The Role of Primary Prevention in Anti-Gang Strategy

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LASD Community Action Committee

Monday, July 23, 12
To Prevent Young People From Joining Gangs
Herman and Santi

Monday, July 23, 12
Crisis?

• Is this a civil or societal problem?
• Is this a legal and law enforcement problem?
• Is this an educational problem?
• Is this an economic problem?
• Is this a family and social work problem?
• Is this a psychological or psychiatric problem?
Gang Strategy

- Prevention
- Intervention
- Suppression
- Re-entry
Suppression
City of Los Angeles

- Investigation, Arrest, Prosecution, and Conviction of Gang Murder* $1,200,000
- Incarceration of Gang Murderer @ $50k for 25 years* $1,250,000
- Economic Loss to Victims, Health Systems, and Businesses* $160,000
- Costs of 200 Gang Murders in 2010 $522,000,000 or $2,610,000 each*

* No appeal, no special circumstances, no catastrophic loss, no early release, etc.
Intervention
City of Los Angeles

- Number of Youths Enrolled in LA’s GRYD Intervention Program: 1,000*
- Annual Gang Intervention Budget in LA’s GRYD (of $26M budget 2009): $20,000,000
- Average Loss to Victims, Health Services, Institutions, and Businesses: $13,600
- Cost for 1,000 Gang Intervention Clients Served by GRYD: $33,600,000 or $33,600 each

* Actual number unknown. ** Average per client for known gang wannabes and affiliates in 2008
Primary Prevention
GAP in Los Angeles

- Number of Students Served with 100% Classroom Coverage in ES and MS: 8,000
- Annual Budget from City of LA to GAP for Primary Prevention (2009): $130,000
- Average Loss to Victims, Health Services, Institutions, and Businesses*: $45
- Cost for 8,000 Students Served with 100% Classroom Coverage: $490,000 or $61.25 each

*Average of all 2nd, 4th, and 6th grade students.
# Success Rates

- **Suppression**: 7.4 – 21.7%  
  - 88.3-92.6% failure*
- **Intervention**: 20.2 – 30.3%  
  - 69.3–79.8% failure**
- **Prevention**: 89.1 – 96.0%  
  - 4.0–10.9% failure***

* California DOC, October 2010  
**Toberman Center GRYD, December 2011  
***Vital Research, LLC, June 2008
Crisis?

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Public Health Epidemic

- What comprises an epidemic?
- What do we do in a public health emergency?
Public Health Crisis/
Public Health Approach

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

Public Health Model

Social-Ecological Framework
Public Health Model

Define and Monitor the Problem:

- Following data trends to continuously define, redefine, and fine tune tactics and strategy
- Observing constantly evolving pathology
- Peer reporting
Public Health Model

Identify risk and protective factors:

- Engaging in the study and practice of risk factors that contribute to gang joining and protective factors that prevent gang joining

- Reviewing lit: OJJDP, the US Surgeon General, academic and institutional research, and evaluation

- Targeting risk factors and injecting protective factors
Public Health Model

Develop and Test Prevention Strategies:

- Using evidence-based best practices as tactics in a primary prevention strategy
- Sourcing OJJDP, the BJA, the National Gang Crime Research Center, and the National Conference of Mayors
- Validating through vigorous evaluation of new and proven methods
Public Health Model

Assure Widespread Adoption:

- My Gangfree Life®, My Gangfree Family®, STEP UP!
- Community Clean Up
- Public and Governmental Affairs
- Widespread “inoculation” from gang culture and violence
- Sharing expertise, experience, and resources locally and globally
Social-Ecological Framework

Individual:

GAP closely examines group, school, and individual factors to

- Utilize demographics, criminal records, surveys, testing, and evaluation for maximum efficacy
- Change attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and values through education and life skills training
- Address economic, social, and educational attachment and connectedness
Social-Ecological Framework

Relationship:

GAP uses the terms “family” and “friends” to examine the influence of close relationships by:

- Exploring peer pressure and family influences
- Implanting conflict reduction, problem solving, positive relationship, and constructive behavior skills
- Strengthen protective factors so a family or group can achieve Gangfree® living
Social-Ecological Framework

Community:

GAP works in schools and in the community on a daily basis to

- Foster ongoing improvements to individual, family, and group life through my Gangfree Life®, Our Gangfree School®, Our Gangfree Family®, and the Gangfree Workplace®
- Actively resist signs of gang power with Community Clean Up services and activities
- Improve quality of life, reinforce community pride, and demonstrate GAP’s solidarity with residents and businesses
Social-Ecological Framework

**Societal:**
GAP addresses this fourth level of the framework with its comprehensive approach to gang prevention with

- Seminars and public meetings about Gangfree® living
- Professional development training for educators, counselors, police officers, public prosecutors and defenders
- Public and Governmental Affairs meetings with policymakers and government
**culture** | 'kəlCHər |
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noun
1 the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively: *20th century popular culture.*
   • a refined understanding or appreciation of this: *men of culture.*
   • the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group: *Caribbean culture | people from many different cultures.*
   • [ with modifier ] the attitudes and behavior characteristic of a particular social group: *the emerging drug culture.*
2 Biology the cultivation of bacteria, tissue cells, etc., in an artificial medium containing nutrients: *the cells proliferate readily in culture.*
   • a preparation of cells obtained in such a way: *the bacterium was isolated in two blood cultures.*
   • the cultivation of plants: *this variety of lettuce is popular for its ease of culture.*

verb [ with obj. ] Biology
maintain (tissue cells, bacteria, etc.) in conditions suitable for growth.

“Culture”
Gang Culture

Gang Culture Exists In One Or More Venues Of All Students’ Lives

- Home
- Church
- School
- Neighborhood
- Internet/Media
Gang Culture In A Community

Gang Culture Affects Children’s Outlooks:*

I Live In A Place Of

- Crime
- Graffiti
- Trash
- Ugliness
- Danger
- Drugs
- Gangs

*Semark, Interviews with Harbor Area elementary school kids, 2002
Los Angeles Facts

- In LA, 850,000 children live in violent crime areas.
- In LA, 290,000 live in high gang crime areas.
- Of children living in high crime areas, 90 percent are exposed to violence as a victim or witness.
- Of children living in high crime areas, 27 percent show symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).*

Childhood Predictors

- Availability of Marijuana/Early Marijuana Use
- Learning Disabled
- Early Violence
- Low Academic Achievement
- Neighborhood Youth in Trouble
Childhood Predictors*

- Single Parent Plus Nonparent Adults
- Externalizing Behaviors
- Single Parent
- Parental Attitudes Favoring Violence

Major Risk Factors

- Lack of jobs for youth
- Poverty compounded by social isolation
- Domestic violence
- Negative peer networks
- Lack of parental supervision
- Early academic failure and lack of school attachment*

Gang Recruiting

- Protection
- Belonging
- Respect
Remedy

- Educate
- Inoculate
- Follow Up
- Treat
- Isolate
Gang Culture Redux

Gang Culture Exists In One Or More Venues Of All Students’ Lives and Must Be Addressed There.

- Home
- Church
- School
- Neighborhood
- Internet/Media
The Tactics Of Gang Prevention

Awareness And Training

• Parents: Orientation and Ten Week Parenting Program

• School Personnel: Inservice, Evaluation, and Referral

• Students: Pre- And Post-Survey, My Gangfree Life® In-School Gang Prevention Program, Culmination, and Referral

• Community: Awareness, Clean Up, and Active Resistance
The Tactics Of Gang Prevention

40 Developmental Assets

1. External Assets
2. Internal Assets
The Tactics Of Gang Prevention: 40 Assets

External Assets

• Support
• Empowerment
• Boundaries and Expectations
• Constructive Use of Time
The Tactics Of Gang Prevention: 40 Assets

Internal Assets

• Commitment to Learning
• Positive Values
• Social Competencies
• Positive Identity
Tactics of Gang Prevention: Education

- Principles of Learning
  1. Clear Expectations
  2. Accountable Talk
  3. Academic Rigor

- Best Practices
- 100% Classroom Coverage
- School Safety Plan
Tactics of Gang Prevention: Education

- California Standards (I–V) for reading and writing
  1. Significant Core of Knowledge
  2. High Thinking Demand
  3. Active Use of Knowledge

- Culmination event
- Middle School follow up
Best Practices

Predictors of Program Quality

• Extensiveness and Quality of Training
• Level of Supervision
• Principal Support for Program
• Degree of Structure ("Scriptedness") of Activities
• Local Responsibility for Initiating Program
• Multiple Sources of Information
• Part of the Regular School Program Day*

*Gottfredson Associates, Inc., *Gang Problems and Gang Programs in a National Sample of Schools, 2002 (USDOJ, OJJDP)
School, Community, and Organizational Actions

Address The Issue By

- Identifying And Referring At Risk Youth*
- Creating Safer Environments Through Safety Plans**
- Helping Students Connect To Teachers, Mentors, Role Models, Law Enforcement, Community Leaders, and Peers**
- Using Prevention and Intervention Strategies That Include Outside Agencies***
- Treating the Entire Population***

* and *** Pynoos and Nader, Psychological first aid and treatment approach to children exposed to community violence Journal of Traumatic Stress, 1988
** Phillip and Chaiken, Indicators of school crime and safety, US Department of Education, 2000
Primary Gang Prevention

Through the utilization of the Public Health Model and Social-Ecological Framework:

- Primary prevention is an ongoing process and a generational commitment.
- Primary prevention is the only approach that pre-empts the negative behaviors associated with gang culture.
- Primary prevention is a multidisciplinary, full spectrum approach to the gang problem that is the first step in an anti-gang strategy.
Gang Control Regimen

- Educate (Prevention)
- Inoculate (Prevention)
- Follow Up (Prevention)
- Treat (Intervention)
- Isolate (Suppression)
- Reintegrate (Re-entry)
Challenge

- “Raise up a child in the way he should go; when he is old, he will not depart from it.”
- “A young tree is easily bent; an old tree can only be broken.”
- “When a child begins to go astray, you must deal with her now, or you will deal with her later.”
The Gangfree Life®

- My Gangfree Life®
- Our Gangfree Family®
- Our Gangfree Schools®
- The Gangfree Workplace®