



OJJDP FACT SHEET

Shay Bilchik, Administrator

July 1999 #112

Implementing the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model

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In 1995, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) awarded grants to five communities to implement and test a model program to reduce gang crime and violence. The OJJDP (or "Spergel") Model includes five strategies for dealing with gang-involved youth and their communities. These strategies are: (1) mobilizing community leaders and residents to plan, strengthen, or create new opportunities or linkages to existing organizations for gang-involved and at-risk youth; (2) using outreach workers to engage gang-involved youth; (3) providing and facilitating access to academic, economic, and social opportunities; (4) conducting gang suppression activities and holding gang-involved youth accountable; and (5) facilitating organizational change and development to help community agencies better address gang problems through a team "problem-solving" approach that is consistent with the philosophy of community oriented policing. The model and its strategies are designed and targeted based on a strategic problem assessment and implemented sequentially. At each of the five sites, a steering committee made up of key community leaders and staff from local agencies provides overall direction and guidance.

Although the demonstration phase of the projects will not end for some time, each site has seen important preliminary results. This Fact Sheet offers a preview of programs at each site and should be helpful to any community attempting to address gang crime and violence. These descriptions are intended to highlight the essence of the model—a coordinated team approach to delivering services and problem solving.

Mesa Gang Intervention Project

The target area for the Mesa (AZ) Gang Intervention Project (MGIP), coordinated by the City of Mesa Police Department, is defined by the service areas of 2 junior high schools, home to approximately 18 gangs with an estimated 650 members. A team of 2 gang detectives, 1 adult and 3 juvenile probation officers, and 2 street outreach workers monitors and provides services daily to the 100 youth in the project. The MGIP team operates out of a storefront office in the target community and uses a team problem-solving approach to ensure that progress is made with

each youth. The MGIP gang detectives and probation officers hold program youth accountable through surveillance and routine monitoring and support street outreach workers and staff from community-based agencies who ensure delivery of services such as counseling, job referrals, drug and alcohol treatment, and other social services. The Arizona Supreme Court, Administrative Office of the Court, has recently provided additional support to MGIP for a computer literacy lab for youth in the target area.

Tucson Gang Project

The Tucson Gang Project, affiliated with the OUR Town Family Center of Tucson, AZ, focuses on 4 Tucson neighborhoods where 4 main gangs with an estimated 350 members are located. The project operates from offices in a Boys & Girls Club in the target area. Street outreach workers, probation officers, a police gang unit officer, and others work daily to provide services and opportunities and to encourage constructive and positive activities and accountability for negative or criminal acts to youth targeted by the project. Weekly outreach staff meetings are supplemented by weekly meetings of the entire project team to review progress and reevaluate community needs. The project recently added the Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Gang Prevention Through Targeted Outreach Program, which focuses on younger at-risk youth, to its strategy. A community justice effort, led by the Pima County District Attorney's Office, is also underway in the area and potential links to the project are being examined.

Riverside Comprehensive Communitywide Approach to Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression

This project of the City of Riverside (CA) Police Department focuses on 2 communities in the city known to be high gang crime areas and home to 21 gangs with approximately 1,230 members. Outreach workers and employees of other service agencies meet weekly to discuss service needs. They also meet regularly with police and probation officers to discuss area safety, gang activities, and accountability issues. Outreach workers encourage youth to attend school, obtain job training, seek regular employment, and use social services. Police and probation officers make home visits,

perform area surveillance, make arrests, and maintain other controls on project youth. The project has also been enhanced by the Probation Department's development of Youth Accountability Boards and a new prevention-oriented, school-based outreach program that is linked to the gang project.

Bloomington/Normal Youth Impact, Inc.

Run by Project OZ, Inc., this project includes all of Bloomington and Normal, IL, in its target area where 8 gangs with 640 gang members are located. Regular team meetings for outreach workers are supplemented by monthly meetings between the Bloomington Police Department's Proactive Unit and juvenile parole, adult and juvenile probation, and school resource officers who review the progress of project youth, special problems in the cities, and overall gang activities. Outreach workers assist both project youth in the community and those who are incarcerated but expect to return in the near future. Bloomington and Normal police, along with other justice agencies, such as probation and the county prosecutor's office, work closely to provide increased gang surveillance and sanctions for gang crime in Bloomington/Normal. The project has been enhanced by an OJJDP Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) grant that provides services to youth at risk for joining gangs. The Gang Prevention Through Targeted Outreach Program of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America has recently been added to the project and will focus on youth at high risk of gang involvement.

San Antonio Gang Rehabilitation, Assessment, and Services Program

The target community of the City of San Antonio (TX) Police Department's Gang Rehabilitation, Assessment, and Services Program (GRAASP), located on the outer limits of the southwest side of the city, is home to 15 gangs with an estimated 1,664 members. Street-based outreach workers assist other social service agency employees, probation officers, a job developer, Texas Youth Commission staff, city police assigned to community policing and tactical units, and others to provide services, opportunities, and

support to youth in the program while also providing sanctions including arrest for criminal or delinquent acts. Outreach workers meet monthly to discuss coordination and case management. Police and probation officers are available to meet whenever safety or accountability issues arise, although communication between police, probation officers, and other GRAASP staff also occurs outside of scheduled meetings and informal meetings take place regularly. The project coordinator, outreach staff, and job developer operate out of a project office near the target area. Project staff have organized graffiti paintouts, community health fairs, recreational opportunities for project youth, and other community activities with local neighborhood associations.

University of Chicago Evaluation

Over the past 4 years, project participants at the five sites have learned many lessons that are expected to greatly enhance knowledge about responding to chronic and emerging youth gang problems. The University of Chicago's evaluation of the demonstration effort, funded by OJJDP, is expected to shed further light on the process and outcomes in each of these sites.

For Further Information

For additional information about youth gangs, call OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, 800-638-8736, or visit OJJDP's Web site, www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org (Internet).

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

FS-99112

FS-99112



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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
Washington, DC 20531
Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300