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**Probation Model**

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## Statement of the Problem

Probation departments across the country are increasingly confronted with youth gang probationers who are engaged in serious gang related crimes. Gang violence and drug-trafficking have placed communities and gang members themselves in considerable danger and need for special attention. Research also indicates that adjudicated youth gang members are at greater risk than adjudicated non-gang members for development of criminal careers.

The problem for probation varies in communities where gang violence and gang crime are emerging and where the problem is chronic. In areas where the gang problem is emerging, probation departments often lack the knowledge, expertise and funding mandate to address the problem effectively. In jurisdictions where the problem is chronic or entrenched, probation officers are faced with a multitude of hard core gang members, increased levels of violence and use of juvenile gang members by adults in drug trafficking.

In both emerging and chronic gang problem communities, the demands on the justice system are overwhelming. Probation officers, plagued with heavy paperwork and court appearances, have little time for field supervision duties. Oversized caseloads, sometimes in excess of 200 per officer, seriously limit the probation department's ability to carry out its primary objectives of protecting the community and diverting youth from further crime. Moreover, a lack of resources due to funding constraints has forced many probation departments to make surveillance activities for dangerous, felony, habitual offenders the priority concern while providing adequate controls and services to less delinquent gang youth are neglected.

A certain amount of role confusion also exists in regard to the youth gang issue. Probation may not be clear in certain jurisdictions about what its primary mission should be: suppression, treatment, or some specific mix of both. In certain parts of the country, probation department success is measured by its ability to catch probation violators and turn them over to the court as opposed to facilitating successful treatment outcomes. Probation officers are required to engage in police ride alongs and sweeps to demonstrate a greater street presence and enhance their authority in the eyes of probationers. In other jurisdictions, often those with relatively more resources and less severe gang problems, treatment is still emphasized. However, probation officers may avoid contact with the police in these jurisdictions because of their belief that it diminishes their rapport with gang youth. Whether this belief is true needs to be examined. In any case, it reflects a serious problem in criminal justice relationships, especially between police and probation.

The probation response to the youth gang problem varies markedly around the country. Some departments are uncertain whether gang and non-gang probationers should be on the same caseload or separated and receive the same or different levels of control and social services. Some large urban jurisdictions have developed separate units to deal with gang offenders, and even sub

gang units to address specialized gang problems. Different patterns of detention, court processing, and case management may be provided to gang offenders as compared to non-gang offenders. On the other hand, some probation departments ignore the fact of gang membership or the gang relatedness of the offense and believe that the nature of probation should be determined by the seriousness of the probationer's general criminal record and social circumstances.

Many probation departments, in chronic gang problem contexts have still not given special attention to the gang problem, although they have intensive probation programs focussed on other types of offenders. Some have a deliberate policy of avoiding service to gang delinquents in these special programs. Even where specialized units and procedures exist to deal with gang probationers, few probation departments have developed a sufficient range of program services such as individual and group counseling, remedial education and alternative school arrangements, employment training, and job placement. However, closer relations with police departments and improved community outreach are in evidence.

### Strategies, Goals, and Objectives

A multi-dimensional strategy is necessary for the implementation of probation's dual mission of protecting the community and reintegrating gang youth into normative conventional patterns of community behavior. A five fold strategy of suppression, opportunities provision, social intervention, community mobilization, and organizational development is required. While primary emphasis should be on suppression, greater attention should be addressed to community mobilization and opportunities provision, particularly in chronic gang problem cities. Use of social intervention activities and special program mechanisms to implement these strategies, should depend on the severity of the gang problem, the age of gang youth on probation, and available agency resources in the community.

The goals and objectives of probation which incorporate these strategies are: first, to assist the court in its sentencing decision, i.e., to provide the court with detailed information on the youth gang member along with recommendations regarding possible sanctions and rehabilitative options for the judge to consider; second, to effectively enforce the orders of the court and the laws of the state with special regard to limiting the criminal activity of youth gang members; third, to assist criminal justice and community agencies as well as grassroots groups to coordinate information and develop efforts both to control and prevent gang behavior; and fourth, to broker special school and employment opportunities for youth gang probationers to better meet their social development needs.

Probation can carry out its primary strategy of suppression by removing gang youth from the community for violating probation, particularly when they commit violent or drug-related offenses. This can be done through various levels of sanction including temporary detention. Special arrangements (e.g. reduced caseloads,

supervisory networks) are essential to insure close supervision of youth gang offenders so they comply with the conditions of their probation. An adequate suppression strategy requires the development of gang intelligence and information sharing mechanisms in conjunction with the police. Activities such as gang surveillance and crisis intervention by probation should be coordinated with similar activities by criminal justice and community-based youth agencies. The probation department should also assist in the development of a referral system to provide protection and assistance to victims and witnesses.

A social intervention strategy also needs to be implemented. Probation officers should directly provide assistance to youth gang probationers and their parents in crisis situations and make sure that counseling services are available to and used by both. Crisis situations provide opportunities for the probation officer to deal with personal problems and gang-related activities of the youth gang probationer. Probation assistance generally needs to focus on task-centered objectives for the probationer such as improving school performance, procuring employment, and avoiding gang situations.

Of particular importance are community mobilization efforts by the probation department to motivate agencies to reach out and provide more attention and services to gang youth as well as to better coordinate programs across agencies whether in emerging or chronic gang problem communities. Informal and formal working relationships need to be created with schools, local community groups, business and industry to address the youth gang problem in particular localities. Activities can include: assisting a community-based youth agency to collaborate with a parent's group and the police to suppress gang violence and crime; collaborating with schools to develop prevention and early intervention programming for youth at different levels of risk who get involved with gangs; calling upon local business to create more employment opportunities for gang youth and their families; and advising the court on ways the youth gang probationer can make restitution to victims or contribute to community improvement, e.g., graffiti removal programs. A community restitution program can be established in cooperation with community-based agencies and grassroots organizations. Extensive use of adult community volunteers may be required in these programs.

An opportunities provision strategy can target specific youth and promote case plans which emphasize remedial education, pre-vocational and vocational training, and age appropriate employment. In some localities, probation and the court have created job programs for probationers, with special supervisory arrangements such as drug testing. Finally, new organizational arrangements may be required to carry out the above strategies, including vertical case management, flexible work shifts, decentralized probation offices, and outreach efforts such as ride alongs with the police and contacts with youth on the street and at home.

## Probation Functions and Issues

Special program emphases will be required by probation in emerging and chronic gang problem communities and between adult and juvenile courts. In emerging gang problem contexts, relatively greater cooperation by probation will be required with schools and community-based youth agencies. In chronic gang problem communities, relatively greater cooperation with law enforcement authorities and attention to community mobilization will be necessary, especially where services appear to be more fragmented. In both contexts, more attention should be given to the development of the capacity of the juvenile court to suppress and supervise serious juvenile gang offenders, instead of assisting the court to transfer them to adult criminal court. In conjunction with this, more efforts will be required by probation to develop social opportunities and services for older youth gang offenders through adult court.

The various strategies mentioned above should be integrated with each other and prioritized in relation to the nature and scope of the problem and the resources available within a particular community. Less complex and formal arrangements involving other agencies will be required in smaller communities where the gang problem is emerging. Special department wide data systems and individual officer resource files will be necessary in larger departments. Nevertheless, certain common functions should be implemented in regard to the gang problem regardless of the characteristics of the department and the jurisdiction.

### Organizational Development and Change

Probation departments are often ill equipped to deal with a youth gang problem because they lack knowledge about youth gang phenomena and promising probation responses. After recognizing the presence of a gang problem, particularly in an emerging problem jurisdiction, a staff group should study its nature and scope and recommend that certain changes take place in the probation department as necessary. If the recommendations are feasible and acceptable to the decision makers, it should be incumbent upon the chief probation officer to act forcefully to promote appropriate organizational development and change. Such organizational development should emphasize a combination of suppression, community mobilization, social intervention, and opportunity provision strategies.

Organizationally, in emerging gang problem cities, regular probation units can change their staffing patterns and program mix to provide more intensive supervision and services to youth gang members. In these often smaller emerging problem jurisdictions, the chief probation officer has a number of options. He can designate a probation officer with specialized gang expertise to handle all of the gang-affiliated probationers within the unit. Alternatively, a special detail of probation officers can be established, with reduced paperwork requirements, exclusive youth

gang probationer caseloads, and community outreach functions to better monitor and supervise gang youth. The most economically viable alternative may be to provide limited gang training to all probation officers, especially juvenile officers, and target younger juveniles at highest risk of repeat gang offenses.

In large chronic gang problem cities, a full scale specialized unit can be developed to supervise youth gang probationers. Such gang probation units may be necessary to provide intensive surveillance and specialized supervision because of high gang density, the presence of large numbers of hardcore gang members on the streets, and heightened potential for gang violence. The issue of a special unit or arrangements across juvenile and adult age divisions may be raised and requires major policy and legislative attention.

Specialized units often utilize a vertical case management approach in which certain types of gang probationers are assigned exclusively to each deputy. The probation officer is responsible for the same youth from intake through the termination of probation. Frequent contacts with the probationer are mandated and restrictive gang-related probation conditions emphasized. Special linkages with law enforcement personnel should be developed in which probation officers and police receive and provide reciprocal back up in carrying out some of their tasks. Special arrangements should also be developed in the local prosecutor's office to provide a rapid response to probationer violations of court orders.

New organizational arrangements in chronic or emerging gang problem contexts can provide for improved supervision and accountability. Resources should be allocated according to problems and needs of particular areas. Twenty four hour shifts and flex time options can be developed. Monthly, mandatory staff meetings can be held which involve the entire probation department - from detention staff to field officers - to share information and insure proper internal coordination with respect to the gang issue. Probation officers should not only be familiar with gangs in their supervisory area, but also have knowledge of gangs in other parts of the jurisdiction since gangs are increasingly mobile.

Other organizational arrangements in both emerging and chronic problem jurisdictions which can be developed include designation of probation liaisons to perform community outreach functions to schools and community-based organizations. Better monitoring of youth gang probationers in these facilities along with improved training, and job opportunities for them can be encouraged. Probation officers can maintain an on-site presence at selected schools for supervisory, agency coordination, and local school staff training purposes. Probation units can also direct their officers to spend more time in the field to make them highly visible and well known within the gang affected communities. Additional community mobilization activities can include participating on boards and community task forces, and encouraging parent groups and PTAs to address the problem in knowledgeable and collaborative ways. Finally, decentralized probation units can be set up in affected communities to allow probation officers to more

readily perform surveillance, supervision, home visit and crisis intervention activities.

### Data Systems and Information Sharing

A data information system, particularly in chronic problem jurisdictions, should be developed to meet the needs of the probation department. The probation data system in larger chronic cities should be linked to other criminal justice information systems, especially the gang crime files of the District or State's Attorney's office. Issues of compatibility with police system files may arise since such systems may vary by police department in the county. The function of the probation data system should be twofold: 1) to provide current intelligence on the criminal patterns of individual gang probationers; and 2) to maintain up-to-date information on gang activities in the different local communities which may affect individual probationer behavior. Data information systems in chronic problem jurisdictions should be computerized to enhance data retrieval, exchange, and analysis.

The probation officer will also need to develop a file of resources in the community which can be useful in addressing the youth gang probationer's problem. This file should include current information on police and prosecution contacts, youth agency services, special school programs, employment possibilities, and parent support and neighborhood watch groups which presently exist in the community. These resources should be useful not only in dealing with the specific gang youth's problems but also in controlling of the activities of the gang which affect the probationer's social adjustment.

The probation department needs to share information regularly with criminal justice agencies on such matters as gang names, signs, symbols, location of turf, level of gang involvement and nature of criminal activity both of the gang and the probationer. Such information will complement that gathered by police and prosecution. Certain types of gang-related information on the probationer should also be shared with school personnel and social agencies, particularly such information that will enable the probation officer, teacher, and youth worker to provide not only improved control but better services and remedial opportunities to these youth.

### Pre-sentence Investigation

The primary purpose of the pre-sentence or social investigation is to inform the judge's sentencing decision by providing pertinent and complete social information and delinquent or criminal history about the adjudicated youth gang offender. Judges are often not well informed about specific gang issues and appropriate options available in the community or correctional institution to resocialize the youth. The probation officer can significantly influence the judge's sentencing decision by means of carefully gathered and well organized information obtained in the



pre-sentence investigation process.

The probation officer's report should become the basis of a plan of supervision. The report should include essential physical, psychological, and health information; a careful appraisal of the youth's academic, vocational and work history; an assessment of his social maturity or competence; and a report of family circumstances, especially the ability of the family to supervise and assist the youth to improve his social behavior. The history of the youth's gang and non-gang related crime and the seriousness of the incident(s) for which he is presently in court must also be included. Special gang-related considerations which may affect decisions about his return to the community and the level of supervision required should be identified, e.g., the youth's position in and identification with the gang, the current state of criminal activity of the gang, the risks that are posed to the youth and the threat his gang poses to the community. The possible impact of incarceration on the youth also needs to be considered.

In instances where the probation officer advises the court to allow a gang youth to remain in the community, particularly a youth who has committed a serious offense, certain supervisory restrictions should be recommended as part of standard procedure, e.g., non-association with gang members, prohibition of gang dress and other insignia, non-possession of weapons or drugs, strict curfew, and, if appropriate, drug testing. If these restrictions are ordered they should be regularly monitored and violations fully enforced. The probationer, whether juvenile or adult, should also be required to participate in specific educational and employment programs, e.g., remedial education, vocational training, placement in an alternative school, or assistance with job referral. Gang awareness and parent effectiveness training can be recommended for the juvenile's parents. When the youth's home environment is totally destabilized, the probation officer can recommend to the court that the youth be placed in a situation such as a residential juvenile center, extended family, or state ward context where he will receive proper supervision and support, preferably away from gang influence. When the issue of parental responsibility in regard to abuse or neglect arises, the probation officer should advise both the judge and district attorney to undertake special proceedings against the parent(s).

If the juvenile petition is sustained, the probation officer should contact the public defender in order to come up with a case plan that will serve the best interests of the youngster. In the pre-sentence process, the probation officer should assist the judge to develop appropriate dispositional orders by making him aware of the type of court orders the probation department can effectively carry out and what appropriate resources are available within the community and the correctional institution for the youth in question.

## Supervision

In both emerging and chronic gang problem areas, the probation officer must give primary consideration to the risks of controlling the youth's behavior if he remains in the community, and then develop a case plan to deal with his social and personal needs. A risk/needs assessment exercise should be conducted for each youth gang probationer, whether juvenile or adult, to construe the level of supervision and the nature and intensity of services which will have to be provided to the youth and his family. The level of supervision given to the youth gang member should be proportional to the risk the youth poses to the community and to himself. As suggested above, possibilities include regular field supervision, intensive probation, house arrest, curfew, electronic monitoring, and mandatory substance abuse testing.

Categories of supervision should be utilized, on a continuum from least to most restrictive especially in chronic problem jurisdictions. Supervision should be periodically adjusted according to the probationer's success in adhering to his probation conditions. Gang probationers who remain arrest free on intensive probation for a substantial period of time should be considered for transfer to the regular probation caseload. The type and intensity of social services provided should also vary based on what the youth gang member needs to develop adequate social and skill competencies.

At the beginning of supervision, it is critical that the probation officer explain to the youth gang member and his family or significant others the conditions of his probation and the consequences of their violation. At this time, the probation officer should try to establish relationships with the family and significant others which will provide insights into the special developmental needs of the youth, which he should address. Development of the social competency of the youth or young adult probationer should be at the heart of the supervisory process. The probation officer must spend a great deal of time planning and implementing an academic, social and vocational plan for and with the probationer. A special effort needs to be made to identify ways in which the probationer can use his school, work, and spare time productively. The key objective is to assist the youth in the development of appropriate interpersonal and world of work skills which will enhance his future employability and hence his capacity to pursue a legitimate lifestyle. Attention should be directed to the development of skills by the youth, particularly those related to conflict resolution either on the streets, within the family, or in the school or work setting.

A key element of supervision should be regular contact with the parent(s) or spouse of the probationer to the extent possible. The probation officer needs to both counsel and require the parent(s) or spouse to keep "close tabs" on the youth, particularly his contacts with fellow gang members. The parent(s) or spouse should be advised to monitor and ensure daily school or work attendance, and to support the youth's efforts at school and on the

job. The parent(s) or spouse may be in need of counseling and support for their own personal and family problems. They should be assisted whenever possible with referrals to relevant social services, including public aid, housing, mental health and drug treatment, and training and employment. At a minimum, the probation officer should attempt to persuade the parent(s) or spouse to attend gang relevant education or parent support groups.

In both emerging and chronic gang contexts, the probation officer should be primarily concerned with holding the youth accountable for his actions while making him cognizant of his illegal behavior, and his obligation to make restitution to his victim(s) and the community. A variety of community service options can be made available and utilized in conjunction with community-based and grassroots organizations including graffiti removal, public housing renovation, and community clean-up. To ensure adherence to court orders, the probation officer should make regular and unscheduled home and school visits as well as telephone contacts with employers, community agency personnel, and others who know the youth. Developing case plans which mandate participation in structured or supervised activities by the probationer throughout the day coupled with a curfew at night can be effective. Moreover, creating a communication network with other supervisory agencies - police, school, community-based youth agencies - to exchange information regularly on probationer compliance can be a useful monitoring tool and also provide a means for the probation officer to proactively intervene in crisis situations.

While consequences for violation of probation should be imposed as soon as possible, the issue of what penalties to impose is problematic. If the violation is related to minor gang activity, the option of sending the youth to a correctional institution, where his gang life style may become further entrenched, should be questioned. The probation officer should have search and seizure power and use of a "quick stop" court order under specific conditions. This order would provide a probation officer with the authority to place a youth in detention for up to two weeks when the youth has violated a condition of his probation. If the youth commits a very serious crime, revocation of probation may be in order.

The structure and process of supervision should differ in emerging and chronic gang problem contexts. In emerging problem contexts, gang affiliated probationers are likely to be in the age range 11 to 17 years and should probably be supervised as part of the regular juvenile probation caseload. The probation officer should use a service brokerage approach depending heavily on local community resources and assistance. He should emphasize close supervision, particularly for the leaders and relatively hard core or committed gang youth. All gang probationers should be expected to perform mandatory community service. Special after-school tutoring programs should be developed for those youth who need them. The probation officer should also seek out age appropriate full or part-time employment opportunities in conjunction with other agencies. If resources are available, a volunteer adult

mentor should be assigned to each youth. Parents should be expected to undertake gang awareness training at a local youth agency or public school. A local community-based youth serving agency or a school can be contacted to assist with these functions and activities.

The probation approach should be more complex in the chronic gang problem city. Special preventive, early intervention, and intensive supervision programs need to be established for different types of gang offenders. The probation officer should help organize and participate in programs at schools where youth who may have been arrested are beginning to experiment with gang participation. Early intervention programs should be directed to first or second time court adjudicated gang offenders, mainly from 12 to 15 years of age. Minor gang affiliated offenders, from 11 to 17 years of age, should probably be supervised on the regular probation caseload. An intensive probation gang program should be directed to the more serious gang offender primarily between 15 and 24 years of age with a history of high levels of gang-related criminality and violence. To maintain the integrity of intensive supervision, caseloads should be limited to between 30 and 40 probationers. For some of the more serious offenders as well as older adolescent and young adult gang/drug traffickers, a special electronic monitoring program could be established, with appropriate and swift recourse to detention, use of probation camps, and probation revocation.

Of particular importance in chronic gang contexts may be the development of a special probation directed alternative school for juveniles in cooperation with the school system and a youth agency. The special school could serve as a base for a comprehensive case management approach in which probationers would receive intensive remedial education in reading, writing, and math under closely supervised arrangements. Close cooperation with agencies that provide mental health, drug treatment, parent counseling as well as a variety of special apprentice training and civilian conservation corps type programs should be developed. A variety of social, educational, job referral and counseling services could be made available to parents and even to other high risk children in the family. The special school could become a center for high risk adjudicated gang probationers between the ages of 13 and 15. In order to minimize stigmatization, youth could be transferred back to regular school programs at the end of a 6 to 12 month period.

#### Interagency Coordination

The probation officer is uniquely linked to both the justice and community-based service system. He must serve as an important coordinator of efforts to deal with gang youth within both systems. This role requires that the probation officer play the parts of policeman and social worker at various times. His collaboration with school, criminal justice, community-based service agencies and employers should differ somewhat depending on whether he operates in an emerging or chronic gang problem jurisdiction.

In an emerging gang context, the probation officer's contacts with police, schools, community youth agencies, local business and community groups will probably be relatively informal. He should assist agencies to better identify and target gang youth for social and recreational services and additional monitoring. He should also urge the community to provide more volunteers as mentors to these youth. When community-based agencies or grassroots organizations have neither the experience nor expertise to deal with gang youth, the probation officer should assist them with training and the acquisition of resources in the development of gang member outreach services, to the extent possible.

In a chronic gang context, coordination should be more formalized because of the entrenched nature of the youth gang problem, and the fact that chronic gang problem cities tend to be larger. Greater emphasis should be placed on advocacy and resource development to change agency policies to better serve gang youth. More formal collaborative projects will have to be developed in conjunction with police, prosecutors, judges, schools, youth agencies, and employment sources. It is essential that probation officers interface with watch commanders and gang officers of the police department to share information and intelligence. Joint probation and police patrols to target "hot" spots on special occasions should be considered. The police may also have to accompany probation officers into homes of gang members in dangerous neighborhoods.

The probation officer along with prosecutors should identify potential and hardcore gang members who are likely to be probation violators for special monitoring and services. Probation in turn can assist prosecutors in case preparation and filings. Judges can be requested to fully enforce conditions of probation and impose significant penalties on probation violators when circumstances warrant. Probation should provide information on gang activity to school officials and closely monitor active gang probationers on school premises. They should also work to reinstate gang probationers who have been expelled or dropped out of school. Probation officers, in conjunction with youth outreach workers, may need to be involved in directly controlling, i.e., supervising and "violating," older gang youth who may be inciting or leading younger gang youth in fights. Finally, local business and industry should be regularly contacted and urged to provide training and employment opportunities to youth gang probationers. The probation department can also provide special assistance to employment sites in the development of appropriately monitored and supervised job situations.

It is imperative that probation advocate that schools take a lead role in resocializing youth gang members. Efforts by the school system to expel gang youth and not provide for their education should be strongly opposed by the probation department. If alternative schools are simply disciplinary schools where a sincere effort is not put forth to work with the youth, probation needs to take a leading community role to have the situation changed. Joint programs between probation and the schools should

be encouraged on behalf of younger gang prone youth with special needs for remedial education and older gang youth who require special education, apprenticeship training, job placement and supportive counseling.

Written interagency agreements should be encouraged. Multi-agency responsibility and effort to deal with the gang problem are essential. In situations of highly limited resources and fiercely competitive agencies, trust must be developed. Task force, interagency committees, and joint case management arrangements may facilitate communication, joint planning and cooperative program implementation.

Special efforts are also required by probation with Chambers of Commerce, Businessmen's Groups, JTPA councils, and the Mayor's and Governor's office in regard to special training and job opportunities for older gang youth. Legislation and policy are required to insure that government contracts include provisions for the employment of gang youth who may be on probation.

#### Community Mobilization, Education and Prevention

The probation department can play a key role in helping the community, particularly grassroots and public interest groups, to recognize that a gang problem is developing or growing worse. In emerging problem contexts it is important for probation to carefully document the problem by providing evidence concerning gang incidents, weapons used, injuries sustained, locations of gang activity, and identities of persons involved. In communities that are experiencing a denial syndrome, probation may have to become a risk-taker by using the media and encouraging pressure by residents in the affected areas to get key authorities to recognize the problem. However, care should be taken not to exaggerate the problem in this process.

Probation can serve as an organizer of local groups and agencies on behalf of the interests of the local residents and the probationer. Links with state and federal authorities and contacts locally with probationers and their families, residents, and community institutions, place the probation department in a unique intermediary position. Probation can assist in the education of local citizens on the nature and dangers of gang life and urge them to organize and participate in a variety of community crime prevention, parent support and patrol groups. The probation department is also well positioned to build a community wide consensus among local grassroots groups, police, parole, and correctional authorities concerning definitions on what constitutes a gang, gang member and gang incident to ensure that resources are well targeted and used efficiently.

#### Selection, Training, and Education

Policies and procedures developed by the department to address the gang issue may not be properly implemented or adequately carried out without a capable staff and a standardized training

program. Criteria for the selection of probation officers should include: 1) familiarity with and understanding of gang youth; 2) ability to be authoritative yet provide personalized support; 3) a willingness to work evening and weekend hours and during gang crises; 4) a capacity for community outreach; 5) successful community or justice system experience; and 6) an educational level of at least a baccalaureate degree. Police checks for job candidates should be mandatory.

The chief probation officer needs to aggressively seek out -- perhaps from other cities and jurisdictions -- gang-related expertise for agency staff training, especially in emerging gang problem areas where local resources are limited. Staff training and participation in interagency task forces can be utilized to educate probation personnel on gang topics and intervention issues. Possible training topics include: updates on gang-related legislation, gang drug use and trafficking, street and prison gangs, search and seizure, social investigation and supervision skills, effective case planning, crisis intervention and mediation skills, how to handle gang-related information in court and interagency reports, use of data systems, testifying as a witness, officer safety issues, development of community resources, and community mobilization techniques.

The chief probation officer should also direct his department to develop community gang education programs. These can include workshops for judges, parents, school staff and students, detention and custody personnel, community-based agency workers, and staff of grassroots and landlord/tenant organizations. Topics can include the sociology of gangs, gang awareness techniques and crime prevention. A special effort can be made in cooperation with the police to educate the media on guidelines for proper reporting of gang incidents. Finally, the probation department should probably advocate for a national training institute for probation officers. Besides developing curricula and carrying out training programs on gang and other probation-related topics, this institute could be a major force in developing a clearer and more consistent general definition and role for probation as a profession.

### Research and Evaluation

A variety of means should be established to evaluate gang program efforts and outcome. The quality of the probation officer's case reports (e.g. presentence investigation, supplemental reports) contact logs and files should be standardized and analyzed on a regular basis. The extent to which probation officers are enforcing the special conditions ordered for gang probationers should be assessed. Basic data on characteristics of probationers and services provided to them need to be reported periodically. It is important to determine whether different types of probationers are receiving different levels of supervision. Systematic evaluation concerning the effectiveness of services provided to different kinds of probationers is essential.

Outcomes of court screening and transfer decisions should also

be evaluated. Probation dismissal and revocation rates should be regularly used to determine the effectiveness of current programming in meeting the organizational mission of probation. Efforts at community mobilization by probation officers should also be closely studied to determine whether these efforts contribute to lowering gang crime rates in targeted communities.

Finally, the long-term effects of probation on gang youth, particularly the more serious offenders should be determined. Criteria to assess this should include grades, general improvement in school, relationships with the gang and gang members, and employment performance, as applicable. Differences in outcomes for gang youth assigned to regular probation, intensive probation, or incarceration and their possible explanations, should be construed, particularly if the backgrounds of some of the probationers in each of these categories appear to be quite similar.