means to

prevent and control those problems. The teacher will need special help in recognizing and controlling the efforts of core gang members or leaders and how to advise gang prone youth to stay out of gangs, avoid gang crises and attacks, and other gang related criminal behaviors.

The CBYA worker is expected to be part of the school team, coaching, supplementing, and joining with teachers in a variety of activities both within and outside of school to deal with gang prone youth and those who are already gang members. The CBYA worker should be able to establish credibility with school administrators and teachers based on his understanding of gangs and prior experience in the school system or as a parent of a school age child. Both the teacher and the CBYA worker should present a unified front to students and family about the youth's problems and need to improve his performance and behavior at school as well as in the community.

The CBYA worker should take special responsibility for assisting and controlling the youth in respect to his after-school behavior, e.g., providing constructive activities that substitute for gang activity. He should be able to involve parents in special gang informational evening activities as well as programs which enable parents of gang affiliated youth to make better use of school educational resources for themselves. The CBYA worker may be able to assist parent and community groups to organize patrols in collaboration with the police to protect children on their way to and from school and home. The worker should also be helpful in recruiting community volunteers to participate in a range of school based activities that would enhance the social and cultural life of gang prone students and their parents both during and after school.

The activities of the CBYA workers with older gang youth still at school may have a somewhat different emphasis. These youth may not only be failing, but on the verge of dropping out. The CBYA worker should encourage the school to keep these youth in regular school programs and provide additional tutorial and after school support or perhaps arrange special remedial classes or school transfers for them, if appropriate. Program changes for youth that involve vocational training and cooperative school and work experiences should be encouraged.

If these youth have quit school, CBYA staff should work with school administrators to establish alternative school programs and remedial evening programs, special skill or GED centers. CBYA workers should collaborate with teachers, parents, and community volunteers teaching and supervising these youth. CBYA staff could be especially helpful by counseling parents who unknowingly reinforce their children's participation in gangs. They should also facilitate communication between court and probation officers and employers and teachers, to create a consistent set of expectations and community controls.

### **Family Support**

Families in low income, newcomer communities are often

characterized by personal and social disorganization, and lack of stability and self-respect. They may be socially isolated from the opportunities, values, and norms of the larger society. A few of the newcomer families may have a history of gang affiliation. Fathers uncles, cousins, and friends may be current or former gang members. Some families from inner city areas move to the new neighborhoods or smaller cities and bring the gang subculture with them.

Many of these parents, burdened with their own problems, are often not effective parents at least to some of their children. They are not consistent in their guidance, control, or support of particularly headstrong or impulsive youth. They may have difficulty in setting limits or communicating behavioral expectations. They may not support the youth in his school efforts. They may pay little attention to peers whom he hangs out with. They fail to notice or understand the sudden appearance of gang signs and symbols in the home. A few of these parents will look away when the young adolescent male begins to drink hard liquor and smoke marijuana. The parent may also not raise many questions, if the youth provides extra money occasionally for food or household expenses, although the parent knows that such funds come from street drug sales or other criminal activity, sometimes gang related.

These parents are extremely difficult to reach and counsel effectively. They are often known to many agencies, but do not respond to school, agency, or community efforts to control and socialize their children. A persistent long-term outreach effort by the CBYA in cooperation with other agencies must be initiated. Such parents will usually not appear for counseling sessions with the school, family, or mental health social worker. The CBYA staff person will need to visit the family in the home on a regular, yet informal, but purposive basis. A positive helping relationship must be established. The worker may possess certain family treatment skills, provide home care assistance, help the family with access to new resources, or simply be available to participate in a variety of social, family, and cultural affairs as a family associate or friend. Over time, the worker should become an advocate, helper, teacher, referral agent, mental health worker, as well as friend. In all cases the focus should be on assisting the family unit to function in a more socially productive way, particularly as it contributes to improved social behavior of the gang prone or gang member youth.

There will be occasions when the family is so disorganized and the influence of the parent(s) so negative that a gang prone or gang member youth must be assisted to leave the particular family situation. In conjunction with the child welfare agency, the court, or probation officer, the CBYA worker may assist with temporary shelter or foster care for the youth or recommend transfer of parental responsibilities to another relative such as a grandparent, uncle or aunt. Residential care out of the community can be a useful last resort.

When appropriate, the CBYA worker can attempt to aid parents

of gang members by having them meet together to share problems of parenting and supervising their gang offspring. These groups can become mutual aid or support groups during times of gang crises. Some of the groups may assist in efforts at community control of the gang problem through crisis intervention and mediation efforts as well as school patrol and after school volunteer activities. Such activities may require the guidance of school and police authorities as well as that of the CBYA. Some of these support groups or concerned parent groups may develop leadership capable not only of counseling other parents but advocating for more and improved agency services and community opportunities for gang prone and gang member youth.

### **Training and Employment**

The CBYA can play a multitude of roles in the training and employment of older gang youth and in the preparation of younger youth still at school for the world of work. Gang members and gang prone youth tend not to have the academic or vocational preparation, let alone specific job skills or experience, necessary for the work place. Most important, they simply do not understand the meaning of work, holding a job, and earning a regular wage. There have often been few adults available at home or in the neighborhood with regular full time jobs to provide models of attitudes and behaviors necessary for success at work.

The CBYA can assist schools, community organizations, and employers to prepare youth for employment at their facility with job readiness programs. Such introductions to the world of work may already exist at a variety of other agencies or training centers in more fully developed form, however. The CBYA should set a high priority in referring gang youth to these programs and assisting them to make the best use of these opportunities. Filling out forms, role playing, and the development of techniques for getting a job, particularly for older youth, is only one, and not necessarily the most important, component in preparing the gang youth for work.

A job that has some status and provides self-respect for the gang youth is almost a sine qua non for his breaking or significantly reducing contact with the youth gang and settling down. It offers him the sense of manhood, identity, and loyalty he obtained as a gang member, and gang fighter. There is much that a job can teach a youth about conventional behavior and productive ways to interact with peers and authority. On the other hand, sufficient meaningful jobs or connections to them may not be readily available. It is incumbent upon the CBYA, therefore, not to engage in superficial or ineffective job referral, but in substantial job development efforts on behalf of gang youth in cooperation with business and industry, other CBYAs, and public agencies.

A variety of innovative arrangements have begun to develop in which CBYAs provide training for specific job openings in particular industries. Instructors and stipends for trainees are

offered by the particular business or corporation, and the youth is assured a job at the termination of training. The CBYA can also provide a variety of services to support him during training and the initial job adjustment period, including remedial education, drug treatment referral and counseling. In some cases, the CBYA can develop small entrepreneurial operations, sometimes in collaboration with other established businesses, that employ gang youth. Examples include graffiti removal, building contract work including carpentry and painting, and food preparation services.

Of special importance are cooperative job development and job readiness programs with the schools. CBYAs can take some responsibility for the creation of job banks to provide part time employment for youth after school and during the summer period. They can assist schools with special support services for youth in apprenticeship positions. In all cases, focus must be on gang members and gang prone youth who have the greatest need to develop problem solving skills. The temptation to deal with lower risk or less intractable youth has to be avoided.

## Social Control

The CBYA must learn to accept and take on new roles of deterrence, supervision, or suppression in dealing with gang prone and gang member youth. In this process key links with police, probation, parole, and the courts must be developed. Gang youth and their families should come to view the CBYA worker not only as a helping agent but as a possible link to authoritative or criminal justice agencies which will not hesitate to report gang related behavior and assist with certain activities such as surveillance or patrol.

The agency's supervisory or deterrent role takes many forms. It is based on the traditional socialization function of the CBYA to assist the individual to mature and socially develop within the framework of the conventional values of the neighborhood and a democratic society. Because of family and community breakdown the CBYA must not only take on a greater responsibility for social support and remediation of problem behavior but also for control of deviant and anti-social behavior. The challenge is difficult since gang members and gang prone youth often have very weak identification with conventional authority.

The CBYA worker must clearly demonstrate and articulate his identification with legitimate authority. His exercise of rules, regulations, and decision making must be eminently fair, patient, and consistent. At the same time he must clearly associate his role of authority with that of protecting and safeguarding the youth from physical harm. Protection of other people and community property should be viewed in terms that sooner or later it will directly affect the welfare of the gang youth himself.

The authority role of the CBYA worker is particularly difficult to carry out when he is on youth gang turf or surrounded at the agency or elsewhere by a solid phalanx of gang members displaying gang oriented norms and values. The development and expression of the worker's deterrent role is an evolving one which must be connected to the worker's support role. It must be exercised judiciously in part depending on the strength of his relationship with gang members or gang prone youth and their common experiences together. At no point, however, should there be any doubt by gang youth as to where the worker and his agency stand on issues of gang criminal behavior, particularly violence and drug trafficking.

Gang prone and gang member youth should recognize that the worker and his agency are closely affiliated with criminal justice agencies and will support all legitimate investigation, surveillance, and suppression activities, if not assist in carrying them out through crisis intervention, school patrol, and criminal justice information sharing. The CBYA should also participate in a variety of joint probation and parole activities to facilitate the implementation of court or correctional orders, particularly in respect to avoiding participation in gang related delinquent or criminal behavior. CBYA rules and regulations must be kept to a minimum but vigorously enforced.

On the other hand, the CBYA worker should not come to be viewed as simply a policeman or probation officer. He is largely an authoritative intermediary. He must express acceptance of and identification with gang youth and local neighborhoods norms and values that are non-criminal. He must demonstrate his concern for social justice when the gang youth receives unfair or unjust treatment at school, in court, on the job, or elsewhere. This means that there will be occasions when he will advocate for just and fair treatment for the gang youth both through informal, formal, and public channels.

### **Community Mobilization and Agency Coordination**

Community-based youth agencies also have a responsibility to mobilize local community groups and other agencies to develop collective community or citywide anti-gang crime efforts. These include not only advocacy and development of more effective means to protect the local community from youth gang crime, including drug trafficking, but the development of more resources and opportunities for education, training, and jobs targeted to gang members and gang prone youth.

As a member of the community system of agencies, the CBYA may be ideally positioned to observe and articulate the needs and problems of the community and its youth. The CBYA may be able to rally others to action, especially if the agency has a track record of working with gangs and can demonstrate credibility with diverse organizations and community groups. It may also act as a moderating force where others might be inclined to overreact to gang youth and their crimes of violence.

The CBYA is integral to the success of local efforts to reduce gang activity. It can be either an initiator of action in the development of local anti-gang strategy or a key partner with other organizations, especially the schools in emerging gang problem contexts. The community-based youth agency can therefore assume either a leadership role or that of team member as a long-term plan for reducing gang violence and working with gang youth is developed.

**Consistency within the Agency:** Essential to a community mobilization and coordination effort is a consistent agency response and strategy. The CBYA director must develop a vision which is shared by and communicated to all staff. He must have a commitment to assisting youth to meet their social needs through positive means, yet holding them accountable for their actions. He must also work on their behalf so that appropriate community systems are established to benefit them. Necessary to this commitment is a common set of agency rules and expectations subscribed to by board members, program staff and volunteers in their concerns and interactions with gang youth.

**Coordination Among Organizations:** In conjunction with the schools, agency executives and program directors should participate in

whatever local or citywide group is formed to ensure coordination with representatives of police, prosecutors, probation/parole, other direct service providers, the mayor's office, community groups, and local businesses. Since this task force may be large, it is anticipated that work on certain issues may be assigned to committees. Staff other than the agency and program directors may find it valuable to serve on committees, as appropriate, to learn and draw on expertise of committee members as well as to build relationships with them useful in the development of services for gang youth. Reporting to youth agency program and school staffs on these meetings should be a standing item on staff agendas to ensure CBYA and school staff are kept abreast of important issues and decisions. Regular meetings could also be held with probation and parole to discuss the progress of youth in the program.

### **Chronic Gang Problem Cities**

The same type of CBYA core services and approaches are required in chronic gang problem cities as in emerging gang problem cities. The differences lie mainly in the elaboration and intensity of services and emphases in approaches provided. The residents of the chronic gang problem community will have suffered greater relative deprivation and consequently will need greater resources. The problem of gangs and gang crime will be more entrenched and complex. Service and program patterns will already have been established, but more formal arrangements will be required within and across a greater variety of agencies and community groups. The role of the CBYA will have to be more closely linked with that of a public authority or criminal justice agency, particularly a probation department. Some of the key differences or elaborations of services and approach in chronic problem contexts are the following.

**Socialization:** The intransigence of gang violence and gang crime in chronic problem settings will require a more formal and comprehensive arrangement by the CBYA to reach established gangs and gang members on the street. Crisis intervention teams will be needed to visit "hot spots" to reduce gang tensions and mediate conflicts. A special 24 hour emergency communications system may have to be established in cooperation with the police department's gang unit. Special procedures will be necessary to distinguish between the conflict resolution purposes of the CBYA worker and the suppression purpose of the police. Greater attention to the social needs of older gang youth and their families will be required. The CBYA worker will also have to be in touch with a greater range of agencies to integrate gang youth into mainstream conventional activities.

**Education:** More youth will have dropped out of school. Since they are older, they will require special school arrangements, probably in alternative or special adult education skill centers. A greater

range of remedial educational, vocational training, and apprentice arrangements with business and industry, and supportive counseling programs will be required. Ideally such adult skill and educational centers should be an integral part of the existing educational system, preparing a range of newcomer adults and dropout youth - some delinquent for a variety of legitimate careers. These programs should be flexible in format and permit entry and exit at different points. Parents and community groups should play an integral role in the program's development. While special attention should be paid to the interests, needs, and problems of gang youth and their families, it should be within the context of a mainstream school and training environment.

**Family Support:** The tradition of youth gangs is expected to be extremely strong in the chronic gang problem community. Two and three generation gang families will be common, particularly in ghettoized public housing. The massive social and economic problems of these families will of course not be overcome simply through a variety of outreach and support efforts by CBYA workers. Therefore, it is advisable that relatively greater concentration be focussed on guidance to families with younger gang prone youth. Older gang youth are more likely to be on their own and not amenable to family based interventions. Probation, parole, and corrections, along with parent and community groups, should be used more often by CBYA workers to bring pressures to bear on committed gang youths to change their values and behaviors. Parent groups may be useful in persuading other parents to more frequently communicate and cooperate with police and probation around problems of serious gang violence and drug trafficking. This can be done to protect their own active gang member youth as well as other members of the community. In other words, distinctions among socialization, family support, and control strategies become particularly difficult to make in chronic gang problem communities, since problems seem to be more tightly interlinked.

**Employment:** While a variety of training and employment programs directed to low income and sometimes offender youth exist, very few, if any will target the needs of gang youth. More formal and intensive efforts will be required in cooperation with public authorities, business, and industry. Governmental tax incentives will be necessary to facilitate the training and employment of gang youth. A series of arrangements with probation and parole should allow CBYAs to supply various support and even some supervisory services to gang youth in these training and employment settings. CBYAs can also be contracted to provide special training in business and industry in how to deal with gang and gang prone youth.

**Social Control:** Because of the intensity and greater severity of the gang problem in chronic problem contexts, close community-based supervision and short-term incarceration may be more likely options than traditional counseling service by CBYA workers. The CBYA

worker will have to share information more regularly and quickly with police, probation, community influentials, schools, and even correctional authorities to prevent and control sudden gang outbreaks. Considerable personal risk for the worker may be incurred in this effort. The CBYA worker will require greater agency support. Also important in chronic gang problem contexts is for the CBYA worker to maintain contact with the youth during his stays in probation camps, detention, correctional institutions, and prisons. The gang youth usually does not remain in jail for long. Appropriate services for him in the institution and his positive integration back in the community should be primary objectives. Regular visits to the youth in jail and sustained relationship with the youth are critical as the CBYA worker attempts to influence the core gang member not to return to gang activity in the community.

**Community Mobilization and Agency Coordination:** The chronic gang problem community is characterized by fragmentation of services and a lack of resources to deal with problems of extreme violence and gang related drug trafficking. Only a massive and persistent community and interagency mobilization effort through formal and informal structures will contribute to a significant reduction in the problem. The CBYA can be a lead agency in a mobilization process which criminal justice agencies and community groups, including parent groups, along with business and industry and schools are important components. The CBYA executive and staff must be particularly skilled in interagency and intercommunity group conflict resolution. Not only youth gangs but agencies and community groups appear to be in a perpetual war of competition for scarce resources.

External resources should be provided to local agencies on condition that gang youth are adequately targeted for service and that such services are highly coordinated and integrated. Consensus on the nature of the gang problem and what to do about it is critical to efforts within and across agencies and communities. Such consensus is particularly difficult to achieve in larger, more complex, and fragmented chronic gang problem contexts. Community-based and criminal justice agencies and local groups must also show their dedication to the mission of gang control by holding each other accountable to providing services they are supposed to.

**Staff Selection and Training:** CBYAs should be staffed by mature individuals who are strongly motivated to serve and have the capacity and skills to work with young people. At least some of the staff should have backgrounds similar to those of the target population. Some should have lived in similar ghetto or socially isolated and problem ridden communities. The CBYA worker should be able to reach out to parents, criminal justice and treatment agencies, and local community organizations as well as to teachers in dealing with troublesome gang member or gang prone youth. Only staff who are committed to the program's goals should be hired. All staff should participate in a training and orientation period.

Agency staff, board members, community residents, and

representatives of schools and justice system agencies should participate in joint training as appropriate. Much of the training will be defined by the experience that participants themselves bring to the agency. However, outside experts will have to be brought in to discuss a range of topics: the current scope, nature, and basis for the gang problem, how to relate to gang youth and their families, special issues of gang control and mediation of disputes, identification and use of agency facilities and programs as well as local community resources. Other topics include appropriate collaborative procedures with staff of other agencies. Ways to integrate CBYA support and social control procedures with various agency and community group representatives working with gang youths should be emphasized.

### **Research and Evaluation**

The community-based youth agency model proposed should be tested in emerging and chronic youth gang problem communities. Such a complex program needs to be carefully designed and faithfully implemented. Specific objectives, services, and process should be assessed initially through formative evaluation procedures. In other words a substantial period of demonstrating and testing the elements of complex CBYA related programs should be carried out before any systematic outcome testing or summative evaluation is conducted.

When such outcome evaluation is finally carried out, it should focus on objectives for the reduction generally of gang conflict, gang related drug trafficking in the local area as well as reduction in the number of gangs and gang members among targeted youth in the program. Specific intermediate objectives to achieve these outcome objectives should be assessed. They include changes in the targeted youth's individual school performance, attendance and behavior; special training courses completed, types of jobs obtained and their job duration. Internal agency, interagency coordination, and community mobilization processes as well as the role of the CBYA worker should also be studied to the extent that research resources are available.

Moral leadership must arise in the fourth stage not only to keep the renewed coalition intact and active, but to see to it that each agency and its program is held accountable for doing as effective and meaningful a job as possible in dealing with the youth gang problem. Regular formal meetings and many informal contacts must occur among local community groups and outside agency representatives. Identification with the interests and needs of the local community is accepted as the basis for any collective problem solving effort. Tendencies toward community fragmentation are thereby constrained. Even gang members and former gang members become identified with local community improvement and gang control efforts. Under these sustained conditions, the gang problem should significantly abate.

### **Related Policy Issues**

Because the youth gang problem is related in complex ways to a variety of more basic social problems, it may not be effectively resolved except as other social policies are addressed. But this linkage is not a perfectly reciprocal one. In fact, it is a mistake to assume that youth gang problems will be automatically reduced simply as "larger" issues of education, employment, and housing are resolved. There are examples where one or more of the "larger" issues was successfully addressed but the scope and severity of the youth gang problem was untouched or worsened.

The 1960s War on Poverty arose in part out of a concern with delinquency and youth gangs in the ghettos of large cities in the late 1950s. Structural approaches for dealing with the problems of poverty and lack of empowerment succeeded in considerable measure, permitting many low-income or marginal groups to enter the mainstream through such programs as Head Start, Job Corps, manpower development, community economic development, and voter registration. But there is little evidence that the youth gang or even the delinquency problem, per se was specifically targeted or that effective programs were developed. We have little or no evidence of a decrease in youth gangs, but rather an increase or a conversion of the gang problem to more serious forms in the middle and late 1960s, particularly with the advent of rapid social change and community disorders.

Criminal justice policy targeted at the local community youth gang problem must be joined with general social policy, particularly education and job development, to achieve positive results. Educational reform and manpower development, per se, even addressed to low-income groups and neighborhoods, may do little to modify the youth gang problem, unless youth gang-related programs for remedial education, job training, and job development are articulated with these larger concerns and programs.

It is imperative that criminal justice personnel not marginalize their efforts, isolate their programs, and focus only on their own particular organizational interests and needs. They must attempt to influence decision-makers in other relevant social policy arenas to also target the youth gang problem. In turn,

legislators, chief executives, and social policy generalists must attend to significant subsets of problems, such as youth gangs, on the assumption that a variety of component problems in fact comprise the larger problem.

Inclusive national policy initiatives focused on youth cultural and social development are necessary. They must emphasize opportunities for gang and gang prone youth to escape ghetto crime ridden and alienated communities through special educational and work incentives and conditions (and even criminal record expunging). At the same time, youth from mainstream society must be provided with an opportunity to assist in the social regeneration of inner city areas, including participation as volunteers and staff in gang prevention and control programs. The development of domestic Peace Corps or Vista type programs, inclusive both of inner city minority also gang youth prepared to give up their gang commitment, and mainstream youth must be emphasized.

### Goals and Objectives

#### **Long and Short-Term Goals and Objectives**

There is a tendency for organizations initially to respond to a social problem in quick but routine ways, such as providing simply beefed-up police patrols or additional recreational programs without clear understanding of the problem or knowledge of alternative approaches successfully tried in other communities or contexts. The rationale for the approach selected to deal with the youth gang problem is usually not expressed in inter-related causal, program, and impact terms. For example, the problem is not specified by age, number and characteristics of youth involved, type of gang problems committed, appropriate approaches, interagency arrangements, and differential programs and expected outcomes. Goals for gang programs are developed usually by one or two established agencies, mainly the police or youth serving organizations. However, a strategic problem study and planning process is rarely undertaken.

Long-term community goals with measurable objectives must be established and distinguished from short-term individual agency objectives. While necessary suppression procedures of the police and social intervention by youth agencies have some preliminary or short-term value, longer term comprehensive strategies across agencies and community groups are critically important. Both short and long-term policies and procedures have to be pursued and priorities established. The sooner a long-term targeted opportunities provision strategy is developed, based on mobilization of schools, businesses and industry, the more effective short-term strategies such as suppression and social intervention will be, particularly in chronic gang problem communities.

When setting goals and objectives, it is important to remember that in many cities the youth gang problem has developed over many

years. Consequently, it is reasonable to expect that it will take years of effort to substantially modify the problem. A complex set of program and interagency issues must be addressed. The varied tasks or objectives include helping specific youth to leave gangs or not to join in the first place; assisting families to do a better job of rearing children; and enabling agencies to collaborate with each other in ways that simultaneously protect communities as well as socialize gang youth. Other major factors have to be addressed to the extent possible, including improved job, housing, and educational opportunities as well as issues of rapid population change, fear of newcomers, and racism.

The balance between strategies focused directly on individual and family change and those which emphasize system changes and the provision of additional resources, such as the creation of a youth conservation corps and the targeted inclusion of gang youth in the program, must be considered and appropriate decisions taken to maximize benefits to costs. At the same time, concern for protection of life and property of both community residents and gang members must be maintained, largely through a vigorous and efficient set of suppression measures which removes and confines hard core gang members and influentials from the community -- at least temporarily.

### **Sustained Effort**

It takes time, usually a long time, to develop the understanding, planning structures and processes necessary to facilitate gang problem reduction. Different kinds of interrelated individual youth, agency, and community changes have to be created. It is not easy to counsel, modify behavior, and constrain a youth who is a committed youth gang member and already has a long delinquency record. Organizations do not readily change their routines to "reach out" to difficult gang youth. Planners and funding agencies do not usually leap forward to attack complex, amorphous, and persistent social problems such as gangs. The odds of program failure are perceived as very high. There are few who would advocate anything other than a strictly suppression approach. There are no easy winners in the battle against gang crime.

A quick-fix approach, in fact, may lead to a variety of dysfunctional policy and program effects, as documented in other justice system reforms. Unanticipated policy results include "netwidening" or increasing the number of youth labelled as belonging to a gang; "relabelling", calling a disorderly youth in a nuisance street corner group a member of a criminal gang; "skimming", "creaming", or working only with fringe or less delinquent gang members; "violating" or arresting gang youth rather than attempting to counsel or rehabilitate them. Rapidly formulated, massive non-targeted police sweeps of so-called gang youth may result in gang or gang prone youth being arrested for a short period and returned to the street, now more established in their "anti-cop" and street gang reputations.

Sustained long-term, developmental efforts are required to bring about changes in the behavior of hard-core gang youth, in part because agency strategies and programs are difficult to change. Furthermore, once a new strategy or different program is in place, it may still need to be modified or even abandoned, and an alternate strategy sought to replace it. The individual youth, the family, the gang, the community organization, social agency, and the community are in a state of continual mutual interaction or reciprocal influence. Well conceived, flexible, accountable, and persistent efforts are required to deal with the problem. All this takes time for hopefully positive results to appear--sometimes five years or more.

### **Targeting Specific Problem or Vulnerable Groups**

Meaningful objectives cannot be established, unless policy makers and program directors define and target specific youth gang members for attention. Objectives can then be developed which express the changes the program intends to bring about among these youth. It is inappropriate for an agency or community group to develop an amorphous youth gang program for youth who are neither gang youth nor at risk of gang membership, under the mistaken notion that all youth in certain neighborhoods or contexts have to be or can be equally prevented from joining gangs and engaging in criminal activity.

Not specifying youth who are to receive particular kinds of gang program attention is also dysfunctional because it wastes resources. It may mean that youth who need preventive, remedial, or suppression services do not get them, and that other youth who do not get them are wrongfully labelled and drawn into a net of social control which increases rather than reduces the problem.

In some cities broad-scale non-targeted gang sweeps, as indicated above, may result in arrests of scores, if not hundreds of youth and young adults who are neither gang members nor engaged in gang-related or gang-motivated crime. Many youth service agencies are also prone to provide irrelevant gang prevention activities, for example recreation, to a range of younger teens or pre-adolescents who are neither gang members nor youth at risk for gang membership. Therefore, policy makers and program providers have to conceptualize who the problem populations are, where the gang problem is likely to occur and under what conditions, what the key objectives are, and what specific programs and activities are necessary to achieve these objectives.

### **Relevant Programming**

The next step is the development and implementation of appropriate action or intervention activities. Differential intervention for varied gang youth, gangs, and gang situations is not a fine or well practiced art, let alone based on a set of scientific procedures. Appropriate treatment or action measures

are even less well developed than assessment categories for different types of gangs, gang members, and gang problem situations. Ad hoc, fashionable, and intervention slogans often become the basis for action.

Rationales for services, tactics, or procedures have to be systematically articulated. At present, we possess only rudimentary notions about "effective" tactics and services. They include targeting, arresting, and incarcerating gang leaders; referring fringe members and their parents to youth services for counseling; providing preventive services for youth at risk who are often not clearly defined as a group; parent and teen gang member education about the consequences of gang membership; crisis intervention or mediation of gang fights; patrols of "hot spots" in the community; close supervision of gang offenders; remedial education for targeted gang youth in middle school; job referral, placement, and mentoring; safe zones around schools; vertical prosecution or case management and enhanced sentences; and nuisance abatement.

How these tactics and services are to be developed and carried out is not clear. An integration of activities and mixed strategies within a context of agreement by key organizational and community leaders as to what needs to be done may be more important than development of specific tactics and activities or an independent agency basis. Again, there needs to be knowledge of tactics or programs that don't work or what their limitations are. Recreational activities alone do not reduce gang problems; gang conflict mediation procedures have had mixed results; ad hoc job referral and placement procedures for gang youth are often ineffective; use of gang leaders or influentials to deal with gang crises has at times been disastrous; vertical prosecution has proved highly efficient but there is no evidence that it has a general deterrent effect.

There is a great deal that needs to be done in the form of simple and complex evaluation and research to test these program activities, many of which have been used for decades. Systematic description and evaluation of such activities must be undertaken, if investments in particular programs are to have credibility. Slogans, myths, and wishful thinking as guides to the selection of specific procedures and activities to implement program objectives are no longer acceptable.

## Community Structure and Processes

### **Coordination and Community Participation**

It is possible in part that because we do not know convincingly what particular activities or tactics work for which kinds of gang youth problems in particular circumstances, we must rely at this stage of program development on more general organizational and especially interorganizational approaches. Our analyses suggest that certain structures or processes, such as comprehensive

community mobilization, in some cases associated with opportunities provision, may be promising. Operationalization of these notions requires the development of neighborhood, city or community-wide coordinating mechanisms, such as intra and inter agency task forces, agency coalitions, community-based advisory groups, and cooperative projects.

Interagency collaboration facilitates the development of common perceptions and definitions of the problem. It is especially important that justice system agencies, e.g., police, prosecution, school security, probation from the same jurisdiction develop the same definition of the problem and collaborate with each other about appropriate objectives and tactics in targeting the problem. Information sharing about high profile criminal youth gangs and specific gang youth is of special importance.

Systematic exchange of information about gang youth and complementary ways of dealing with them also need to be developed across different kinds of agencies and community groups, e.g., law enforcement, youth service, school, and grassroots groups. Ground rules for the exchange of such information should be established with protection of life and property of paramount importance, but also accompanied by appropriate procedures for confidentiality of information and due process in regard to juveniles. A climate of trust and a system of interdependent strategies and procedures essential to coping with the problem must be generated among the diverse organizations and community groups, including parents. For example, probation and police need to reach out to work closely with parent groups and grassroots organizations. Organizations involved with gangs should meet on a regular basis and be accountable to each other in respect to specific activities to carry out their common objectives of gang violence prevention, mediation of gang fights, supervision of offenders, arrests of drug dealers and job and social service referral.

Common assessment of and perhaps more specific prescriptions for dealing with the youth gang problem result from such collaboration. It also leads to a more cohesive and "competent" community. A fragmented or disorganized community encourages the development of serious gang activity. However, on the other hand, the development of consistent, positive relations among diverse agencies and community groups signifies greater social control and social support, better targeting of the problem, and makes more likely its probable reduction. The chief proposition of the present model is that a mobilized community is the most promising way to deal with the youth gang problem.

The complexity of the gang problem, with its multiple causes and competing agency and community group strategies and programs, requires not only a broad scale but an integrated response, particularly in chronic gang problem situations and cities. Thus, it is critically important that community agencies go beyond development of a series of "beefed up", but unrelated individual agency programs. In both chronic and emerging gang problem cities, local community organizations or groups may require special resources, training, and consultation from established criminal

justice and community-based agencies in the development of cooperative and coordinated programs.

### Consistency Within Organizations

The phenomena of social disorganization are incremental and cumulative in their impact on the gang problem. Personal and family inadequacy contributes to the need for children and youth to seek substitute satisfactions in unsupervised play groups and later in gangs on neighborhood streets where conflicting group values or criminal patterns may abound. The lack of adequate and consistent approaches in schools and within increasingly large bureaucratic organizations to prevent or remedy the problem may further aggravate the gang problem. The fragmentation of efforts as well as the lack of available resources for different units within organizations contribute both directly and indirectly to the development of youth gangs.

Failure of individual units within an organization to speak with one voice may mean that organizations do not develop policies and mechanisms to maximize resources appropriate to dealing with the particular gang problem. Not all units of an agency may recognize or address the youth gang problem in the same or a consistent manner. Fragmentation within an agency manifests itself in various ways. For example, the narcotics and gang units of a police department may not develop or willingly share information relevant to both units. The police gang bureau in a large city may be so decentralized that headquarters and area units have different operational definitions and recordkeeping procedures, as well as different tactics for dealing with the same situations. A youth service organization may exclude gang youth from its in-house programs and relegate them to special services in its street program or to some adjoining building, although complementary services which mainstream these youth in fact would be desirable.

Coordination tactics among and within organizations are also often insufficiently related to each other. One unit of a police department or of a large youth organization may have close relationships with a particular community organization and share a particular strategy while other parts of the police department, or the youth organization are closely connected to a second community organization, or even a state or federal agency with an opposing perspective or strategy as to what to do about the youth gang problem. The particular agency executive has an ongoing responsibility to make sure that maximum consistency is developed by his or her units in their internal as well as external relationships.

The idea of a common goal to which all parts of an organization are committed requires that different units of the same agency have similar policies and complementary procedures in respect to youth gangs and their members. Most important, it calls for the head of an agency through authority, staff training, and appropriate procedures to establish a primary emphasis on and a common or integrated strategy for dealing with a youth gang problem. Such commitment has to be clearly communicated, coordinative mechanisms

developed, and procedures enforced for carrying out the primary strategy or combination of strategies.

### **Development of Broad Community Support**

Very often police officers, school teachers, youth workers, and community residents are aware of the presence of gangs in their neighborhoods well before the "gang problem" becomes the focus of top level official attention. These street level professionals or bureaucrats observe changes in the behavior of youngsters, such as wearing of colors, representing or signing; associating with certain other young people; graffiti on walls of buildings; and young people bragging that they're members of a particular gang or admitting to fighting because someone insulted a fellow gang member. Rarely, however, will a concerted effort be undertaken in a particular community unless a recognized leader--such as a mayor, police chief, school superintendent, youth agency director, minister, or community leader -- declares that a gang problem exists and that action must be taken to address it. Frequently this acknowledgement is precipitated by a crisis event which is "close to home", such as an assault on the mayor's daughter or a shooting in a classroom.

Once an authority figure has publicly spoken out or taken a stand on gangs, an expectation is created in the minds of those who are concerned about gang activity in their communities that something will, in fact, be done. For the leader's credibility to be maintained this expectation must be fulfilled. The reality of the youth gang problem, particularly in cities and institutional situations where it has been chronic, calls for complex ways of dealing with it. It requires of leaders sensitivity and understanding of local community factors which may give rise to gang recruitment, intergang conflict, drug dealing, and other criminal and non-criminal activities. It means mobilizing the interest and energies of other leaders and significant groups in the community. It requires not only clarification of information and development of facts, but persistent and patient negotiation and renegotiation among conflicting community groups and agencies, and the establishment of new relationships between agencies which may not have been in communication with each other.

To assure an approach is developed which makes both sense and has the greatest likelihood of succeeding, the views of significant interests groups must be incorporated into the planning process. An effort should also be made to identify and involve those who have access to or control of information, resources, and personnel to contribute to a program. Such resources should not be viewed narrowly: often volunteer efforts, redirection of existing community programs or re-thinking of current priorities or policies can be just as powerful as new funding. While additional funds may be useful, they may not be a solution, if other changes are not made. Involving diverse groups at the outset, especially representatives of minority groups in gang neighborhoods with an interest in seeing the gang problem addressed, will better position

the leader later to develop a viable approach while building a support base for that effort. Local leadership must also be recruited and developed if later racial and class conflicts are to be avoided or minimized. A process of informal and purposeful power sharing in respect to dealing with the problem, thus, must be initiated as early as possible. Community involvement can be accomplished in a number of ways, including community meetings, advisory groups, task forces, parades, marches, forums as well as informal person to person contacts.

### **Pro-Active Leadership**

Successful gang prevention, intervention, and suppression programs call for a high level of commitment and entrepreneurship by agency or community leaders. Gang work leadership is a particularly difficult, risky, and frustrating vocational or avocational specialty. The job requires great courage and creativity to overcome organizational and political obstacles which prevail in emerging or chronic gang problem cities or contexts. Leaders who contribute to the development of promising programs usually demonstrate considerable personal interest and concern, excitement and challenge in regard to the problem, as well as a high level of personal and professional energy and drive. The pro-active leader must also have a knowledgeable and well-articulated position about what needs to be done.

The pro-active leader must be able to cut through staff apathy in his own organization as well as stimulate other executives and leaders in the community to be concerned with the problem. However, the apathy of established agencies may quickly convert to hostility against the pro-active leader who is suspected of "show-boating" to obtain more funding for his own organization's activities or if he demonstrates political motives. The pro-active leader will have to pursue a somewhat independent course until he is able to convince others that he is honest and committed, that the gang problem is serious, and that interagency collaboration is essential and should be accepted. The pro-active executive or community leader is essentially a catalyst energizing other leaders, frequently from large public and private bureaucracies as well as local community groups to create a rational, coherent, and active community approach to the gang problem.

### **Youth Accountability and Specific Situational Opportunities**

Any set of policies or program model must hold gang youth accountable for their criminal acts and also provide opportunities to change or control such behavior. The less able a youth is to control his or her own behavior the more supervision must be exerted to demonstrate to and educate the youth as to what behavior is not acceptable. For some gang youth secure confinement will, at some point, be necessary; for others, graduated degrees of community-based supervision ranging from continuous "eyeball" or electronic supervision to total self-supervision, is appropriate.

It is also important that youth understand and believe that there will be a consequence imposed if they do not follow program rules or reasonable expectations in a particular organizational setting or social situation. To the extent possible, this message must be consistently communicated and enforced by all those who come into contact with the youth. Also important is that the consequence for a criminal act be meaningful, fair, and that it be quickly imposed.

On the other hand, it is not sufficient to hold a gang youth accountable for his acts based only on mandated acceptance of conventional norms and values, court orders, or expectations of severe consequences. To support and ensure long-term change, a gang youth must also have chances to do something he perceives to be worthwhile, which provides him with a sense of personal accomplishment, self-esteem, and positive future prospects. A series of situations must be provided in which he can develop social, academic, and vocational skills. Rewards for work well done and positive accomplishments must be provided. A set of ongoing developmental opportunities accompanied by a normal structure of rewards and punishments must be created. It is not possible to take the "jungle out of youth", unless the youth is also given a positive or legitimate opportunity to survive and develop outside of the jungle of youth gangs and crime.

#### **Staffing the Community Mobilization Process**

Gang prevention and control efforts require the effective implementation by workers of their agency's particular policies and procedures and an adequate understanding of the complexity of gang activity in the context of local community life. It calls for perceptive intelligence by the street level agency or community worker, a basic friendliness by him towards all kinds of people, and above all, an extraordinary degree of professional self-discipline to manage diverse value systems that may challenge his or her own feelings during crises and anxiety-provoking situations.

The reality of the youth gang problem, particularly in cities and institutional situations where it has been chronic, calls for complex ways of dealing with it not only at the executive but at the practitioner or street level. It requires sensitivity and understanding of patterns of relationship and specific situational factors which give rise to a crisis or potential crisis. The worker must be highly knowledgeable of particular intergang conflicts, criminal opportunities, group and family pressures, local resources and community influences that assist in constraining or preventing youth gang problems. Local influentials with positive norms and values can be useful in this regard. For example, a sensitive, former gang member with a legitimate job from the same neighborhood can be helpful in bridging the world of street expectations and work place norms for the ambivalent young gang member.

At the same time, the agency or community worker must generally avoid recognizing or using the gang structure or gang process as a primary instrument or mechanism for controlling or resolving a gang

problem. This is to avoid co-optation by gang members and thereby contributing to gang cohesion where it already may exist or furthering influence by criminally oriented gang leaders. The worker must avoid conflict with representatives of other organizations also engaged in dealing with the problem. He has to be clear and "up front" about his values and practices which must demonstrate that gang recruitment, intergroup conflict, and other forms of gang criminal behavior are not acceptable and will be punished sooner or later. With these values expressed and operative, it is still possible for the agency or community worker to collaborate in a mobilized community context with gang youth, neighbors, parents, and agency representatives in the resolution of gang crises and also deal with criminal behavior. The approach recognizes the reality and the existence of criminal gangs, but not their legitimacy. It permits the worker to deal with gangs within a framework consistent with the norms and values of the conventional world, including those to which important influentials in the local community also subscribe.

This approach allows for collective participation by the perpetrators of gang activities along with others affected by these activities as well as with key law enforcement agency, school, church, and other community influentials in dealing with a gang problem. Open communication and a collaborative orientation do not prevent law enforcement from gathering intelligence, arresting, investigating, prosecuting, and incarcerating gang youths, or youth service agencies and schools from counseling, rehabilitating and socializing gang offenders. A cooperative community approach means the street level worker has to deal purposefully with interpersonal hostility, inter gang conflict, and pervasive apathy and hopelessness. In this process, the mobilization of local sources of legitimate social control as well as external resources of suppression and social opportunity is integral to controlling both gang-related violence and drug trafficking.

Adequate staffing of the community mobilization process depends on the selection of competent neighborhood as well as outside personnel concerned with the youth gang problem. Local neighborhood people must be employed at different levels of the task force or community council structure and should have an opportunity in due course to qualify for positions and advancement outside of the local community. On the other hand, outside competent staff should bring the interest, concerns, and energies of the wider community into the usually ghettoized or socially isolated community. A strictly self-help or externally imposed program as represented in leadership and staffing patterns of the community organizing program will not be productive.

### **Staff Education and Training**

A significant lack of reliable information exists about youth gang problems and what strategies and programs succeed or fail. Many practitioners have little knowledge of newer program alternatives that might be productive. Many legislators, policy

makers, agency executives, and practitioners also do not have accurate knowledge about gang problems and therefore do not have an adequate basis for the development of relevant policy and programming. There are few gang policy and program experts available and literature on what to do about the current problem(s) does not exist.

Presently, the major sources of information about gangs and what to do about them appear to be the media. However, newspaper, radio, and TV reporters tend mainly to describe the problem and emphasize quick-fix responses that serve the interests of mass audiences and advertisers rather than the educational and training needs of staff and community leaders. Valid training resources are in short supply. Only a few law enforcement and criminal justice personnel have extensive experience in work with youth gangs and much of that is suppression oriented.

Significant curriculum development efforts are required in universities, criminal justice and community-based agencies to educate faculty, program directors, staff, reporters and local citizenry as to the scope and nature of the problem and as to what valid policies, programs, and procedures are necessary. Specific gang-content courses need to be introduced into curricula of departments and schools of education, social work, law and criminal justice, and other organizations to more adequately prepare teachers, police, social workers, and other criminal justice and community practitioners to better prepare them for gang work.

A more immediate requirement is the training of personnel presently engaged in school gang prevention, tactical patrol, youth service intervention, justice system supervision, and community group programming. High quality, short-term training courses are needed based on the findings of available youth gang scholarship and research. They should be cross-disciplinary, and to the extent possible, use the few academics and experts in the field who have dealt with the problem in its varied complexity. Not only specific agency relevant strategies and work skills, but also collaborative relationships across professional disciplines and community organization interests must be emphasized.

Staff training must focus on the development of somewhat different strategies of intervention and suppression in emerging and chronic gang problem jurisdictions. More attention to the specifics of gang recognition and understanding the bases for gang process is required in emerging gang problem contexts. The limits of a simple, exclusive suppression strategy must also be stressed. Relatively more attention to principles of cross agency and community group collaboration is necessary in chronic gang problem cities, with special attention to development and use of techniques of remedial education, training, job development, and support for gang youth.

## Research and Evaluation

Research and evaluation bearing on youth gang policy and program have been infrequently conducted in the past two decades. Good evaluation of gang programs requires complex research skills. Gang research or evaluation is extremely difficult and has never been a well-developed scientific form even in the hey-day of youth gang programming in the 1950s and 1960s. Influentials in the youth gang field tend to be legislators, politicians, bureaucrats, and community "experts" who are quick to propose a variety of explanations, ad hoc policies and program answers but are reluctant to test their ideas or support evaluation of specific programs. The usual unfounded claim by practitioners or activists is that "we know what needs to be done, give us the money and don't waste it on research and evaluation." A common assumption of planners not familiar with the field is that tested or proven ways of dealing with the youth gang problem exist, and the only thing required is application of these "tested" models and demonstrated effective principles. But such successful models do not exist, or at least we have no good evidence that they exist.

We lack effective designs for the elimination or reduction of the youth gang problem. Old and especially new policies, programs, and procedures are desperately in need of systematic and rigorous research testing that should be performed along with the implementation of promising program designs. Several analysts have suggested that some policy makers and agency personnel are not seriously interested in resolving youth gang problems, since such problems provide sources of political, moral, and economic influence or resources. The long history of failed or defective gang policies and programs will not be broken without the aid of research and evaluation.

We have little basic data on the scope and seriousness of the problem in most jurisdictions and certainly across jurisdictions or nationally. We do not know who gang youth specifically are and why they commit gang crimes. We have not developed a tested structure and technology for dealing with different types of gang youth and their problems in different kinds of communities. Extremely little comparative descriptive and evaluative information exists on gang prevention, intervention, and suppression programs. In other words, essential policy and program relevant information on what the gang problem is and what to do about it is in scarce supply.

From the perspective of justice system policy, especially important is the determination and dissemination of a common operational definition of what a youth gang, who a youth gang member, and what a gang incident is so that we can with some validity assess the scope of the youth gang problem across place and time and determine in relation to a common standard whether our interventions validly make a difference.

## Funding Priorities

No clear and simple way exists at this time to determine which policies and procedures will work in reducing youth gang problems. We know something about strategies and programs that do not work. To that extent, it is incumbent on policy makers and program executives not to support and/or fund policies and programs which have been repeatedly found useless, such as simple recreation, non-directive counseling, simple youth outreach or street group work, and massive arrest and incarceration procedures. We need to establish "up front" that a variety of sophisticated, interrelated policies and procedures are probably required to meet the current complex nature of the problem.

Based on available research, theory, and experience and until we know better, certain strategies and programs must be accorded the highest funding priority. They include policies and procedures which encourage community mobilization, i.e., the involvement of key organizations, police, schools, youth agencies, probation, and parole as well as local community organizations and grassroots groups together in the development of common or interrelated program efforts. Furthermore, from the perspective of suppression and intervention, a closely connected social opportunities provision strategy, especially in chronic gang problem jurisdictions, needs to be emphasized in which gang members or youth clearly at risk are targeted in the middle schools for special preventive, remedial, and supervisory services, and older youth gang members who are ready to leave the gang are assisted with training, jobs, and appropriate justice system supervision. At the community level there need to be component programs which address simultaneously and interactively, issues of early intervention, suppression, rehabilitation, and prevention.

In addition, the recipients of funding for such community mobilization or opportunities provision programs must be those agencies and community organizations most knowledgeable, experienced, and influential in the local community context in which a response has to take place. A governmental unit or special commission needs to be selected to coordinate the development of the targeted community-wide mobilization program, particularly in chronic gang problem cities and jurisdictions. A school or educational administration unit in connection with a community-based youth agency must take key responsibility for development of early intervention programs, particularly in emerging gang problem cities. A range of organizations needs to be involved in the creation and implementation of programs-- including schools, training, and employment facilities, as well as justice system units and community-based organizations or coalitions--which direct attention to youth gang members or those clearly identified as at risk of gang membership and criminal youth gang behavior.

Lower funding priorities need to be accorded to single type strategies, whether deterrence, social intervention, or organizational development. Non-targeted prevention must receive even lower priority, at least within the framework of justice

system suppression and intervention approaches. The concept of prevention tends to be loosely applied to reach a mass of children who are often at low risk, even in low-income high gang crime neighborhoods. A targeted approach is most useful at the present time for purposes of community protection and reaching those gang youth in greatest need of supervision, social support, and redirection.

In addition, no major justice system sponsored youth gang policy or program initiative ought to be funded unless it meets the following criteria:

1. The policy or program will address a demonstrated local community crisis, actual or clearly impending, in regard to youth gangs;
2. Long-term need assessment and relevant resource development to meet youth gang problems will be coordinated at local, state, and national levels;
3. A local neighborhood or community advisory group will be established and held accountable for each local program with representation from justice system agencies, including police, prosecution, judiciary, probation, parole and corrections, community-based agencies, including schools, youth and treatment agencies, and grassroots community groups, including churches and business groups;
4. A rigorous cross-neighborhood or community and cross-city experimental or quasi-experimental design will govern the development and testing of major national policy or program initiatives.



## References

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## Appendix:

### Research Paradigm

#### General Model

##### I. Assumptions

1. The youth gang problem is an indicator and extreme manifestation of a very large social and economic problem that includes rising rates of violent delinquency, school dropout, unemployment, drug trafficking and addiction, single parenthood, child abuse, and unstable families.

2. Youth gangs are alternative or surrogate social institutions which satisfy, at least partially, basic human needs of youth for social, emotional, academic, and economic achievement when existing institutions of family, school, legitimate employment and neighborhood organizations fail to function adequately. Youth gangs result from cumulative failures of key social institutions.

3. Youth gangs signify the extreme breakdown of specifically local, organizational and community functions, especially of legitimate social control, socialization, and social support.

4. Larger societal conditions contribute to institutional breakdown and local community disorganization. They include population movements, market economy changes, poverty, defective national social policy, and racism, particularly as they impact minority groups.

5. These larger social conditions which generate community and institutional breakdown must be addressed even as we focus locally on the gang-related aspects of these interconnected problems.

6. We need to target those youth who are committed gang members through a set of policies and programs which includes social intervention, provision of social opportunities and community mobilization, and organizational development and modification as well as suppression. The focus of policy for justice system program purposes should be intervention and suppression, i.e., secondary and tertiary rather than primary prevention (which should be the primary responsibility of a variety of other organizations at national and local levels).

7. Thus, The National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program will target gang youth
  - a) 12 to 24 years old; and others who directly influence youth gangs, particularly in regard to traditional turf-based violent gang activity.
  - b) male and female youth especially in turf-based violent, as well as those in mobile gangs engaged in a variety of serious crimes including drug trafficking, property crime, and with connections to organized crime, but whose identification with the youth gang is primarily for symbolic, communal, or status development purposes.
  
8. The Program will not target the following groups
  - a) youths under age 12 years, particularly wannabees, including those not connected to high profile, police identified serious street or youth gangs;
  - b) older youth or adults where primary identification is with criminal organizations for purposes of economic gain;
  - c) delinquent groups generally those which are ad hoc, ephemeral or engage in property crime as minor criminal behavior.
  
9. At the same time because of the systemic character of youth gangs, younger and older gang youth, male and female, will be targeted in some interrelated fashion. In other words, we will target gang youth at both earlier and later points in their gang commitment and development, but not prior to actual police contact or after the youth or the gang is primarily committed to criminal gain opportunities.
  
10. A key interrelated focus of the program will be reintegration of gang youth into mainstream society as well as community protection.

## II. General Hypothesis

The interrelated application of strategies of mainly community mobilization and social opportunities provision, also including culturally sensitive suppression, organizational development and social intervention, will lead to a reduction in the youth gang problem.

## III. Specific Hypothesis

1. These five strategies will be present in appropriate organizational and program combinations in any city or social context for the problem to be reduced.

2. Certain priorities in use of strategies will occur in situations where the problem is to be reduced.
  - a) In chronic youth gang problem contexts, emphasis will be on strategies of community mobilization and opportunities provision;
  - b) In emerging youth gang problem contexts, emphasis will be on strategies of community mobilization.
  - c) Issues of criminal opportunity system, criminal tradition, culture, and institutional pressure will also 'have to' be considered in the possible modification and prioritization of strategies.
3. Furthermore, for a reduction and nonconversion of the youth gang problem, e.g., drug trafficking to occur, strategies will be implemented in such a way that
  - a) there is consensus by key community actors on perceptions of the nature of the problem, its causes, program goals and objectives;
  - b) accountability is achieved through such mechanisms as informed and proactive advisory groups comprising both public, non-profit, and community interest groups.

IV. Dependent Variables (Desired Outcome)

A. Primary

1. Reduction of serious youth gang violence;
2. Reduction of less serious youth gang violence.

B. Secondary

1. Reduction of youth gang-related drug trafficking;
2. Reduction of other youth gang-related activity
3. Reduction of other non-youth gang-related criminal activity.

V. Program Process/Independent Variables (community level)

1. An appropriate community assessment of the problem.
2. Organization of a collaborative community planning and control organization, especially one that maximizes inclusion of criminal justice, community agencies, and grassroots influentials.
3. Development of a relevant combination of suppression and intervention strategies, especially in respect to the overall community approach.
4. Provision of proactive and sustained community leadership in respect to the overall community approach.
5. Mediation of interagency and intercommunity group conflict in regard to programs and resources affecting the problem.

6. Mechanisms of accountability, especially those which maximize commitment to program strategies and minimize tendencies to goal displacement, coaptation, and collusion mainly for purposes of maintenance and expansion of organizational interests.

7. Provision of adequate long-term funding to appropriate agencies and clusters of organizations over a sustained period of time, 3 to 5 years, to achieve program goals.

VI. Program Process Independent Variables (organizational level)

1. Provision of social/educational/vocational support relationships by organizational workers with gang youth;
2. Development of fair and equitable social control relationships with gang youth;
3. Improved access to remedial education for gang youth;
4. Improved access to vocational training for gang youth;
5. Improved access to adequate job opportunities for gang youth;
6. Improved access to supervised recreational activities for gang youth;
7. Improved access to health services for gang youth;
8. Improved access to educational, social, and vocational services for gang youth's family/support network.

VII. Intervening Variables (youth gang member level)

1. Improved school performance;
2. Satisfactory participation in training programs;
3. Satisfactory performance on a job;
4. Non-participation in criminal youth gangs;
5. Increased participation with non-youth gang peers;
6. Improved self esteem;
7. Improved family support group function;
8. Improved physical/mental health.

VIII. Conditional (Qualifying) Variables  
(Their extent or degree in a particular community affects the power of the independent variables)

1. Social Disorganization
  - a) personal (behavioral disorder or illness);
  - b) family (disruption);
  - c) gang/group process (status conflicts);
  - d) organization (lack of coordination);
  - e) interorganization (competition and conflict);

- f) community (fragmentation, isolation, duration of population groups).
- g) Integration of criminal and legitimate opportunity systems.

2. Poverty

- a) actual level of deprivation (e.g., income);
- b) relative deprivation

3. Culture

- a) tradition of criminality
- b) tradition of violence

IX. Definitions  
(See Training Manuals)



Traditional Model  
Components

Community Model A (Suppression/Intervention)

Residual, simplistic, agency oriented policies (focussed mainly on Suppression or Social Intervention); deterrence (mainly community protection); and primary concern with prevention of broadly defined at-risk youth

I. Assumptions (Beliefs)

1. Youth gangs are all highly anti-social and contain severely socially and emotionally disturbed members.
2. Youth gangs are organized and exist mainly to engage in violence, drug trafficking, and other serious criminal activities.
3. Youth gangs comprise hard core delinquent or criminal offenders.
4. All hard core gang youth should be prosecuted to the limits of the law and incarcerated for as long a time as possible.
5. Gang membership is a life-long commitment. Once a gang member, always a gang member.

II. Definition of the Problem

1. Any offense committed by any group of youths classifiable as a gang offense.
2. The youth gang is defined simply as any street association or grouping. It includes any collection or structure of persons engaged in criminal activity, street-based or otherwise, ranging from violence, drug trafficking, shoplifting, and burglary, to disorderly conduct and incivilities.
3. A youth is defined as a member of a youth gang based mainly on situational, community, agency, or police attribution; self-admission; or association with known gang members.
4. A youth gang incident is any criminal or uncivil act defined by the police as involving a gang member suspect or victim.

5. A youth gang member is viewed as predisposed to a greater range and frequency of crime because of his gang membership.

III. Policy/Program Goal

1. to eliminate youth gang crime
2. to eliminate youth gangs

IV. General Approach - Emphases

1. Non-targeted suppression and some diversion for "at risk" youth broadly defined;
2. Undifferentiated focus on service not based on age or race/ethnicity criteria, albeit with some focus on hard core leaders and "at risk" youth;
3. Exclusive criminal justice orientation;
4. Commitment to dealing with the problem by a single method;
5. Primary, if not exclusive, responsibility by a single agency.

V. Strategy

1. An agency oriented strategy which emphasizes specialized programming and structures independent of those of other organizations. Emphasis is on the strategy of suppression in both chronic and emerging youth gang problem cities. Attention is also paid to a strategy of social intervention, especially in chronic gang problem contexts.
2. The youth gang problem is mainly a responsibility of specialized law enforcement personnel, and to some extent youth agency, including recreation, personnel.
3. Participation by professional police and/or social agency leaders is emphasized.
4. The role of suppression is dominant and is exercised by law enforcement. Community participation, particularly by other agencies is requested on a token basis. Law enforcement mainly encourages community residents and non-criminal justice agencies to aid police and prosecutors in law enforcement.

Traditional  
Model A

5. Police operate independently and in non-targeted fashion in reference to sweeps or mass arrests of so-called gang offenders.

6. The gang unit is concerned strictly with suppression activities and prefers not to dilute its patrol, intelligence, investigating, and criminal justice liaison functions with social intervention or social opportunities strategies, although it may engage in some community mobilization activities to facilitate its suppression objectives.

7. Social intervention is restricted to particular youth service agencies or community-based agencies.

8. Youth agencies or community-based organizations restrict their efforts to treatment and social intervention functions.

9. Opportunities provision organizations, such as schools, training, and placement agencies, and employers, are concerned with narrow definitions of mission, i.e., education, employment, and profit making, mainly in reference to traditional populations (for example, white, middle class and selected inner city youth).

10. Opportunities provision organizations, e.g., schools, employers, training organizations do not perform functions such as social support or community development, in reference to the youth gang problem, although there is concern with community safety and security.

VI. Structure and Implementation

1. Ad hoc, short-term, rigid arrangements to deal with the youth gang problem are developed.

2. Traditionally, specialized, professional role functions are emphasized.

3. Simple, undifferentiated assessment criteria are used in conduct of activities or provision of services.

4. Emphasis is on limited range of practitioner activities and responsibilities in dealing with the youth gang problem.

Traditional  
Model A

5. Limited or nominal intra-agency unit and interagency collaboration is accepted.
6. Reliance is mainly on public agencies to deal with hard core gang youth and voluntary agencies to deal with "at risk" youth broadly defined (e.g., all youth in a low income neighborhood).
7. Staff selection is based on exclusive criteria with strong preference given either to candidates with certain common racial/ethnic, residence qualifications or alternatively to candidates with high academic, professional and/or service qualifications.
8. A generally cautious, denial, politically sensitive approach is viewed as appropriate.
9. No systematic communication exists in regard to interagency or community group programming for gang youth.
10. Funding arrangements are made so that each agency has independent responsibility for specific programs with no interagency or mutual agency accountability structure.

Traditional  
Model A

Innovative Model Components

Community Model B (Community Mobilization)

Innovative, complex community mobilization focussed also on appropriate balance of opportunities provision, social intervention, and suppression; substantial concern with rehabilitation for youth identified as gang members as well as concern for community protection.

I. Assumptions (Beliefs)

1. Youth gangs are residual social institutions. They comprise youth who are social but not necessarily emotional failures.
2. Not all youth gangs are the same, but vary as to age, race/ethnicity, patterns of illegitimate behavior. Not all are engaged in drug trafficking or extreme violence.
3. Youth gangs comprise a variety of types of members, wannabees, fringe, core, associates, and leaders.
4. Hard core and gang leaders should be selectively prosecuted and "thrown" into jail. Some can be rehabilitated.
5. Gang membership is a time limited commitment - mainly between the ages of 12 and 24 years. Most gang members no longer engage in gang activity - criminal or non-criminal -- after age 20 years.

II. Definitions

1. A youth gang problem is defined in narrow terms. It includes a limited range of offenses, mainly by adolescents, only a few of which are selected for law enforcement attention.
2. The youth gang is defined as a discrete, specifically identifiable street entity. The youth gang is recognized mainly by its commitment to status achievement and turf interests, violence and intimidation, and by its secondary interests in criminal gain activity, such as drug trafficking.

3. A youth is defined as a member of a youth gang only if such identification is based on multiple and systematic sources of information, particularly if the youth was apprehended at an earlier time for a gang-related offense.

4. A youth gang incident is a criminal act growing out of specifically defined gang motivated circumstances.

5. A youth gang member is not necessarily viewed as predisposed to all kinds of criminal behavior because he is a gang member. Motivations unrelated to the gang, such as economic gain, may predispose him to commit non-gang motivated crime.

III. Policy/Program Goal

1. to reduce the level of youth gang crime, as to scope and intensity.

2. to control criminal youth gangs.

IV. General Approach - Emphases

1. Targeted rehabilitation, suppression, diversion (secondary prevention); a continuum of activities to achieve different levels of the strategies;

2. Differential focus on service based on a range of age, race/ethnic youth gang problem considerations;

3. Community involvement;

4. Agency multiple role function;

5. Interagency coordination.

V. Strategy

1. A comprehensive strategy is employed which emphasizes community mobilization in chronic and emerging youth gang problem cities, with special attention to opportunities provision in chronic gang problem cities.

2. A community wide approach involving grassroots groups, social agencies, schools, business and industry, churches, criminal justice agencies, former gang members, and even selected youth gang members is developed.

3. Participation by community residents and local agencies is emphasized in efforts to control their own community.

Model B  
Innov.

4. The role of suppression is important and is carried out in various ways by different community and agency activists in terms of community patrols, close supervision of students, children, and offenders.
5. Police operate in coordination with other law enforcement and sometimes community groups in sweeps of targeted gang offenders.
6. While the gang unit and other units of the police, probation, and prosecution target gang youth, they perform a variety of secondary functions with gang youth, including opportunities provision, social intervention, and community relations.
7. Social intervention, e.g., counseling, development of support groups for parents, referral for services, athletic and recreational programs, is characteristic at some level of all agencies and community groups addressing the youth gang problem.
8. Youth agencies perform a variety of functions, e.g., opportunities provision, community mobilization, and suppression, in addition to their traditional function of social intervention.
9. Opportunities provision organizations take a broader view of their mission, with special concern (and inducements to serve) a variety of socially disadvantaged groups including gang youth.
10. Opportunities provision organizations reach out to become part of general community efforts serving a youth gang population and in the process also provide or coordinate with a variety of appropriate social support and suppression or supervision functions.

VI. Structure and Implementation

1. Planned, long-term, flexible arrangements for dealing with the youth gang problem are developed.
2. Professional, multi-role functioning as well as local citizen involvement is emphasized.
3. Use is made of assessment criteria for agency activity or service based on age, race/ethnicity,

Model B  
Innov.

gender, prior offense, social adjustment, available services.

4. Emphasis on client participation in program development and implementation to the extent consistent with safety and security of clients and community.
5. Integral development and use of advisory committee and interagency or coalitional structures.
6. Reliance on a range of collaborative public, voluntary agency, community, and church structures to carry out various differentiated aspects of program.
7. Staff selection is based on a mixture of criteria, with appropriate preference given both to racial/ethnic, residence, academic, professional, or civil service requirements.
8. Generally pro-active accountability approach.
9. Use of written and informal contracts for joint agency, community group implementation of programs.
10. Funding is provided to coalitions of agencies and/or community groups with collective as well as independent responsibility for dealing with the youth gang problem.