

# **National Evaluation of The Gang-Free Schools Initiative**

## **DRAFT FINAL REPORT** **November 30, 2007**

Submitted by:

COSMOS Corporation  
3 Bethesda Metro Center  
Suite 400  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Submitted to:

Office of Juvenile Justice and  
Delinquency Prevention  
810 Seventh Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20531



# **National Evaluation of The Gang-Free Schools Initiative**

## **Draft Final Report**

**November 30, 2007**

Submitted by:  
COSMOS Corporation  
3 Bethesda Metro Center  
Suite 400  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Submitted to:  
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
810 Seventh Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20531

*This project was supported by Grant Number 2006-JV-FX-K004, awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The authors wish to thank the following individuals for their support during this evaluation. Without their assistance and dedication, this effort would not have succeeded. We are grateful for their countless hours of program support, data collection, statistical analysis, and report writing. These individuals<sup>1</sup> include:

### **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention**

- Stephanie Rapp
- Phelan Wyrick, Ph.D.

### **National Youth Gang Center**

- Michelle Arciaga
- John Moore, Ph.D.

### **Houston, Texas**

- Janie Balderrama
- Tino Chapo
- Carla Glover
- Victor Gonzalez
- Patricia Harrington, Ph.D.
- Ann McFarland
- Dolores Mendiola
- John Munoz
- James Odom
- Robert Tagle
- Nat Vasquez

### **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

- Jason Akers
- Raymond Bauer
- Margaret Brown, Ed.D.

---

<sup>1</sup> Names are listed in alphabetical order.

- Joyce D'Antonio, Ph.D.
- Errika Fearbry Jones
- Mary Hatheway
- Rasheed Jihad
- Inshira Jihada
- Amy Mattia
- George Simmons
- Mona Wallace
- Tone Walls
- Earl Wooryard

### **East Cleveland, Ohio**

- Jerry Dowling
- Michelle Earley
- William Gibson
- Patricia Lane
- Tracey Martin Peebles
- William Mason
- Richard Neff
- Jemond Riffe
- James Tribble
- Monroe Williams

### **Miami, Florida**

- Tiffany Anderson
- Marcelo Castro, Ph.D.
- Wesley Clark
- Anthony Cos
- John Hunkiar
- James Hutchins
- Pablo Lima
- Renee Parker
- Nathan Pope
- Ezzie Scott

## **NATIONAL EVALUATION OF THE GANG-FREE SCHOOLS INITIATIVE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **OVERVIEW OF GRANTEE IMPLEMENTATION SITES AND OUTCOMES**

COSMOS Corporation (COSMOS) conducted the national impact evaluation of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) *Comprehensive Gang Model: An Enhanced School/Community Approach to Reducing Youth Gang Crime*. The evaluation featured: 1) implementation of data collection activities designed to capture both process and impact outcomes; 2) development of individual site program logic models or theories of change specifying immediate, intermediate, and long-range outcome measures; 3) selection of a carefully matched group of comparison youth and a comparison area; and 4) articulation of four case studies that focused on the grant sites' continuing efforts to develop collaborative capacity to implement the Gang-Free Schools (GFS) model.

The GFS initiative is one of several adaptations of the Comprehensive Gang Model implemented by OJJDP. The model is based on the research of Irving Spergel and his evaluation of the Little Village Gang Violence Reduction project in Chicago (Spergel, 1995, 1999). The comprehensive model calls for the demonstration sites to identify and enroll gang affiliated youth and implement five basic strategies to reduce gang crime and gang membership:

1. Community mobilization;
2. Social intervention;
3. Opportunities provision;

4. Suppression; and
5. Organizational change and development.

The comprehensive model seeks to reduce youth participation in gangs and reduce gang-related crimes and violence in the community.

The GFS adaptation was implemented at four sites: 1) Houston, TX; 2) Pittsburgh, PA; 3) East Cleveland, OH; and 4) Miami-Dade County, FL. The City of Houston and the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) served as co-grantees in Houston, with the Mayor's Anti-Gang Office (MAGO) leading the effort. The School District of Pittsburgh served as the lead agency for the Pittsburgh Gang-Free Schools and Communities Initiative. In East Cleveland the Cuyahoga County Board of Commissioners is listed as the official grantee for the East Cleveland Gang-Free Schools project, however, the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office (CCPO), the agency that submitted the grant application and served as the project's lead agency. The Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) led the project and is the administrative arm of the School Board of Miami-Dade County.

*Client Characteristics.* During the course of the project, the four GFS sites implemented their comprehensive gang reduction strategies with a goal of achieving an enrollment of at least 100 youth from their target communities and neighborhoods. These youth received outreach and social services as prescribed by the comprehensive gang reduction model. Exhibit 1 shows that two sites enrolled slightly less than 100 youth (East Cleveland and Pittsburgh) and two sites enrolled more than 100 youth (Miami and Houston). In addition, African American males composed the majority of the sample.

### Exhibit 1

#### CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS

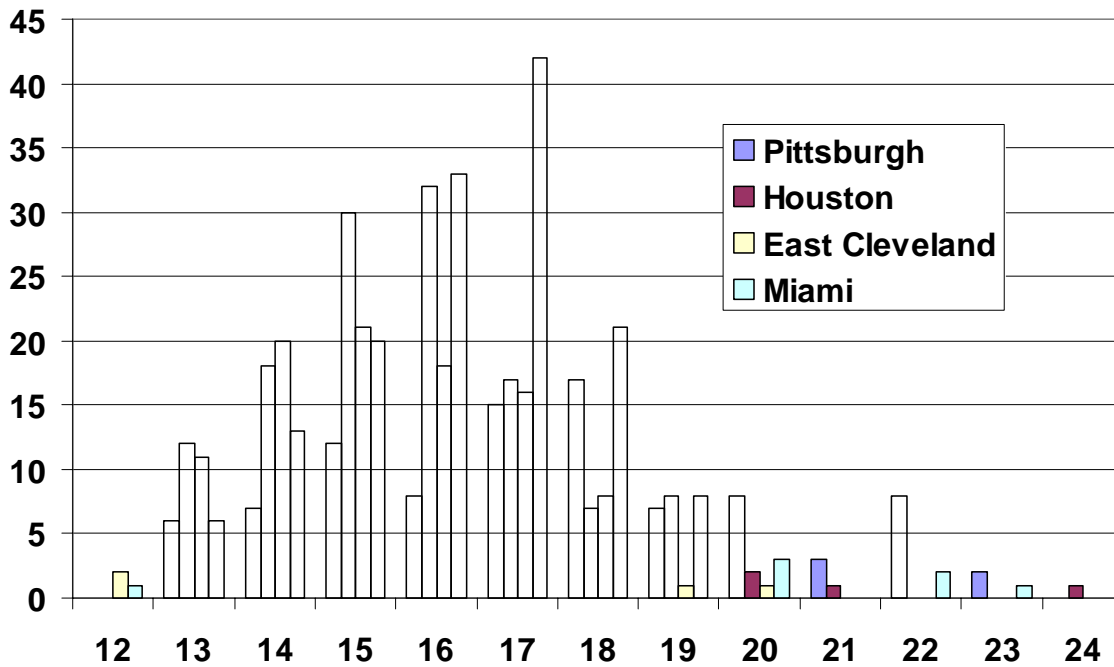
	East Cleveland	Miami	Pittsburgh	Houston
<b>Total clients</b>	98	150.0	93.0	128.0
<b>% Male</b>	90.8	88.7	100.0	74.2
<b>% Female</b>	9.2	11.3	0.0	25.8
<b>% African American</b>	100.0	82.6	100.0	0.8
<b>% Hispanic</b>	0.0	16.8	0.0	98.4
<b>% Other</b>	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.8

Source: Gangs MIS

The age of the youth at intake ranged from 12 to 24 years of age, with a median age of 16.2 (see Exhibit 2).

### Exhibit 2

#### AGE OF YOUTH AT INTAKE\*



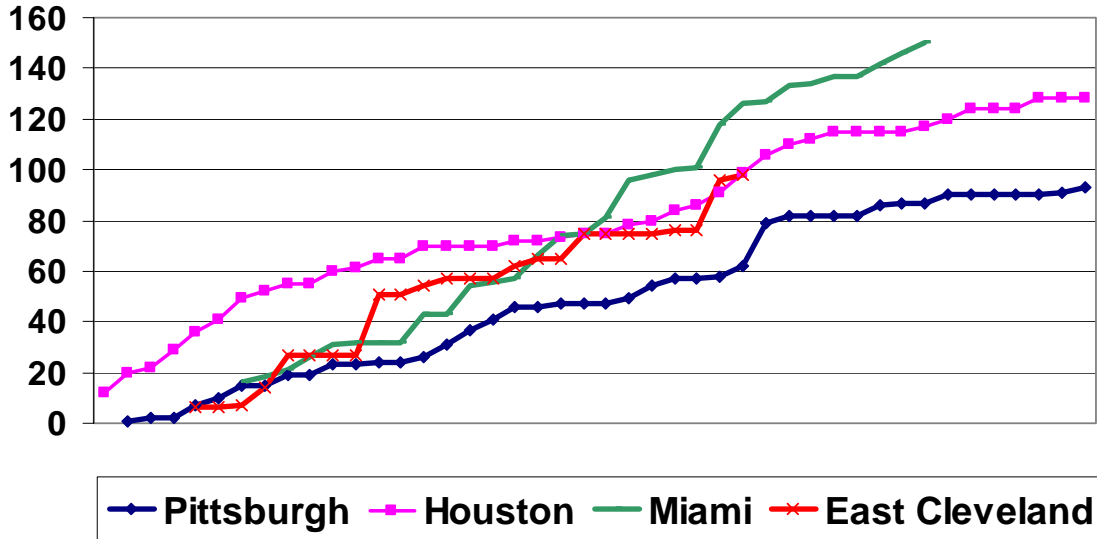
\*Based on age of youth at "Date Client Entered"

Source: Gangs MIS

Exhibit 3 illustrates that all four sites showed a steady enrollment of youth from start to finish.

### Exhibit 3

#### CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT OF YOUTH



Source: Gangs MIS

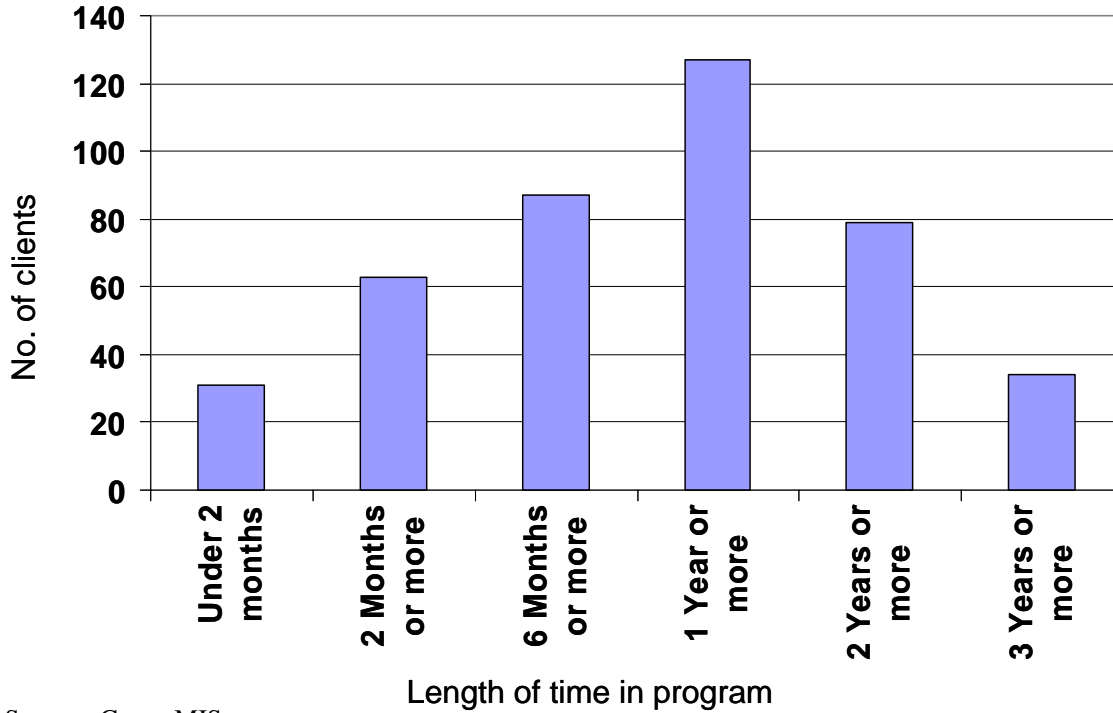
In addition, the majority of the youth remained enrolled in the program for more than 24 months (see Exhibit 4).

At the time of enrollment, a minimum of 75 percent of all youth reported being gang members, having been in a gang from 1.8 to 4.6 years prior to joining the GFS program. The average age the youth reported first joining gangs ranged from 12.5 to 14.1 years of age (see Exhibit 5).



### Exhibit 4

#### TIME IN PROGRAM – ALL SITES



Source: Gangs MIS

### Exhibit 5

#### GANG INVOLVEMENT

	East Cleveland	Miami	Pittsburgh	Houston
Gang members	75.3%	82.7%	84.9%	90.6%
Avg. age joined	13.3	14.1	12.9	12.5
Avg. length of involvement	1.8	2.3	4.6	3.5

Source: Gangs MIS

All four sites made frequent contact with the youth in their program. The highest number of contacts occurred in East Cleveland and Houston. The average length of each contact ranged between 33 and 41 minutes across all sites. For three of the four sites, the person(s) most frequently contacted was a combination of the client and a family member of the client. For Pittsburgh, the

youth was the person most frequently contacted. The most frequent method of contact across the sites was a combination of in-person and over-the-telephone contacts (see Exhibit 6).

All four sites used a combination of intervention components including: family, employment, criminal, social, and education. In all cases, the education component was the most commonly used (see Exhibits 7, 8, and 9).

With regard to impacts on youth across the four sites, a correlational analysis reveals that youths currently attending school were less likely than their peers who were not attending schools to be re-arrested and to use drugs and alcohol over the duration of the study. Youths who have been arrested by the police were more likely than their peers who had not been arrested to engage in drug and alcohol use. Also, youths who were more involved in their gangs were more likely than others who were less involved to be expelled more often from school, to receive disciplinary infractions at school and to be jailed more often. Youths who feel more connected to their family are less likely than youths who feel less connected to their family to be expelled from school and to receive disciplinary infractions.

### Exhibit 6

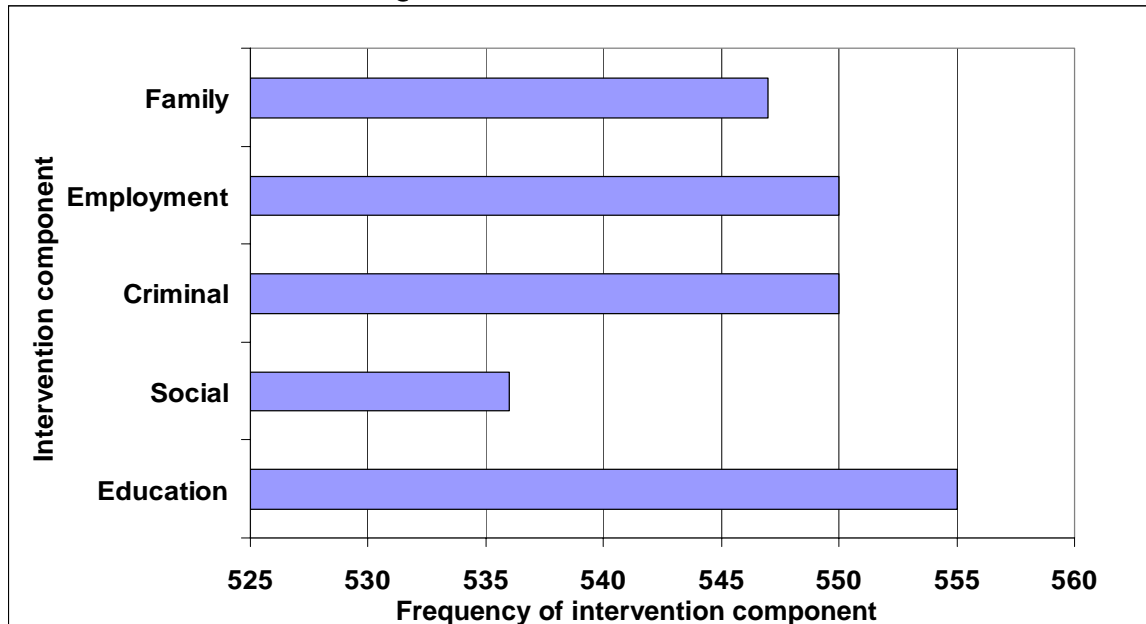
#### CONTACT EFFORTS

	Mean number of contacts	Mean length of contacts (in minutes)
East Cleveland	62.5	35.9
Miami-Dade	27.1	40.7
Pittsburgh	41.7	37.1
Houston	61.5	33.0

Source: Gangs MIS

### Exhibit 7

#### HOUSTON – FREQUENCY OF INTERVENTION COMPONENTS\*

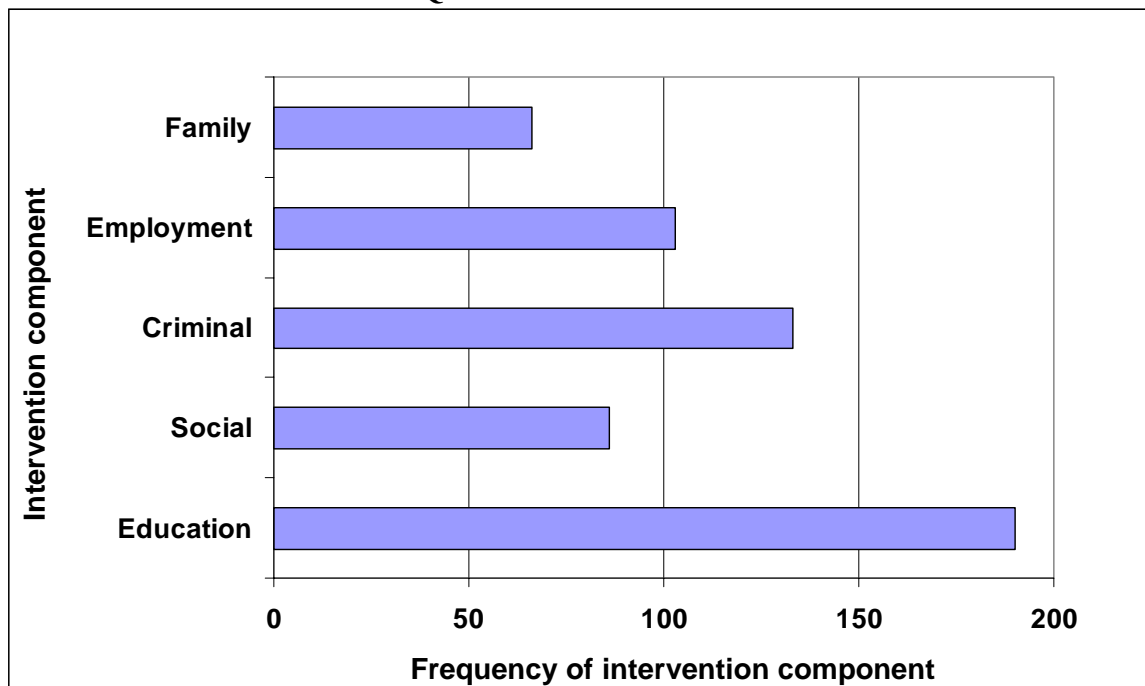


\*Intervention components are based upon number of entries in the MIS

Source: Gangs MIS

### Exhibit 8

#### PITTSBURGH – FREQUENCY OF INTERVENTION COMPONENTS\*

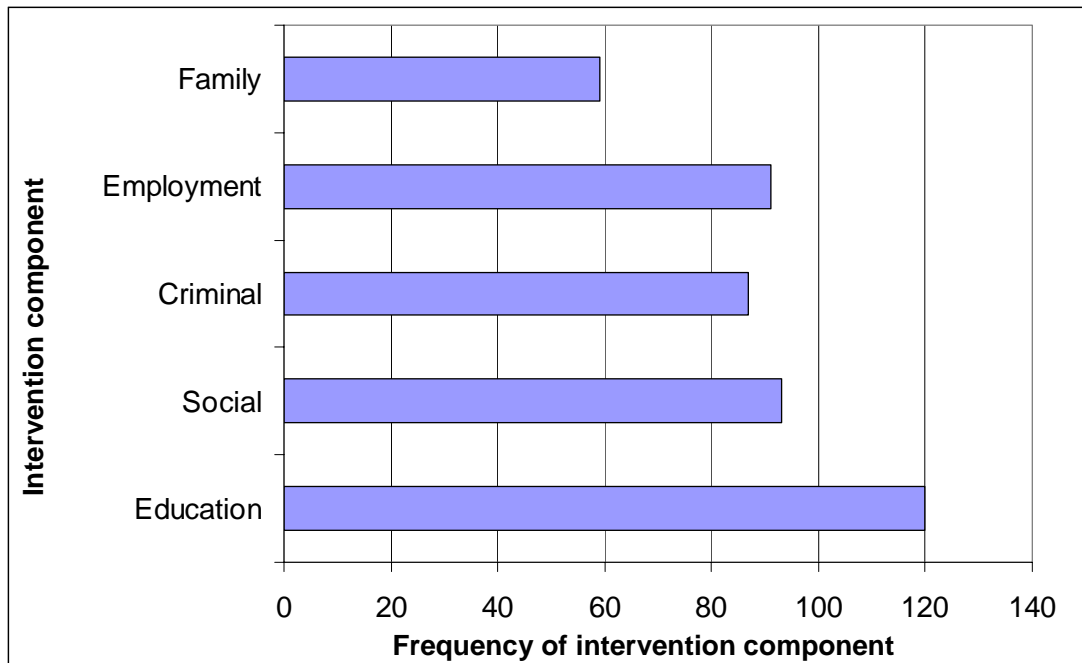


\*Intervention components are based upon number of entries in the MIS

Source: Gangs MIS

### Exhibit 9

#### MIAMI – FREQUENCY OF INTERVENTION COMPONENTS\*



\*Intervention components are based upon number of entries in the MIS

Source: Gangs MIS

Additional analysis indicates that the more time spent per contact by the outreach workers, the more likely were the target youth to remain active in the program. It also was noted that greater lengths of time per contact were related to less alcohol use and fewer arrests at the Houston site. And, as a negative result it was noted that greater lengths of time per contact was related to higher alcohol use and more arrests at the Pittsburgh site.

When examining recidivism for target vs. comparison group youth, group membership did not predict a higher or lower prevalence of alleged and dispositional charges. This was true for all three types of charges—violence, weapons, and drugs—across all four sites. The relationship between group membership and criminal charge did not differ by site as shown by the non-significant interaction terms.

These results demonstrate that there was no noticeable impact on the target youth population in regard to subsequent court charges for violence, weapons, or drugs. These results were similar for each of the four demonstration sites, and the site by group interactions also did not significantly differ.

In addition to conducting logistic regression analyses of subsequent criminal behaviors for the demonstration period as a whole, another investigation was conducted breaking down criminal charges by yearly totals for the target and comparison groups. The comparison groups in Pittsburgh and Houston track closely with the target youth. This suggests that the cumulative criminal charges for both groups are similar. The East Cleveland results indicate that the target population's subsequent criminal charges were higher during the period 2003-2004. The analysis for Miami-Dade suggests that the comparison group for 2004-2005 had a greater number of criminal charges. It should be noted that the comparison group for Miami-Dade had twice as many youth than did the target group.

Another examination was performed using the criminal history data for Houston and Pittsburgh. The period 2004-2006 was selected because this was the time during which most of the target youth received intervention services. The results show that in Houston criminal charges for both the target and comparison youth decreased during the 2004-2006 period. In Pittsburgh, the target youth had fewer charges in 2005, but increased dramatically in 2006. Neither of these findings suggests any advantage in recidivism for the target population.

The crime trend analyses for Houston differ from that found in Pittsburgh. Homicide trends, beginning in 2002, increased dramatically in the comparison area. While there was an overall increase in homicides in the target area during the same period, the trend lines differed significantly using a regressive moving average test ( $p < .05$ ). An examination of the trend lines for aggravated assaults showed no statistical differences. While comparison area robberies increased during the 2002-2006 period, the target area had a slight decline. The robberies trend lines in Houston did differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ). The target area's gang-related and non-gang aggravated assaults declined slightly during the GFS demonstration period—2002-2006. The trend lines for each group were not significantly different. Non-Gang and Gang-Related robberies declined from the GFS project starting in early 2002. Gang-related robberies fell at a much greater and statistically significant rate during the demonstration period 2002-2006, ( $p < .05$ ).

In Pittsburgh, while total homicides and robberies were higher in the target area, the trends for the two groups were similar and non-significant during the demonstration period. However the aggravated assaults trends in Pittsburgh's target area declined during the follow-up period 2002-2006. These differences were found to be statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) following a time series analysis, which employed a regressive moving average test.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

Beyond the quantitative outcomes discussed above, other lessons learned are in the form of more qualitative experiences and inferences from observations over the course of the evaluation. The primary lessons learned from the four sites involved in this project include:

1. ***Community Capacity.*** When making decisions on grant awards, community capacity issues need to be a priority. If the communities do not have services in place and prior existing relationships (with MOUs in place) then the grantee will not be able to provide the necessary interventions to their clients. A community capacity assessment should be part of the grant application. Intervention programs such as GFS are commonly awarded to poverty-stricken communities with high crime rates. From a social service perspective, this is a logical move. Nevertheless, when these communities are in cities that are beleaguered with financial problems and budget cuts, the financial issues tend to impede the level of services, programming, and activities that are available to young people and their families. Federally-funded projects like GFS need the support of surrounding community organizations and police departments in order to be completely successful, but budget constraints severely restrict the support. Additionally, local budget constraints may hamper the institutionalization and sustainability of the program in the future.

2. ***Role of the Project Coordinator.*** The role of Project Coordinator is one the most critical elements contributing to the success of the project. The title “Project Director” would perhaps be more reflective of the duties and responsibilities of this individual. For example, traits of successful project coordinators include having an ability to network and effectively communicate the issues; being already integrated within the city’s existing organizational infrastructure (e.g., within the school system, the mayor’s office, etc.); having in-depth information about key project issues; being employed by only this grant or in combination with other grants targeted toward similar or complementary issues; maintaining a deep long-term commitment to the project; and an understanding of basic research principles. Because this role

requires the Project Coordinator to serve as the liaison to various oversight entities (the Steering Committee, the Intervention Team, etc.) the Project Coordinator should have outstanding interpersonal skills and an energetic and outgoing personality.

3. ***Location of the Grant.*** Intervention programs of this nature may be more productive when situated and managed within school systems (e.g., Board of Education), as opposed to law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement agencies naturally tend to focus on suppression components rather than embracing a more broad-based approach leading to an uneven pursuit of activities. These programs should also promote constant input from teachers and administrators working in the schools with the young people on a daily basis. Most school personnel build trust and personal relationships with the youth. The school personnel have in-depth information about a youth's behavior, home life, and overall personal and academic needs more than a director of an organization or law enforcement agency.

4. ***Range of Interventions Offered and Age Span of Clients Eligible to Participate.*** Programs like the GFS project may have long-term success with juveniles and young adults if intervention strategies are intermingled with prevention strategies and are offered to both younger and older clients. More and more youth are getting actively involved in gang-related and juvenile delinquent activities at a younger age, especially in elementary school. Thus, a model that incorporates both prevention and intervention strategies that are age appropriate (e.g. 8 to 24 years old) may yield greater benefits over time for society generally and the youth population specifically.



A holistic intervention program that specially benefits the needs of the young person and his/her family seems to have a positive effect. A holistic program may include opportunities for education, employment, mentoring, mental health counseling, and parenting classes for the young person and his/her family. Lack of employment and good-paying job opportunities are some of the biggest issues in all of these cities.

The sites should have more flexibility in selecting some of the interventions for the enrolled youth. For instance, in addition to the more common and obvious youth interventions, such as employment and educational opportunities, the sites should be urged to customize intervention programs according to the cultural issues and needs of the individuals in each city. Some young people in GFS needed extra help with learning and understanding the English language, and others needed major assistance with drug, alcohol, and mental problems. Furthermore, some of the youth lacked positive role models, so they may benefit more from a strong mentoring component in an intervention program.

**5. *Parental and Community Member Involvement.*** Parents' and community members' involvement on the Steering Committee and Intervention Team may be key to learning the true tone and inner-workings of a community and to getting young people to actively participate in the intervention programs. In fact, it may be imperative to have community members who have been active in the neighborhood to serve as outreach workers because young people seem to relate to, respond to, and respect these individuals more. Outreach workers from the participating neighborhoods have a strong record and seem to be better predictors of referring youth who will benefit from the intervention programs and who will stay active in the program.

6. ***Title of the Project.*** The cities involved in GFS created a different project name that did not include the word “gang.” Though each city outlined a particular definition for “gang member” and specific criteria for identifying “gang-related youth” in its organizational documents, the term “gang” being used in the project name or during school or community discussions seemed to be a hindrance when seeking youth involvement in the program. Young people do not want to be labeled as a gang member because they interpret the term to be negative and derogatory. A project name that does not use a word like “gang,” but reflects that the purpose is to diminish juvenile delinquency through intervention and/or prevention may increase youth enrollment in the program.

## **CHALLENGES**

During the course of the national evaluation several problems associated with measuring gang and program activities were noted. These include:

1. ***Defining Gang Crime.*** Most law enforcement agencies do not have procedures for marking whether a reported crime was gang-involved. Measuring gangs and gang crime has become more difficult as youth street gangs have evolved in the past two decades. Traditional indices to identify gang crimes, such as tagging and use of colors may or may not be present when a gang crime takes place. As a result police must use “secondary” criteria by answering questions such as was the crime committed by a group of youths, or did the suspects have tattoos or other symbols, or was the crime committed by known gang members? For the researcher attempting to use accurate and reliable measures of gang activity this ambiguity is particularly

troublesome. Based on the experiences of the national evaluators in the GFS initiative, there is a need for local law enforcement officers and support personnel to be trained in identifying these “secondary” criteria as they review crime reports for gang-involvement.

2. *Costs Associated with Data Collection.* Individual gang member interviews are difficult and costly to obtain. First, program evaluations are governed by institutional review boards where active consent is typically required. Active consent means that the youth (21 and over), or parent or guardian must fully understand the nature of the intervention program and “agree” to be interviewed. The evaluators of the GFS program developed a Gang Membership Inventory (GMI) for interviewing the target gang youth. It was noted by the evaluators that the GMIs should be administered on a one-on-one basis in order to capture relevant details such as a self reported criminal activity. However, even though the interviewees were paid \$20 for their participation, they were difficult to locate, even during school hours. Moreover, a secure and safe facility had to be used to conduct the interviews. As a result the evaluators conducted far fewer interviews than were anticipated.

3. *MIS Data.* The National Youth Gang Center developed a management information system (MIS) to facilitate maintenance of site records. The MIS was composed of: a referral database; client intake data; a contact log; intervention strategies; and client tracking. The MIS featured computer data entry employing software that was to be user-friendly. Data files were to be aggregated to generate administrative reports, and to use in forwarding data to the national evaluation team. There was some training provided for local project staff to load the software and for data entry. As with any new MIS software data entry errors and procedural problems

were found. And, while a few of the local GFS staff was able to work around these problems, others had difficulty resolving these glitches. As a result the quality and utility of the MIS data varied significantly from site to site. The project coordinators in Pittsburgh, and to a lesser degree in Houston, were able to maintain MIS data that was helpful to the evaluation. In Miami-Dade the project staff was unable to fully install the MIS until later in the demonstration, and the resulting quality of the data was incomplete and in some case incorrect. In East Cleveland MIS data entry was separate from those collecting the information, and as a result the MIS records had several gaps and inconsistencies. MIS data capturing can be a valuable asset for both local project administrators and evaluators. Time and resources should be allocated to work closely with on-site data collectors and entry personnel to insure that this information is of the highest quality.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The GFS initiative was able to accomplish several of the goals established in the original OJJDP funding announcement:

- With the assistance from the National Youth Gang Center, community assessments were conducted at each site to identify the gang-involved youth and neighborhoods to be targeted. These assessments included a review of gang-related crimes, interviews with gang members, a school survey, and an audit of youth needs and resources. Based on these findings each site prepared an assessment report.
- Each GFS site also formed a steering committee to prepare an implementation plan and assemble an intervention team to direct and monitor the gang youth intervention services.
- The national evaluation team worked with each site to prepare program logic models to specify short and long-term measures to assess program outcomes.

- The four GFS sites enrolled over 400 clients in their programs during the four plus year's demonstration period.
- The sites also hired local street outreach workers to maintain contact with the enrolled youth, and to help enroll them in intervention services to reduce their dependence on gangs.

For the most part, however, the GFS program failed to achieve several key goals. Little evidence exists showing that the intervention strategies had any positive effect on the target youth recruited into the program. Of course, there are specific exceptions where several of the enrolled clients in each city took advantage of the social interventions and other positive opportunities offered to them. These youth reduced or eliminated their involvement with gangs, and the GFS program helped them get out of the gang life. Also, in a couple of the sites gang-related crime trends for some offenses were lower than those in the comparison areas. However, as a whole, with the measures available to the national evaluation team, the majority of the program's clients did not have lower recidivism rates, nor was gang-related crime significantly reduced in their target neighborhoods.

## CONTENTS

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	ii
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	iv
<b>1. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s Gang-Free Schools Initiative</b> .....	1-1
Introduction .....	1-1
Overview of the Comprehensive Gang Model.....	1-2
Overall Perspective: Theories of Change.....	1-3
Methods and Data Sources or Evidence.....	1-7
Cooperation with Technical Assistance .....	1-23
<b>2. Cross-Site Results and Outcomes</b> .....	2-1
Characteristics of the Four GFS Sites .....	2-1
Target Youth Demographic Information.....	2-1
The Gang Membership Inventory .....	2-9
Cross-Site Outcomes .....	2-13
<b>3. Houston</b> .....	3-1
Introduction and Overview.....	3-1
Project Timeline .....	3-12
Development of the Initial GFS Application.....	3-12
The Assessment Report.....	3-14
Implementation Plan Activities .....	3-29
Logic Model Planning Process.....	3-30
Activities Implemented .....	3-37
Organization and Structure.....	3-48
Summary of Focus Group Findings .....	3-57
<b>4. Pittsburgh</b> .....	4-1
Introduction and Overview.....	4-1
Development of the Initial GFS Application.....	4-9
Phases of Activities .....	4-22
Logic Model Planning Process.....	4-23
Organization and Structure.....	4-26
Activities Implemented .....	4-31
Summary of Focus Group Findings .....	4-39
<b>5. East Cleveland</b> .....	5-1
Introduction and Overview.....	5-1
Project Timeline .....	5-7

Development of the Initial GFS Application.....	5-8
The Assessment Report .....	5-10
Implementation Plan Activities .....	5-20
Logic Model Planning Process.....	5-21
Activities Implemented .....	5-22
Organization and Structure.....	5-31
Summary of Focus Group Findings .....	5-44
Some Highlights and Lessons Learned.....	5-52
<b>6. Miami-Dade County .....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
Introduction and Overview.....	6-1
Project Timeline .....	6-11
Development of the Initial GFS Application.....	6-11
The Assessment Report .....	6-15
Implementation Plan and Activities .....	6-32
Logic Model Planning Process.....	6-34
Activities Implemented .....	6-37
Organization and Structure.....	6-52
Summary of Focus Group Findings .....	6-66
<b>7. References .....</b>	<b>7-1</b>

## **EXHIBITS**

1-1 Evaluation Activities.....	1-8
1-2 Data Collection Methods Utilized For Process Evaluation.....	1-12
1-3 Conceptual Model of the Program Development and Implementation Process .....	1-14
1-4 Factors Contributing to Successful Program Development and Implementation .....	1-16
2-1 Population and Violent Crime Rates for the Four Sites GFS Sites.....	2-1
2-2 Number of Participants Enrolled in Program and in Target and Comparison Groups by Site.....	2-2
2-3 Youth Characteristics.....	2-2
2-4 Age of Youth at Intake.....	2-3
2-5 Cumulative Enrollment of Youth.....	2-4
2-6 Time in Program – All Sites.....	2-5
2-7 Gang Involvement.....	2-6
2-8 Intervention Strategies .....	2-7
2-9 Mean Number and Length of Contacts with the Target Youth or Their Families .....	2-8
2-10 GMI Responses to Questions about Gang Membership .....	2-10
2-11 Number of Gang Members.....	2-10
2-12 Percent of Youth Reported Engaging in Delinquent and Criminal Activities.....	2-12

2-13	Correlations among Personal Attitudes, School Participation, Prior Criminal Involvement, Gang Participation, and Outcomes .....	2-14
2-14	Correlations between Length of Time per Contact and Outcomes by Site .....	2-15
2-15	Correlations between Number of Interventions Implemented and Outcomes by Site .....	2-16
2-16	Target and Comparison Groups by Site .....	2-17
2-17	Group Membership (Target vs. Comparison) and Site X Group Membership Predicting Criminal Charges for the GFS Demonstration Period 2002-2006.....	2-18
2-18	Cumulative Criminal Histories for the Target and Comparison Groups .....	2-19
2-19	Average Number of Criminal History Charges for Target and Comparison Youth .....	2-20
2-20	Crime Trends in the Target Neighborhoods.....	2-22
2-21	Aggravated Assault Crime Trends for Houston and Pittsburgh.....	2-23
2-22	Crimes against Persons in East Cleveland and Glenville.....	2-23
2-23	Pittsburgh Crimes.....	2-24
2-24	Houston Crime Trends .....	2-25
2-25	Houston Total Target Area and Gang-Related Aggravated Assaults .....	2-31
2-26	Houston Total Target Area and Gang-Related Robberies .....	2-32
3-1	Gangs and Gang Membership in Houston, 1995-1999.....	3-7
3-2	Gang Related Crimes Committed in Houston, 1995-1999 .....	3-7
3-3	Houston GFS Assessment Phase Timeline .....	3-13
3-4	Houston GFS Assessment Team Composition .....	3-18
3-5	Houston’s Gang Definitions.....	3-20
3-6	Logic Model Strategies and Planned Activities .....	3-32
3-7	Initial Houston Steering Committee Composition.....	3-49
3-8	Organizations Represented on the Houston GFS Steering Committee .....	3-51
4-1	Pittsburgh GFS Timeline (2001-2007) .....	4-12
4-2	Action Team Representation at Inaugural Meeting .....	4-16
4-3	Pittsburgh’s Gang Definitions.....	4-18
4-4	Strategies and Activities.....	4-24
4-5	Steering Committee Representation during Assessment Report Phase .....	4-27
5-1	East Cleveland GFS Assessment Phase-Project Timeline .....	5-8
5-2	Agencies Initially Pledging Involvement in Steering Committee or General Support for East Cleveland’s GFS Project.....	5-9
5-3	Status of Data Collection for East Cleveland GFS Project.....	5-10
5-4	East Cleveland Gang Definitions .....	5-13
5-5	Strategies and Activities.....	5-24
5-6	Social Service and Criminal Justice Projects and Grants.....	5-30



5-7	East Cleveland GFS Steering Committee Meetings and Key Agenda Items .....	5-33
5-8	East Cleveland Steering Committee Composition .....	5-33
5-9	Attendance by Core Steering Committee Constituencies .....	5-34
5-10	East Cleveland: Steering Committee Participation .....	5-35
6-1	Gang Membership in Miami-Dade County, 1994-1998 .....	6-5
6-2	Gangs Active in Miami-Dade County, 2002-2005 .....	6-7
6-3	Juvenile Crime Rates: Total Arrests, 2000-2006 .....	6-9
6-4	Miami-Dade Gang-Free Schools Project Timeline .....	6-12
6-5	Number of Officers in the Four Involved Police Agencies (2001) .....	6-14
6-6	Initial Assessment of Gang-Related Crimes in Hialeah, Miami Beach, and Miami-Dade County, 1999-2001 .....	6-22
6-7	Demographic Characteristics of the Target Areas for Miami’s Gang-Free Schools Project (2000) .....	6-24
6-8	Target Area Map .....	6-25
6-9	Program Goals and Objectives .....	6-27
6-10	Steering Committee Membership - Participating Organizations throughout the Years .....	6-57

This resource was prepared by the author(s) using Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice. Opinions or points of view expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **OJJDP's GANG-FREE SCHOOLS INITIATIVE**

## CHAPTER ONE

### OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION'S GANG-FREE SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

#### INTRODUCTION

COSMOS Corporation (COSMOS) conducted the national impact evaluation of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) *Comprehensive Gang Model: An Enhanced School/Community Approach to Reducing Youth Gang Crime*. The evaluation featured: 1) implementation of data collection activities designed to capture both process and impact outcomes; 2) development of individual site program logic models or theories of change specifying immediate, intermediate, and long-range outcome measures; and 3) articulation of four case studies that focused on the grant sites' continuing efforts to develop collaborative capacity to implement the Gang-Free Schools (GFS) model.

The evaluation addressed two primary overarching goals. The first goal sought to provide a thorough understanding in four communities of the development and process by which school and community collaboration leads to assessment and program planning activities. The second goal aimed to provide employable and functional outcome results through the use of process and impact evaluations. The process evaluation focused on the efforts of the local stakeholders to build a successful collaboration with participation from the school system, community, law enforcement and justice system agencies, and a variety of both public and private youth-serving agencies. The impact evaluation focused on the development and collection of performance outcome data related to the targeted youth gang population, their families and peers, the

participating schools, and the targeted communities. The national evaluation team developed an impact evaluation design that measured both program implementation and outcomes appropriate to the schools and participating communities.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GANG MODEL**

The GFS initiative is one of several adaptations of the Comprehensive Gang Model implemented by OJJDP. Prior initiatives included the “urban” replication at five sites and the “rural” replication at four sites. The model is based on the research of Irving Spergel and his evaluation of the Little Village Gang Violence Reduction project in Chicago (Spergel, 1995, 1999). The comprehensive model calls for the demonstration sites to identify and enroll gang affiliated youth and implement five basic strategies to reduce gang crime and gang membership:

1. Community mobilization;
2. Social intervention;
3. Opportunities provision;
4. Suppression; and
5. Organizational change and development.

The comprehensive model seeks to reduce youth participation in gangs and reduce gang-related crimes and violence in the community.

The GFS adaptation was implemented at four sites: 1) Houston, TX; 2) Pittsburgh, PA; 3) East Cleveland, OH; and 4) Miami-Dade County, FL. The local sites were asked to:

- ***Establish a Collaborative Structure.*** OJJDP requested that each site hire a project coordinator; recruit Steering Committee members who represented law enforcement, the justice system, schools, and the community; establish an assessment team; develop a definition for “gangs” and “gang-related” crime; and oversee the assessment process and implementation planning;
- ***Prepare a Gang Activity Assessment Report.*** After conducting an initial “scan” to narrow the potential target areas, as well as developing a gang definition to frame the data collection, the sites were to obtain information on youth gang violence from police departments, schools, students (specifically including a survey on gangs developed by DRP, Inc.), gang members, and other sources. The data collection effort resulted in an assessment report; and
- ***Prepare an Implementation Plan.*** Based on the data collected, OJJDP requested that the sites develop a plan describing their approach to combating youth gangs and gang-related violence, including the strategies and activities to be offered during the implementation phase. The approach to implementation included the “five component strategies” found in OJJDP’s Comprehensive Gang Model.

During the past five to six years, the four GFS sites have been implementing their comprehensive gang reduction strategies. Their goal was to enroll at least 100 youth from their target communities and neighborhoods. These youth received outreach and social services as prescribed by the comprehensive gang reduction model.

## **OVERALL PERSPECTIVE: THEORIES OF CHANGE**

Until the 1960s, it was widely believed that implementing innovative social programs such as OJJDP’s Comprehensive Gang Model was comparable to building a bridge: a plan is carefully drafted, the plan is rigorously followed, and the desired outcome is produced. With the rise of the Great Society, however, it was discovered that the development of a new program idea, however noble, did not necessarily lead to its successful implementation. Research in a variety of fields

provided similar conclusions.<sup>1</sup> Weiss (1998) provides a more recent and sophisticated understanding of the challenges facing the implementation and evaluation of social programs:

Social programs are complex undertakings. They are an amalgam of dreams and personalities, rooms and theories, paper clips and organizational structure, clients and activities, budgets and photocopies, and great intentions....They incorporate a range of components, styles, people, and procedures. It becomes difficult to describe what the program really is. (p. 48)

Any social program, regardless of its content, proposes to effect *change*. In order to do so, such programs are based on explicit or implicit theories about how and why the program will work (Weiss, 1972, pp. 50-53; Shadish, 1987; Chen, 1990; Lipsey, 1993). Weiss (1998) conceptualizes two “theories of change” that, explicitly or implicitly, underlie social programs: program theories and implementation theories. “Program theory,” according to Weiss (1998), is:

a set of hypotheses upon which people build their program plans. It is an explanation of the causal links that tie program inputs to expected program outputs, or as Bickman (1987, p. 5) has put it, “a plausible and sensible model of how a program is supposed to work.” (p. 55)

Wholey (1987, p. 78) says that program theory identifies “program resources, program activities, and intended program outcomes, and then specifies a chain of causal assumptions linking program resources, activities, intermediate outcomes, and ultimate goals.”

Moving from intentions to sound program activities is the major challenge that agency managers face. “Implementation,” says Weiss (1998), “implicitly incorporates a theory about what is required to translate objectives into ongoing service delivery and program operation”

---

<sup>1</sup>The topics of research ran the gamut, from education (Bailey and Mosher, 1968; Orfield, 1969; Fullan and Pomfret, 1977; McLaughlin, 1975; Murphy, 1971; Radin, 1977; Elmore, 1976, Gramlich, 1976; Berman and McLaughlin, 1978; Mann, 1978), to employment and training (Mirengoff, 1976, 1978; Williams, 1980; Johnson, 1973), community and economic development (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973; Derthick, 1972; Dommell et al., 1978; Nathan et al., 1977; Van Horn, 1978; Sosowski, 1974), law enforcement (Wycoff and Kelling, 1978; Feeley and Sarat, 1980; U.S. Comptroller General, 1978), and crime prevention (Pate, 1984).

(p. 58). Such an “implementation theory” has the assumption that “if the activities are conducted as planned, with sufficient quality, intensity, and fidelity to plan, the desired results will be forthcoming” (Weiss, 1998, p. 58).

The two kinds of theory, program theory and implementation theory, intertwine in the evolution of any program. The combination of the two is what Weiss (1998, p. 58) calls the program’s “theories of change.” It is crucial for any program evaluation to understand both types of theories of change in order to be able to understand the nature of the programs being implemented, their goals, the means by which they seek to achieve those goals, and the obstacles to implementation that those programs might be expected to encounter. Once specified, these theories can provide the basis for an evaluation of the program. Using these theories, explains Weiss (1998):

The evaluator can organize the evaluation to trace the unfolding of the assumptions. The evaluation can collect data on the interim markers that are expected to appear....The evaluation traces each step along the route to see whether the stages appear as anticipated. If things go as expected, the evaluation can tell *how* the program worked in achieving its goals; it can explain the steps and processes that led to desired results. If data do not confirm some of the steps...the evaluation can show where the program goes off the tracks. The evaluator uses program theories to plan points for data collection [and] can collect data to find out if the program carried out each step of the plan of activities and if each step led to the next step and to expected responses from participants. (pp. 58-60)

The advent of comprehensive cross-sector community-based interventions such as OJJDP’s Comprehensive Gang Model makes the idea of basing evaluation on the “theories of change” that underlie these initiatives even more desirable. This is the case because, as Connell and Kubisch (1998) point out, unlike most programs, they:

have multiple strands (economic, political, and social), which operate at many levels (community, institutional, personal network, family, and individual), are co-constructed

in a collaborative process by diverse stakeholders, and evolve over the course of the initiative. (p. 16)

In response to these complexities, theory-based evaluations have these distinct advantages (Weiss, 1995; Cornell and Kubishch, 1998; Yin, 2000):

- They concentrate evaluation attention and resources on key aspects of the program;
- By examining the intermediate stages between the initiation of the program and its long-term effects, need not wait until final outcomes appear (or fail to appear) to provide early indications of program effectiveness;
- By carefully articulating not only the program theory, but also theories of unintended consequences and, in particular, theories of rival explanations the evaluation can help explain whether the program is responsible for whatever outcomes are observed;
- They facilitate aggregation of evaluation results into a broader base of theoretical and program knowledge;
- They ask program practitioners to make their assumptions explicit and to reach consensus with their colleagues about what they are trying to do and why; and
- Evaluations that address the theoretical assumptions embedded in programs may have more influence on both policy and popular opinion.

In sum, the theory-driven approach to evaluation avoids many of the pitfalls that threaten evaluation, particularly with respect to complex programs such as the Comprehensive Gang Model. It helps to ensure that the developments being studied are good reflections of the things that matter in the program and that the results identified in the evaluation are firmly connected to the program's activities (Chen and Rossi, 1987).

Given the distinct advantages of theory-based evaluation in dealing with a program such as the Comprehensive Gang Model, the national evaluation team structured both the impact



evaluation and the process evaluation as theory-based evaluations, based on the general principles delineated by Connell and Kubish (1998).

## **METHODS AND DATA SOURCES OR EVIDENCE**

In order to address the evaluation's goals and answer the key research questions, the national evaluation team conducted the following activities (See Exhibit 1-1).

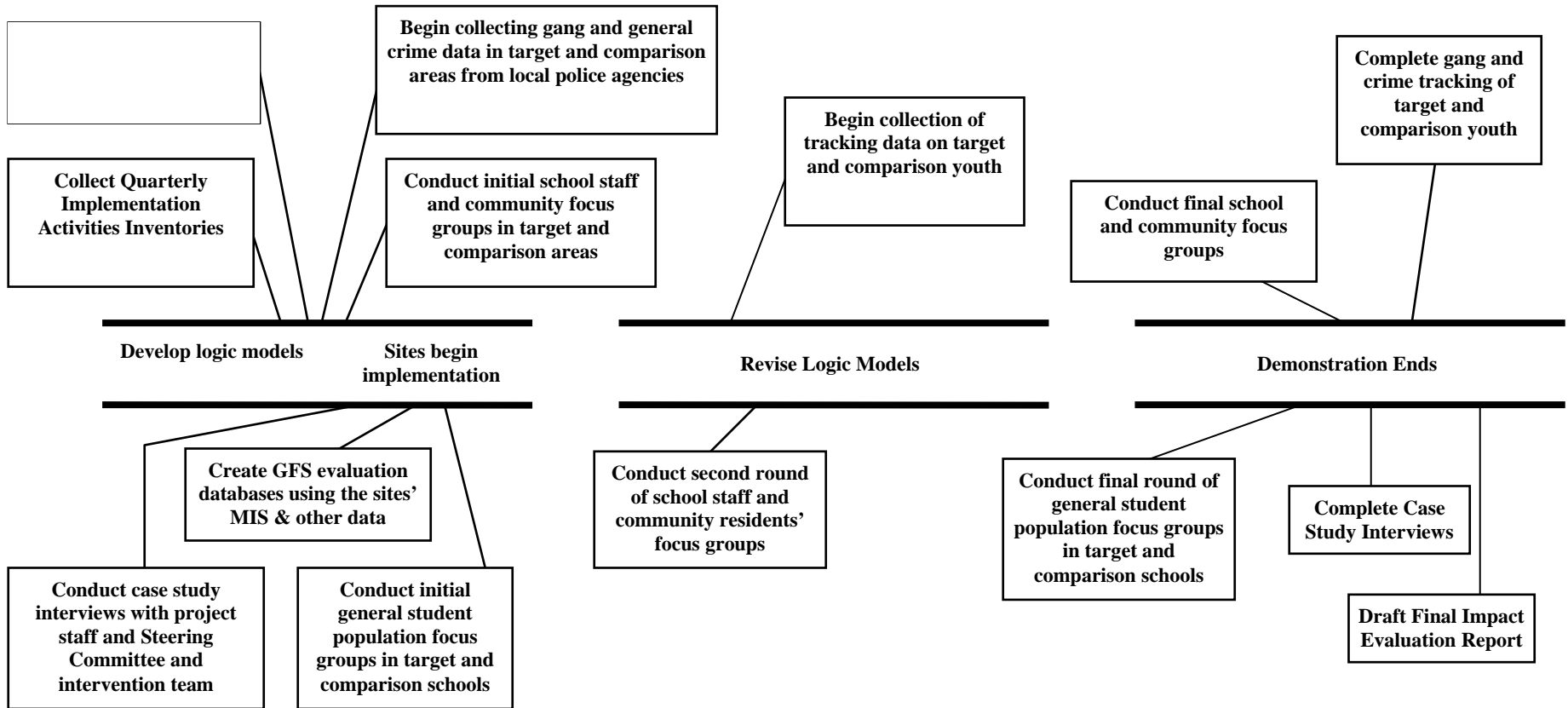
### **1. Developed Site-Specific Logic Models or Theories of Change**

The national evaluation team, working with key stakeholders at each GFS demonstration site, developed program logic models to identify outcome measures. The objectives included: 1) to assist the demonstration program sites by clarifying their goals, specifying program theory and objectives, and selecting program designs; 2) to assist the sites in enhancing their program intervention designs; and 3) to help the sites shape and focus their activities by assessing local community data. The facilitation occurred through a series of on-site technical assistance visits and a specially designed cluster workshop. Through these modes, the national evaluation team remained available, throughout the entire project, to assist the project sites as needed.

Based on Connell and Kubish (1998), the first step in conducting this theory-based evaluation was to engage in a participatory planning process in each of the four demonstration communities to generate theories of change that are viewed by program stakeholders as plausible, viable, and testable. The end result of this process included four sets of "logic models" (Wholey, 1979) that delineated the presumed flow of causal effects, as well as possible rival explanations for any demonstrated effects. The initial discussion focused on elaborating

### Exhibit 1-1

## EVALUATION ACTIVITIES



upon the preliminary, generic theory of change/logic model. This model shows that the demonstration sites may have pursued several strategies that could have then presumed to produce a sequence of outcomes culminating in reduced youth gang crime and violence.

The first step of this planning process occurred at a cluster meeting in Washington, D.C., at which the program sites' community leaders, Steering Committee members, project staff, and local evaluators developed theories of change that represented their intended program aims. The two-day cluster workshop focused on a review of the demonstration sites' applications to determine where additional capacity-building was required for strategic planning. The workshop focused on the refinement of the development and institutionalization of program-specific logic models that measured actual productivity, and the integration of feedback mechanisms into strategic planning. Conceptual frameworks take the form of logic models that have previously proven to be extremely useful for project administrators and evaluators alike in forcing the joint articulation of the sequences whereby interventions are supposed to produce the desired outcomes. Thus, the process of constructing a logic model was potentially even more important than the ultimate model itself. The development of program-specific logic models was to be considered a heuristic process to be facilitated during this workshop. As a heuristic device, the adaptations and revisions to the logic model could be expected to occur throughout the evaluation period. The site may have discovered that the planned intervention had gaps in its logic. The intervention could then be reconfigured to fill such gaps. The logic models also have been used successfully to facilitate discussions among entire partnerships, and this application also would be encouraged outside of the workshop. The workshop also reviewed other key

features for assessing and implementing gun violence reduction activities. The workshop was designed to be highly interactive and minimally didactic.

By means of periodic telephonic and e-mail contact, as well as periodic site visits, the national evaluation team continued the planning process throughout the 12-month planning and strategy development period. The resulting logic models were used by the evaluation staff to identify the key resources, decision points, critical actors, and data sources to be included in conducting the process evaluation and designing the impact evaluation design.

## **2. Conduct Four Case Studies to Produce a Process Evaluation**

The general intent of the first goal was to conduct a process evaluation of the implementation of the four OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model programs during their first 12 months of operation. “Process evaluation is the use of empirical data to assess the delivery of programs,” and unlike impact evaluation, which focuses on inferring what outcomes (intended or unintended) resulted from a program, process evaluation addresses three questions (Scheirer, 1994, p. 40):

- What is the program *intended* to be?;
- What is *delivered* and *how*?; and
- Are there *gaps* between program plans and program delivery and *why*?

In short, process evaluations open up the “black box” behind a program label to reveal the realities of its day-to-day operations and delivery. Given the complexity of the Comprehensive Gang Model, the method of conducting this evaluation was by use of a series of “case studies.” As defined by Robert K. Yin, in his classic *Case Study Research*, a case study is:

an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon in a natural setting when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clear, using multiple sources of evidence. (1994)

In order to conduct these case studies, the national evaluation team collected many different types of information, using many research methods. Exhibit 1-2 summarizes the types of data collection methods that were used to produce the four case study reports. On periodic site visits, staff conducted interviews, administered survey instruments, observed program activity, collected files, conducted focus groups, and engaged in all of the other activities described in Exhibit 1-1.

The case studies contained within this report examine the local efforts from the perspective of both their program theory and their implementation theory. Each of those approaches will be summarized below.

***Program Theory.*** Because no actual service delivery was expected to occur during the planning and strategy development period, the program theory centered on the three aspects of the planning process: school and community collaboration, assessment activities, and program planning. The issues addressed in each of those areas are summarized as follows.

*1. School and Community Collaboration.* The national evaluation team documented the nature of school and community collaboration in each site. Research questions included, but are not limited to, the following:

- How were members selected for the Steering Committee?
- What agencies or groups were represented?

## Exhibit 1-2

### DATA COLLECTION METHODS UTILIZED FOR PROCESS EVALUATION

Method	Description	Examples
<b>Observation</b>	Evaluator observes program in operation.	Observe Steering Committee meetings; Observe assessment activities; Observe collaboration with research partner.
<b>Open-end Interviews</b>	Evaluator asks probing questions about program planning process using an interview protocol without preset response categories.	Interview program staff; Interview stakeholders; Interview local evaluator.
<b>Focus Groups</b>	Small group discussion is held among program staff and stakeholders, focusing on their experiences and reactions to planning process.	Conduct focus groups of staff members, stakeholders, and local evaluators.
<b>Records Analysis</b>	Evaluator collects and analyzes program records to determine the nature and content of program delivery.	Collect and analyze school and agency documents, minutes from meetings, preliminary assessment reports.
<b>Survey</b>	Evaluator administers and analyzes survey instrument to program stakeholders to ascertain their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes.	Administer and analyze survey instrument given to program staff, stakeholders, and local evaluators at various stages of their program experience.

- How representative of the community and school district was the group?;
- What decision-making processes were used by the committee?;
- Which individuals exerted the most influence in the group?; and
- How, if at all, did the activities of the committee change over time?;

2. *Assessment Activities.* The national evaluation team documented the procedures and instruments used to assess the gang problem in the schools and the community. Research questions included, but were not limited to, these:

- How did the sites collect data from various domains, such as schools, police agencies, juvenile agencies, social service agencies, and others?;

- How, and with what success, were the services of the national technical assistance provider utilized?;
- How, and with what success, were local resources utilized?; and
- What approaches or strategies appeared to be most, and least, successful?

*3. Program Planning.* The national evaluation team documented and assessed the process by which each site moved from generating assessment findings to developing a program design.

Research questions included, but were not limited to:

- How did the Steering Committee and program staff collaborate with the research partner and the technical assistance provider during the transition from assessment to program planning?;
- How did the Steering Committee respond to conflicting assessment findings from various data sources?;
- How did the committee set priorities for programming?;
- How well did the program plan derive from the assessment results?; and
- How well did the program plan fit with local resources, facilities, and conditions?

*Implementation Theory.* Over the last three decades, much research has been conducted that facilitates our understanding of the dynamics of the program implementation process and the factors that lead to success or failure. Particular attention has been paid to programs, such as the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model, that involve multiple levels of government coordination.<sup>2</sup>

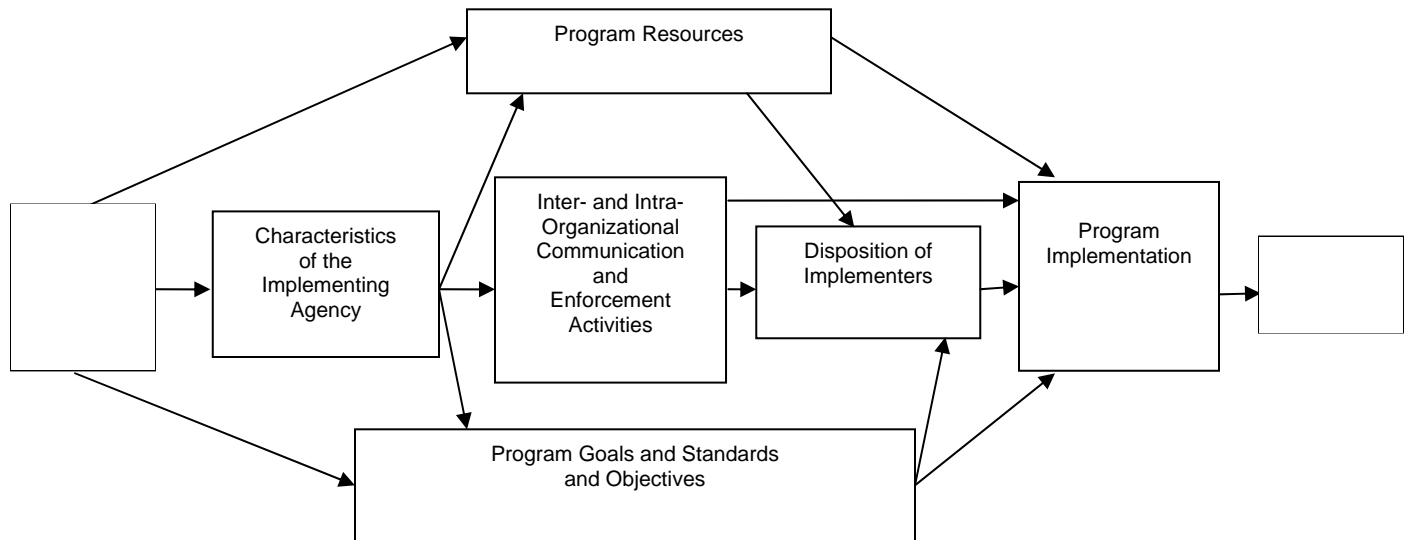
These factors were the primary focus of this portion of the process evaluation at the four demonstration sites. In order to summarize these factors, Exhibit 1-3 provides a conceptual

---

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Rogers, 1962; Glaser and Wrenn, 1966; Wilson, 1966; Knight, 1967; Sheppard, 1967; Havelock, 1968, 1969, 1974; Hage and Aiken, 1970; Bunker, 1972; Zaltman, Duncan, and Holbek, 1973; Smith, 1973; Glaser, 1973; Berman and McLaughlin, 1975, 1978; Pressman, 1975; Hargrove, 1975; Van Meter and Van Horn, 1975; Dunbar, 1976; Glaser, 1976; Bardach, 1977; Fullan and Pomfret, 1977; Ingram, 1977; Yin, Heald, and Vogel, 1977; Ellickson, 1978; Elmore, 1978; Jolly, Creighton, and George, 1978; Mann, 1978; Chase, 1979; Williams, 1980; Rice and Rogers, 1980; Weimer, 1980; Yin, 1982; Ellickson and Petersilia, 1983.

### Exhibit 1-3

## CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS



model of the program development and implementation process developed by the authors, based upon models proposed by Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), Larson (1980), Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980), Stone (1980), Ellickson and Petersilia (1983), and Goggin (1986, 1987).

The model posits some general factors (variables) that have been found to affect social program development and implementation:

1. Economic, social, and political conditions;
2. Characteristics of the implementing agency;
3. Program goals, standards, and objectives;
4. Inter- and intra-organizational communication and enforcement activities; and



## 5. Disposition of implementers.

This model not only specifies the relationships between the independent variables and performance, but also makes explicit the relationships among the independent variables. Exhibit 1-4 summarizes the components that research has identified as contributing to successful program implementation.

## 3. Conduct Impact Evaluation

Throughout the 12-month collaborative planning process with each demonstration site, the national evaluation team worked with local stakeholders to create an impact evaluation design that was appropriate to the local availability of data, the circumstances in the local schools and communities, and the local program plans. Designs utilized by previous and ongoing evaluations of the Comprehensive Gang Model were obtained from the technical assistance provider and OJJDP and used as models in this design.

The ultimate purpose of the impact evaluation was to inform the main objective of the program's effort to increase the effectiveness of youth gang reduction strategies through coordination, linkage, and partnership. Thus, the impact evaluation provided empirical evidence in support of, or challenging the effectiveness of, different strategies. As a prelude to the impact evaluation, the proposed feasibility analysis dealt with four core concerns: defining outcome measures, making causal attributions to link outcomes and specific strategies, testing rival hypotheses, and dealing with lessons to be learned across individual programs, not just for single program sites alone:

## Exhibit 1-4

### FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

#### **Economic, Social, and Political Conditions**

1. Economic, social, and political conditions will be favorably affected by the program.
  2. There is a perceived need for the program.
  3. The implementing agency and the program are supported by politicians, the media, public opinion, elites, and private interest groups.
- 

#### **Characteristics of Implementing Agency**

1. The agency commits adequate staff and other resources to the program.
  2. The program takes advantage of skilled staff with appropriate expertise.
  3. The implementing agency has instituted hierarchical control of subunit decisions and processes.
  4. Frequent and open communications (i.e., networks of free horizontal and vertical communication) occur within and among implementing agencies.
- 

#### **Program Goals, Standards, and Objectives**

1. The program is grounded in comprehensive theories that are closely related to a pressing local need or problem identified by the agency.
  2. The program is based on an empirical assessment of the local environment.
  3. The program begins with an adaptable planning process and is implemented in a way that allows for programmatic and organizational modifications.
  4. Program planning, development, and implementation involve the agency implementers and potential beneficiaries.
  5. The program's goals are realistic, and standards and objectives for the program have been clearly communicated.
  6. The program's design will assure a high probability of success; its advantages over the status quo can be clearly stated.
  7. The agency has developed specific performance measures for the program.
  8. The program is consistent with existing practices and procedures.
  9. The program can be tested with a few staff and a limited financial commitment, and is reversible, if necessary.
- 

#### **Program Resources**

1. Adequate funds are provided for program implementation.
  2. Space, supplies, equipment, and support are readily available for the program.
  3. The program includes technical assistance and training components. Training involves a sustained in-service effort and on-the-job learning.
  4. Agency staff have already acquired appropriate expertise, and skilled personnel are readily available in the local labor market.
  5. The program includes incentives for participation.
- 

#### **Intra- and Inter-Organizational Communication and Enforcement Activities**

1. Accurate and consistent information is provided so those responsible for implementation can understand the program.
  2. There is regular communication between the funding and receiving agencies, among participating agencies, and within the staff of all involved agencies.
  3. Participants have a history of working together.
  4. Roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined.
- 

#### **Disposition of Implementers**

1. Agency heads, project directors, and staff understand the program and subscribe to it.
2. Program goals are congruent with the values and ideals of the agency.
3. Leadership has expressed an urgency to goal achievement, but will allow revision and reconsideration if experience indicates that changes would be desirable.
4. The program was developed with input from those responsible for its implementation.

- ***Defining Outcome Measures.*** During the planning stage, both the partnership sites and the proposed national evaluation team would be charged with defining measures of success to reflect program accomplishments. From the perspective of the original proposal, the important outcome measures would be focused on individual gang reduction strategies. The difficulty of defining these measures and of amassing the needed data for each measure would be the first topic of discussion in the feasibility analysis;
- ***Causal Attributions.*** Having outcomes measured would be only the first step toward associating the outcome with a violence reduction strategy that had actually been implemented. To support a causal inference (that the strategy produced the outcome) normally requires some experimental or quasi-experimental design, the collection of parallel data from some control or comparison group. Criminal justice researchers claim an alternative that appears to hold promise for new evaluations: the notion of theory-based evaluations, now espoused by key investigators in criminal justice research. The viability of using a theory-based approach, or of creating some quasi-experimental situation, including the testing of rival hypotheses, would be the second topic of discussion in the feasibility analysis;
- ***Rival Hypotheses.*** Steps for testing rival hypotheses includes: 1) defining the outcome or condition being evaluated; 2) hypothesizing what the main reason is for the observed changes (i.e., was the intervention being evaluated?) and developing alternate or rival hypotheses (other reasons why this change occurred); 3) collecting evidence to prove or disapprove all identified hypotheses, leaning, if anything, towards proving the rival hypotheses; and 4) assessing, or testing the evidence in support of the main hypothesis; and
- ***Cross-Partnership Lessons.*** Finally, the impact evaluation would be incomplete if it only focused on the individual partnerships. The OJJDP goal was to identify gun violence reduction strategies that can be used across the country, and not just to evaluate the operations of the four funded partnerships.

The impact research questions addressed included:

- How did each grantee's collaborative capacity contribute to, or inhibit, the achievement of their program goals, and of their ability to fully implement the Comprehensive Gang Model?;
- What was the impact of the GFS initiative on the gang youth targeted by each grantee?;

- What was the program's impact on gang-related and other criminal activity in the grantees' target neighborhoods?; and
- What was the GFS initiative's impact on changes in teachers', school administrators', and community residents' perceptions of gang activities in their schools and neighborhoods?

#### **4. Developed Data Collection Procedures**

During the collaborative planning process, the national evaluation team worked with local stakeholders to create instruments that were used effectively and appropriately during the impact evaluation stage. Instruments developed for previous and ongoing evaluations of the Comprehensive Gang Model were obtained from the technical assistance provider and OJJDP and used as models. The national evaluation team worked with the program's technical assistance provider (the National Youth Gang Center – NYGC) to implement the project MIS protocols and data collection procedures for the GFS sites. For each target youth enrolled in the program, referral, intake, service plans, and follow-up tracking data were recorded in the program's electronic MIS system.

#### **5. Assessed the Sites' Collaborative Capacity**

The national evaluation team assessed the sites collaborative capacity as they implement their GFS plan and asked the local staff at the sites to complete the *Implementation Activities Inventory*, a quarterly report on the projects' Steering Committees and Implementation Teams' activities. The national evaluation team also conducted case study interviews with the projects' key stakeholders and project staff to assess the administrative and organizational capacity of the GFS program. These interviews provided an outside perspective of the program's collaborative structure and achievements.

## **6. Identified a Matched Cohort Population**

The national evaluation team worked with each site's local stakeholder agencies to identify a representative matched cohort sample of gang-involved youth. The national evaluation team collaborated with the juvenile justice agencies, probation departments, the local schools, and other agencies referring youth to the program to develop criteria for selecting a group of youth to serve as a matching cohort. Approximately 100 cohort youth at each site were matched with the grantee's target youth during the three-year demonstration period. The national evaluation team collected basic demographic and crime history information on the matched sample to ensure that the cohort youth were statistically similar to the target population. The cohort sample, along with the target youth, was tracked over time to assess differences in subsequent criminal and gang-related activities.

## **7. Conducted Data Collection**

The national evaluation team initiated data collection for each youth enrolled in the GFS's program. The national evaluation team completed the 92-item *Gang Membership Inventory* (GMI) with each youth. The GMI assessed the youths' attitudes and perceptions about gangs, gang membership, gang violence, involvement in gangs, substance abuse, and criminal activities.

## **8. Collected Gang Crime Data**

The national evaluation team worked with each of the sites to develop procedures for gathering gang-related and other personal and property crime statistics from the local law enforcement agencies. These data were collected and aggregated on a monthly basis in order to

provide as many datapoints as possible for subsequent trend line analyses. The national evaluation team also worked with the local stakeholders to identify matching communities from which to extract similar crime data.

#### **9. Conducted School and Community Focus Groups**

The national evaluation team conducted two waves of teacher and school administrator focus group interviews in the target and comparison communities and two waves of community residents' focus group interviews. These focus groups included representative groups of teachers and administrators from similar schools in the program's target and comparison communities. Three rounds of focus group interviews with community residents from the target and comparison neighborhoods provided the evaluators with useful data to assess community impact.

#### **10. Conducted General Student Population Focus Groups**

The national evaluation team conducted focus group interviews with representative general student populations in the program's target and comparison area's schools to assess their perceptions of changes in gang activities and violence in their schools. A representative sample of students from high schools, as well as from similar schools in the comparison areas, was identified to participate in the focus groups. The focus groups examined the students' attitudes about gang presence and activity in the school and their concerns with safety in and around the school campus.

## **11. Collected Target Population Tracking Data**

The national evaluation team collected recidivism and other justice system outcome data on the target and matched cohort youth. The national evaluation team tracked both the target and matched cohort youth throughout the GFS's demonstration period to collect recidivism data for gang-related and other criminal offenses. For the target youth these data were extracted from the MIS tracking database. For the matched cohorts these data were gathered from police, probation, prosecutors, and court records.

## **12. Provided Database Management and Analyses**

As part of the process, impact outcome data from the demonstration sites were forwarded to the national evaluation team that developed procedures to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the designated databases. The national evaluation team analyzed gang crime data trends comparing the target and comparison neighborhoods using interrupted time-series statistics. Target youth recidivism outcomes were analyzed for comparison with the matched cohort sample using appropriate logistic regression analyses.

## **13. Produced Case Study Reports and Final Reports**

Based on the results of the evaluation activities described above, the national evaluation team produced separate reports summarizing the results of those studies. Each site's experience should not automatically be considered a demonstration project readily leading to precise duplication at other local sites. Rather, the experiences must be considered as part of an array of examples of school and community. Process evaluations must capture the diversity and richness of such examples rather than prematurely narrowing inquiry into a model, demonstration project

logic whereby there is believed to be a core demonstration practice that can be emulated from site to site. Instead, the very notion of case study means that core practices may differ from site to site, along with key contextual conditions, and that the role of evaluation is to capture these differences and not force commonalities.

At the same time, the national evaluation team arrived at cross-case conclusions, and the desired evaluation design may be considered a *multiple-case study* design. To derive common lessons from a series of such case studies invokes a replication logic (Yin, 1994). The replication-based, multiple-case study design suited the planned partnerships well. Rather than assuming that the data from all partnerships could be pooled across all sites, the main assumption was that the lessons learned must be derived by first establishing whether there had been different types of interventions, and whether common lessons emerged for those partnerships within the same type (and different lessons for those of different types).

Overall, the national evaluation team believes that the evaluation design exhibited a good conceptual fit with the requirements of an evaluation of a youth gang reduction program. First, the explicit articulation of gang reduction theories as opposed to black box interventions produced a benefit to the field where little is known about how the reduction process works. Second, each program pursued its own course of action under its own circumstances, yet common lessons were still possible. Instead of having uniform interventions imposed on each program, theory-based evaluations seek to extract the common theories that might underlie what at first would appear to be diverse interventions. Third, there was a need for comparison groups. Comparison communities, comparison target areas, and comparison individual gang members were considered.



However, theory-based and multiple-case replication designs do not automatically require all of these comparison groups, providing more flexibility for the impact design.

## **COOPERATION WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The national evaluation team cooperated with the project's technical assistance providers, the NYGC, in conducting the process evaluation. Areas for cooperation included the development of the cluster meeting, the development and refinement of the sites' logic models, the on-site capacity-building activities, the collection of program assessment data, and the use of process outcomes to inform project site planners and managers. The national evaluation team established a close working relationship with NYGC, realizing that technical assistance providers and evaluators frequently are attempting to accomplish the same goal—to enable the demonstration sites to develop comprehensive plans based on data-driven strategies with measurable goals and objectives.

This resource was prepared by the author(s) using Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice. Opinions or points of view expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **OVERVIEW OF CROSS-SITE OUTCOMES**

## CHAPTER 2

### CROSS-SITE RESULTS AND OUTCOMES

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOUR GFS SITES

Exhibit 2-1 presents a breakdown of the lead agencies, city populations, and crime rates for the four GFS sites.

#### Exhibit 2-1

#### POPULATION AND VIOLENT CRIME RATES FOR THE FOUR GFS SITES

	Houston	Pittsburgh	Miami-Dade	East Cleveland
<b>Lead Agency</b>	Mayor's Office City of Houston	Pittsburgh Public Schools	Miami-Dade Public Schools	Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office
<b>City Population</b>	2,073,729	324,604	392,934	452,759
<b>Violent Crime Rate per 100,000</b>	1169.4	1069.9	1509.4	1547.0

SOURCE: 2006 UCR Crime Data

#### TARGET YOUTH DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

##### Target and Comparison Youth

Exhibit 2-2 presents a breakdown of the target and comparison youth by site. Note that the columns under "Group" represent only those target and comparison youth for whom criminal history data was available. For East Cleveland there were nearly twice as many target youth with criminal records vs. comparison; for Miami-Dade there were over twice as many comparison juveniles with criminal records; Pittsburgh had slightly fewer comparison group members with criminal records; and, Houston had an equal number of target and comparison youth with criminal records.

## Exhibit 2-2

### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS ENROLLED IN PROGRAM AND IN TARGET AND COMPARISON GROUPS BY SITE

	Cumulative Enrollment*	Group**	
		Target	Comparison
East Cleveland	98	63	31
Miami-Dade	150	83	176
Pittsburgh	93	58	47
Houston	128	106	106

\*MIS data.

\*\*Criminal History data.

### Target Youth Characteristics

Exhibit 2-3 presents a demographic breakdown of the target youth and their families for each site.

## Exhibit 2-3

### YOUTH CHARACTERISTICS

	Target Group
<b>East Cleveland</b>	
Average Age	15.8
% Male	91
% Female	9
% Black	100
<b>Miami-Dade</b>	
Average Age	16.9
% Male	89
% Female	11
% Black	83
% Latino	17
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	
Average Age	17.8
% Male	100
% Female	0
% Black	100
<b>Houston</b>	
Average Age	16.3
% Male	75
% Female	25
% Black	1
% Latino	98
% White	1

\* p < .01

1 – Source: MIS

2 – Source: Criminal Histories

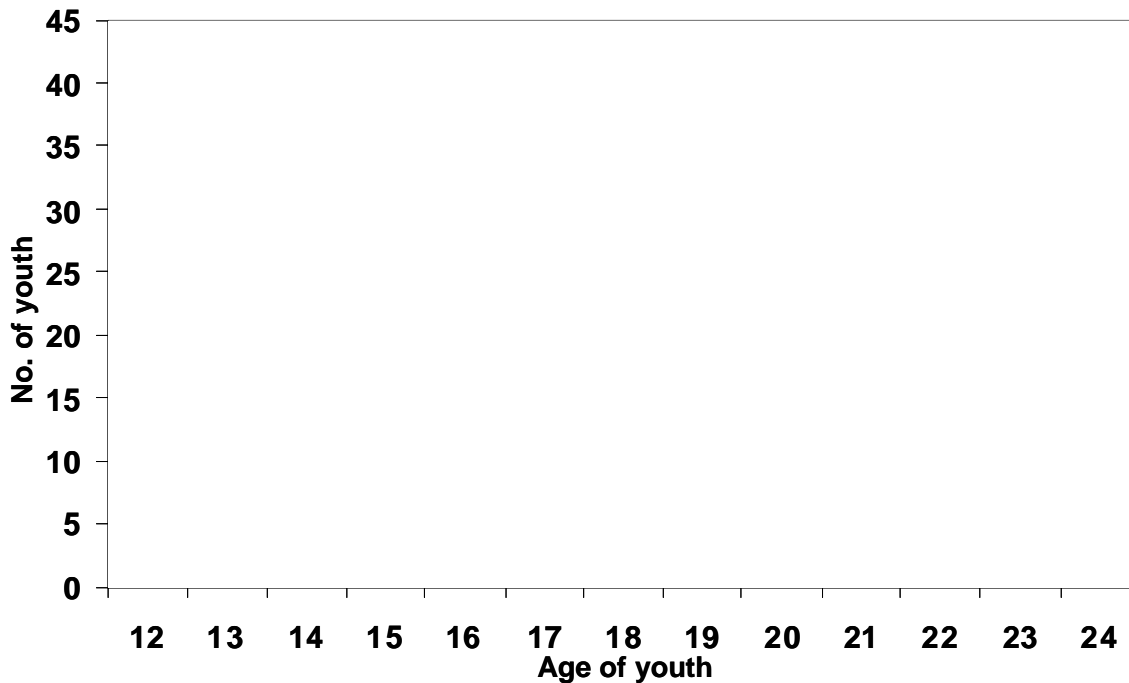
## Age at Enrollment

The ages of the enrolled youth ranged from 12 to 24 for the sites; the mean age was 16.5; the median age was 16; and over half of the clients (58%) were between the ages of 15 and 18.

Exhibit 2-4 shows these data.

**Exhibit 2-4**

### AGE OF YOUTH AT INTAKE\*



\*Based on age of youth at "Date Client Entered"

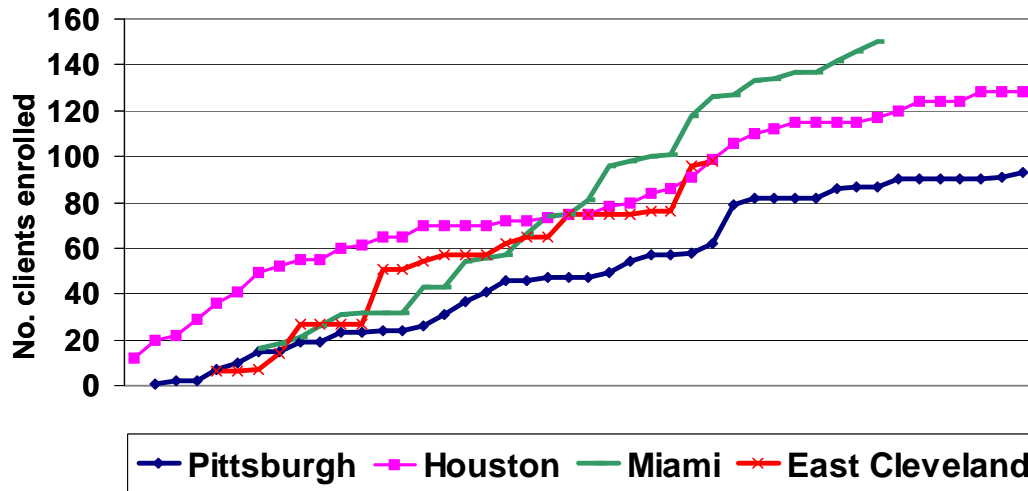
Source: Gangs MIS

## Cumulative Enrollment

Exhibit 2-5 shows the cumulative enrollment of target youth over time for each grantee site. The patterns of enrollment vary for each site. Houston began enrolling clients in September 2003 and within six months had nearly 40 youth enrolled. The other three sites did not begin enrolling clients in earnest until early 2004.

### Exhibit 2-5

#### CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT OF YOUTH



Source: Gangs MIS

During the mid-2004 to mid-2005 period Houston's enrollment leveled off; then in late 2005 through mid-2006 the rate of enrollment once again increased. Pittsburgh's rate of enrollment was modest through October 2004. Pittsburgh's enrollment then increased steadily until March 2006, before leveling through April 2007. Both Houston and Pittsburgh received one additional year of funding to help increase enrollment.

Miami enrolled new youth at a slower pace until late 2004; during 2005 and 2006 the rate of enrollment increased steadily. MIS enrollment records for Miami were reported through September 2006. At that time the project staff was informed that OJJDP funding would terminate as scheduled and enrollment in the GFS project ceased.

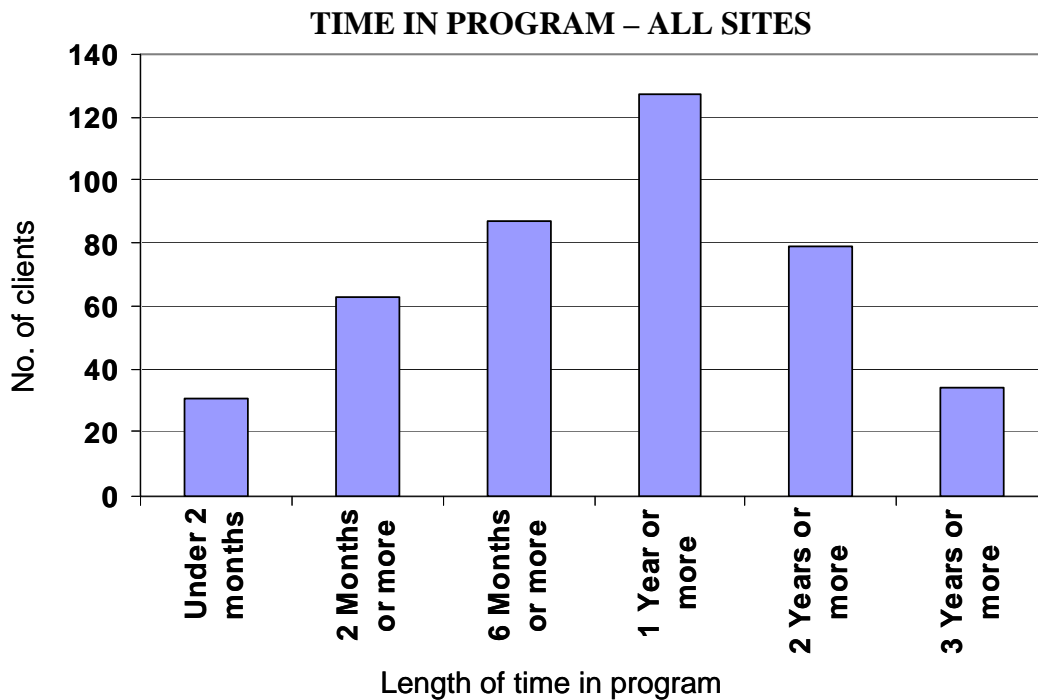
East Cleveland enrollment efforts began in earnest in April 2004 and continued through December 2005 when the project ceased forwarding MIS enrollment records to the national

evaluators. East Cleveland, like Miami-Dade, was informed that they would not receive additional funding.

### Length of Participation in GFS Initiative

Exhibit 2-6 shows the percent of the 421 GFS target youth for all four sites that participated in the program for various lengths of time. The range of those was from under two months for those enrolling in late 2006, to three plus years for those clients who began their participation in late 2003 and early 2004. It is noted that over 50 percent of the target youth were enrolled for one year or longer, allowing them to participate in many of the intervention strategies each site was offering.

**Exhibit 2-6**



Source: Gangs MIS

## Documented Gang Members

Exhibit 2-7 presents a breakdown of the percent of target youth who were documented as gang members for each grantee. Project staff at each site recorded this information during an intake interview. In addition, to the youth admitting their gang involvement, the interviewer would check with other sources to verify their answers. The percent ranges from slightly over 75 percent in East Cleveland to over 90 percent in Houston. The youth also reported at what age they joined a gang. The average age of the target youth in Houston was 12.5 years, and in Miami it was 14.1. The youth were also asked how long they had been, or currently were a gang member. In Pittsburgh and Houston the average exceeded three and a-half years, while for East Cleveland the length of involvement was under two and a-half years.

### Exhibit 2-7

#### GANG INVOLVEMENT

	East Cleveland	Miami	Pittsburgh	Houston
<b>Gang members</b>	75.3%	82.7%	84.9%	90.6%
<b>Avg. age joined</b>	13.3	14.1	12.9	12.5
<b>Avg. length of involvement</b>	1.8	2.3	4.6	3.5

Source: Gangs MIS

## Intervention Strategies

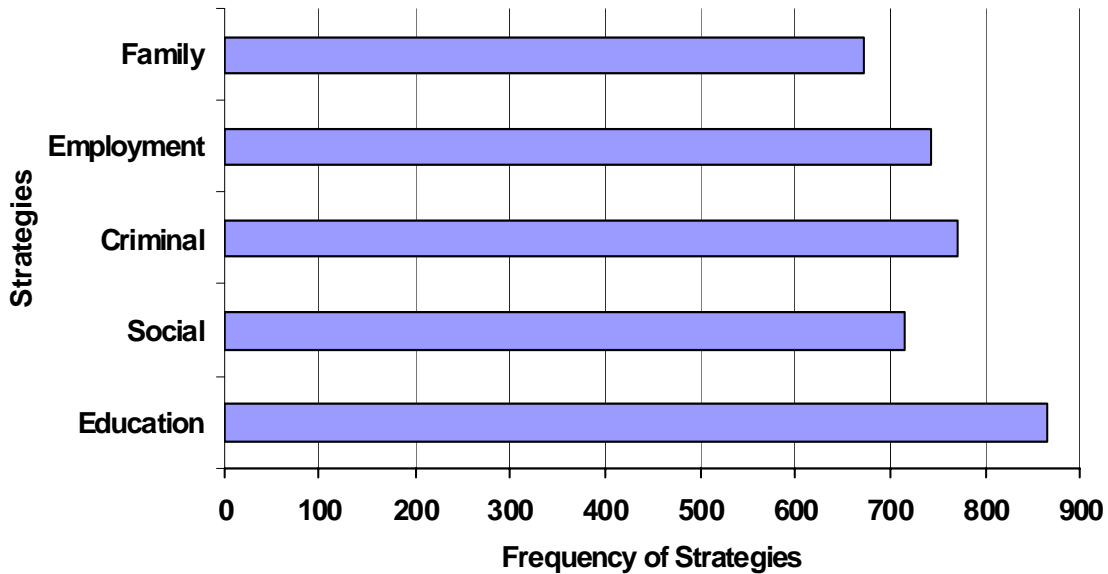
The various types of intervention strategies offered by the sites and the frequency the target youth participated in these strategies are shown in Exhibit 2-8. Three of the grantee sites, Houston, Pittsburgh, and Miami-Dade recorded these strategies. East Cleveland did not report specific strategies offered to the participating youth. The strategies included:

1. Family Services;
2. Employment and Job Training;



**Exhibit 2-8**

**INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**



3. Criminal Justice Services;
4. Social Services; and
5. Educational and Tutoring.

The data in Exhibit 2-8 shows that educational services were the most frequent type of interventions provided with over 800 sessions given to the target youth during the demonstration period. The other types of services, family, employment, criminal justice, and social, also were provided over 700 times each for the three jurisdictions reporting the results. The intervention data needs to be interpreted cautiously, the information captured in the intervention data is not coded to support a meaningful quantitative analysis. Outreach workers would often document information about the youth relating to the many different intervention categories, however it is not clear whether this information is documenting actual intervention strategies that have been implemented with the youth (relevant information for analysis) or if it is just documenting circumstantial information about the youth (irrelevant for analysis). For the purposes of this

analysis, it was assumed that all entries were related to some intervention strategy the youth encountered throughout the program.

### **Outreach Workers' Contact Activities**

Exhibit 2-9 presents the average number of contacts the project staff members had with the target youth at each site and average length of those contacts. The GFS model prescribed the use of street outreach workers to mentor and assist the enrolled youth. Each site hired two to four outreach staff as part of a core intervention strategy. The East Cleveland and Houston projects reported that their outreach workers contacted their clients over 60 times during the demonstration period, and that those contacts lasted over 33 minutes. While Miami-Dade and Pittsburgh reported fewer contacts, their contacts with the clients were of longer duration. For three of the four sites, the person(s) contacted most frequently was a combination of the client and a family member of the client. For the Pittsburgh site, the client was the person most frequently contacted. The most frequent method of contact across the sites was a combination of in-person and telephone calls.

#### **Exhibit 2-9**

#### **MEAN NUMBER AND LENGTH OF CONTACTS WITH THE TARGET YOUTH OR THEIR FAMILIES**

	<b>Mean Number of Contacts per Youth</b>	<b>Mean Length of Contacts (in minutes)</b>
East Cleveland	62.5	35.9
Miami-Dade	27.1	40.7
Pittsburgh	41.7	37.1
Houston	61.5	33.0

Source: Gangs MIS

## **THE GANG MEMBERSHIP INVENTORY**

The national evaluation team interviewed approximately 36 percent of the target youth (170) shortly (one to three months) after they were enrolled in the program. Youth received a \$20 gift certificate for their participation. The Gang Membership Inventory (GMI) contained a 92 item protocol administered by the national evaluation staff. It covered basic self esteem and risk-taking attitudes, their involvement with gangs, drugs, and crime, and their access and use of guns. The GMI differed from the Gang-Free Schools' MIS in that the national evaluators conducted one-on-one interviews for the GMI; the MIS was a compilation of the sites' intake process, and input from other local criminal justice and social service providers. In the original research design there was to be a follow-up administration of the GMI at the end of the demonstration period. However, the national evaluation team discovered that locating and administering the GMI a second time to the youth would be difficult since these youth frequently moved and were not interested in a follow-up interview. As a result the national evaluation team used the GMI data to provide more detail on the target youth at the time of intake.

### **Gang Membership**

Exhibit 2-10 presents the target youths' response to questions about whether they reported being gang members in the past and whether they are currently gang members. As noted in the exhibit, the youth more readily admitted gang membership in the past, but were not able to say they were current gang members. Note also that a far greater percent of target youth gave no response for the question: Are you currently a gang member?

### Exhibit 2-10

#### GMI RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT GANG MEMBERSHIP

	Percentage		
	Yes	No	No Response
<b>Have You Ever Belonged to a Gang?</b>	48	49	3
<b>Are You Now a Gang Member?</b>	23	39	38

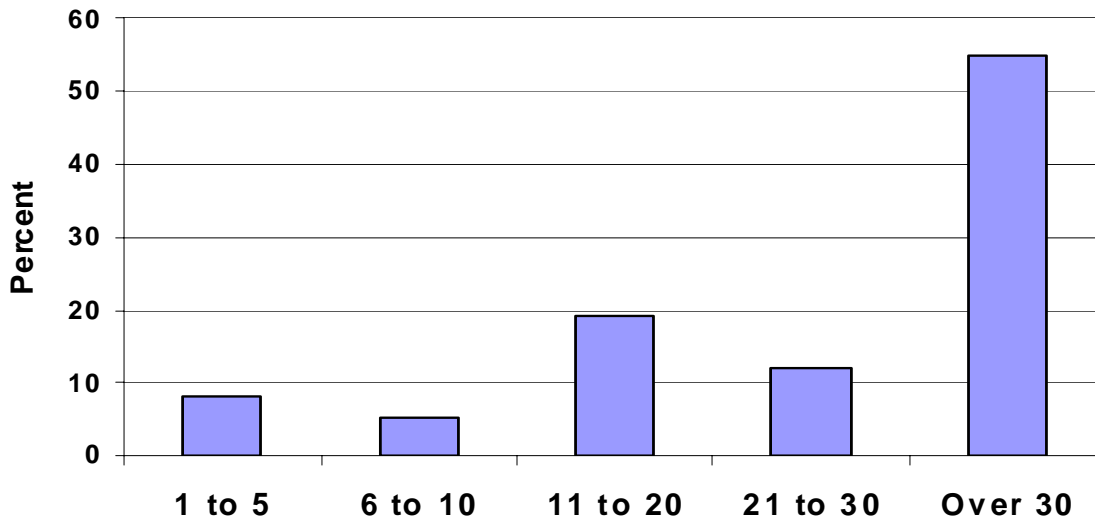
Source: GMI

#### Characteristics of the Gangs

Exhibit 2-11 shows the number of gang members the target youth reported in the GMI at the time they were enrolled in the GFS initiative. Over 55 percent indicated that their gangs had over 30 members; the rest stated that their gangs had fewer than 30 members.

### Exhibit 2-11

#### NUMBER OF GANG MEMBERS



Source: GMI

The target youth reported the following characteristics of these gangs:

- 34 percent had initiation rites;
- 30 percent had established leaders;
- 24 percent had regular meetings;

- 31 percent had specific rules and codes, and
- 47 percent had symbols and colors.

The target youth also reported their use of alcohol and drugs during the past year on the

GMI:

- 88 percent reported use of alcohol in the past 12 months;
- 74 percent reported marijuana use;
- 48 percent reported smoking cigarettes;
- 35 percent said they used dowers like Xanax;
- 15 percent reported use of cocaine;
- 16 percent said they used other club drugs;
- Approximately 12 percent reported that they used prescription drugs like painkillers or tranquilizers; and
- Less than one percent said that they had used crack or heroin.

### **Criminal Activities**

Exhibit 2-12 shows the target youths' responses when asked if they had engaged in specific delinquent or criminal activities. Over 50 percent of the GFS's clients reported that they had carried a hidden weapon at one time or another. About 65 percent of the youths admitted being in a gang fight, either at school or at a public facility (i.e., a park or recreation center). And, nearly one-third said they had attacked someone with a weapon with the intention of causing serious injury.

## Exhibit 2-12

### PERCENT OF YOUTH REPORTED ENGAGING IN DELINQUENT AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Percentage
Carried a hidden weapon	61
Vandalism	42
Breaking and entering	15
Shoplifting	48
Stole wallet or purse	11
Stole items from a car	30
Bought or sold stolen goods	42
Stolen a car or vehicle	28
Attacked someone with a weapon with the intention of causing serious injury	32
Participated in a gang fight	65
Robbery	13
Sold illegal drugs	55

Source: GMI

#### Gun Possession and Use

The GMI respondents also were asked if anyone in their household owned a gun. In response, 29 percent said that there was a gun in the house. Over 20 percent of those responding said they had taken a gun to school. When asked if they ever had to use a gun to protect themselves, 27 percent of those responding said yes. If they had used a gun, most said that they only showed it to someone to scare them. However, approximately 28 percent of those responding said they had fired the weapon at someone. It is noted that only 20 to 40 percent of the 170 target youth who were interviewed for the GMI answered questions about gun possession and use. As a result the reader should use caution when interpreting these findings.

## **CROSS-SITE OUTCOMES**

### **GFS Impact on the Target Youth**

Exhibit 2-13 presents a correlation analysis of the target populations' attitudes, school participation, prior criminal charges, and gang participation with criminal history, drugs and alcohol use, and school disciplinary outcomes. Youths currently attending school were less likely than their peers who were not attending schools to be re-arrested and to use drugs and alcohol over the duration of the study. Youths who have been arrested by the police were more likely than their peers who had not been arrested to be jailed more often and to engage in drug and alcohol use. Youths who were more involved in their gangs were more likely than others who were less involved to be expelled more often from school, to receive disciplinary infractions at school, and to be jailed more often. Youths who felt more connected to their family were less likely than youths who felt less connected to their family to be expelled from school and to receive disciplinary infractions.

### **Length of Client Contacts and Outcomes**

Each grantee's outreach workers routinely contacted the target clients to monitor their participation in the sites' intervention strategies, and to help address their personal and family problems. Exhibit 2-14 shows a correlation analysis between the length of time for each contact and the youths' active or inactive status in the project, their drug and alcohol use, and new arrests. The results showed that more time spent per contact the more likely were the target youth to remain active in the program. It also was noted that greater lengths of time per contact was related to less alcohol use and fewer arrests at the Houston site. And, as a negative result it was noted that greater lengths of time per contact was related to higher alcohol use and more arrests at the Pittsburgh site.

### Exhibit 2-13

## CORRELATIONS AMONG PERSONAL ATTITUDES, SCHOOL PARTICIPATION, PRIOR CRIMINAL INVOLVEMENT, GANG PARTICIPATION, AND OUTCOMES

	Re-arrests	Re-arrests involving violence	Re-arrests involving weapons	Frequency of drug use	Frequency of alcohol use	Frequency of jailing	Number of school suspensions	Number of school expulsions	Number of school Disciplinary infractions
Currently attending school	.04	.03	.04	-.38*	-.37*	-.11	.26*	-.02	.22*
Been arrested by police	.08	.08	.05	.27*	.28*	.20*	.16	.15	.17
Gang-related arrests	-.03	-.01	.21	.05	.06	.18	.07	.11	.11
Weapon-related arrests	.05	.09	.27*	-.10	-.15	.12	-.20	-.10	-.24*
Ever belonged to a gang	.11	-.02	.15	-.03	-.05	.09	-.06	.00	-.01
Gang member currently	.04	.02	.12	.12	.16	.13	.10	-.08	.00
Level of gang involvement	.06	-.10	.18	.38	.40*	.49*	.32	.62*	.54*
Attitudes-feels a part of their family	.08	.05	-.06	-.12	-.10	-.02	-.05	-.20*	-.16*
Attitudes-likes the way they are	.02	-.06	-.04	-.05	-.05	-.02	.04	-.04	-.05
Attitudes-finds it easy to express emotions	-.11	-.07	.07	-.07	-.01	-.21*	.03	-.19*	.03

\* p < .05

Note: Sites included in analysis are Miami-Dade, Pittsburgh, and Houston

Source: MIS, Criminal Histories, GMI



## Exhibit 2-14

### CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LENGTH OF TIME PER CONTACT AND OUTCOMES BY SITE

	Active/Not Active	Drug Use	Alcohol Use	New Arrests
East Cleveland (n = 80)	.23*	-.06	-.03	-.04
Miami-Dade (n = 130)	.15	-.05	.06	.09
Pittsburgh (n = 89)	.08	.33*	.33*	.43*
Houston (n = 125)	.18*	-.10	-.23*	-.25*

\* p < .05

Source: MIS

### Number of Interventions and Outcomes

One tenant of the Comprehensive Gang Model is that as more intervention services are offered to the client youth the greater the opportunity to have a positive impact on the target population. This issue is illustrated in the analysis presented in Exhibit 2-15. In this case the number of interventions implemented was used to measure strength of the intervention strategies, and outcomes included participation status, drug and alcohol use, and subsequent arrests.

However, the findings were not supportive of the program. Specifically:

- Greater number of interventions used for all intervention types was related to more drug and alcohol use (Pittsburgh and Houston); and
- Greater number of education, social, criminal and employment interventions used was related to more new arrests (Pittsburgh).

### Target and Comparison Group Recidivism

The national evaluation team selected comparison youth at each site to match demographic characteristics with the target youth. Exhibit 2-16 shows the comparison results for each group at each of the four sites.

## Exhibit 2-15

### CORRELATIONS BETWEEN NUMBER OF INTERVENTIONS IMPLEMENTED AND OUTCOMES BY SITE

	Active/Not Active	Drug Use	Alcohol Use	New Arrests
<b>Miami-Dade (n = 81)</b>	--	-.09	-.11	-.06
<b>Education</b>	--	-.13	-.05	-.05
<b>Social</b>	--	.04	-.03	.05
<b>Criminal</b>	--	-.03	.01	-.03
<b>Employment</b>	--	-.07	-.18	-.08
<b>Family</b>				
<b>Pittsburgh (n = 89)</b>				
<b>Education</b>	.19	.44*	.44*	.37*
<b>Social</b>	.16	.40*	.40*	.31*
<b>Criminal</b>	.19	.34*	.34*	.45*
<b>Employment</b>	.15	.39*	.39*	.34*
<b>Family</b>	.17	.43*	.43*	.12
<b>Houston (n = 125)</b>				
<b>Education</b>	.13	.20*	.36*	.14
<b>Social</b>	.13	.22*	.37*	.15
<b>Criminal</b>	.13	.36*	.22*	.14
<b>Employment</b>	.13	.36*	.22*	.15
<b>Family</b>	.13	.36*	.22*	.17

\* p < .05

Source: MIS

With the exception of the Miami-Dade site, participants in the target and comparison groups did not differ from one another on demographic characteristics. For the Miami-Dade site, the target group was older and had proportionally more males than the comparison group. The demographic characteristics of the two sub-groups were similar to the demographics of the larger program enrollment sample.

Exhibit 2-17 presents the results of logistic regression analyses to determine if group membership predicts criminal and drug use outcomes. As shown, group membership (target vs. comparison group) did not predict a higher or lower prevalence of alleged and

## Exhibit 2-16

### TARGET AND COMPARISON GROUPS BY SITE

	Target	Group Comparison	t or $\chi^2$
<b>East Cleveland</b>			
Average Age	15.46	15.13	.62
% Male	86	87	.03
% Female	14	13	
% Black	100	100	-
<b>Miami-Dade</b>			
Average Age	17.04	14.65	9.40*
% Male	94	77	10.96*
% Female	6	23	
% Black	87	86	.04
<b>Pittsburgh</b>			
Average Age	16.51	16.47	.12
% Male	-	100	-
% Female	-	0	
% Black	100	98	1.25
<b>Houston</b>			
Average Age	16.16	15.96	1.39
% Male	75	75	0
% Female	25	25	
% Black	3	2	.36
% Latino	86	84	
% White	11	13	
M Number in Home	4.73	4.87	-.56
% Attending School	64	64	0
Average Grade	8.92	8.69	-1.37

Source: MIS

dispositional charges. This was true for all three types of charges—violence, weapons, and drugs—across all four sites. The relationship between group membership and criminal charge did not differ by site as shown by the non-significant interaction terms.

These results demonstrate that there was no noticeable impact on the target youth population in regard to subsequent court charges for violence, weapons, or drugs. These results were similar for each of the four demonstration sites, and the site by group interactions also did not significantly differ.

**Exhibit 2-17**

**GROUP MEMBERSHIP (TARGET VS. COMPARISON) AND  
SITE X GROUP MEMBERSHIP PREDICTING CRIMINAL CHARGES FOR  
THE GFS DEMONSTRATION PERIOD 2002-2006**

Site/Criminal Charge	Mean # Charges Target Group	Mean # Charges Comparison	p value
<b>East Cleveland</b>	N = 63	N = 31	
<b>Violence</b>	.66	.35	.18
<b>Weapons</b>	.29	.13	.18
<b>Drugs</b>	.16	.06	.22
<b>Miami-Dade</b>	N = 83	N = 176	
<b>Violence</b>	1.036	1.11	.37
<b>Weapons</b>	.48	.52	.51
<b>Drugs</b>	.33	.37	.23
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	N = 58	N = 47	
<b>Violence</b>	.69	1.06	.13
<b>Weapons</b>	.51	.53	.13
<b>Drugs</b>	.90	.49	.07
<b>Houston</b>	N = 106	N = 106	
<b>Violence</b>	.57	.56	.42
<b>Weapons</b>	.65	.33	.45
<b>Drugs</b>	1.21	.59	.57
<b>Site X Group</b>			
<b>Violence</b>			.32
<b>Weapons</b>			.16
<b>Drugs</b>			.43

Note: Logistic regressions for criminal charges of the target and comparison youth during the GFS demonstration period 2002-2006. These data were used to predict (a) violence charges (1 = yes, 0 = no), (b) weapons charges (yes, no), and (c) drug charges (yes, no). Another set of logistic regressions were prepared using site x group interactions (for site, 1 = East Cleveland, 2 = Miami-Dade, 3 = Pittsburgh, 4 = Houston) to predict (a) violence charge, (b) weapons charge, and (c) drug charge. \* p<.05

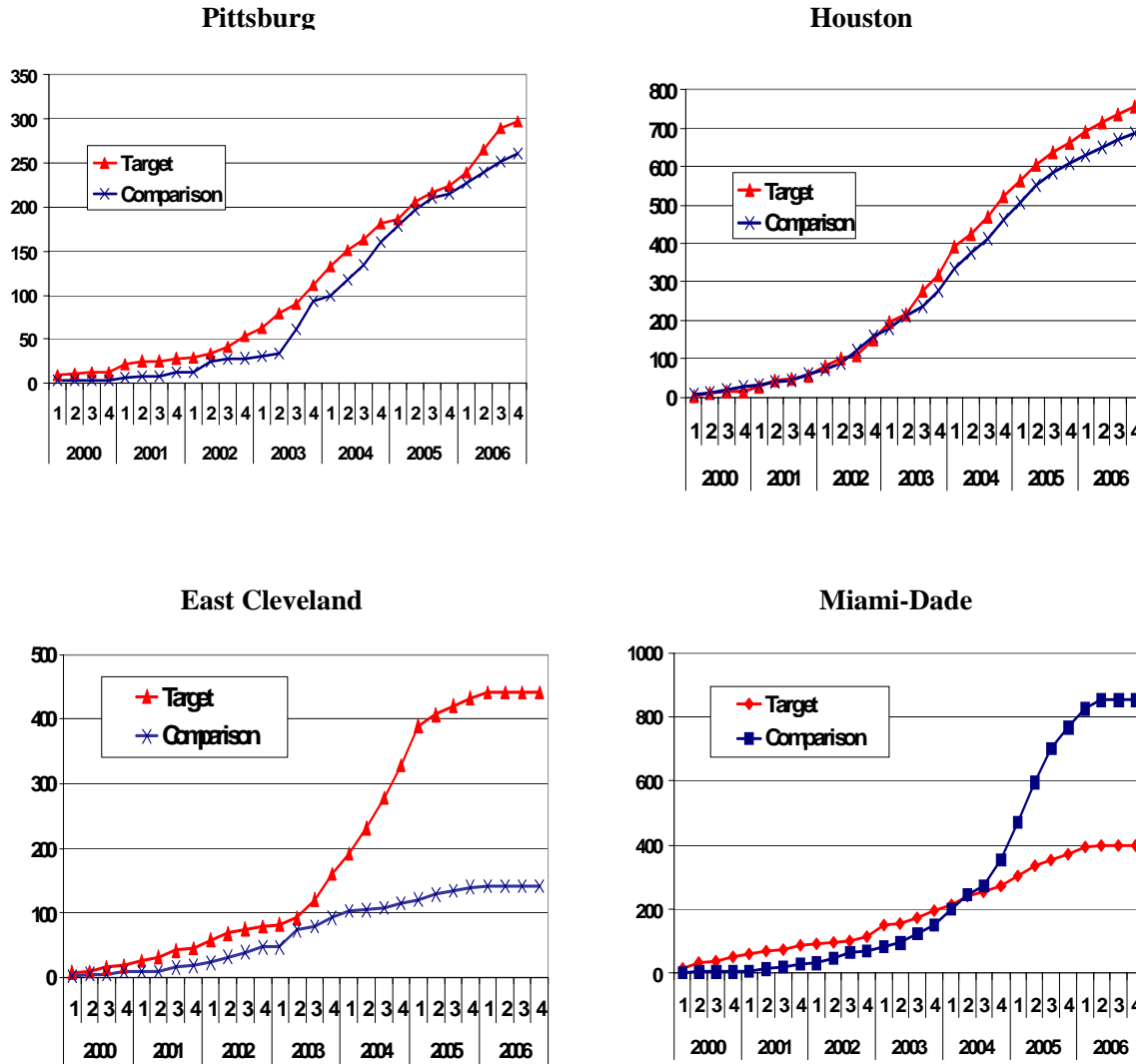
Source: Criminal Histories

**Criminal Charges**

In addition to conducting logistic regression analyses of subsequent criminal behaviors for the demonstration period as a whole, another investigation was conducted breaking down criminal charges by yearly totals for the target and comparison groups. Exhibit 2-18 presents the results of this analysis. As shown, the comparison groups in Pittsburgh and Houston track closely with the target youth. The comparison groups in Pittsburgh and Houston track closely with the target

### Exhibit 2-18

## CUMULATIVE CRIMINAL HISTORIES FOR THE TARGET AND COMPARISON GROUPS



Source: Criminal Histories

youth. This suggests that the cumulative criminal charges for both groups are similar. The East Cleveland results indicate that the target population's subsequent criminal charges were higher during the period 2003-2004. The analysis for Miami-Dade suggests that the comparison group for 2004-2005 had a greater number of criminal charges. It should be noted that the comparison group for Miami-Dade had twice as many youth than did the target group.

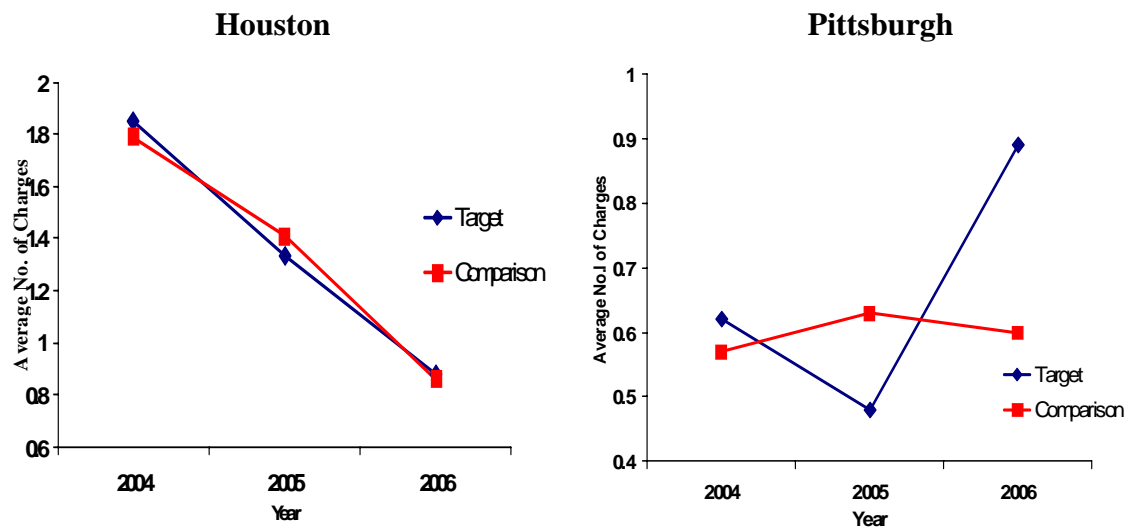
Another examination was performed using the criminal history data for Houston and Pittsburgh (Exhibit 2-19). The period 2004-2006 was selected because this was the time during which most of the target youth received intervention services. The results in Exhibit 2-19 show that in Houston criminal charges for both the target and comparison youth decreased during the 2004-2006 period. In Pittsburgh, the target youth had fewer charges in 2005, but increased dramatically in 2006. Neither of these findings suggests any advantage in recidivism for the target population.

### Community Crime Trends

One of the goals of the Gang-Free Schools program was to have a positive impact on reducing gang-related crimes in the grantee's target neighborhoods. In order to assess whether or not the program had an effect on crime, the national evaluators attempted to work with each of the local projects and police departments to collect accurate and reliable crime records. In

**Exhibit 2-19**

#### **AVERAGE NUMBER OF CRIMINAL HISTORY CHARGES FOR TARGET AND COMPARISON YOUTH**



Source: Criminal Histories

Houston, Miami-Dade, and Pittsburgh the project staff worked with the police to capture this data. Exhibit 2-20 presents the crime trends for homicides and robberies.

Miami-Dade did not capture aggravated assault records; thus, Exhibit 2-21 presents this data for Houston and Pittsburgh only.

As a result of a lack of resources in the East Cleveland's police department, the crime data was not reported consistently. Instead the evaluators used annual juvenile probation data showing the number of youth charged with crimes against persons in East Cleveland and in Glenville, a comparison neighborhood in the City of Cleveland. These results are summarized in Exhibit 2-22. These results show that Glenville had an overall higher total of crimes against persons, and East Cleveland's rate did not change during the period.

### **Crime Trends in Target and Comparison Areas**

Crime trend data was collected for both target and comparison areas in Houston and Pittsburgh. The results of these analyses are presented in Exhibit 2-23 and 2-24.

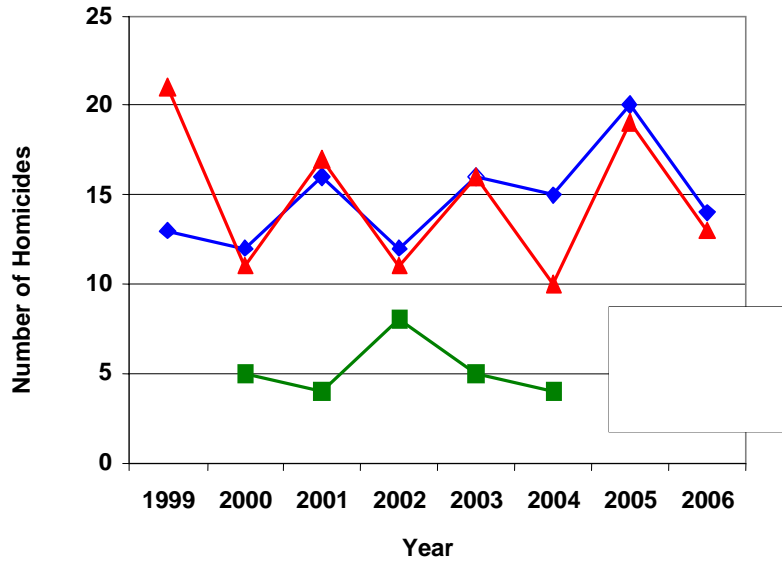
### **Pittsburgh**

The target and comparison areas in Pittsburgh are shown in Figure 1. The map shows the police patrol districts for the city. The target area is composed of those five districts in southeast Houston marked with a red T; and the control area, known as the Fondren District in southwest Houston, are those four districts marked with blue Cs.

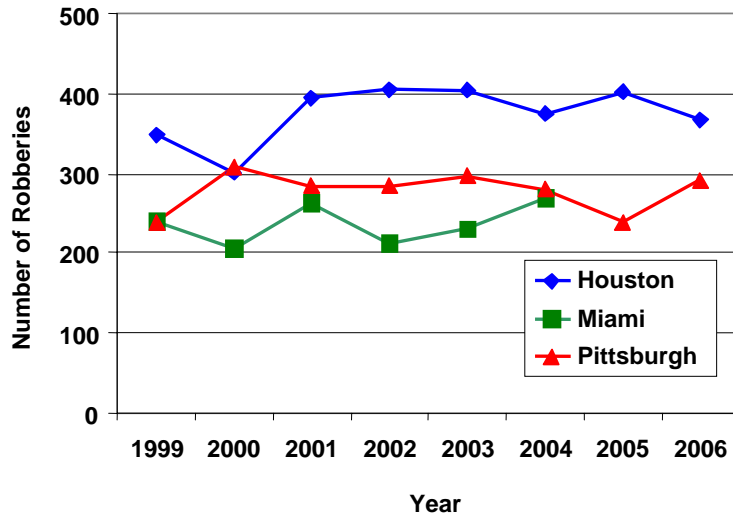
## Exhibit 2-20

### CRIME TRENDS IN THE TARGET NEIGHBORHOODS

#### Homicides



#### Robberies

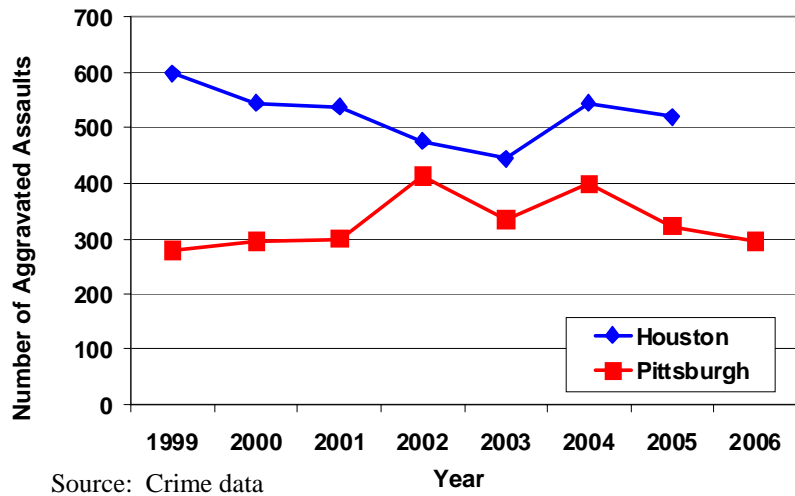


Source: Crime data



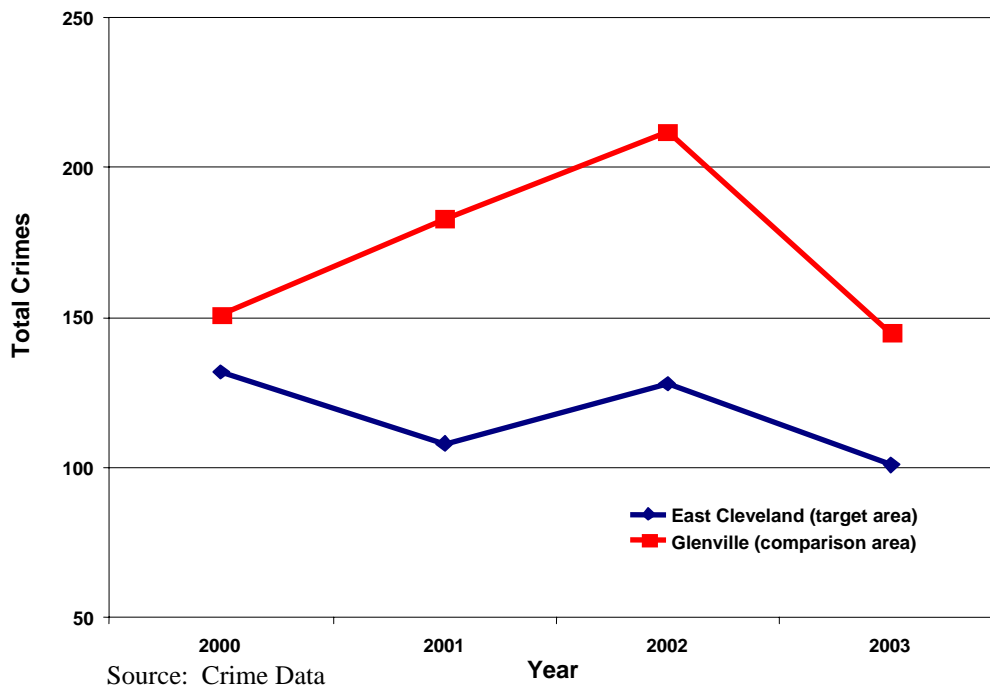
### Exhibit 2-21

#### AGGRAVATED ASSAULT CRIME TRENDS FOR HOUSTON AND PITTSBURGH



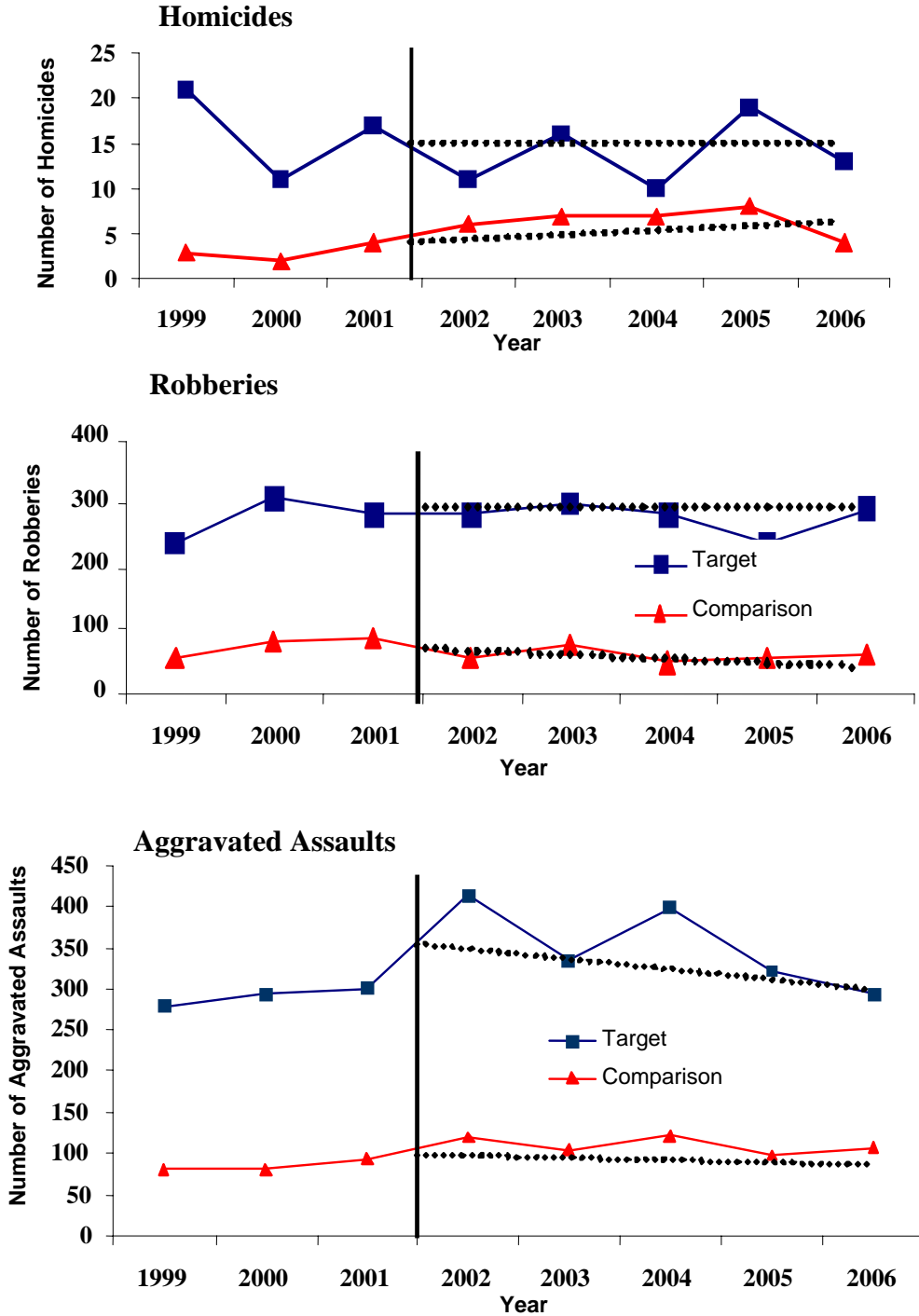
### Exhibit 2-22

#### CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS IN EAST CLEVELAND AND GLENVILLE



### Exhibit 2-23

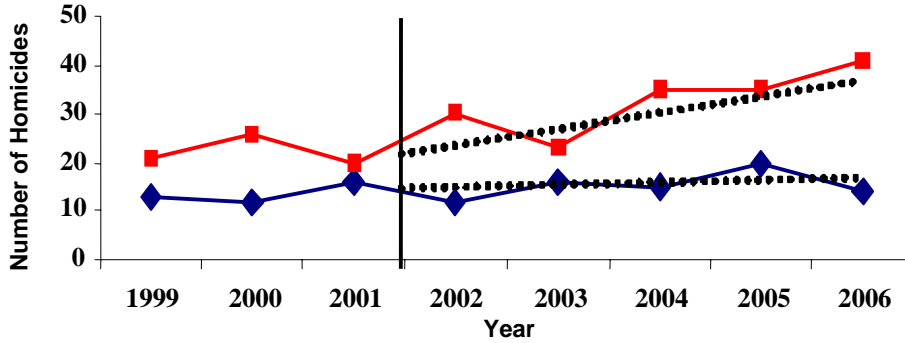
### PITTSBURGH CRIMES



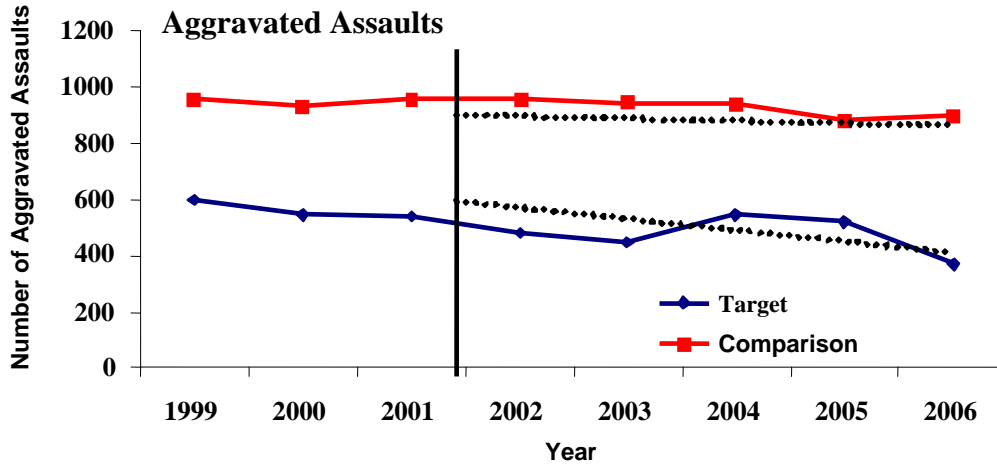
## Exhibit 2-24

### HOUSTON CRIME TRENDS

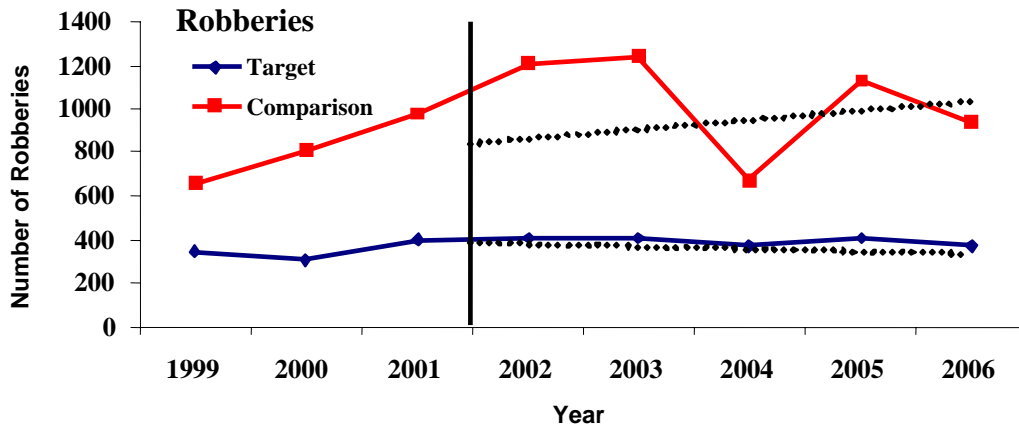
#### Homicides



#### Aggravated Assaults



#### Robberies



Source: Crime data

**Figure 1**

**PITTSBURGH TARGET AND COMPARISON AREAS**

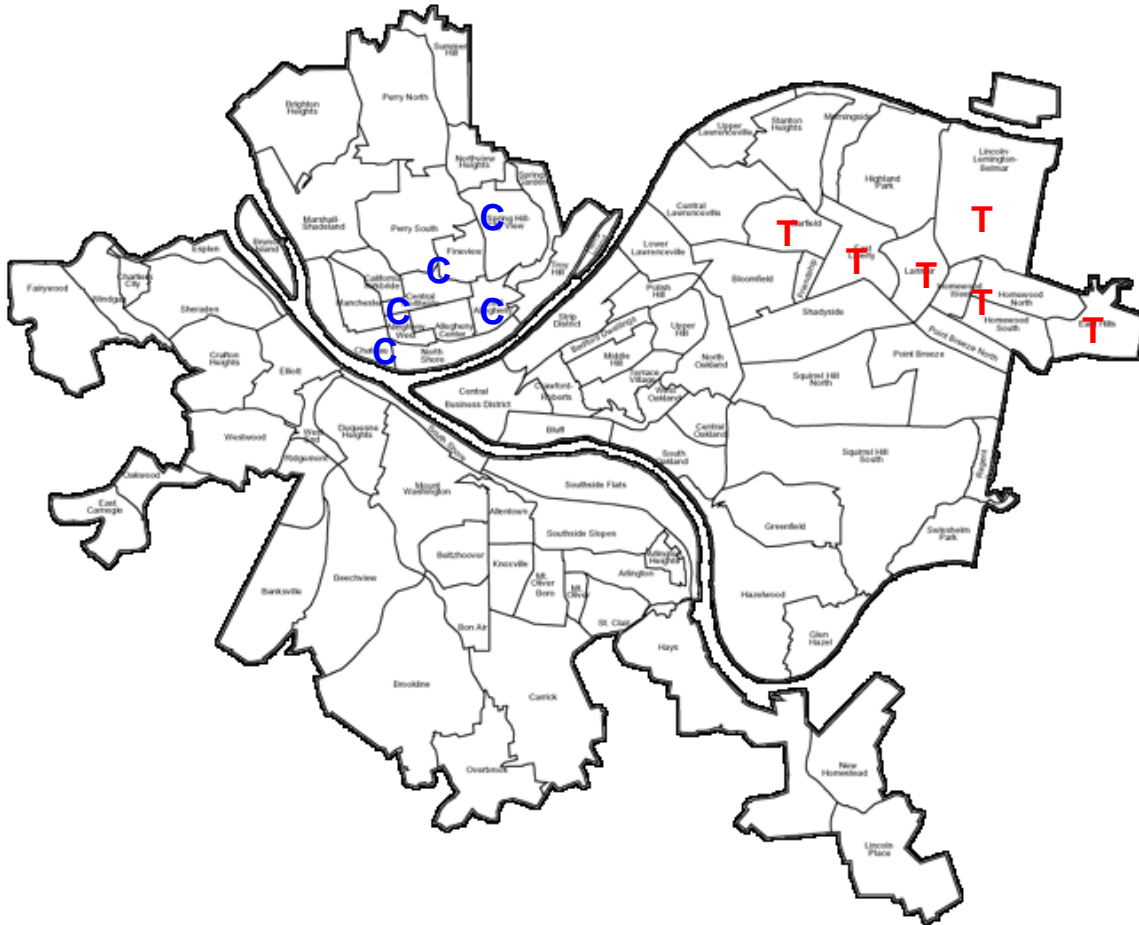


Exhibit 2-23 shows Pittsburgh crime trends for homicides, robberies, and aggravated assaults. The vertical line shows the point in time when the project began to enroll clients. While total homicides and robberies were higher in the target area, the trends for the two groups were similar and non-significant during the demonstration period. However the aggravated assaults trends in Pittsburgh's target area declined during the follow-up period 2002-2006. These differences were found to be statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) following a time series analysis, which employed a regressive moving average test.

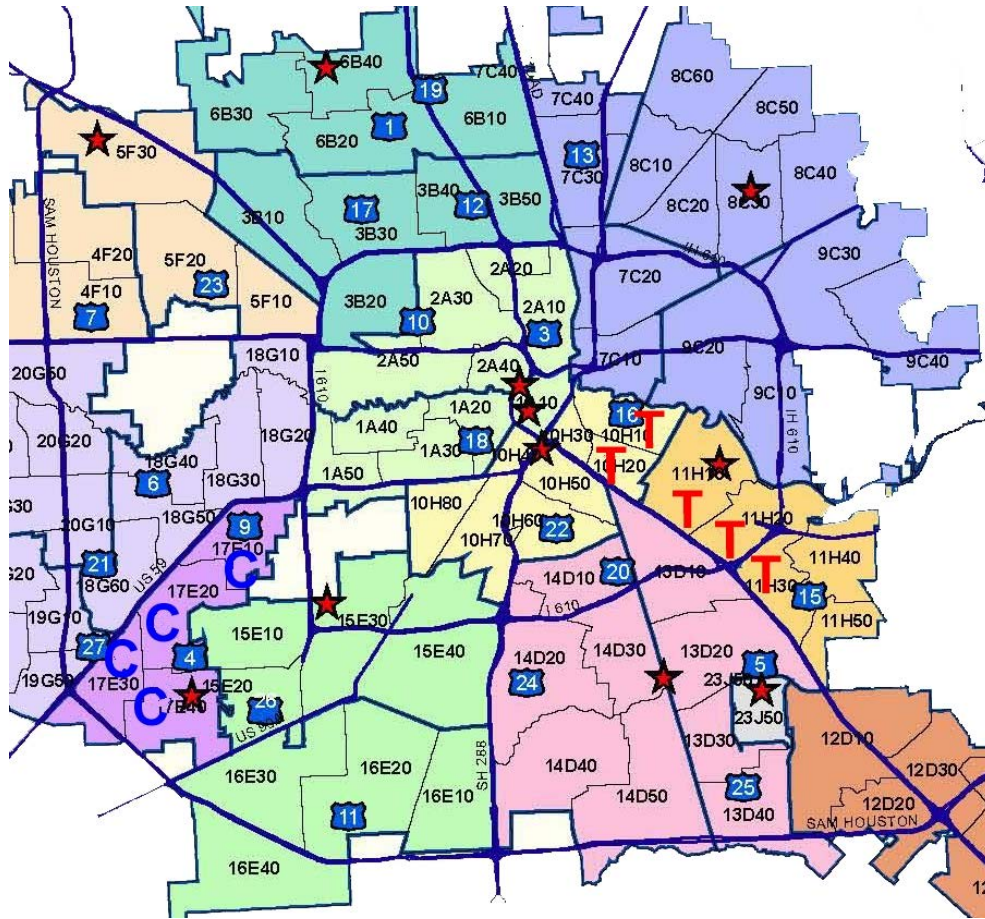
## **Houston**

The target and comparison areas in Houston are shown in Figure 2. The map shows the police patrol districts for the city. The target area is composed of those five districts in southeast Houston marked with a red T; and the control area, known as the Fondren District in southwest Houston, are those four districts marked with blue Cs.

The crime trend analyses for Houston (Exhibit 2-24) differ from that found in Pittsburgh. Homicide trends, beginning in 2002, increased dramatically in the comparison area. While there was an overall increase in homicides in the target area during the same period, the trend lines differed significantly using a regressive moving average test ( $p < .05$ ). An examination of the trend lines for aggravated assaults showed no statistical differences. While comparison area robberies increased during the 2002-2006 period, the target area had a slight decline. The robberies trend lines in Houston did differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ).

Figure 2

HOUSTON TARGET AND COMPARISON AREAS



## **Gang Crime Trends in Houston**

A primary goal of the Gang-Free Schools initiative was to reduce gang crimes in the target neighborhoods. Each grantee attempted to assess their gang crime problems during the assessment phase of the project. Their efforts included manual reviews of all crimes within the target areas during a two to three year period prior to their grant awards (1998-99 to 2001). In many instances several thousand crime reports were examined to determine if in fact the offense could be considered a gang crime. The sites conducted analyses of these crimes to determine which offenses were causing the most problems in neighborhoods as candidates for the selected target areas.

Following the initiation of the GFS project, each site launched data collection procedures to provide ongoing gang crime data in their target neighborhoods. The results of their efforts were generally less than anticipated. East Cleveland relied on the police department to continue the gang crime screening, but the department was unable to free sufficient manpower to gather this information consistently in a reliable manner. Miami-Dade assigned their research partner to collect the gang crime data. The records themselves were to be reviewed by the county and school district police officials. The criteria for what constituted as a gang crime was not well defined, and it was found in a later audit of their records that, in fact, there were many more crimes that could have been classified as gang-related than were reported in their statistical summaries. Some effort was attempted to conduct a retrograde review to provide more accurate data, but there was little or no coordination with the project staff. As a result much of the gang crime data for Miami-Dade's target area was missing and found not to be useful for analysis.

Pittsburgh also assigned their research partner to collect their gang crime reports. The research partner, along with staff from the police department's records department, conducted retrospective reviews prior to 2004, beginning in 2004 a concurrent review of crime was implemented for each crime as described in their community crime data synopsis. Data for 1999-2006 had either a concurrent review process or a retrospective review process for each crime. There was a lack of agreement between concurrent and review processes in 2004, the year in which an overlap between retrospective and concurrent review processes occurred, as indicated in the cross tabs analysis below. Within the concurrent gang review decision only 33 percent of "YES" responses corresponded with the retrospective decision; 79 percent of "NO" responses, and 59 percent of "DON'T KNOW" responses within the concurrent gang review decision corresponded with the retrospective review decision. This suggests that some of Pittsburgh's data was not accurately assessed, and was not suitable for an analysis of gang crime trends.

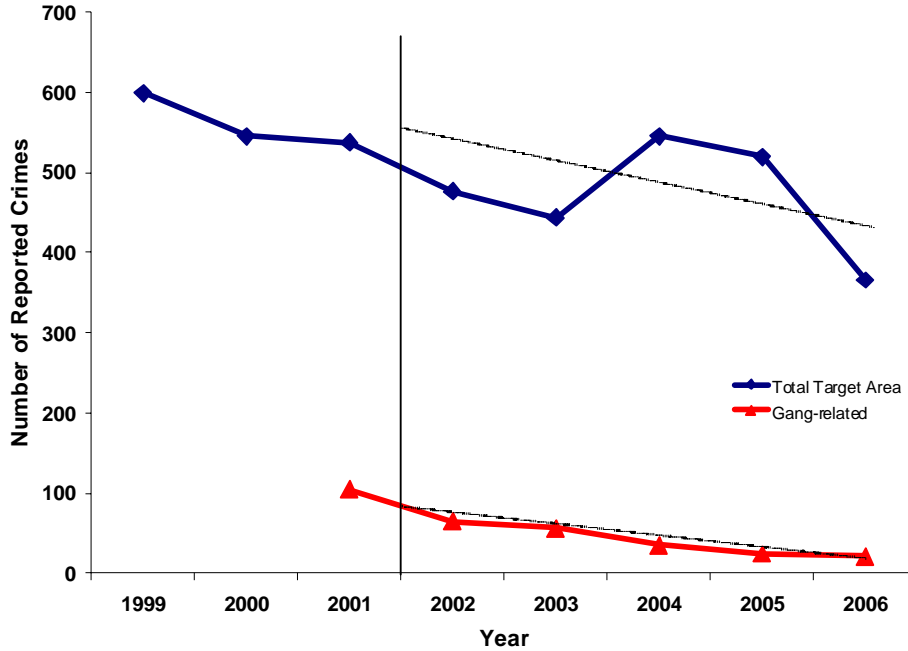
Houston assigned an officer who was responsible for crime reporting in the target area to screen reports for gang involvement. He reviewed eligible cases and talked with the patrol officers who completed the original reports to determine if the reported offense was a gang crime. This data was consistently and reliably collected during the 2001-2006 demonstration period, and was used to conduct gang crime trend analyses for two offense categories. The results of these analyses are presented in Exhibits 2-25 and 2-26.

Exhibit 2-25 shows Houston's gang and non-gang aggravated assaults trends in the project's target area. The target area's gang-related and non-gang aggravated assaults declined



### Exhibit 2-25

#### HOUSTON TOTAL TARGET AREA AND GANG-RELATED AGGRAVATED ASSAULTS



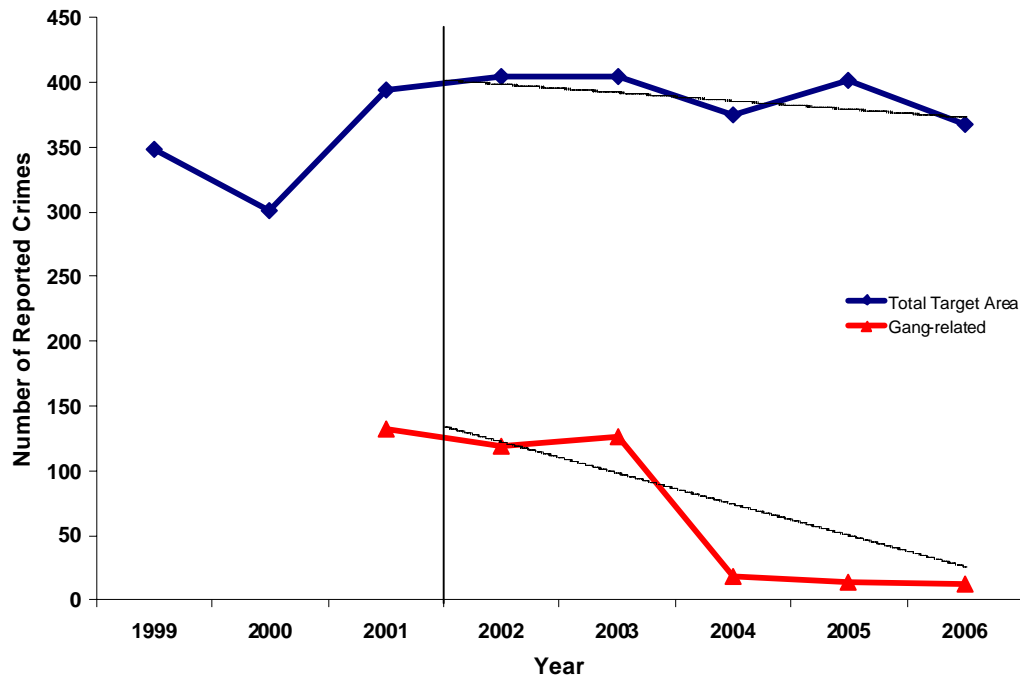
Source: Crime data

slightly during the GFS demonstration period—2002-2006. The trend lines for each group were not significantly different.

Exhibit 2-26 presents the gang and non-gang crime trends for robberies in Houston's target area. Non-Gang and Gang-Related robberies declined from the GFS project starting in early 2002. Gang-related robberies fell at a much greater and statistically significant rate during the demonstration period 2002-2006, ( $p < .05$ ).

### Exhibit 2-26

#### HOUSTON TOTAL TARGET AREA AND GANG-RELATED ROBBERIES



Source: Crime data

#### Summary of Findings

As a result of the analyses conducted with the Gang-Free Schools outcome data the following results were found:

1. Youths who were currently attending school were less likely than their peers not attending schools to be re-arrested and to use drugs and alcohol over the duration of the study. Youths who have been arrested by the police were more likely than their peers who had not been arrested to be jailed more often and to engage in drug and alcohol use. Youths who were more involved in their gangs were more likely than others who were less involved to be expelled more often from school, to receive disciplinary infractions at school and to be jailed more often. Youths who feel more connected to their family are less likely than youths who feel less connected to their family to be expelled from school and to receive disciplinary infractions.

2. The more time spent per contact with the target youth the more likely the target youth were to remain active in the program. It was also noted that greater lengths of time per contact was related to less alcohol use and fewer arrests in Houston.
3. Greater numbers of targets were related to more drug and alcohol use (Pittsburgh and Houston).
4. Greater numbers of education, social, criminal and employment targets used were related to more new arrests (Pittsburgh).
5. Group membership (target vs. comparison group) did not predict a higher or lower prevalence of criminal charges. This was true for three types of charges—violence, weapons, and drugs—across all four sites.
6. There was no noticeable impact on the target youth population in regard to subsequent court charges for violence, weapons, or drugs.
7. In Pittsburgh and Houston subsequent criminal charges for both target and comparison groups were similar. For East Cleveland the results indicated that the target population's subsequent criminal charges were higher during the period 2003-2004. The analysis for Miami-Dade suggested that the comparison group for 2004-2005 had a greater number of criminal charges.
8. In Houston criminal charges for both the target and comparison youth decreased during the 2004-2006 period. In Pittsburgh, the target youth had fewer charges in 2005, but increased dramatically in 2006. Neither of these findings suggests any advantage in recidivism for the target population.
9. In Pittsburgh while total homicides and robberies were higher in the target area, the trends for the two groups were similar and non-significant during the demonstration period. However the aggravated assaults trends in Pittsburgh's target area declined during the follow-up period 2002-2006. These differences were found to be statistically significant.
10. In Houston, homicide trends increased dramatically in the comparison area. While there was an overall increase in homicides in the target area during the same period, the trend lines differed significantly. Comparison area robberies increased during the 2002-2006 period, the target area had a slight decline. The robberies trend lines differed significantly demonstrating that the GFS project was a factor in reducing this violent crime.
11. Houston's non-Gang and Gang-Related robberies declined from the implementation of the GFS in 2002. Gang-related robberies fell at a much greater and statistically significant rate during the demonstration period 2002-2006.

This resource was prepared by the author(s) using Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice. Opinions or points of view expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **HOUSTON**

## CHAPTER THREE

### HOUSTON

#### INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The City of Houston and the Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) served as co-grantees for the Houston Gang-free Schools and Community Project. The lead agency for the project was the Mayor's Anti-Gang Office (MAGO), a division of the Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Drug Policy (OPSDP). OPSDP also oversees Houston's Fire and Police Departments, municipal courts, and other departments and programs that are related to public safety in Houston.

In 1994, Robert Lanier established the Houston Police Department's (HPD) Gang Task Force and MAGO to implement prevention and suppression tactics to reduce street gang growth and development.<sup>1</sup> The stated mission of MAGO aims to reduce gang crime through increased coordination of public and private agencies working to prevent and eliminate gang violence.<sup>2</sup> MAGO, operating in Houston and Harris County, has administered numerous grant-funded initiatives focused on reducing gang crime, and administers city-wide programs on related issues such as graffiti abatement and enhanced curfew enforcement. The various programs of MAGO, as well as HPD's Gang Task Force, support and advance the goals of Houston's GFS project, and are described in detail later in this chapter.

---

<sup>1</sup>Mayor's Anti-Gang Office Service Profile, Mayor's Anti-Gang Office website, [www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/mayor/antigang/profile.html](http://www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/mayor/antigang/profile.html), no date.

<sup>2</sup>Message from the Mayor's Anti-Gang Office Director, Mayor's Anti-Gang Office website, [www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/mayor/antigang/garcia.html](http://www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/mayor/antigang/garcia.html), no date.

In 1999, Mayor Lee Brown named Adrian Garcia, a Houston police officer, as the director of MAGO. Prior to his position as the director, Mr. Garcia served as HPD's Liaison to the Mayor's Anti-Gang Office and was the chief architect of MAGO's gang tracking and profile system. MAGO receives administrative assistance for the GFS project from the Mayor's Grants Team, which provides accounting and managerial support to all of the divisions within OPSDP. Both the director of MAGO and representatives from the Mayor's Grants Team serve on Houston's GFS Steering Committee and provide strong leadership and hands-on assistance to the project.

HCDE served as the co-grantee for the Houston GFS project during the assessment phase. HCDE is a 118-year-old, nonprofit, tax-assisted local education agency established under the Texas education code.<sup>3</sup> HCDE's stated goals include the improvement of student achievement, increased utilization of public resources, support for equal educational opportunities for all students, and the promotion of public education.<sup>4</sup> HCDE has established long-term, multi-level relationships with all of the independent school districts in Harris County and is governed by a publicly elected Board of County School Trustees. HCDE receives over \$82 million annually from federal, state, and local grants, and local tax collection, which is used to serve needy children and families, and implement a purchasing cooperative that serves all member organizations and agencies. HCDE's Director of Research and Evaluation, Rosalind J. Dworkin, Ph.D., served as HCDE's representative on the GFS Steering Committee. Within HCDE, Houston Independent School District (HISD), a Houston

---

<sup>3</sup>HCDE provides a variety of services to districts in the county, including adult education, Head Start programs, special education, and specialized instructional services, all of which are designed to supplement the instructional work of the districts. HCDE does not provide direct funding to the districts, nor do they have a direct effect on curriculum decisions. Rather, HCDE works to provide academic services that the districts may not be able to fully provide on their own.

<sup>4</sup>HCDE website, [www.hcde-texas.org](http://www.hcde-texas.org), no date.

GFS partner, is the largest of the school districts that cover Harris County and is also the largest school district in Texas in terms of enrollment and the seventh largest district in the U.S.

Other active Houston Steering Committee partners included: HPD (Eastside, South Central, and Greater East End Management District); District I Harris County Juvenile Probation; Adult Probation; Texas Youth Commission; Houston City Council (member Carol Alvarado); East End Chamber of Commerce; Mission Milby Community Development Center (brings the tools of community development and community technology together in a collaborative effort of neighborhood improvement with stakeholders); Park Place Civic Association; Parks and Recreation Department; Riverside General Hospital; the University of Houston; HoustonWorks USA (offers employment and training services for Houston residents); Houston Worksource (provides back-to-work services for Houston residents); Cossaboom YMCA; and Reclamando Nuestro Futuro (conducts faith-based community development activities). Participating schools include: Austin High School, Deady Middle School; Edison Middle School; Milby High School; G.I. Sanchez High School; Jackson Middle School; Raul Yzaguirre School for Success Neighborhood Centers, Inc. (see section below for additional information about this school).

***Description of the Community.*** Houston is located in Harris County and is the fourth largest city in the nation, with a population of nearly 2 million residents. In the year 2000, the city of Houston was home to 278,453 youth between the ages of 10 and 19 (who made up 14.3% of the total population for the city), while 161,754 Houston residents were between the ages of 20 and 24 (8.3% of the population for the city). Houston is a city with a large representation of minority residents:

25.3 percent of the population during the 2000 Census identified themselves as African American, while 37.4 percent of city's residents identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino.<sup>5</sup>

Houston's GFS target area originally included five police beats (11H10, 11H20, 10H10, 10H20, and 10H30) covering four zip codes (77003, 77011, 77012, and 77023) and is commonly referred to as the city's Greater East End.<sup>6</sup> The area is located east of downtown Houston and is populated primarily by a Hispanic population of Mexican origin. The target area includes five different neighborhoods: Magnolia, the Second Ward, Lawndale, Eastwood, and Idylwood.<sup>7</sup> The selection of the Greater East End resulted from an assessment by MAGO of HPD's crime data. This examination revealed that the highest incidence of gang crime occurred in police beat 11H10, at the center of the Greater East End. In addition, the surrounding police beats had above average rates of gang-related crime. However, a review of the area's 2001 crime data indicated that violent crimes declined in police beat 10H30 during the previous year. These findings motivated GFS staff to remove the police beat from the target area.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the Greater East End was heavily industrialized and employed a strong blue-collar workforce. During the 1980s, manufacturing plants in the area began to close (particularly when the local oil industry entered an economic downturn), which negatively

---

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, Profiles of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000 Census of Population and Housing - Texas, May 2001.

<sup>6</sup>During the first site visit, several interviewees mentioned confusion over the size and boundaries of the assessment area. Some individuals pointed out that they were under the impression that police beat 11H10 would make up the entire assessment area. Several additional individuals mentioned the possibility of "expanding" the assessment area past the 11H10 police beat. However, the Assessment Team never intended to focus only on that police beat. Somewhere during the first several months of the assessment phase, a mix-up in communication occurred and the original assessment area agreed upon in Mesa (which included police beats 11H10, 11H20, 10H10, 10H20, and 10H30) was limited down to just the 11H10 beat. The intent of the Assessment Team was to collect information on the whole Greater East End area of Houston.

<sup>7</sup>These neighborhood designations do not coincide with police beat, zip code, or census tract boundaries, but rather are names that community residents use to refer to their area.



affected the community's recovery. The economic decline coincided with the introduction of local gangs into the area. Gangs served as a haven for troubled youth as the deteriorating economic situation in the area began to negatively impact the availability of recreational and other positive activities for youth. As the gang presence increased, youth increasingly joined gangs for their own protection.

While the majority of adult residents in the target area are immigrants from Mexico and Latin America with Spanish as their primary language, most of their children are first or second generation Americans who are bilingual. Houston's Greater East End has the reputation among police officers as an area that consistently has a high number of calls for service, a crime rate higher than most other areas in the city, and a lot of gang activity.

Those interviewed for this chapter and throughout the time period of the project noted that the Greater East End also suffers from high levels of poverty compounded by a lack of social and family services. In addition, the residents are geographically isolated from surrounding neighborhoods. Although many social services are available to residents in the surrounding neighborhoods, these services are generally inaccessible to residents in the target area due to a lack of personal transportation and limited access to public transportation. Interviewees familiar with the target area noted that most residents do not have medical insurance and are often unaware of available federal medial assistance programs such as Medicaid and CHIPs. Some interviewees also indicated that family violence and sexual abuse are prevalent in the area, and drugs and guns are relatively easy for youth to obtain. Most Greater East End youth have very limited after school activities or job opportunities.

***Houston's Gang Problem.*** According to MAGO, criminal street gangs in Houston are “more loosely knit” and lack the organization of gangs seen in cities like Los Angeles and New York.<sup>8</sup> As noted in Exhibit 3-1, the total number of *identified* gangs in Houston between the years of 1995 and 1999 remained fairly constant, while the number of *active* gangs has decreased over the same time period. However, while the number of *active* gangs has decreased, the total number of gang members has increased every year since 1995. Since 2000, the number of identified gangs has sharply decreased, however no data were available pertaining to the number of active gangs from 2000 to 2006.

From 1995 to 1999, 76.6 percent of gang-related murder victims in Houston were Hispanic, and gang crimes increased 11 percent during that same period. Exhibit 3-2 shows that gang-related aggravated assault and robbery have been, by far, the most common gang-related crimes in the city.<sup>9</sup> From 2000 to 2006, 63.2 percent of gang-related murder victims were white, and no victims were identified as Hispanic. Gang-related crimes decreased by 99.1 percent between 2000 and 2004, however in 2005, gang-related crimes increased by 116.3 percent from the previous year.

Between January and October 2006, 34 juveniles were murdered in Houston. Six or seven deaths were directly attributable to gang activities. During the first six months of 2006, there

---

<sup>8</sup>Mayor's Anti-Gang Office Service Profile, Mayor's Anti-Gang Office website, [www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/mayor/antigang/profile.html](http://www.ci.houston.tx.us/citygovt/mayor/antigang/profile.html), no date.

<sup>9</sup>Houston GFS application, September 15, 2001.

### Exhibit 3-1

#### GANGS AND GANG MEMBERSHIP IN HOUSTON, 1995-1999

Gangs and Gang Membership	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Total Identified Gangs</b>	376	392	401	433	412	422	184	195	200	199	191	157
<b>Active Gangs</b>	208	237	231	195	171	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Total Gang Members</b>	10,953	12,298	12,300	14,062	15,312	15,925	2,894	3,304	3,571	3,696	3,893	3,307
<b>Juvenile Gang Members (17 years of age and younger)</b>	2,640	2,152	1,787	1,556	n/a	918	71	174	214	361	230	222

*n/a=not available*

Source: Mayor's Anti-Gang Office 2000 and Houston Police Department Gangs Division.

### Exhibit 3-2

#### GANG RELATED CRIMES COMMITTED IN HOUSTON, 1995-1999

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Gang-Related Murder</b>	35	24	35	34	25	13	7	9	11	13	28	55
<b>Gang-Related Aggravated Assault</b>	258	255	217	147	221	238	161	122	113	88	203	195
<b>Gang-Related Sexual Assault</b>	14	25	23	15	8	14	11	8	9	3	7	5
<b>Gang-Related Robbery</b>	246	261	208	118	146	65	29	28	33	18	62	71
<b>Total Gang Crimes</b>	1,560	2,776	2,185	2,062	1,732	2,897	1,856	1,615	1,820	1,345	2,909	3,134

Sources: Mayor's Anti-Gang Office 2000<sup>10</sup> and Houston Police Department Gangs Division.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup>This exhibit was recreated from Houston's application for the GFS program. It is unclear what the remaining gang-related crimes consisted of, as the categories listed do not sum to the totals listed.

<sup>11</sup> Houston Police Department Gangs Division, *Gang Tracker, CASE, Quarterly Reports, Criminal Intelligence Division*, data provided September 2007.

were 25 gang-related murders, though not all involved juveniles; this represented a 92 percent increase from the same time period in 2005.<sup>12</sup>

In 2000, MAGO staff commented that the Greater East End target area was home to 14 recognized juvenile gangs with an approximate membership of 200 individuals, and dozens of smaller block-level gangs. The largest youth gangs included the Central Park, Lenox Street, and South East Magnolias gangs. The Houston Gang Division stated in 2007, “There are no juvenile gangs just gangs with juvenile members.” The division reported seven gangs with juvenile members and twenty juvenile members in those gangs within the target area. The largest gangs in the target area are Houston/Tango Blast and Barrio/Denver Harbor.<sup>13</sup> The media also reported Southwest Cholos as a major gang threat throughout Houston.<sup>14</sup>

Those interviewed from the police department and the juvenile justice agencies noted that gangs in the assessment area are becoming less visible as they have become more sophisticated in their operations. These gangs are now aware when HPD officers are on the lookout for gang members, and as a result, they have developed different ways to self-identify aside from the traditional methods (e.g., wearing of colors). Most gang members have little or limited connection to prison gangs in the area, and adult gang members tend to leave juvenile gang

---

<sup>12</sup> Ruiz, Rosanna, “Troublesome Spike in Teen Violent Crime/34 Juveniles have been Slain in ’06, Compared to 20 Homicides Reported Last Year,” *The Houston Chronicle*, December 10, 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Houston Police Department Gangs Division, *Gang Tracker, CASE, Quarterly Reports, Criminal Intelligence Division*, data provided September 2007.

<sup>14</sup> Kumar, Seshadri, “New Gang Emerges as a Threat/HPHD Officer Updates Southwest Residents on Rise of Tango Blast,” *The Houston Chronicle*, November 30, 2006. Dobbyn, Christine, “Learn to Spot Gang Members in Your Community,” KTRK/Houston, February 6, 2007.

members alone.<sup>15</sup> According to one HPD gang unit officer, there are 13 small to medium-sized gangs present and operating in one of the middle schools in the assessment area, each gang identifiable by name and color. Disciplinary action for serious offenses in Houston schools rose 150 percent between 2001 and 2007. During school year 2001-2002, 33 incidents of gang-related violence were reported in or near schools; during 2005-2006, 207 were reported.<sup>16</sup>

Youth continue to face gang problems off campus as well. One interviewee noted that children going home from school sometimes walk far out of their way to avoid known gang turf areas and streets. School bus stop locations in the target area require neighborhood children to cross through two (and sometimes three) different gang territories to get from their homes to their designated bus stops and vice versa. Knowledge and avoidance of these dangerous areas isolates the children that live in the target area, prevents them from accessing the few community services that are available to them, and makes the trip to school a dangerous activity.

The criminal activities of juvenile gangs in the target area primarily include theft, drug sales, drug use, and use of dangerous and lethal weapons. The drugs of choice include alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, and the prescription drug Xanax (known by the street name “handlebars” or “bars”), an addictive tranquilizer used to treat anxiety disorders.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup>Interviews with Gang Unit Officers and street workers noted that once juvenile gang members enter prison, they are often recruited into adult prison gangs. When these youth leave prison they continue to participate in their adult gangs and often recruit new members from their old juvenile gang. The assessment area is also home to the *Texas Syndicate*, a prison gang that is often the next step for juvenile gang members after they go through the corrections system. One interviewee noted that the corrections system serves as a “gang college” and that the juveniles “graduate” to a higher-level and more intense gang affiliation after their release.

<sup>16</sup> Mellon, Ericka, and Jennifer Radcliffe, “HISD Unveils Aggressive Safety Plan/Proposal Calls for More Police, Cameras and GPS Tracking Systems,” *The Houston Chronicle*, March 2, 2007.

<sup>17</sup>Prescription Drug Abuse Explodes in America, The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, May 4, 2001, [www.health.org/newsroom/rep/168.htm](http://www.health.org/newsroom/rep/168.htm).

Following Hurricane Katrina in late summer 2005, approximately 150,000 people from New Orleans were evacuated to Houston. Along with the evacuees came gang members; turf wars were transplanted from one city to the next. Between September 2005 and the end of February 2006, Houston experienced a 28 percent increase in the homicide rate. In 29 of the 170 cases, evacuees were involved as suspects, victims, or both.<sup>18</sup> Rates of assaults and weapons arrests also rose, and gang members were noted to be more violent than those in Houston.<sup>19</sup> Most of the violence was concentrated in two southwest areas and one northwest area of the city. Violence in schools also increased, with one altercation leading to 27 arrests. The superintendent increased police presence in the schools by 10 percent in response.<sup>20</sup> As a result of the increase in homicides and robberies, the Gang Murder Squad was formed, and police officers from New Orleans were brought to Houston to share their knowledge and understanding. Houston requested \$6.5 million from FEMA to help cover the costs of overtime and greater security measures. With the assistance of the FBI and the New Orleans Police Department, Houston was able to compile a list of over 800 gang members and their disputes, identifiers, and crimes for use in tracking members and cracking down on gang-related crime.<sup>21</sup>

*State Gang Laws, Tracking of Gang Members, and Gang Related Crime.* HPD has maintained a database of gang members and gang-related incidents (the gang database) as part of its surveillance activities for the Gang Task Force. However, a 1999 amendment to the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure greatly impacted the way in which HPD collected data and effectively resulted in the elimination of a substantial amount of data due to its lack of

---

<sup>18</sup>Kennett, Jim, "Louisiana Gangs that Fled Katrina Heighten Houston Murder Rate," Bloomberg.com, March 3, 2006.

<sup>19</sup>Gelinas, Nicole, "Houston's Noble Experiment: Can Good Government Uplift the New Orleans Evacuees Whom Bad Government Harmed?" *City Journal*, spring 2006.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

compliance with the new collection procedures. This amendment, known as Senate Bill 8, became effective on September 1, 1999, and was enacted to keep Texas state code consistent with federal law and to protect the constitutional rights of the persons on whom data were being collected.<sup>22</sup> The amended code controls the types of gang-related data law enforcement officers can collect based on five criteria, which define gang membership and identify an incident as gang-related. Now, in order to include a person in the gang database, the suspect must meet two of the following five criteria: 1) self admission to gang membership; 2) gang membership based on the report of a credible person; 3) gang membership based on the corroborated word of a person of unknown credibility; 4) gang membership based on the presence of physical gang indicators like gang dress, tattoos, or frequenting known gang areas; or 5) the suspect was accompanied by known gang members during the current incident or offense.

The amended Texas statute requires law enforcement agencies to review all of the compiled information pertaining to criminal street gangs against the five new criteria and to eliminate all records that do not meet the new requirements. Prior to the new criteria, HPD would include a suspect or incident in their gang database based on only one of the listed criteria. Although exact figures are not available, MAGO staff noted that by September 2000, thousands of incident records and over 20,000 gang members were purged from HPD's gang database during a citywide record review to comply with the new data collection criteria. This change has affected how the gang problem is defined in the city of Houston and in the GFS assessment area.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup>Texas Legislature Online, Senate Bill 8, Legislative Session 76(R), [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us).

<sup>23</sup>Law enforcement agencies were given one year to bring their crime databases into compliance with the new law. The HPD completed this work by September 2000, taking a full year to purge the database, as each criminal record had to be manually reviewed.

## **PROJECT TIMELINE**

The Steering Committee and other key project stakeholders undertook several initial activities including the development of an Assessment Report, Implementation Plan, and logic model. Each of these will be discussed in a subsequent section. Exhibit 3-3 provides a brief timeline illustrating the startup activities.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE INITIAL GFS APPLICATION**

When MAGO first received the solicitation for the GFS program, Cheryl Murray, the administrator for the Mayor's Grant Team office, reviewed the announcement and felt that the program offered a good opportunity for MAGO to expand its efforts to address the gang problem in Houston. However, Ms. Murray and MAGO initially encountered challenges identifying which areas of the city could serve as potential target areas, and this situation was further complicated by the fact that the Houston area was served by 24 different school districts. Lacking an easily definable area to use as the target for the grant and a single school district that could act as a partner during the application process, Ms. Murray and MAGO approached the HCDE. HCDE was selected as the co-applicant since it has a working relationship with every school district in the Houston area and could serve as a resource regardless of what assessment or target area would eventually be selected.



### Exhibit 3-3

#### HOUSTON GFS ASSESSMENT PHASE TIMELINE

Year and Month	Activity
<b>2001</b>	
<b>April</b>	First GFS Cluster Meeting, Mesa AZ
<b>June</b>	Planning Meeting (Executive Committee)
<b>July</b>	Planning Meeting (Executive Committee)
<b>August</b>	Steering Committee meeting (Initial Meeting)
<b>September</b>	Steering Committee meeting
<b>October</b>	Steering Committee meeting Assessment Team meetings
<b>November</b>	Steering Committee meeting Local data collection (Begin Key Informant Interviews) NYGC site visit (Training on Spergel Model and Assessment Process)
<b>December</b>	Project Coordinator hired Steering Committee meeting Local data collection (Continue Key Informant Interviews)
<b>2002</b>	
<b>January</b>	Steering Committee meeting Assessment Team meetings Local data collection (Continue key informant interviews. Begin gang member interviews, student surveys, community member interviews, parent focus groups, and teacher interviews) NYGC site visit (Training of Project Coordinator) National evaluation site visit
<b>February</b>	Steering Committee meeting Assessment Team meetings Local data collection (Continue key informant interviews, gang member interviews, student surveys, community member interviews, and teacher interviews. Completed parent focus groups)
<b>March</b>	Steering Committee meeting Assessment Team meetings Local data collection (Continue key informant interviews, and community member interviews. Completed gang member interviews) NYGC site visit (Feedback on data collection and gang crime data) Second GFS Cluster Meeting, Mesa, AZ
<b>April</b>	Steering Committee meetings Local data collection (Completed key informant interviews and community member interviews) NYGC conference call (Discuss preliminary gang crime data)
<b>May</b>	Steering Committee meeting Assessment Team meetings
<b>June</b>	Assessment Team meetings
<b>July</b>	Steering Committee meeting Assessment Team meetings National evaluation site visit

Ms. Murray and Mr. Garcia also selected the University of Houston's Graduate School of Social Work to serve as the project's initial research partner for the proposal. The MAGO office and the Graduate School of Social Work had previously worked together and, as a result, a positive pre-existing relationship existed between the two organizations.

Ms. Murray took the lead in preparing the application and received assistance from HCDE staff when necessary. MAGO interviewed several community leaders to provide their input on potential assessment areas. These individuals identified areas that were heavily influenced by gang activity and that lacked appropriate social services to cope with the problem. This process led to the identification of an area in southeast Houston, known as the Greater East End, as the likely assessment area due to its high level of criminal activity related to gangs and the flight of social services and community organizations in recent years.

## **THE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The national evaluation team obtained information on Houston's assessment activities through several sources. First, the national evaluation team conducted interviews with Steering Committee members and other key stakeholders during site visits throughout the course of the project. The visits coincided with local Steering Committee meetings, Assessment Team meetings, or sessions with staff from OJJDP. The national evaluation team obtained copies of project documents (sign-in sheets, meeting minutes, reports, etc.) during these visits.

The national evaluation team also tracked GFS performance through the use of the planning and assessment activities inventory that the site was to submit on a quarterly basis. The activities inventories were designed to collect detailed information on local planning activities, including data on meetings, stakeholder involvement, decision-making, and project outcomes.

Written materials prepared by the sites—proposals, reports, data from the research team or project partners—also were reviewed as an important source of information for gauging accomplishments and challenges during the assessment phase. The national evaluation team also reviewed site reports and correspondence (including electronic mail) from the National Youth Gang Center, which had frequent contact with GFS sites. Finally, the national evaluation team obtained supplemental information on the Houston community by reviewing data from public sources such as government web sites and local newspaper articles.

## **A. Key Participants**

*Steering Committee.* Despite the smooth functioning of the Steering Committee following the hiring of the first Project Coordinator, the group encountered several ongoing challenges during the assessment phase. Decreased and lowered attendance at the Steering Committee meetings occurred throughout the assessment phase. Attendance problems may have been compounded by confusion over the perceived role of the Steering Committee itself by its members. Several members initially viewed the group as a mechanism to address data collection questions not identified by the Assessment Team, rather than as the critical decision-making organization to implement the project. In addition, it was noted that many committee members did not fully understand the importance of the assessment phase and were instead focusing on

project implementation. These problems may be a result of limited attendance at the first two meetings, where the role of the Steering Committee and importance of the assessment phase were discussed. Several Steering Committee members were unable to define the role of the committee and many were hard-pressed to identify differences in the work of the Steering Committee and that of the Assessment Team.

Steering Committee members commented that a common occurrence during meetings was that several topics ended up being discussed that could have been dealt with by the Assessment Team. For example, one entire Steering Committee meeting early in the assessment phase (led by the research partners) consisted of discussions on survey development, the scheduling of key informant interviews, and other data collection issues.

The project team also faced longer than anticipated delays to obtain clearance from the University of Houston's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB). These delays, in turn, delayed the beginning of data collection efforts.

***The Executive Committee.*** The Houston GFS project developed an Executive Committee, but this group played a limited role during the assessment phase. The Executive Committee provided the initial leadership for the Houston project, prior to the Project Coordinator being hired. Nine individuals composed the Executive Committee, including the three Steering Committee co-chairs, the Project Coordinator, the director of MAGO, the Mayor's Grants Team administrator, a representative from HCDE, and two research partners. The Executive Committee served as a policy-setting resource for the Steering Committee. MAGO utilized this

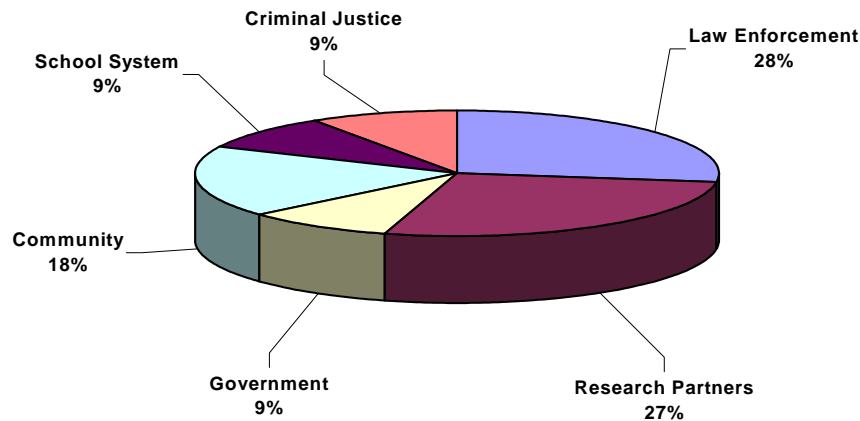
structure (the use of both a Steering Committee and an Executive Committee) in all of its other programs, including its Gang Violence Reduction Program, the Truancy Program, the Juvenile Accountability Court Program, and the Graffiti Abatement Program.

***The Assessment Team.*** The Assessment Team for the Houston GFS project included 12 individuals, all of whom were members of the Steering Committee. The Assessment Team members represent nine different organizations, including MAGO, the University of Houston's Graduate School of Social Work, the school district's police department, the Houston Police Department, the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department, the Harris County Department of Education, and several community organizations (See Exhibit 3-4).

***Implementation Team.*** The Project Coordinator distributed copies of the Implementation Planning Manual to the Steering Committee members prior to actual planning beginning. MAGO then requested implementation training assistance, which NYGC provided. In the initial planning meetings, the Steering Committee reviewed data from the Assessment Report in addition to the criteria for model strategies in the Implementation Planning Manual. Workgroups formed to develop problem statements, goals, objectives, and activities. The workgroups reported their decisions back to the full group of Steering Committee members. The workgroups then incorporated feedback into their work.

**Exhibit 3-4**

**HOUSTON GFS ASSESSMENT TEAM COMPOSITION**



***Intervention Team.*** The Intervention Team met on a weekly basis throughout the course of the project to review and discuss referrals made by project partners. As the Intervention Team gained experience with this process, the meetings became more routinized and efficient. The Intervention Team moved to holding meeting every two weeks.

**B. Assessment Report Preparation Initial Activities**

***Selection of the Target Area.*** The Steering Committee conducted a review of extant historical documents to identify the appropriate area for assessment. The Steering Committee examined neighborhood crime maps documenting five years of gang-related crimes by police beats. The Steering Committee observed that the police beats in the Greater East End had the highest gang crime areas of the city. The 17E10 Gulfton police beat had comparable levels of gang activity, however, the federal and state governments were funding Weed and Seed and

State Community Youth Development Initiatives. The Steering Committee further investigated the availability of resources in the Greater East End and determined that the area was severely lacking. As a result of its research, the Steering Committee selected the Greater East End, bound by I-45 on the Southwest, U.S. 59 and Buffalo Bayou on the North and East, and 610 on the Southeast.

*Defining “Gang.”* Although Texas Senate Bill 8 provided a description of the criteria necessary to classify an individual as a gang member or an incident as gang-related, the city’s project planners felt that their working definition of a “gang” needed to be expanded to address issues specific to gang membership and gang-related crimes in Houston. On September 26, 2001, the project’s Steering Committee approved definitions for use during the assessment phase (see Exhibit 3-5).

*Defining Problem Statements and Developing Objective and Project Goals.* Houston’s GFS application identified the following three goals for the assessment phase of the project:

- Determine the nature, extent, and magnitude of youth gang activity in Houston and Harris County area schools;
- Determine the risk factors that contribute to youth gang activity in Houston and Harris County area schools; and
- Determine available programs and resources being targeted to address the gang problem in Houston and Harris County area schools.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup>Houston GFS application, September 15, 2001.

## Exhibit 3-5

### HOUSTON'S GANG DEFINITIONS

<p><b>Street Gang:</b> A gang is a group of three or more persons who associate together and exhibit one or more of the following characteristics in varying degrees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of negative behavior that could include criminal activity;</li><li>• A shared sign, symbol, name, manner of dress; and/or other identifiable characteristics; and</li><li>• A geographic territory affiliation.</li></ul>
<p><b>Gang Member:</b> A gang member is a person who admits to gang membership, or meets two or more of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is identified as a member of a gang by a reliable informant or source;</li><li>• Is identified as a member of a gang by an informant or source, which can be corroborated by independent information;</li><li>• Is observed to associate on a regular basis with known gang members;</li><li>• Several arrests or contacts with police in the presence of known gang members;</li><li>• Resides in or frequents a particular gang's area and affects their style of dress, use of hand signs, tattoos and/or other identifiable characteristics;</li><li>• Appears in photographs or other electronic or digital media with known gang members;</li><li>• Name is on a gang document or gang-related graffiti; corresponds with known gang members or writes and/or receives correspondence about gang activity; or is in possession of gang or gang-related documents or correspondence;</li><li>• Has past criminal record for gang activity (includes other law enforcement sources); and</li><li>• Identified as a member of a Corrections Department Security Threat Group<sup>25</sup>.</li></ul>
<p><b>Gang Associate:</b> An individual who does not meet the criteria for a gang member, but is known to associate with known gang members, and law enforcement personnel have established a reasonable suspicion that the individual is involved in criminal activity or promotes the criminal activity of the gang.</p>
<p><b>Gang-Related Crime:</b> A crime committed by known gang member(s), and such crime is known or believed to be committed in furtherance to the gang's benefit; or a crime is known or believed to be committed for the purpose of retaliation against person(s) for acts committed against said gang, to include, but not limited to, victim/witness testimony.</p>
<p><b>Gang-Involved Incident:</b> Any incident or crime committed/participated in by known gang member(s).</p>

*Source: Houston GFS Steering Committee Minutes, September 26, 2001.*

For the most part, these goals were reflected in the activities and discussions observed during site visits by the national evaluation team. Several interviewees pointed to the importance of the assessment process when talking about the GFS project and the upcoming implementation phase. For example, one of the Steering Committee co-chairs commented that the key (to the

---

<sup>25</sup>The Texas Department of Corrections' Security Threat Group is any group of offenders who have been in prison and were identified by the Department as probable prison gang members.



GFS program) is the review and assessment of information to ensure the development of a program that addresses the needs of the community.

However, a number of other interviewees tended to focus on the potential implementation of programs when asked about their perceptions of the GFS project goals. Several identified the goal of the program as a whole “to reduce or eliminate gang violence and crime” or “to increase available community resources to positively impact the lives of gang members.” While this focus on implementation is encouraging in the sense that these individuals are thinking ahead to the next phase of the grant, it pointed to oversights in the early approach to the assessment phase. This focus on the pending implementation phase may be a cause of the discrepancies in the perceived roles of Steering Committee members, as individuals viewed the focus of the GFS to be on implementation issues despite current efforts to complete the Assessment Report. The delays resulted in several challenges for Houston’s GFS project. Interviewees noted that the Steering Committee did not function effectively before the Project Coordinator was hired. In addition, data collection efforts also were delayed, since no one was able to coordinate the data collection process during this time. One interviewee noted that a great deal of time and effort was lost during the months that a Project Coordinator was not present.

Once the Project Coordinator was on-board, he was able to transition into the position and did an admirable job in moving the Houston project forward. Immediately after the hiring became official, MAGO staff and Steering Committee members briefed the new Project Coordinator on the GFS project and introduced him to key individuals in the community, local service providers, and a number of law enforcement officials. The new coordinator quickly

gained the respect of the Steering Committee, took a leadership role, and offered some much needed coordination to the Assessment Team.

The Project Coordinator saw his role as that of a “big-picture” person who provides hands-on administration by supervising the day-to-day activities of the project. The Project Coordinator worked behind the scenes to ensure that the GFS project operated smoothly throughout each of its phases. During the assessment phase, the Project Coordinator coordinated Steering Committee meetings to ensure that these sessions were successful. As part of his responsibilities, the Project Coordinator worked closely with the committee’s co-chairs and provided regular updates on the progress of the grant. The coordinator also led and provided oversight to the Assessment Team and had primary responsibility for ensuring the completion of the Assessment Report.

***Collecting Data.*** The Assessment Team, with the help of the research partner, concentrated their data collection efforts in six different areas:

1. **Key Informant Interviews.** These interviews were completed in two phases. The first phase involved interviews with 22 community residents to gain their perspectives on community conditions in the assessment area. A second round of interviews was then conducted with key individuals who had connections to the community in some way. Most of the interviewees served on the Steering Committee or were individuals who were recommended by the committee’s members.
2. **Gang Member Interviews.** The Assessment Team supervised the completion of 104 gang member interviews. These interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes each and were conducted with known or self-identifying gang members. The research partners conducted the interviews with the assistance of the Gang Intervention Specialists from MAGO’s GVRT.

- 3. Student Surveys.** The Assessment Team also coordinated the administration of the student surveys. Five thousand active consent permission slips were sent to parents through students at Dealy, Jackson, and Edison Middle Schools (all located in the assessment area), and 591 students completed the survey.<sup>26</sup> When DRP, the contractor originally scheduled to complete the analysis of the student surveys, was unable to provide those services, Houston was forced to seek out additional help in collecting and analyzing the student surveys. To address this need, the planners contracted with the Depelchin Children's Center to complete the data entry of the student surveys, and with Dr. Oscar Cabrera to conduct the analysis of the instruments.

Dr. Cabrera was contracted in December 2002 and was tasked with providing oversight of the ongoing student survey data collection process and with completing the analysis of the student surveys. As the GFS project progressed, Dr. Cabrera was provided with the title of "research consultant" and was asked to provide feedback and constructive criticism on the work of the research partner, along with additional analyses to further examine the data collected by the Assessment Team and the research partner. Several interviewees commented that the addition of the research consultant took the project to "the next level," as he provided additional expertise on methodological issues.

- 4. Community Member Interviews.** The Assessment Team also surveyed community residents, collecting 263 completed surveys. Assessment Team members attended large community events and gatherings to obtain a large number of these completed surveys.
- 5. Parent Focus Groups.** The Assessment Team completed seven parent focus group sessions. Both the research partner and the Project Coordinator led these focus groups, and the size of the groups ranged from two to twenty individuals.
- 6. Teacher Interviews.** To gather additional information on the state of gang activity in schools in the assessment area, the Assessment Team completed interviews with 61 teachers who taught in the assessment area's middle and high schools. These interviews were used to supplement the information collected through the student surveys and the community member surveys.

***Documenting Gang Crime and Gang Activity.*** One of the most significant challenges that

Houston faced was the collection of gang crime data from the Houston Police Department and

---

<sup>26</sup>The expected return for these surveys was low since active consent for the permission forms was required. The students were given the permission forms at school and were expected to take the forms home to their parents to complete. The students then had to bring the completed form (with parent signatures) back to school before being allowed to participate in the survey. This need for active consent prior to the surveys decreased the return rate as students will need enough initiative to complete the entire process.

the Eastside Division. As described earlier, the passage of Texas Senate Bill 8 had a significant impact on how gang-related incidents were classified under the HPD data collection system. The department's systemwide review led to thousands of gang-related crime incidents being purged from the system, and similarly affected the way all subsequent incident reports were recorded.

In addition, the process that the department used to collect information on gang-related crime incidents created further difficulties in obtaining what was felt to be a reasonable estimate of gang-related crime in the program's assessment area. HPD officers filed incident reports through department-issued laptops and standardized reporting forms. The reporting forms contained a single question that asks if the offense is "gang-related," offering a "yes or no" response option. When making this determination, an officer considered the definition of a gang-related crime, and whether or not the suspect was a gang member. These two determinations often created a great deal of difficulty for officers, particularly for those not trained to recognize gang-related offenses. In addition, three other conditions complicated the incident reporting process:

1. The type of offense creates difficulty in the reporting, particularly for property crimes. Officers often have difficulty establishing whether there is a gang connection at the scene of the crime (absent obvious indicators such as the use of gang tagging or witnesses). Even with witnesses, there is still some question as to whether a group of individuals are members of a "gang" or simply acting in concert. These questions often lead officers to classify most crimes in the area as not gang-related. However, sometimes officers miss critical clues that could point to gang-involvement;
2. The assessment area has a high rate of auto theft and burglary, which are especially difficult to connect to gang members absent witnesses to the crime. However, most officers in the department's gang unit are aware of the break-in patterns of the assessment area's gang members, and can often connect these types of crimes with typical methods of car theft or home invasion.

However, there are only a limited number of officers trained in gang awareness, leaving the majority to record that most crimes scenes do not have enough evidence to point to gang involvement according to the statute's definition; and

3. Officers often “get a feeling” that a crime is gang-related, but they have difficulty collecting enough concrete evidence to make that decision. While officers are often encouraged to trust their instincts, the structure of the reporting form creates a “yes/no” dichotomy that forces officers to report that the incident is not gang related unless they are sure that there is a gang connection.

With the assistance of the HPD's Eastside Division gang officers, the GFS project staff accessed the HPD database to collect and analyze incident reports for crimes classified as gang-related in the assessment area for calendar years 1999–2001. Upon completion of this analysis, project staff and several officers in the Eastside Division noted that the “official” gang-related incident numbers drastically underreported the perceived actual number of gang-related incidents in the assessment area.

To solve this problem, the Eastside Division's gang officers conducted a hard copy review of all Type 1 (violent crimes – murder, aggravated assault, armed robbery, and rape) crime reports between 1999 and 2001.<sup>27</sup> Each officer tasked with completing the hand review received training on how to look for gang indicators and then reviewed each case file to make a determination if the crime was gang-related. As a check on the entire process, an Eastside Division sergeant with the most familiarity with area's gangs conducted a secondary review of each record for quality control purposes. The entire review process took approximately 500 hours among ten officers, who completed the work over a time period of approximately six

---

<sup>27</sup>The total number of crime reports reviewed was approximately 3,000, or 1,000 per year.

weeks. Most of the hours spent completing the record review were paid for though officer overtime or conducted by officers restricted to “light duty.”

When completed, the review process classified almost twice as many incident reports as gang-related, as compared to the number of reports under the “official” definition of gang-related crime. Several interviewees pointed out that the undercount of gang-related incidents would have been more drastic had the GFS project had the resources available to conduct a review of all crimes reported, rather than just violent crime. With the completion of this review process, the Houston GFS project completed its last data collection activity for the assessment process.

### **C. Assessment Report Phase Summary**

*Reported Limitations of the Assessment Manual.* During both site visits by the national evaluation team, several interviewees reported a variety of concerns centered on the OJJDP’s GFS Assessment Manual. One interviewee indicated that committee members and stakeholders had difficulty sticking to the tasks outlined in the assessment manual, while others wanted to pursue activities beyond the scope of the assessment manual’s requirements. Another interviewee indicated that the Assessment Manual was very detailed and prescribed, which while providing a great deal of guidance during the assessment process, limited additional data collection ideas proposed by the research partners and the project staff. Another interviewee pointed out that the expectations outlined in the Assessment Manual were often inappropriate since the grantees are limited by local (financial and human resources) constraints, and may be unable to complete all of the tasks within the prescribed amount of time.

***Difficulty Defining the Assessment Area.*** As described earlier, the project's stakeholders had a lot of confusion in defining their assessment area. Early in the assessment phase, the project's planners decided to assess five police beats in the city's East End. However, a mix-up in communications had several members of the Assessment Team believing that the assessment area had been reduced to only one police beat (11H10). This confusion led to delays in the collection and analysis of the gang crime data, and further delayed the need to collect additional gang-crime information. In addition, the project faced difficulties in identifying common geographic boundaries for collecting data. GFS project staff used zip codes, census blocks, police beats, neighborhood designations, and high school attendance zones to divide the assessment area; however, none of these geographical divisions have common boundaries, making comparisons across the boundaries difficult.

***Communication Challenges.*** Several individuals associated with the Houston project also reported a variety of interpersonal communication problems during the assessment phase. The members chosen for the Assessment Team represented a wide set of personalities which made it difficult in keeping conflict to a minimum. These personality differences led to internal dissention within the Assessment Team. The most prevalent example was the strained relationship between the research partners and members of the GFS project staff. The structure of the Assessment Team, combined with the lack of a Project Coordinator early on, led to resentment and feelings of "too many people making demands of the research partners." Fortunately, most people seemed to agree that the Project Coordinator has done a good job in diffusing these conflicts before they escalated to the point where they severely impacted the

operation of the Assessment Team. However, several interviewees pointed out that power struggles continue to occur between several individuals associated with the project.

*Support from Outside Sources.* One of the most significant achievements of the Houston GFS project was the rallying of support for the project from a wide variety of sources. Once the assessment area was selected, HISD became a strong supporter of the project, with the most significant support coming from the school district's two Steering Committee co-chairs and the public support of the superintendent.<sup>28</sup> HoustonWorks, a private non-profit organization providing employment and training services for Houston residents, also provided a great deal of support by allowing one staff member to serve on the Assessment Team and by providing access to data sets valuable to the assessment process. The Joint City/County Commission also cooperated heavily in the project by offering access to a previous study of the assessment area's health conditions and the availability of social services. Quite possibly the greatest level of support for the assessment process came from the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans, which provided access to community members in the assessment area, organized focus groups, and also supplied information on programs, activities, and the population in the assessment area.

---

<sup>28</sup>However, the relationship with the HCDE, the original educational partner during the first year of the grant, has lessened to the point of non-existence. Once the MAGO decided to focus on the Greater East End, HISD became a much more substantial partner in the process. In addition, HCDE developed an expectation that it would be compensated for the time that staff worked on the project. Once the MAGO informed HCDE that it would not be able to compensate the HCDE representative for time spent assisting the project, HCDE decided to cease involvement.



## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ACTIVITIES

*Determining a Target Population.* Based on the findings from the Assessment Report, the Steering Committee decided to implement project activities in the entire target area, which includes Second Ward, Eastwood/Lawndale, Magnolia Park, Lawndale/Wayside, and Pecan Park/Harrisburg. All targeted youth lived in these communities. The Assessment Report determined that 10 gangs were associated with almost two-thirds of all reported violent gang crimes in the area including murder, robbery, aggravated assault, and rape. Seven of the 10 gangs were more criminally involved. At the time of the Assessment Report, the documented youth population (those ranging from age 15 through 24) of these gangs included 231 youth. Gang intervention specialists and other social service providers commented at the time that the actual number of youth involved was greater.

Using this information, the Steering Committee selected primary and secondary targets.

The primary target population included:

1. Age 15 through 17 years old, and criminally-involved known or suspected members of any of the following gangs: Central Park, Lenox Mob, Puro Segundo Vario, Puro Vatos Locos, South East Crip Cartel, South East Crips, and South East Magnolia; and
2. Age 18 through 24 years old, and criminally-involved known or suspected members of any of the following gangs: Central Park, Lenox Mob, Puro Segundo Vario, Puro Vatos Locos, South East Crip Cartel, South East Crips, and South East Magnolia.

The gangs consisted of mostly Hispanic males. The secondary target population included:

1. Age 15–17 years old, and known or suspected gang members who had been suspended or expelled from school, or who had habitual school discipline problems; and
2. The associates, siblings, or other family members of individuals in the primary target populations.

The primary and secondary target populations aligned with the different intervention strategies. The variance in age distinguished between school age and non-school age youth and the probable probation assignment (juvenile vs. adult).

## **LOGIC MODEL PLANNING PROCESS**

### **A. Logic Model Development Training**

The first step in the logic model planning process occurred during a two-day planning workshop with the Steering Committee and other key project stakeholders (e.g., community leaders, agency stakeholders, project staff, and research partners). In an interactive manner the group reviewed the assessment findings and then identified performance measures that captured outcomes associated with the program’s strategies and activities. The two-day workshop focused on a review of the Assessment Report and implementation plan to determine where additional capacity-building was needed for strategic planning. The workshop focused on the development and institutionalization of a program-specific logic model that measured actual productivity and the integration of feedback mechanisms into strategic planning.

The national evaluation team worked with the project team as needed to refine and revise their logic model. The following section highlights the strategies and activities from the logic model.

## **B. Strategies and Activities**

The initial logic model categorized all of the activities under the five key strategies of OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model: 1) Suppression; 2) Organizational Change and Development; 3) Social Interventions; 4) Opportunities Provision; and 5) Community Mobilization. Exhibit 3-6 presents the aforementioned strategies and summarizes the activities identified by the project in its logic model (shown in plain text) and the status of, or revisions made to, the activities at the conclusion of the project. The revisions to the activities reflect a variety of factors including:

1. Project coordinator turnover and associated shifts in priorities or focus;
2. Staff turnover within partner organizations;
3. Loss of a relevant funding stream by a partner organization (e.g., because of discontinued funding, Youth Connections classes with AAMA were discontinued);
4. Decreases in budgets (e.g., due to budget decreases and pension cuts, GTF officers were leaving; other officers continued the gang-related suppression activities but were not as trained in gang crimes);
5. For each partner organization, the GFS was only a small component within their scope of work, which made consistency and teaming across partners challenging;
6. While the area had numerous agencies focusing on gang *prevention* strategies, a complicating factor was the very limited number of service agencies that provided gang *intervention* services; and
7. Encountering area residents' trepidation to be visibly involved in gang intervention activities (e.g., due to community members' reluctance to participate, GFS did not work on establishing citizens on community patrol groups).

## Exhibit 3-6

### LOGIC MODEL STRATEGIES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

#### STRATEGY: SUPPRESSION

---

Activity: Participants on probation/parole will be placed on specialized gang-offender caseloads. The Harris County Juvenile Probation Department maintains 3 full-time probation officers dedicated to working with gang members. GFS participants enrolled in the program will be assigned to one of these officers (if on probation).

As part of the specialized caseload, probation officers make greater efforts to supervise and interact with youth, making more contacts, requiring youth to take additional random drug tests, and setting gang-specific conditions of probation (such as prohibiting contact with other known gang members).

**Note: This activity occurred as stated. One probation officer was paid to represent GFS clients.**

---

Activity: HPD generates specific assignments for officers based on patterns/trends in gang crimes (analysis of intelligence).

Based on information and guidance obtained through Intervention Team meetings, the HPD examines crime data in the target area (using a dedicated crime analysis officer) and creates officer assignments. During their directed patrols, officers attempt to focus on activities such as meeting with gang members, completing curfew visits, and meetings to refer youth to available services. Some funding for these officers comes from the GFS program.

**Note: This activity was not fully developed as stated. HPD placed officers on special assignments, based on their interest rather than on crime analysis data.**

---

Activity: HPD provides critical incident response services based on gang activity in the target area. HPD will monitor and respond to critical incident reports by target area residents with a focus on addressing reports that may be related to gang activity. Using gang intelligence and case management data from the Intervention Team, the HPD can better address resident concerns with gang activity, particularly when GFS participants may be involved.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

---

Activity: HPD and probation officers increase collaboration when interacting with youth. HPD officers and probation officers will work jointly to complete interactions with youth, such as home visits, school visits, and curfew calls. HPD will also provide support to probation officers by assisting in the enforcement of probation and parole conditions.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

---

Activity: Conduct INS interviews with violent gang offenders.

The GFS program will work with one local INS officer to ensure that youth have appropriate immigration paperwork. The INS officer will also work directly with youth as a counselor, asking why youth continue to commit violent crimes.

**Note: GFS staff referred undocumented youths to organizations that can provide necessary assistance rather than working specifically with one INS officer.**

---

## **STRATEGY: ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE & DEVELOPMENT**

---

**Activity:** Convene weekly Intervention Team meetings.

Weekly Intervention Team meetings will consider new referrals to the program as well as develop, maintain, review, and update the progress targeted youth make as part of their respective case management plans.

Agencies on the Intervention Team include: GFS staff and outreach workers, Houston Police Department, Harris County Juvenile Probation Department, Harris County Constables, HISD and schools in target area, HISD police officers, Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (AAMA) – Barrios Unidos program, Community Education Partners, HoustonWorks, ALTA Charter School, Early Intervention Team, and the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work.

**Note: *The Intervention Team meetings begun as weekly meetings, but were scaled down to biweekly, and then to monthly meetings. The main challenge has been to get the needed staff representation at the meetings.***

---

**Activity:** Houston Police Department reestablishes the South Central Gang Task Force

**Note: *This activity was not developed as stated due to budget cuts and GTF officers leaving. However, HPD officers complete a number of gang-related suppression activities, including directed patrols in gang-heavy areas. A citywide complicating factor has been that some officers patrolling the areas are not fully trained in gang-related crime***

---

**Activity:** Support the GEAR program for schools in the Greater East End.

GFS staff will support the pre-existing GEAR (Gang Education, Awareness, and Resistance) program by identifying key people at each school to receive additional training on gang-related topics. For example, some training will focus on maintaining consistent communication between GEAR staff and community programs to ensure that GEAR's focus looks beyond the school grounds. GEAR staff will also be encouraged to implement case management techniques with their youth and to talk with parents on a regular basis.

**Note: *This activity was not developed due to staffing problems.***

---

**Activity:** Conduct training sessions on gang-crime identification for HPD officers in target area.

GFS will provide formal training sessions for police officers with patrol or investigative responsibilities in the target area as requested by HPD. These trainings will cover topics such as information updates on active gangs in the area and how to be more effective in identifying gang-related crimes. These trainings will occur approximately once every quarter. GFS staff also provides informal training to HPD and HISD police officers on the Intervention Team by encouraging information sharing and collaboration.

**Note: *This activity occurred as stated. GFS staff has partnered with a statewide multi-agency task force (Texas Violent Gang Task Force) to conduct the trainings.***

---

**Activity:** Improve identification and tracking of gang-related crimes on HISD campuses.

HISD officers will attend formal training sessions mentioned previously. In addition, HISD police officers on the Intervention Team receive continuous information and intelligence on gang activities in the area.

**Note: *This activity was not fully implemented. Outreach workers attended all HISD training meetings and conducted informal presentations. HISD only recently formed a small, 4-person, gang task force to cover all schools in the district.***

---

**Activity:** Increase Constable access to, and use of, HPD reporting system.

The GFS program, HPD, and the appropriate Constable precinct are expected to share information on potential and current GFS participants. To encourage this participation, GFS staff work to ensure that HPD and Constable officers input reports and other relevant information into their counterpart's information system.

**Note: *This activity has only recently, and partially, begun to be implemented. In early 2007, HPD formed a citywide gang unit's gang tracker program and invited GFS to the meeting to start the dialogue for information sharing. Similarly, dialogue between GFS and the Constable's office was been ongoing although formal partnering has not been achieved.***

---

**Activity:** Utilize NYGC case management system and regular Intervention Team meetings to increase cross-agency information sharing.

**Note: *This activity occurred as stated.***

---

## STRATEGY: SOCIAL INTERVENTIONS

---

**Activity:** Outreach workers and partner agencies refer youth to GFS program.

Outreach workers and partner agencies complete referrals on youth and submit them to the Intervention Team for consideration. During weekly meetings, Intervention Team members discuss each referral and determine if youth should be officially 'intaked' into the program. Prior to the Intervention Team considering the referral, the outreach workers may meet with the youth to gather additional information on the youth and their gang involvement. Youth that are well known by the referring agency or other partner agencies will not go through this process. Agencies that can refer youth to the program include: Houston Police Department: Gang Unit, South Central Division, and Eastside Division; HISD Community Education Partners (alternative school); Harris County Juvenile Probation Dept.; AAMA – Barrios Unidos program; HISD target schools (3 middle and 2 high); Early Intervention Team (MAGO); Outreach Workers.

**Note:** *GFS has processed over 100 referrals. Most referrals have been through outreach, schools, and juvenile probation department.*

---

**Activity:** Develop individualized case management plans for each participant.

The Intervention Team collectively develops the case management plan for each youth enrolled into the program. The project team (which includes the GFS outreach workers and the project coordinator) formally document the case management plan for each youth on the MIS system.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

**Activity:** Refer participants in need of substance abuse treatment to appropriate programs.

When youth are first enrolled into the program, an outreach worker conducts an initial interview and informal assessment with them. If the outreach worker (or any other Intervention Team member) decides the youth needs substance abuse treatment services, that individual brings the concern to the full Intervention Team. The Intervention Team can then refer the youth to one of three agencies for the services: Riverside General Hospital (inpatient treatment), Casa Phoenix (AAMA inpatient), or AAMA outpatient treatment. The Harris County Juvenile Probation counselor is also available to conduct assessments of youth and make referrals to other agencies.

Formal assessments of youth substance use are made once the youth are referred to the above agencies.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

**Activity:** Outreach workers will complete initial home visits & subsequent monthly contacts with parents/guardians of GFS juvenile participants.

Once youth are recommended for enrollment in the GFS program, the outreach workers make an initial home visit to meet with the youth's parents or guardians. The outreach worker conducts an initial assessment of the family and home environment and determines the communication tendencies of the family. At this time, paperwork for enrollment will also be completed.

After the initial visit, both outreach workers and probation officers will work collaboratively to complete at least one home visit a week. These visits serve to maintain consistent communication with the family and to establish a rapport. The parents will also be provided with an update on the youth's progress.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated. GFS also contracted with a parent specialist to conduct subsequent home visits.*

---

**Activity:** Intervention Team members utilize interaction with parents to identify secondary intervention targets (siblings/associates).

During contact with parents, any Intervention Team members can identify siblings or friends of GFS youth that might make good secondary clients. Outreach workers, probation officers, AAMA staff, and police officers will have the most contact with youth and will likely make the most referrals for secondary clients.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

**Activity:** Expand access and participation in parent support groups in the target area.

The greater East End offers several different types of parenting groups. The GFS program (and the outreach workers in particular) will work with these groups, and the parents of GFS participants to encourage participation. Local parent groups include: the AAMA Youth Connections parenting group; the Houston Area Women's Center group offering services focusing on domestic violence and sexual assault; the Advance parent support group which provide cultural enrichment activities; the Riverside General

---

---

Hospital parenting group for parents with youth receiving substance abuse treatment; and various school related support groups such as the PTA.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated. GFS first contracted with AAMA to provide parent meetings. Subsequently GFS staff, with a hired parent specialist, held weekly parents meetings.**

---

### **STRATEGY: OPPORTUNITIES PROVISION**

---

**Activity:** Provide tattoo removal services as necessary to program youth.

During initial intake and assessment, GFS project staff determine if youth would like tattoos removed. Those youth meeting eligibility criteria (24 years old or younger with visible tattoos) are referred to the MAGO D-Tag program. D-Tag participants receive tattoo removal services free of charge once per month, and in exchange must complete 6 hours of volunteer or community service hours for each tattoo removal session. Youth are allowed to count hours working with the GFS program towards this requirement.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated. GFS staff developed selection criteria for screening youths, based on their stated motivators for tattoo removal.**

---

**Activity:** Provide educational opportunities (and academic remediation programs) for appropriate GFSC participants.

During initial intake and assessment, GFS project staff determine if youth are in need of academic remediation services. Through the Intervention Team, youth in need of alternative school placement will be referred to the Sanchez alternative High School. Youth in need of GED services will be referred to the University of Houston's GED program.

Probation officers also utilize a more formalized assessment tool to determine a youth's educational needs. Based on these assessments, probation officers can also make recommendations to the Intervention Team for academic services.

**Note: Since the second year of funding, the activity has occurred as stated.**

---

**Activity:** Enhance job training and apprenticeship opportunities for appropriate GFSC participants.

Once GFS youth have stabilized in the program and continue to demonstrate willingness to decrease involvement in the gang lifestyle, project staff and the Intervention Team will begin to refer the youth to the HoustonWorks program for job training services.

Youth will be provided with services such as resume building, interview techniques, and other job readiness skills.

**Note: This activity was not fully developed. GFS hired educator provided assistance to limited numbers of GFSC participants in resume writing and interviewing skills.**

---

**Activity:** Refer participating youth to AAMA Youth Connections classes.

All youth enrolled in the GFS program are referred to AAMA's weekly Youth Connections classes. Youth are not required to attend (although probation or parole might require attendance) but are strongly encouraged to do so as part of GFS. The 10-week Youth Connections program focuses on improving family bonding, anger management, the development of communication skills, and relationship building. Youth must attend all 10 sessions to complete the program. If they miss a single session, they must begin the program again.

Parents of these youth are also encouraged to attend similar classes offered by AAMA that cover similar topics from the view of parents.

**Note: This activity was begun, but was discontinued due to the service provider's (AAMA) lost funding stream.**

---

**Activity:** Enroll youth in the MAGO Early Intervention Team program.

GFS participants will be recommended to the MAGO Early Intervention Team (EIT) for additional case management as necessary. In the EIT, youth will work with court counselors to attempt to address outstanding issues relating to their criminal history. Youth can work with EIT to clear previous tickets or warrants if they meet criteria established by the EIT. Since the EIT works closely with the GFS program, many of the conditions for youth relate to their participation in GFS activities. This relationship provides a great deal of potential leverage over the youth for GFS staff.

After 90 days of participation in EIT, each youth is provided a recommendation by EIT staff to the youth's court counselors. A good recommendation (youth have been compliant with all conditions set for them) will result in clearing of past criminal charges or outstanding warrants and tickets.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

---

---

**Activity:** Outreach workers provide appropriate resource referrals to parents who demonstrate specific problems or needs.

Through regular meetings with parents, outreach workers identify any needs for services in the family. Parents (or other family members) could be referred to a variety of services including: food assistance, alcohol and drug treatment, legal assistance, job training, counseling services, and educational assistance.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

### **STRATEGY: COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION**

---

**Activity:** Maintain quarterly Steering Committee meetings.

The quarterly Steering Committee meetings will continue, with the project coordinator providing updates on work of the Intervention Team and progress towards GFS goals and objectives. Steering Committee members will also be provided the opportunity to propose and enact modifications to the GFS programming or service area that are deemed necessary.

**Note:** *This activity began as stated. Subsequently, the Steering Committee meetings stopped altogether due to staff turnover, but then restarted as monthly meetings.*

---

**Activity:** Provide information and support to town hall meetings in target area.

An annual town hall meeting takes place in the target area that covers a number of neighborhood and safety issues. The GFS program will work with city representatives to provide information on the program and its successes at the meeting. The GFS program will also offer information on the current neighborhood gang culture. In future years, the GFS hopes to host the meeting, or place the entire focus of the meeting on gang-related issues in the community.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

**Activity:** Recruit parents completing AAMA parenting classes to provide peer-to-peer support for current parents of GFS participants.

The GFS program staff will work with AAMA to identify and recruit parents who have completed the AAMA Youth Connections parenting classes. These parents will serve as mentors and advisors to parents who currently have youth enrolled in the GFS program and the AAMA Youth Connections program. The parent mentors and advisors will be available to provide support, advice, and other guidance as needed.

**Note:** *This activity was modified from the structured peer-to-peer support to more informal supportive interaction. Parents who had completed the parenting classes were encouraged to continue to attend the parent group and support parents of current participants.*

---

**Activity:** Encourage regular participation in Positive Interaction Program (PIP) meetings.

The HPD substations offer these community meetings that provide residents with important information on crime trends in their area. The GFS program will assist in these meetings by providing information on gang trends and offering training on community gang prevention activities.

**Note:** *This activity was begun, but was discontinued due to a lack of attendance in the meetings.*

---

**Activity:** Work with civic clubs to establish and maintain citizens on patrol groups.

Several citizens on patrol groups currently exist in the target area. These groups monitor neighborhood criminal activity and report suspicious incidents to HPD using two-way radios. The HPD community liaison officer is responsible for overseeing the groups. The GFS program will support the groups by assisting in communication between residents and HPD officers, as well as offering needed equipment to residents. GFS staff will also provide training on communicating with police officers as needed to residents.

**Note:** *This activity was not developed as stated due to residents' trepidation and reluctance to participate in community patrols. However, parents have been recruited to participate in school-based parent patrols, particularly at middle school. Volunteer parents patrol before and after school and during lunch and have direct radio contact with the campus officer.*

---

**Activity:** Utilize community residents and volunteers to increase monitoring of school campuses.

This monitoring is currently underway, however, the GFS staff will work with community residents to encourage more volunteers to contribute greater amounts of time. The GFS program also provides radios and gang awareness training to these volunteers. The volunteers walk around school campuses and serve as an additional level of campus security by reporting suspicious incidents to HISD and HPD police officers.

---



---

**Note: This activity occurred as stated and has been fully implemented at one middle school with other schools in the target area expressing interest in implementation.**

---

**Activity:** Train community agencies on gang awareness, crime/intelligence reporting procedures and outreach techniques.

GFS staff provides these trainings as requested by the Intervention Team agencies. In addition, other community agencies can request trainings at any time. GFS also seeks out potential training opportunities in target area neighborhoods.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

---

**Activity:** Generate media stories promoting the Gang-Free Schools project, project success stories, and encouraging community mobilization.

MAGO and GFS staff will work to promote media coverage whenever possible. The intent of this effort is to provide information on the program to the public and to share success stories.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

---

Source: Houston's Logic Model

## ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

### Past and Current Gang Violence Reduction Programs

In Houston, OPSDP has historically provided the majority of gang prevention and intervention activities. OPSDP implements and supports prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies directed at decreasing gang violence, assisting victims of crime, and coordinating and supporting community youth and anti-drug programs. Gang violence reduction programs operated by OPSDP and other area organizations are summarized below.

#### Past Activities

Within the OPSDP, MAGO is the agency primarily responsible for the bulk of gang prevention and intervention strategies. In 1994, Mayor Brown created this office to serve as a proactive complement to gang suppression activities of HPD. MAGO initially began with very limited funding, but quickly expanded through the awarding of two grants. The first of these was a 1997 U.S. Department of Justice grant for a Weed and Seed program, which continues to this day. The second major grant awarded to MAGO came through the Texas Governor's Office,

which supported the Gang Violence Reduction Team (both the Weed and Seed program and the Gang Violence Reduction Team are described further later in this section).

MAGO works directly with youth and families to reduce juvenile delinquency and gang-related crime through a series of initiatives and partnerships involving law enforcement, criminal justice agencies, schools, community service providers, and the general public. In addition to the Gang-Free Schools project, MAGO oversees several other gang-related initiatives, including:

***The Gang Violence Reduction Initiative.*** The Governor's Criminal Justice Division funds this program, which attempts to reduce juvenile crime and gang violence throughout the Houston area using counseling, mentoring, mediation, referral services, and positive interactions with members of the criminal justice system.<sup>29</sup> Most of the activities are conducted by the Gang Violence Reduction Team (GVRT), which includes three Gang Intervention Specialists who work directly with gang- involved and at-risk youth.

GVRT serves as one of the primary gang outreach programs in the Houston area. Prior to GVRT, the city had no comprehensive gang outreach programs and all gang related initiatives revolved around public education activities (through MAGO) or gang suppression activities (through HPD). While GVRT has a citywide focus, most of its activities have been in the city's southeast (including the Greater East End) and southwest neighborhoods.

---

<sup>29</sup>Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Drug Policy - City of Houston, "New Council Member Briefing Materials - Executive Summary," December 14, 2001.

GVRT is tasked with making contact with 500 youth per year through individual counseling sessions, problem mediation, and referrals to other services in the area. GVRT also provides victim assistance services and education and awareness sessions to the general public. Each of the three GVRT staff members spends a majority of his time on case management issues and individual counseling of gang members and associates.

GVRT works with a number of city and community agencies to coordinate the delivery of services to current and potential gang members. GVRT works directly with 12 officers in the HPD assigned to gang related crime and they jointly share information to support their respective activities.<sup>30</sup> GVRT also works closely with the Juvenile Probation Department to keep track of gang-involved youth who are on probation. These probationers make up the bulk of GVRT's caseload. In addition, GVRT formed a partnership with the Texas Youth Commission and takes referrals of youth who have completed their incarceration or are on parole and have moved to the Houston area.<sup>31</sup> GVRT also works with the Victim's Compensation Office (run through the Attorney General's office in Austin) by referring people who have been the victims of gang related crime. GVRT also serves call-ins and referrals from community organizations such as the Association for the Advancement of Mexican-Americans (AAMA) for services such as tattoo removal or employment services. The HISD (school) police department formed a partnership with GVRT, which provides training to HISD police officers centered on recognizing and dealing with gang-related crimes. In addition, GVRT works with community organizations and block groups to

---

<sup>30</sup>Each of these officers is assigned to police substations throughout the city in areas that have a high incidence of gang related crime.

<sup>31</sup>The Texas Youth Commission (TYC) is the state's juvenile corrections agency. The TYC deals with the state's most serious and chronically delinquent offenders who have committed their crimes when they are between the ages of 10 and 17, although they can remain under the jurisdiction of the TYC until the age of 21. The TYC often contracts with private or local government agencies to oversee probation and parole activities for youth. (From the TYC website, Executive Director's Message, March 2000: <http://www.tyc.state.tx.us/about/execcdir.html>).

track and report gang related activity in their neighborhoods. GVRT works very closely with the GFS program by providing information on the target area and identifying gang members for interviews conducted by the Assessment Team as part of the data collection process.

***The Graffiti Abatement Program.*** This initiative operates through a partnership with the Harris County Community Supervisions and Corrections Department. As part of the program, crews of adult community service workers are taken across the city to clean up graffiti on public and private property. The program also seeks to enhance community involvement in the reporting of graffiti as well as increase police surveillance and the investigation of graffiti and related vandalism.<sup>32</sup> Note that the Houston GFS project incorporates graffiti abatement activities into its current approach as well.

***The Juvenile Accountability Court Program (JACP).*** The U.S. Department of Justice's Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant program funded this program. The JACP is a court-based case management program for juvenile offenders operated within the City of Houston's Municipal Court. Under JACP, judges collaborate closely with case managers to determine alternative sentences for youth cited for truancy, curfew violations, and Class C misdemeanors. Rather than paying fines, the youth participate in violence prevention workshops, receive direct services, or are tasked with participation in community service projects designed to address gang involvement, substance abuse, anger management, and family issues.

---

<sup>32</sup>Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Drug Policy - City of Houston, "New Council Member Briefing Materials - Executive Summary," December 14, 2001.

Police officers work closely with parents to inform them of the alternative sentences offered to youth and oversee the successful completion of the sentences.<sup>33</sup>

***The Truancy Reduction Demonstration Project.*** This pilot initiative in the Gulfton community<sup>34</sup> educates students, parents, and the general community on the value of education and school attendance, as well as legal consequences of truancy. Staff members work with a variety of individuals in the police department, community agencies, and the judicial system to provide early identification, assessment, and intervention services for truant youth and their families.<sup>35</sup>

***Weed and Seed Program.*** Houston's Weed and Seed program is funded through the U.S. Department of Justice and is coordinated through MAGO. Three communities in Houston have received federal designations as Weed and Seed neighborhoods (Gulfton, the Greater Fifth Ward, and the Near Northside) and receive funds to implement community strategies to decrease criminal activity, expand youth programs, and increase neighborhood vitalization efforts.<sup>36</sup>

***Houston Police Department Gang Task Force.*** In 1994, at the time MAGO was created, Mayor Brown also established the HPD's Gang Task Force. The HPD Gang Task Force

---

<sup>33</sup>Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Drug Policy - City of Houston, "New Council Member Briefing Materials - Executive Summary," December 14, 2001.

<sup>34</sup>The Gulfton community is not in the GFS assessment area, but does have a large juvenile delinquency and gang problem. However, the Greater East End (assessment area) consistently has a larger gang and juvenile delinquency problem than Gulfton, as reported by MAGO staff.

<sup>35</sup>Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Drug Policy - City of Houston, "New Council Member Briefing Materials - Executive Summary," December 14, 2001.

<sup>36</sup>Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Drug Policy - City of Houston, "New Council Member Briefing Materials - Executive Summary," December 14, 2001.

includes over 100 active police officers<sup>37</sup> that provide a high-profile presence in neighborhoods with significant gang activity. Members of the HPD Gang Task Force are assigned to substations within areas of the city that have high levels of gang-related crime and traditionally have had a suppression focus, with little or no intervention or prevention activities. However, HPD negotiated a new employment contract that awards the members of the Gang Task Force with higher pay grades, but also includes higher levels of scrutiny for these individuals as they will be expected to take on gang intervention and prevention roles in addition to their suppression activities.

HPD Eastside Division's Gang Task Force Officers collaborated with GVRT on a pilot project in the Greater East End. These officers received training from GVRT's Gang Intervention Specialists on how to engage gang members, in order to establish more positive relationships with youth in the area. Officers who encounter youth with serious problems refer them directly to GVRT for follow-up. This collaboration was the first attempt by HPD to expand the roles of the department's Gang Task Force Officers beyond their traditional suppression and enforcement roles and more into community policing and prevention.<sup>38</sup>

***After-School Achievement Program.*** In addition to the activities conducted under MAGO, the OPSDP funds alternative after-school programming through the After-School Achievement Program (ASAP). OPSDP funded ASAP in 1997 as a community-based, collaborative effort to offer children structured and supervised activities to reduce juvenile crime and victimization between the hours of 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Each school or community organization that

---

<sup>37</sup>This number includes the 12 police officers assigned to police substations who work directly with the GVRT.

<sup>38</sup>In a similar initiative, the GVRT is providing training to HISD police officers on topics such as recognizing campus gang activity, how to engage gang involved youth, and how to prevent gang related crime.

participates in the program develops its own curriculum based on feedback from students, parents, and community members. The curriculum focuses on four key program component areas: academic enhancement, enrichment, skill development, and community involvement.

***D-Tag.*** The Houston Parks and Recreation Department operates the D-Tag program, as part of its Youth Safety Programs. D-Tag is a free tattoo removal program offered to individuals 19 years old or younger who wish to remove tattoos that identify them as gang members or engaged in anti-social behavior. The laser-removal sessions occur in a community center, and youth who participate are required to complete volunteer work and community service in exchange for the tattoo removal services.<sup>39</sup>

## **Current Activities**

***Gang Education, Awareness, and Resistance (G.E.A.R.).*** HISD operates this campus-based intervention program that trains administrators and teachers to identify gang-related behavior in students.<sup>40</sup> G.E.A.R. training has been offered since 1998, and is provided by HISD officials in the Office of Special Programs to G.E.A.R. contacts on each campus, who then train other individuals at their respective schools. Individuals receive training on how to recognize potential gang activity and how to report these incidents to HISD police officers.<sup>41</sup> Although this activity began prior to the Houston GFS award, the Houston GFS team works collaboratively with them to offer it as part of their services.

---

<sup>39</sup>City of Houston, Youth Programs and Services, August 2001.

<sup>40</sup>Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and the Texas Performance Review, Children First: A Report on the Houston Independent School District, October 1996, website: <http://www.window.state.tx.us/tpr/tspr/hisd/hisdto.html>, see Chapter 12: Safety and Security.

<sup>41</sup>HISD Department of Research and Accountability, Executive Summary: Youth Enrichment 1999-2000, no date, website: [http://dept.houstonisd.org/research/Reports/Executive%20Summaries/1999-2000/youth\\_enrichment.htm](http://dept.houstonisd.org/research/Reports/Executive%20Summaries/1999-2000/youth_enrichment.htm).

The G.E.A.R. program was identified as being extremely influential in changing the perception of gang activity on school campuses and as getting teachers and administrators to recognize that all campuses have some level of gang activity. This change in perception was significant and made all HISD individuals more receptive to initiatives that deal with gang activity. G.E.A.R. also served as the first cooperative effort between MAGO and HISD, establishing a relationship that contributed to HISD's involvement in the GFS project and full buy-in from the HISD superintendent.

***Barrios Unidos.*** The Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (AAMA) operates the *Barrios Unidos* program in Houston's GFS target area. This program provides intensive intervention and prevention activities to the area's Hispanic youth who are between the ages of 13 and 17. These youth confront and cope with a variety of risk factors, including: family violence, difficulty in school, experimentation with drugs and alcohol, participation in gang-related activities, and active participation in gangs. The *Barrios Unidos* program provides these youth with a structured schedule of educational groups and alternative activities after school and with referrals to other area services as necessary.<sup>42</sup>

AAMA directly serves people in the Greater East End by offering education, health and human services, and community development activities to at-risk youth and their families. In addition to *Barrios Unidos*, AAMA operates the George I. Sanchez (GIS) Charter High School that serves neighborhood youth and is one of the schools in the GFS target area. Founded in 1970, GIS provides an alternative educational environment for students having trouble

---

<sup>42</sup>Association for the Advancement of Mexican-Americans, "What Does AAMA Do?", no date.



succeeding in traditional high school settings. The juvenile justice system and probation refer most students at GIS. GIS offers a variety of services for its students, including free day care, mentoring, tutoring, and academic counseling.<sup>43</sup>

AAMA and the *Barrios Unidos* program serve as a critical link to the assessment area for the GFS project. AAMA's long-term presence in the community and variety of programs offered to youth and parents in the Greater East End make them an ideal GFS partner. No formal agreement was made between the Houston GFS project and AAMA, rather an informal agreement was decided upon where the GFS project could survey AAMA's program participants and, in exchange, AAMA would receive copies of all data and information collected, as well as copies of any reports or analyses that resulted from the data. This provided an ideal situation for both parties, as the GFS project was able to gain access to individuals who lived in the assessment area through AAMA's programs, while AAMA obtained data on their service population that they did not have the resources to compile on their own.

***Joint Probation Curfew Enforcement Visits.*** One of the newer activities of Houston's GFS project is the Law Enforcement Assistance Project (LEAP) Overtime Initiative. One of the functions undertaken by this activity is increased supervision of targeted youth who are under probation/parole orders, specifically curfews. To achieve this, police and probation teams visit the target youth in their homes to conduct unscheduled curfew checks. According to the participating officers, these visits enhance the youth's adherence to the GFS program and their compliance with the curfews set by the court.

---

<sup>43</sup>Association for the Advancement of Mexican-Americans, "What Does AAMA Do?", no date.

During a typical visit to the home of a youth with probation curfew restrictions, police officers identify themselves after knocking on the clients' doors and announce to the parents or other adults that they were conducting a curfew check. For those youth that are home, the officers conduct a short interview, do a cursory inspection of their homes and the clients' rooms, and speak with the parents and others present. Police officers have noted that they have witnessed the benefit for the young probationers when they complied with their curfews, and their parents were involved in monitoring their school attendance and their association with inappropriate peers.

*Education Training, Gang Awareness Presentations, and Town Hall Meetings.* The Houston GFS team has conducted several training activities and awareness events. An illustrative example occurred at Riverside Hospital's Substance Abuse Treatment Program. On June 21, 2005, the GFS project's outreach workers conducted training at Riverside General Hospital's inpatient substance abuse treatment program for 30 youth (26 males and 4 females). The hospital asked the GFS staff to conduct the training, and the program was designed to dispel myths and deglamorize gangs and the gang lifestyle, as well as to share the dangers and consequences of gang membership on the youth, their siblings, and families. The training concluded with a short exercise during which the group was broken up into teams, and each given the assignment to rank in importance three hypothetical life-choice scenarios that the participants might face—lack of a job, criminal tickets or warrants, and alcohol or drug abuse. The participating youth seemed to respond well to the training, and a few of them engaged the GFS trainers in extended dialog about gang activities and drug abuse.

***Graffiti Abatement Program and Community Clean-Ups.*** As mentioned above, the Houston GFS team operates a graffiti abatement program. Juvenile probationers, including several GFS clients, participate in the once-per-week Graffiti Abatement Program to satisfy community service requirements ordered by the Harris County Juvenile Court. Houston residents can report graffiti in their neighborhood to a gang liaison officer at HPD. The liaison officer compiles the reports and secures permission from property owners to conduct the removal. The liaison officer also works with the probation department to identify the youth who will participate. The program purposefully selects youth that are not from the area in which the abatement takes place in order to avoid retaliation against the youth or their families for removing the graffiti and to give those participating an opportunity to visit other areas of the city. The GFS team also hosts community clean-ups as part of its program. Participants have reported that this really makes a difference in their neighborhoods.

***Other Activities.*** In addition to providing comprehensive case management, the Houston GFS team undertakes many other activities. For example, they offer parent and client support groups that focus on a wide array of issues that go beyond just focusing on the individual client, but take into account many family issues. The project team also offers family and education specialists that provide counseling on job readiness, resume writing, tutoring, mentoring, and other education-related issues. Other activities are geared toward providing the youth entertaining activities such as bowling, baseball, swimming, and camping events that they might otherwise not have an opportunity to participate in. The Houston GFS team also sponsors highly successful events such as the Halloween parties in the target area.

## **ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE**

### **A. The Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee represented over 25 different organizations and groups including MAGO, the Harris County Department of Education, HPD, HISD, relevant city and county judicial and probation offices, media outlets, the University of Houston, and an assortment of community and nonprofit organizations that serve the larger Houston area as well as the Greater East End (see Exhibit 3-7).

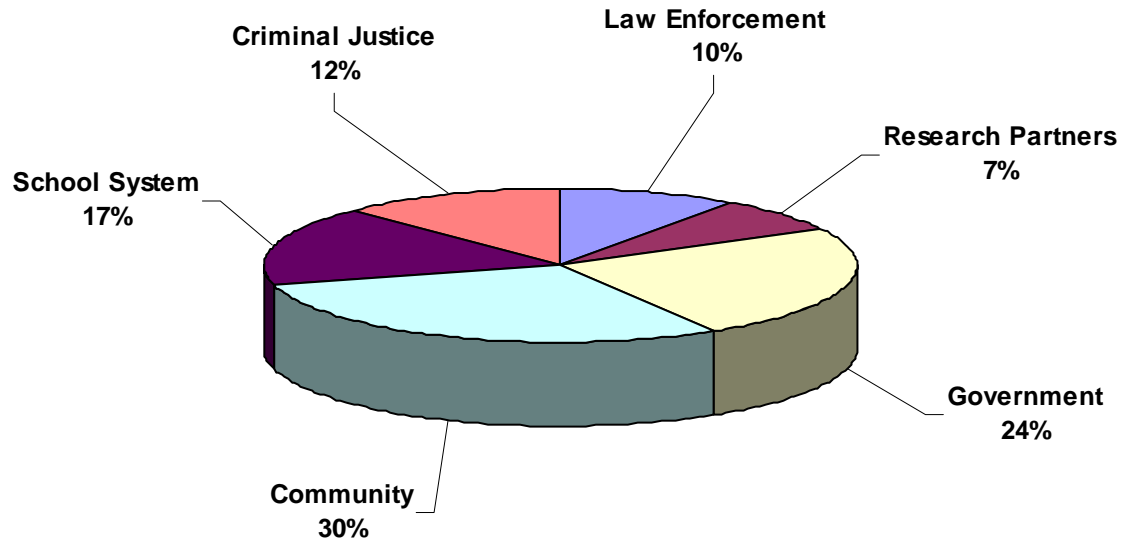
The Steering Committee leadership included one individual from HPD's Eastside Division and two representatives from the Special Projects Division of HISD (these three individuals are co-chairs of the Steering Committee). Prior to the involvement of these individuals, the director of MAGO led the committee.

In April 2002, the HPD co-chair was transferred out of the Eastside Division, and therefore had to give up his Steering Committee responsibilities. The out-going co-chair was described as being a "hard act to follow" but those interviewed indicated that the representatives sent from HPD's Eastside Division filled in quite well.

Despite the diverse representation of organizations found on the current Steering Committee, several interviewees pointed out that some key individuals were lacking. For example, one person commented that greater representation was needed from judges and constables in the assessment area. Several interviewees also commented that parents (and other family members) of gang-involved youth living in the assessment area should be on the Steering

### Exhibit 3-7

#### INITIAL HOUSTON STEERING COMMITTEE COMPOSITION



Committee. A few interviewees also pointed out that greater representation was needed from administrators and teachers serving in schools located in the assessment area.

The Project Coordinator indicated that increased representation of youth directly impacted by the gang problem in the assessment area is needed. Most individuals agreed that gaining some form of youth representation on the Steering Committee was necessary. At the January 2002 Steering Committee meeting, one high school student attended and provided several valuable comments on violence and gang related trends in area schools, but this individual was not a regular participant in the meetings. Efforts to have a greater youth presence on the committee floundered because a candidate could not be identified before the beginning of the summer vacation.

The Steering Committee has benefited greatly from having representation by a school district board member and the two HISD co-chairs. Houston's GFS project has enjoyed easy access to HISD through these individuals, providing a number of avenues for cooperation with the school district.

While the lack of a Project Coordinator led to some disorganization in some of the early Steering Committee meetings, committee members reported that the committee has functioned smoothly since the Project Coordinator was hired. Several interviewees noted that the Project Coordinator was instrumental in structuring the committee meetings, dealing with scheduling concerns, and diffusing conflicts. Interviewees also noted that the members have been more receptive to listening to other opinions and have been more willing to engage in constructive discussions.

Exhibit 3-8 presents a list of organizations represented on the Steering Committee.

## **B. The Project Coordinator, Street Outreach Workers, and Research Partner**

*Project Coordinator.* The original response to the GFS solicitation submitted for Houston called for the hiring of the Project Coordinator position through HCDE. However, the Assessment Team determined that the hiring process could be completed in a timelier manner through the MAGO. Once the decision was made to hire the Project Coordinator through the MAGO, a Hiring Committee was formed, and the OPSDP began to accept applications. This Hiring Committee consisted of the following individuals: Richard Farias - Tejano Center for

**Exhibit 3-8**

**ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED ON  
THE HOUSTON GFS STEERING COMMITTEE**

Association for the Advancement of Mexican-Americans	Houston Area Woman’s Center
Boys and Girls Club of Houston	Houston Independent School District - Office of Special Projects
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms	Houston Independent School District Police Department
City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department	Houston Police Department - Eastside Division
Communities in Schools Houston	Houston Police Department - Criminal Intelligence Division
Community Education Partners	HoustonWorks
Crisis Intervention of Houston	Joint City County Commission on Children
Eastwood Civic Association	Mayor’s Anti-Gang Office
George I. Sanchez Charter High School	National Latino Peace Officers Association - Houston
Greater East End Management District	Riverside General Hospital
Harris County Community Supervision and Corrections	Salvation Army
Harris County Department of Education	Technology for All/Mission Milby
Harris County District Attorney’s Office	Tejano Center for Community Concerns
Harris County Juvenile Probation Office	Telemundo
Harris County Precinct 6	University of Houston – Community Projects
Harris County Sheriff’s Office	University of Houston - Graduate School of Social Work
Hispanic Broadcasting Corporation	Victory Outreach Church

Community Services; Carlton Land - HISD Special Projects (co-chair of Steering Committee); Gail Revis - HISD Special Projects (co-chair of Steering Committee); Ernest Lopez - Victory Outreach Church; Ann McFarland - University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work (research partner); and Julia Ramirez - Harris County Juvenile Probation Department.

While the Hiring Committee identified their preferred candidate (Eli Arce) for Project Coordinator by October 2001, there were significant delays in the actual hiring process that

prevented the desired individual from actually being hired until December 2001. Delays in the paperwork necessary to complete the hiring pushed back the original starting date for the Project Coordinator in mid- November until the first week of December. However, the hiring of this individual continued to be met with delays, as the Project Coordinator had to first be brought on as a temporary employee, and was only later hired full-time once the appropriate paperwork was finally completed.

This delay in the hiring of a Project Coordinator led to several problems with the GFS project in Houston. Interviewees pointed out that the Steering Committee did not function effectively during the period of time before the Project Coordinator was hired. In addition, data collection efforts were also delayed, as no individual was able to coordinate the data collection process during this time.

However, once the Project Coordinator was hired formally, he was able to transition into the position and has done an admirable job in bringing the Houston GFS project close to meeting anticipated timelines during the assessment phase. The new Project Coordinator quickly gained the respect of the Steering Committee, took a leadership role and offered some much needed coordination to the Assessment Team, and allowed the co-chairs to run the Steering Committee meetings.

The Project Coordinator viewed his role as that of a “big-picture” person who provides hands-on administration by supervising the day-to-day activities of the project. The Project Coordinator in effect works behind the scenes to ensure that the GFS project operates smoothly



throughout each of its phases. For the Assessment Phase, the Project Coordinator schedules Steering Committee meetings and makes all necessary contacts to ensure that these meetings are successful. As part of this, the Project Coordinator works closely with the Steering Committee co-chairs and provides a regular update on the progress of the grant at each meeting. The Project Coordinator also leads and oversees the work of the Assessment Team and will have primary responsibility for ensuring the proper completion of the Assessment Report.

Mr. Arce served as the Project Coordinator during the assessment phase and subsequently resigned. Robert Tagle then served as the second Project Coordinator. Mr. Tagle was instrumental during the implementation of project activities and the organizing of the outreach workers, at the beginning of the implementation phase. (In 2006, Mr. Tagle decided to pursue another law enforcement career option). Once Mr. Tagle left the Project Coordinator position, Victor Gonzalez informally assumed the position. Mr. Gonzalez's role as the interim Project Coordinator was primarily to preserve project relationships established with other agencies, as well as oversee regular program functions, like supervising outreach staff, and ensuring usage of NYGC information management system. Prior to, and concurrently with serving in the interim position, Mr. Gonzalez served as the Director of Program Services for MAGO, working on other similar gang-related projects. During his time at MAGO, prior to the GFS program, Mr. Gonzalez had worked with Mr. Tagle on the Gang Violence Reduction Team. Beginning in October and November of 2006, Dolores Mendiola began to transition into the Project Coordinator role by increasing her involvement with the GFS program and attending several meetings, including the November 2006 cluster conference in Pittsburgh. The Project Coordinator position was officially filled by Ms. Mendiola in January 2007. Prior to her

involvement with GFS, Ms. Mendiola had served as Program Manager for the North Side Weed and Seed project. Ms. Mendiola continues to act as the Project Coordinator at the end of the grant period.

Due to repeated changes in personnel at the Project Coordinator position, Mr. Gonzalez and Ms. Mendiola faced the typical challenges of assuming a leadership role near the conclusion of a project, but transitioned quickly and effectively into their new roles.

***Street Outreach Workers.*** The Houston GFS project sought to recruit Street Outreach Workers (one lead and one to two others) with the following characteristics: culturally competent, bilingual (English-Spanish), knowledge of gangs, skills in case management, and experience with outreach. The Lead Street Outreach Worker received direct supervision of the Intervention Team and the Steering Committee. The Lead Street Outreach Worker planned the outreach efforts based on reviews of gang crime trends and activities. The Lead Street Outreach Worker worked with the Intervention Team on client case management, coordinating follow-up with the youth to ensure follow through with service referrals, court dates, probation requirements, school attendance, treatment services, and other services as necessary. The Street Outreach Workers identified and referred gang-involved youth for possible enrollment in the project. They made concerted efforts to identify the leaders and most influential gang members in the target area. They conducted outreach efforts at target area schools, parks, community and recreational centers, and known gang “hot spots.”

*The Research Partner.* The research partner for the Houston GFS project is the University of Houston's (UH) School of Social Work. MAGO entered into a contract with the university for data collection and analysis services on December 18, 2001. However, the university had completed a substantial amount of survey development, data collection, and analysis for the GFS project prior to the effective date of the contract, dating back to May 2001. The research partners had a number of problems getting data collection tools approved by the IRB, which delayed work on the data collection for approximately two months. Further, disputes over publication rights held up the completion of the contract between MAGO and the University of Houston. By the time the contract was finalized, the research partners had developed all data collection instruments and completed most of the data collection on community demographic information. The contract between MAGO and the University of Houston expired on June 30, 2002, but the research partners continued to provide assistance to the project on a limited basis. They provided guidance and further analyses for the Assessment Report along with assistance on the review of gang crime data.

Despite positive relationships in previous joint projects between the city and the University of Houston's School of Social Work, individuals from both MAGO and UH commented that communication could have been improved during the assessment phase. Negotiations over publication rights of the data collected led to a rocky beginning in the relationship. Several disagreements also surfaced regarding the data collection and analysis process. During the first few months of the assessment phase, the research partners felt that "there were too many people in charge," and that they were expected to complete tasks for a variety of individuals connected to the project, rather than having to report to one representative. While this problem disappeared

when the Project Coordinator was hired, this process led to continued communication problems. Relations with the research partners were strained again during the confusion over the size of the original assessment area. This misunderstanding resulted in the research partners having to re-visit the data collection and analysis process after having completed the initial process for the 11H10 police beat. To further complicate the strained relations, several staff members privately expressed concerns over the quality of data analysis completed by the research partners.

The Houston Project Coordinators never replaced the original research partners. The project team relied on existing internal resources to fulfill their immediate research needs. In addition, the National Youth Gang Center provided technical assistance and guidance to the project team throughout the course of the project.

### **C. Intervention Team**

The Intervention Team included the following representatives:

1. Project Coordinator;
2. Research Partner;
3. Outreach Workers;
4. Individuals from target campuses, as designated by the school principals (attending when cases involving students from their schools were being reviewed);
5. A Divisional Gang Unit individual from both the South Central and Eastside Stations, as assigned by each station's Captain;
6. Individuals from juvenile and adult probation/parole, as assigned by agency directors (attending when cases involving individuals from their caseloads were being reviewed);
7. A job development intervention specialist (employed by MAGO, with funding through a Department of Labor grant to HoustonWorks);

8. Case workers/managers from area social service providers (assigned by agency directors); and
9. Other appropriate representatives, as individual cases warranted (as recruited by the Intervention Team and/or the Steering Committee).

Initially, the Intervention Team met on a weekly basis, but then moved to a biweekly schedule as the project progressed. The Intervention Team's roles and responsibilities included:

1. Met biweekly to discuss and review client files and to discuss the appropriate course of action;
2. Communicated intelligence findings on gangs and gang activity in the target area;
3. Provided clients and client's families with information about referrals to area service providers;
4. Provided clients crisis intervention, mediation services, and ongoing outreach activities;
5. Facilitated and coordinated criminal, juvenile justice, and social service agency activities designed to supervise and monitor violent gang members and others at risk of engaging in violent activity;
6. Coordinated remedial and special education services offered by target area schools and service providers targeted at gang members; and
7. Coordinated, enhanced, and leveraged vocational and job training services targeted at gang members.

## **SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS**

### **A. Introduction to Overall Focus Group Methodology**

The national evaluation team conducted two waves of teacher and school administrator focus group interviews in the program's target and comparison communities, two waves of

student focus group interviews, and two waves of community residents' focus group interviews. These focus groups included representative groups of teachers and administrators from similar schools in the program's target and comparison communities. Two rounds of focus group interviews with community residents from the target and comparison neighborhoods provided the national evaluation team with data to assess community impact.

The national evaluation team captured measures of gang activities at schools by conducting focus group discussions with teachers and staff members. These discussions included staff perceptions of gang activity, crime, and other disruptive student behaviors, and whether or not they felt safe in their school. In addition, the staff discussed how effective existing policies and procedures were used for maintaining a safe school environment, and what could be done to reduce gang activity. The national evaluation team also convened focus group interviews with groups of students to discuss gang and crime issues within their school and on their way to and from school.

The national evaluation team assessed community normative variables by examining changes in community residents' attitudes about gang activities in their neighborhoods through focus group interviews. In the target area community, the national evaluation team asked community residents whether gang risk factors in their communities had been affected by the GFS program, and what the program has done to reduce youth gang violence, drug trafficking and use, and access to illegal guns in their neighborhoods. The national evaluation team assessed these issues by looking at community involvement in reporting gang incidents to the

police and their willingness to become involved in volunteering their services to work with the targeted youth and their families.

## **B. Summary of Focus Groups in Houston**

The national evaluation team conducted two waves of focus groups in the Houston target area. During the first wave of focus groups in May 2005, three schools were selected for students and school staff focus groups. Each of the three schools had one focus group conducted with teachers, administrators, and other school staff. A total of five focus groups were conducted with students at the three schools. The second wave of focus groups in May 2007 revisited one of the schools from the first wave and included a focus group of school staff, and a group of students. During the second wave of focus groups the national evaluation team also conducted a focus group of community residents from the target area. The purpose of the focus group was to assess the amount of gang activity in the community, its relative impacts and associated criminal activity. Conducting two waves of focus groups with similar samples of teachers and students allowed the national evaluation team to make limited comparisons of responses over the two-year period.

*Teachers, Administrators, and Staff Focus Groups.* Throughout the duration of the project, the national evaluation team conducted four focus groups with teachers and administrators at the Houston site. Three of these focus groups occurred in May 2005, while the fourth occurred in May 2007. The focus groups were initially held at three schools in the Houston target area: Austin High School, Deady Middle School, and Community Education Partners (CEP). The national evaluation team selected Austin High School for a follow up focus

group conducted in May 2007. The teacher and administrator focus groups typically included seven participants with the exception of Community Education Partners' focus group in 2005, which had four participants. All focus groups typically lasted one hour in duration during which lunch was served. The teacher and administrator focus group participants did not receive a financial incentive to participate.

Many of the observations and opinions expressed during the course of the focus groups were consistent across all groups. All focus group participants acknowledged the presence of gang members and some degree of gang activity on the school campus. Some schools indicated a higher degree of gang activity, citing large amounts of graffiti, open-air drug sales, and theft, while other schools reported a lesser degree in which gang members preferred to keep a low profile.

Consistent across all schools participants observed that the gang lifestyle was attracting a younger crowd. The participants felt as though the initial gang involvement began in the middle school, and seemed to be decreasingly popular in the upper grades of high school. Participants noted that this inverse relationship between grade level and the number of gang members is likely due to high drop out rates observed at the high school level rather than a maturation effect.

According to the teacher and administrator participants, all schools have some policies intended to curb gang activity within the school. These policies generally set some type of dress code policy, banning specific popular material indicators of gang membership, like bandanas, and certain color t-shirts. The effectiveness of these policies varies between schools and could



be a function of the enforcement of the policies, since several participants admitted that enforcement is inconsistent or generally lacking. Despite efforts to enforce these policies, teachers and administrators consistently reported efforts by the students to circumvent dress code policies in order to display their gang membership. For example, although a school may have a dress code, or even a uniform, gang members can still exhibit gang associated colors by wearing a colored undershirt beneath the required uniform. Similarly, students can bypass dress code policies by wearing colored shoelaces, rosaries, and handkerchiefs displayed in their pants pockets. Other non-material forms of displaying gang membership are harder to target with school policy. This includes more behavioral signs of gang association, like “throwing signs” a type of gang sign language, or by special handshakes. These indications of gang membership are harder to detect since they are often brief in duration and can be performed without detection by an authority figure.

Participants gave a mixed set of responses when questioned about the presence of weapons in the school. One school reported that no weapons entered their campus, while other schools reported an occasional incident of students bringing weapons to school. It is important to note that despite a few select instances, in general all school staff felt as though weapons were not a problem on their campus.

Although aware of the gang members and gang activity within the school, nearly all the teachers and administrators said they generally felt safe at school. However, many participants readily identified areas of the school which were hotspots for gang activity, suggesting that their sense of safety is somewhat localized to the classroom and areas under high surveillance of an

authority figure. The hotspots could be often be found in areas without regular surveillance and included stairwells and remote hallways.

When the national evaluation team asked the focus group participants about what could be done to help alleviate the gang problems in the school and the community, they responded consistently across all focus groups. Most believed that additional programs for students would be extremely advantageous. Components of an effective program would be one that is not only educational, but also appeals to the interests of the students. Another important factor would be that it occupied a students' time outside of school hours since many teachers observed that students would often linger after school had ended because of less than desirable home and neighborhood conditions. Finally, a vocational program would provide incentive and direction towards legitimate sources of income after graduation.

Many participants felt as though some type of intervention within the home environment or involving the parents would help mitigate the gang problem. School staff explained that there is little parental involvement in school. Some speculated that parents would like to get involved in their child's life, but feel inadequate or are embarrassed to ask for assistance. It was noted that low parental involvement may be related to more complex issues like language barriers or poor economic conditions that require both parents to work long hours. Finally, many participants cited existing training programs for school staff that allows them to better identify those at risk or those already involved in gang activity.

Comparing the focus groups conducted at Austin High School in 2005 and 2007 provides an opportunity to analyze the similarities and discrepancies reported over time. One discrepancy observed is the enforcement of school policies. During the initial 2005 focus group, participants reported that the school had strongly enforced policies. However, when the follow-up focus group was conducted in 2007, the participants indicated that the same policies were in place, but enforcement of these policies varied. Another major discrepancy between the two focus groups was substance use. In the 2005 focus group, the participants believed that the majority of the drug activity was taking place off campus. However, during the 2007 focus group nearly all of the participants believed that all students, not just those in gangs, were increasingly involved with drugs and alcohol, often on the school campus. Another increasingly popular trend is the use of tinctures and other homemade mixtures of a variety of inebriating substances, including alcohol, over the counter medication, and occasionally illicit drugs. These homemade mixtures can be imbibed on campus without riling much suspicion.

Most of the observations from teachers and administrators remained the same across both focus groups. In both instances, the staff said they feel safe in their school, and that students seldom bring weapons on to the school campus. Students have consistently made attempts to circumvent dress code policies by using more subtle methods of displaying gang membership. Another consistency observed was in 2005 several staff members expressed that fights on campus are “spectator sports,” and likened them to “gladiator events.” In 2007, participants echoed this in explaining that students will often video tape fights for posting on popular internet sites like YouTube or MySpace.

***School Personnel Likert Scale Data (2007).*** Six teachers or administrators (N=6) from the target area completed a Likert scale questionnaire prior to the discussion phase of the focus group. The Likert scale questions were as follows:

1. How well do you like working in your school?;
2. How safe do you feel in your school?;
3. How serious is the gang problem in your school?; and
4. Has the gang problem changed over the last three years?

In response to the first question, four of the six school staff (67%) indicated that they liked working in their school, one said they love working for their school, while the sixth respondent stated that they neither like nor dislike working in their school.

In response to question two, four of the six respondents (67%) stated that they feel safe in their school, while the two remaining participants responded that they feel neither safe nor unsafe.

In response to the third question, five of the six respondents (83%) selected that their school had an average gang problem, the sixth respondent selected that their school had a serious gang problem.

In response to the fourth question, four of the six respondents (67%) said there was no change in the gang activity over the past three years. One of the six respondents believed that

there was a slight worsening in the gang activity, while another felt it was a slight improvement in the gang problem.

***Student Focus Groups.*** The national evaluation team conducted a total of six focus groups with students at various educational institutions. The initial focus groups occurred in early May 2005 with five groups of students. One focus group at Deady Middle School included 10 students; another set of focus groups at the Community Education Partners (CEP) included groups of eight and 10 students. The last set of focus groups occurred at Austin High School, and included two groups of 10 students in 2005. The national evaluation team conducted a follow up focus group in 2007 at Austin High School including nine students. All focus students received a ten dollar gift card incentive for participating in the focus groups.

Across all student focus groups several consistent themes emerged that provide insight into gang activity in the students' community and schools. Similar to the teachers, the students were aware of the gang activity in both their schools and their neighborhoods. Contrary to their adult counterparts, many of the students had a more diverse range of interpretations of what it means to be a part of a gang and its effects on the community. In addition to those adopting the traditional perspective of gang activity as a negative social phenomenon, some participants believed that gangs were a healthy adaptation to a tough neighborhood and provided adolescents with a sense of family and belonging. One student went as far as to refute the popular conception of gangs as lawless and amoral, explaining that the media focuses only on the negative aspects of gangs, and miss the entire set of good qualities. This range of beliefs is

probably heavily influenced by each student's own personal involvement with gangs, but nonetheless provides an interesting range of perspectives into the gangs phenomenon.

All schools have some type of dress code policy preventing students from wearing clothing and other items related to gang membership. The students' comments regarding these policies indicate that enforcement varies between schools. In addition to dress code policies, other preventative measures include abandoning the usage of student storage lockers, banning of book bags or backpacks that are not clear or of mesh material, and prohibiting the use of personal electronics. Many of the schools have additional security measures, including security guards, police officers, security cameras and metal detectors. Despite the wide range of security measures in place, all of the student focus groups in 2005 indicated that they feel safe inside their school. However the focus group conducted in 2007 did not express this sentiment. When asked whether they feel safer in school or on the streets of their neighborhood, the 2007 student participants indicated that they felt more comfortable in the neighborhood. While discussing the presence of weapons and drugs on the school campus the students discussed more of the schools security measures. The students from schools with metal detectors explained that it was impossible to bring a gun in to the school. Students from schools that do not have metal detectors felt as though instances of weapons on campus were a very seldom occurrence, and incidents in which a weapon was brought to school would most likely involve a knife, and would not necessarily be associated with gang activity. More severe security measures implemented by the school include the use of police officers on campus who may conduct searches or use drug sniffing dogs.

The students provide a distinction between drug use and violence and gang activity, explaining that both drugs and violence are not always associated with gangs. Many believed the fights that occur on the school grounds are usually over more trivial matters rather than gang related ones; disputes over members of the opposite sex were cited as the number one cause of in-school altercations. Similarly, although drug use and sales were indicated as a major component of gang activity, many youth unassociated with gangs are also involved with drugs. Students at the alternative school and middle school reported little presence of drugs within the school. This is likely due to the higher security measures in place at the alternative school and the fact that drug use is more of a middle to late adolescent activity. Austin High School focus groups did report some usage of drug use on school grounds. The students believed that “bars” or Xanax was highly prevalent, additionally students were also likely to abuse over the counter medications. Participants mentioned other illicit drugs, but they received far less attention throughout the discussion.

Nearly all student groups expressed a similar set of reasons why youth join gangs. These include protection, to gain a sense of family, and a family member or close friend were a member. Although not unanimous, many of the students articulated reasons related to general community factors. These include a sense of upholding the community legacy of gang activity, rough neighborhoods due to economic conditions, and a disjointed or disintegrated sense of community in the neighborhoods. Other less common reasons cited by the students include “being cool,” peer pressure, and the lack of a good home environment. Many of the students noted that many of those involved in gangs come from single parent households, or broken homes.

One of the most consistent themes throughout all of the focus groups conducted with the students was the helplessness and lack of efficacy in combating gang activity in their school or neighborhood. When asked for strategies to reduce gang activity some student groups even defended the nature of the community gangs, focusing on their belief that gangs are pro-social. While others seemingly advocate the gangs, most of the students expressed a certain concession to the gang activity, viewing it as permissible and an enduring part of their lives.

A comparison of the focus groups conducted in Austin High School in 2005 and in 2007 shows both similarities and changes over time. The most pronounced differences revolve around drug usage and the students' sense of safety within the school. During the 2005 focus groups, the drugs cited were "bars" (Xanax), marijuana, and cocaine. In the 2007 focus group, participants again cited "bars" or Xanax as drug commonly used among the students, as well as over the counter medication. Unlike their 2005 counterparts, the students in 2007 did not even mention common illicit drugs, like marijuana, cocaine, and crack-cocaine until prompted by the focus group leaders. The differences in popularity reported by the students may indicate an increasing trend in the Houston area, a move from illicit drugs to the abuse of legitimate over the counter and prescription medications.

Another striking contrast between the two cohorts of focus group administrations is the student's self-reported sense of safety within the school. In 2005, despite a few dangerous areas or hotspots, the students reported feeling safe in school. However, in 2007 the students did not report feeling as safe, explaining that they felt safer on the streets of the neighborhood, rather than in the school. Although the students did not specify why they did not feel safe in their



school, a comparison of responses to other related questions may provide some insight into changes of the school or gang culture that may have affected students' sense of security. When articulating the severity of the gang problem, the focus groups from 2005 implied that although gangs were present in the school, their particular school was "not as bad." This indifference to the gang activity in the school is contrasted by the focus group in 2007, that expressed a greater sense of fear, and implied a greater prevalence of gang activity in the school and neighborhood. The contrast between the two groups also becomes apparent when the students were asked what could be done to help prevent gang activity. Students from the 2005 group suggested programs that would target students' academic achievements, vocational training, and community efficacy. However, the students from 2007 provided a far bleaker outlook, expressing that nothing could be done. Another possible explanation for differences found between the two groups is their perception of the gangs. The students from the first group seemed to have a more innocuous perception of the gangs in their neighborhood, constantly pointing out that gangs were not always criminal in nature, and seeing drug activity as largely independent of the gangs. Meanwhile the students from 2007 viewed the gangs as a much larger threat, never defending the nature or purpose of the gangs, and making a stronger association with the gangs and drugs and robberies.

***Students' Likert Scale Data (2007).*** Nine student focus group participants (N=9) completed the Likert scale questionnaire during the focus group discussion. The Likert scale questions were as follows:

1. How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?;

2. How safe do you feel in your school?;
3. How serious is the gang problem in your neighborhood?; and
4. How serious is the gang problem in your school?

In response to the first question, four of the nine students (44%) felt safe in their neighborhood, another four students (44%) felt neither safe nor unsafe, and the ninth student felt very unsafe in their neighborhood.

In response to the second question, only two of the nine students feel safe in their school, while four students (44%) feel unsafe, and the three remaining students feel neither safe or unsafe in their school.

In response to the third question, four students (44%) reported that their neighborhood has a serious gang problem, two students felt that their neighborhood had an average gang problem, another two students said their neighborhood had some gang problems (below average) while the ninth students reported their neighborhood had a very serious gang problem.

In response to the fourth question, six of the nine students (67%) felt as though their school had a serious gang problem, another two students said their school had some gang problems while the ninth student described their schools gang problem as very serious.

*Community Focus Groups.* On May 8, 2007, members of the national evaluation team conducted a focus group with eight residents from the target community gathering information on gang activity, causes of gangs, and potential methods of curtailing gang activity.

The community residents readily admitted that gangs had a strong presence in their community. Many of the residents reported having witnessed assaults and drug sales throughout the community and within proximity of the school. Gangs are mostly associated with drug activity, both the usage and the distribution of drugs. Other criminal activity associated with gang members is graffiti, robbery, and vandalism. These illicit activities are often performed in the open with little discretion.

The community members cited many potential causes or aggravating factors for gangs in their neighborhood including tradition, economic conditions, lack of parental involvement, absence of constructive activities, and cultural phenomenon.

Many residents believe that young gang members are simply following community and family traditions. Older generations have not only served as a model for the gang lifestyle, but often encourage or recruit younger generations of gang members.

Participants believed economic conditions to be a factor in gang activity. Parents may work long hours or multiple jobs in order to provide a sustainable income for their families at the expense of sacrificing time spent supervising their children. This unsupervised time is thought to

provide idle time for youth to engage in delinquent behavior or come into contact with other gang members.

Participants believed that the parents' ability to provide discipline for their children could contribute to adolescent gang activity. Parents may feel a wide range of emotions when confronted with their child's gang involvement or criminal activity. They may feel unsure of how to react or discipline their child; they may also feel embarrassed about their lack of control. The strong emotions experienced by parents may prevent them from taking any disciplinary actions against their child, and without any punishment or negative consequences at home delinquent or criminal behavior will continue.

For many youth, school is the only regular structured activity. Outside of school hours the children have long periods of time without structure or supervision. The surplus of idle time and the absence of constructive activities provide a platform for experimentation with delinquent and gang related activities.

Houston's large Latin American community may indicate other cultural factors involved. Many of the residents believed a phenomenon known as "machismo" is a potential factor in gang activity in the neighborhood. Machismo is an exaggerated sense of masculinity and a self-proclaimed right to dominate others; these aggressive tendencies could be manifested in gang and criminal activity.

The community members highlighted two main reasons why youth join gangs. The community residents believe that young people join gangs to gain a sense of belonging, something they explained may be missing for newly immigrated families who may feel estranged from their new community. Another factor drawing adolescents to gang activity is the high regard and positive perception placed on gang members. It has become popular for young women to date gang members and this popularity with the opposite sex serves as a strong influence for young males considering gang membership.

According to the residents, the gangs have changed over the past few years and are beginning to appeal to a younger audience. One resident explained that the problem has expanded beyond the high school and has become a prevalent force in the middle schools as well. Another resident elaborated, explaining that not only are the gangs diversifying in terms of age groups, but they have spread from the city to the suburbs.

Some of the community residents felt that increasing funds to existing programs was the best way to curb gang activity. They explained that existing programs are well established, and have already developed a rapport with local youths.

***Community Residents' Likert Scale Data (2007).*** A total of seven community residents (N=7) responded to the Likert scale questionnaire. The Likert scale questions were as follows:

1. How well do you like living in your neighborhood?;
2. How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?;

3. How serious is the gang problem in your neighborhood?; and
4. Has the gang problem changed over the last three years?

In response to the first question, five of seven (71%) reported that they like living in their neighborhood, similarly, another resident reported that they love living in their neighborhood, while the seventh resident said they neither like nor dislike living in the neighborhood.

In response to the second question, five of seven (71%) said they felt safe in their neighborhood, while the remaining two residents reported that they feel unsafe.

In response to the third question, three of seven residents (43%) believe that their neighborhood has an average gang problem, another three residents (43%) felt the neighborhood had a serious gang problem, the final seventh resident felt as though the gang problem was very serious.

The community residents provided a wide range of responses in response to question four. Only six of the seven community residents responded to this question. Of the six responding residents, two (33%) felt as though the gang problem had worsened over the past three years, while another two residents (33%) reported that the gang problem had not changed. One resident felt the gang problem had improved, similarly, another resident felt the gang problem had slightly improved.

*Conclusions Drawn from the Focus Groups.* Several consistent themes emerged across all focus groups. All focus groups readily identified the presence of gangs in the community and schools and implied a high prevalence of gang membership among the community youth, adolescents and even adults. Many of the focus group participants felt as though the gangs were progressively reaching a younger crowd, extending the arm of influence beyond the traditional high school aged youth down to the middle school youth. The reasons why these youth participate in gang activity are widely agreed upon across all focus groups. According to many of the focus group participants, one potential reason why youth join gangs is for a sense of belonging or social acceptance. Nearly all focus groups felt as though parental involvement was a key factor in curbing gang activity. Although parental involvement was widely recognized as an important factor in a youth's decision to join a gang, most focus group participants also identified the barriers inhibiting a parents' ability to actively participate in their child's life. Another component of the gang problem touched upon briefly by all focus groups was the economics of the community. All focus groups identified some component of community economics as a culprit, from the financial gains associated with drug dealing, to why parents are unable to spend quality time with their children, economics was indicated as a strong factor in gang activity.

This resource was prepared by the author(s) using Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice. Opinions or points of view expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PITTSBURGH**



## CHAPTER FOUR

### PITTSBURGH

#### INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The School District of Pittsburgh served as the lead agency for the Pittsburgh Gang-Free Schools and Communities Initiative. Through this project it hoped to further its mission “to have all students attain a performance level that will enable them to be independent and self-sufficient and contribute responsibly to our society and ever-changing world.”<sup>1</sup> At the time of the award, the school district had about 40,000 students enrolled in 93 schools: 56 elementary schools (grades k-5), 18 middle schools (grades 6-8), 11 high schools, two alternative schools, five special schools, and one adult education center.<sup>2</sup> Currently, the district has approximately 29,447 students enrolled in 65 schools (18 elementary schools, 14 K-8 schools, nine middle schools, ten high schools, four special-use schools, eight accelerated learning centers, and two alternative programs).<sup>3</sup> At the outset of the award, African Americans composed 27 percent of the city’s population, although they constituted 56.4 percent of public school students. The remaining students included 41.9 percent non-Hispanic white, 1.2 percent Asian, 0.4 percent Hispanic, and 0.1 percent American Indian. Sixty-four percent of the students received free or reduced cost lunches, and 32 percent of families received public

---

<sup>1</sup>Board of Public Education, “District Information,” downloaded August 2001 from its web site at [www.info.pps.pgh.pa.us/info/info.html](http://www.info.pps.pgh.pa.us/info/info.html).

<sup>2</sup>Press Release, “Safe Schools/Healthy Students—Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania,” downloaded August 2001 from the U.S. Department of Education’s web site at [www.ed.gov/PressReleases/09-199/pa\\_pitt.html](http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/09-199/pa_pitt.html). Note that the school district’s web site states that there are 19 middle schools and 59 elementary schools. See [www.info.pps.pa.us/info/info.html](http://www.info.pps.pa.us/info/info.html). In addition, the School Directory from this site lists 17 middle schools and 7 special schools (see [www.pps.pgh.pa.us/directory/special.html](http://www.pps.pgh.pa.us/directory/special.html)).

<sup>3</sup>Pittsburgh Public Schools, *Guide to Pittsburgh Public Schools 2007-2008: Getting on the Same Page*, 2007.

assistance. The current student population is comprised of 61 percent African American, 37 percent non-Hispanic white, 2 percent Asian, 1 percent Hispanic, and less than 1 percent American Indian students, with 68 percent eligible for free or reduced cost lunches.<sup>4</sup>

The mayor's office, the program's co-applicant, played a central role under the auspices of its Youth Policy Office (YPO) because its mission includes coordinating the city's existing resources with other partners such as the Pittsburgh Public Schools to ensure that young people have the opportunity to learn important skills needed for future participation in the community. The Pittsburgh Bureau of Police also served as an active partner in GFS. Its primary role during the program's assessment phase focused on reviewing its computerized files to identify gang-related criminal incidents. With six geographic police zones (whose boundaries differ from the nine city council districts) Pittsburgh's police department is organized into three branches: 1) operations, 2) investigations (which includes the Major Crimes Division and Narcotics/Vice Division), and 3) administration (each is managed by an assistant chief). Approximately 900 sworn officers work in the Pittsburgh Police Department, 40-50 of them assigned to the Narcotics/Vice Division.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup>Pittsburgh Public Schools, *Guide to Pittsburgh Public Schools 2007-2008: Getting on the Same Page*, 2007.

<sup>5</sup>Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, "Welcome from the Chief of Police Nathan Harper," [http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/police/html/welcome\\_from\\_the\\_chief.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/police/html/welcome_from_the_chief.html). Inquiry to Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, Narcotics and Vice Division, September 2007.

While the police department no longer has a formal gang unit,<sup>6</sup> each of the zones maintains a squad car designated specifically for detecting gang-related activities. The use of “gang cars” (also referred to as “99 cars”) was launched in the early 1990s. The police department assigns two or three officers to the gang cars per night shift and, while their primary responsibility is to locate gang activity, they may also respond to general calls for service under special circumstances.

Because Pittsburgh is located within Allegheny County (it straddles county districts 10, 11, 12 and 13), the police department also interacts with the county sheriff’s department, the county police, and law enforcement agencies from 123 other near-by municipalities.

*Description of the Community.* According to the 2000 census, Pittsburgh had a population of 334,563. Of those identifying themselves by one racial code, 67.6 percent were white; 27.1 percent were black or African American; and 2.5 percent were Asian (4% were Hispanic, who may be of any race).<sup>7</sup> Since the site’s application for the Gang-Free Schools and Communities (GFS) Project in 2001, the city of Pittsburgh has experienced a notable decline in its population; however, the racial/ethnic demographics of the residents remained almost the same. In 2005, the city of Pittsburgh had a total population of 284,366, of which 64.4 percent were white; 28.8 percent were Black or African American; 3.8 percent were Asian; 1 percent was of some other race; and 0.3

---

<sup>6</sup>A Gang Unit was formed in 1992 and was staffed by three officers. Although it had doubled to six officers at one point, today only one officer is officially assigned to that unit.

<sup>7</sup>“Pittsburgh Fact Sheet,” downloaded from the City of Pittsburgh website in August 2001. See [www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/html/pittsburgh\\_fact\\_sheet.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/cp/html/pittsburgh_fact_sheet.html).

percent was American Indian and Alaska Native. During the same period, approximately 59,885, or 21 percent, of the population were between the ages of 10 and 24.<sup>8</sup>

The city covers 55.5 square miles and comprises 88 distinct neighborhoods. In addition to the racial segregation found in many American cities, there are a number of Pittsburgh communities that are dominated by Americans descended from particular European ethnic groups (Germans and Italians, for example), a remnant of Pittsburgh's history as an industrial center and magnet for new immigrants.

Race relations (particularly between African Americans and whites) have been strained in the past decade—especially between residents and police officers. In 1995, a black motorist died of asphyxiation during a traffic stop by suburban police officers, leading to protests and intense media coverage locally and nationally. The Pittsburgh chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit against the city, alleging civil rights violations;<sup>9</sup> this prompted an investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice, which “concluded that the city had tolerated a pattern of police brutality since the mid-1980s.” Accordingly, in 1997, Pittsburgh reluctantly agreed to a five-year federal “consent decree” that required, among other things, that the Bureau of Police maintain records on arrests, strip searches, use of force, traffic stops, and charges of police abuse or brutality. In 2002, a United States District Court judge granted a joint motion filed by the Department of Justice and the city of Pittsburgh to release the Bureau of Police from the 1997 consent decree. The police department fulfilled the consent decree requirements

---

<sup>8</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 data.

<sup>9</sup>Michael A. Fuoco, Cindi Lash and Jim McKinnon, “A Tale of Two Cities: Not Far Away, a City's Racial Anger Erupts,” Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, April 22, 2001.

to improve training, supervision, discipline, and complaint procedures for investigating civilian complaints. Nevertheless, the provisions governing the newly created Office of Municipal Investigations (OMI), which investigates allegations of police misconduct, remains in place in order to comply with the backlog of misconduct complaints and the failure to investigate complaints thoroughly.<sup>10</sup>

In 2002, the national evaluation team interviewed some Pittsburgh residents. Those interviewed believed that police corruption existed in Pittsburgh and that the police themselves were involved in the drug trade. The interviewees believed that this explained the persistence of open-air drug markets, in some cases within view of the police precincts. Some interviewees felt that overall public opinion was that some officers were profiting from the drug trade and were sharing information with dealers and gang members. Whether true or not, it is clear that these perceptions have affected police-community relations in the city over the past few decades.

***Pittsburgh's Gang Problem.*** In the early 1990s, the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Police Department, and other public agencies seemed reluctant to admit that Pittsburgh faced a serious gang problem, even though there were 43 murders in 1992 (22 of them declared to be gang-related<sup>11</sup>), and 83 in 1993.<sup>12</sup> The following year, the mayor and County Commissioners first publicly acknowledged Pittsburgh's gang problem and

---

<sup>10</sup>“Justice Department Reaches Agreement to Release Pittsburgh Police Bureau From Consent Decree,” Department of Justice, August 20, 2002, downloaded from the Department of Justice website in August 2007. See [www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2002/August/02\\_crt\\_499.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2002/August/02_crt_499.htm). See also, Torsten Ove, “Judge Lifts U.S. Oversight of City of Pittsburgh Police,” Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, September 14, 2002.

<sup>11</sup>Pittsburgh's GFS application.

<sup>12</sup>M. Ferguson Tinsley, “Pittsburgh Homicides: A Year of Death in the City,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, August 3, 2001.

initiated steps to replace the region's fragmented response to juvenile violence with a collaborative and coordinated approach. As a result, the Interagency Council on Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons, and Violence was created with the intention of creating safe and drug-free communities and schools.

The police began to gather intelligence on the city's gangs and in 1996 completed an internal report that showed that in the eastern region of the city—where much of the violence was concentrated—there were 73 street gangs, of which 41 were identified as Crips, 10 as Bloods, and 22 as independent gangs. Concurrently, the federal government indicted numerous young black males under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) Act for their participation in the Larimer Avenue-Wilkinsburg (LAW) gang, a well-known gang in the eastern region of Pittsburgh.

According to 2000 police data, the majority of gang members in Pittsburgh appeared to fall within the 15- to 22-year-old age range.<sup>13</sup> The police also concluded from their 2000 crime data that gangs committed 76.6 percent of robberies; 22.8 percent of home invasions; 87.9 percent of assaults; 80.4 percent of crack sales/use; 55.6 percent of marijuana sales/use; 43 percent of other drug sales/use; 80.7 percent of firearms violations; 64.8 percent of drive-by shootings; 10.6 percent of extortion cases; and 75 percent of auto thefts.

In the first six months of the Pittsburgh GFS project, the site had 38 homicides—more than had occurred during all of 2000. In fact, there was a murder on the day of the

---

<sup>13</sup>Confidential internal police report, Pittsburgh Bureau of Police.

project's first Steering Committee meeting, on July 23, 2001. Several factors contributed to the surge in violence. First, a 1999-2000 truce forged between rival gangs in Pittsburgh's East End disintegrated.<sup>14</sup> Second, concern grew that the impending release of the 52 youth gang members—prosecuted in 1997 under the federal RICO Act—would re-ignite gang wars.<sup>15</sup> Third, at least one neighborhood witnessed a proliferation of graffiti that residents believed indicated that gangs were once again becoming a powerful force in their community.<sup>16</sup> And finally, in testimony before the school board, Richard Garland, the executive director of YouthWorks and a former gang member, “warned [school] board members...that all the ingredients are in place for a resurgence in local gang activity that could be worse than it was a decade ago.”<sup>17</sup>

More recently, the city of Pittsburgh braced itself yet again for a potential resurgence of gang posturing. Since 2004, the city has observed an increase of young men between the ages of 13 and 18 years old wearing certain colors, having tattoos, and hanging out in groups of eight or more on street corners in previously gang-affiliated neighborhoods. At Shuman Juvenile Detention Center, many of the detainees demonstrated gang signs, drawn graffiti, and talked about affiliations with the Crips, Bloods, and Original Gangsters. Community activists and outreach workers noticed that more middle-school children seemed to wear gang colors, bandannas, and discuss gang affiliations than the older teenagers and young adults.<sup>18</sup> Whether a resurrection of gangs

---

<sup>14</sup>MaryLynne Pitz, “Former Gang Members Celebrate Truce,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, March 11, 2000.

<sup>15</sup>Pittsburgh GFS application, PA.

<sup>16</sup>Cindi Lash, “Graffiti Brings Outcry in Oakland,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, May 19, 2001.

<sup>17</sup>Carmen J. Lee, “Consultant Predicts Rise in Gang Activity Here,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, May 9, 2001.

<sup>18</sup>Jonathan D. Silver, “Gang colors reappear in city: Warning signs put police on the alert to head of trouble.” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, July 25, 2004. Downloaded August 2007 from Pittsburgh Post-Gazette website at [www.postgazette.com/pg/04207/351532](http://www.postgazette.com/pg/04207/351532).

in the city of Pittsburgh happened or just a renewed loyalty to representing neighborhood affiliations, as some outreach workers claim, remains unclear to date.

During site visits by the national evaluation team, many of those interviewed expressed concern that Pittsburgh youth violence problem may not meet OJJDP's criteria for being "gang-related" because the motives and affiliations are different compared with a decade ago. The gang members of the early 1990s were easily recognizable because of the colors they wore; currently some youth do not, for example, identify themselves as gang members through clothing and throwing signs. In addition, the gangs of the 1990s appeared more territorial and much of the violence stemmed from incursions by one gang onto another's turf. Today, many city officials believe that most of the violence results from drug-related activities and retaliation for earlier incidents. According to Assistant Chief William Mullen, for example:

[t]he violence...is not caused by one drug enterprise trying to take another's turf. It's revenge. It's retaliation. It's about things that have happened in the past. It's about disrespect.<sup>19</sup>

At a city council hearing in July of 2001, the county coroner testified that the homicides were due to "a vicious triad of circumstances...drugs, money and guns."<sup>20</sup> By the end of 2001, 58 murders occurred in Pittsburgh's neighborhoods.<sup>21</sup> Then in January 2002, three gunmen opened fire in a crowded restaurant in the Homewood neighborhood,

---

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>Timothy McNulty, "Marchers Call Attention to Community's Problems," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, July 19, 2001.

<sup>21</sup>"Neighborhoods: Reported Part 1 Crimes per 100," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, February 24, 2002.



killing not only the intended target, but also an eight-year-old girl and another innocent bystander; a fourth person was seriously wounded.<sup>22</sup>

Solving gang crimes is particularly difficult. Not only do residents fear and distrust the police, many do not wish to come forward with information because of the very real threat of reprisal.<sup>23</sup> Witness intimidation had become such a serious problem, the police established a witness protection program in 1994 after an alleged gang member killed an informant.<sup>24</sup> In March 2002, largely because of the Homewood murders, Pittsburgh's State Attorney General and one of its U.S. Senators "delivered on...increased state and federal funding they promised [in the summer of 2001] for a statewide witness protection program."<sup>25</sup> A total of \$633,000 "[was] earmarked statewide" to relocate witnesses to other Pennsylvania communities.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE INITIAL GFS APPLICATION**

OJJDP encouraged Dr. Margaret Brown, the former project manager for Pittsburgh's Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative, to submit an application for the GFS Initiative. Doris Christmas, Ph.D., a staff member in the Strategic Planning

---

<sup>22</sup>Dan Gigler, "Diner Shooting Leaves 3 Dead," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 26, 2002; Bill Heltzel, "Mother of Slain 8-Year-Old 'Didn't Believe It Was Happening,'" *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 27, 2002;

<sup>23</sup>Michael A. Fuoco, "Some Black Witnesses Won't Aid Crime Probes," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, October 18, 1998; Jim McKinnon, "Armed Homicide Witness Refuses to Give Up Gun to Testify," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, October 6, 1999; Michael Fuoco, "Black Community Increasingly Mum on Homicides," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, December 17, 1999.

<sup>24</sup>Jonathan D. Silver, "Trial is Ordered for Man Accused of Killing Informant," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 23, 1998; John M. R. Bull, "Witness Killing Lands Ex-Gang Member in Prison for Life," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, April 30, 1999.

<sup>25</sup>Editorial, "Making Witnesses Safe: New Funding to Protect Those Who Aid the Police," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, March 1, 2002.

Department within the Pittsburgh Board of Education, authored the application. The Strategic Planning Department writes and submits all of the grants for the schools. Prior to submission to OJJDP, various partners reviewed the GFS application. Additionally, the mayor's office, the program's co-applicant, initially played a central role in Pittsburgh's GFS project under the auspices of its YPO. It is important to note that the former manager for the mayor's YPO later became the coordinator for Pittsburgh's GFS project in 2003. The Pittsburgh Bureau of Police also continued as an active partner in the GFS project. During the assessment phase they reviewed their computerized files to identify gang-related criminal incidents.

In addition to the commitment of the three main partners, the following organizations submitted letters of support: the Center for Violence and Injury Control of the Allegheny-Singer Research Institute (the research partner); the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Social and Urban Research; Allegheny County Juvenile Detention Center; Youth Works; YMCA of Pittsburgh; and the National Council for Urban Peace and Justice. Throughout the GFS project, these organizations and several other community organizations were involved in the GFS project in some capacity whether they served on the Steering Committee, Intervention Team, or provided services to the GFS enrolled youth. During the life of the project, Pittsburgh's Steering Committee and Intervention Team met on a regular basis. Additionally, members of the Steering Committee and Intervention Team worked with the youth in the schools and the community, assisted the Pittsburgh Police Department's gang intelligence unit with modifying gang policies and procedures, and made connections with local organizations

and community groups to provide meaningful programs and resources to the GFS project. Exhibit 4-1 outlines some of the major activities and milestones.

## **The Assessment Report**

The Steering Committee and the Action Team contributed to the development of the Assessment Report. Various individuals interviewed by the national evaluation team commented that the Assessment Team played a greater role than the Steering Committee in the overall process. The interviewees also reported that of the approximately 25 individuals involved in the Assessment Report, only about five of them “put pen to paper.” The primary authors included Odell Richardson, the Project Coordinator, the research partner, the mayor’s office, and the schools.

### **A. Key Participants**

*Steering Committee.* Upon receipt of the grant award, the Pittsburgh team set about two tasks concurrently: the creation of the Steering Committee and evaluation of all of the city’s census tracts to get a better understanding of the criminal activities occurring. The Steering Committee provided leadership and guidance throughout the assessment phase.

*Action Team.* Pittsburgh established a project Action Team. This group met much more frequently than the full Steering Committee and served as the body making the ultimate decisions. As shown in Exhibit 4-2, 12 organizations represented the Action Team.

## EXHIBIT 4-1

### PITTSBURGH GFS TIMELINE (2001-2007)

Year and Month	Activity
<b>2001</b>	
<b>April</b>	First GFS Cluster meeting, Mesa AZ
<b>June</b>	Official start for the Pittsburgh GFS Project
<b>July</b>	Steering Committee meeting (Initial Meeting and OJJDP Training) Assessment Team meeting Established contract with Research Partner (began data collection for Assessment Plan)
<b>August</b>	Supervision meeting with Steering Committee Chair and Outreach Team Terminology Team meeting Assessment Team planning
<b>September</b>	Steering Committee meeting Assessment Team meeting Law Enforcement meeting
<b>October</b>	Research Partner/Assessment Outreach Team meeting with National Youth Gang Center (NYGC) Law enforcement meeting (follow-up) Assessment Outreach Team (training on Gang Member Interviews)
<b>November</b>	Steering Committee meeting (Approved Assessment Plan and Terminology Criteria) Assessment Team meeting Meeting at YouthWorks on DOL grant and gang member involvement
<b>December</b>	Terminology Team meeting (Special meeting and Assessment Outreach Team training) Review of police records and criminal offenses. Action Team/Assessment Team meeting (update on data collection issues and initial findings)
<b>2002</b>	
<b>January</b>	Assessment Team meeting
<b>February</b>	Steering Committee meeting Assessment Team meeting National evaluation site visit
<b>March</b>	Assessment Team meeting Second GFS cluster meeting, Mesa, AZ
<b>April</b>	Local data collection Proposal submitted to OJJDP for Implementation Plan grant
<b>May</b>	Local data collection
<b>June</b>	Steering Committee meeting NYGC site visit Action Team/Assessment Team implementation planning meeting
<b>July</b>	Steering Committee meeting Action Team/Assessment Team meeting National Evaluation Team telephone interviews
<b>August</b>	Steering Committee meeting Action Team/Assessment Team implementation planning meeting National Evaluation Team telephone interviews
<b>September</b>	Local data collection
<b>October</b>	Steering Committee Meeting Action Team/Assessment Team implementation planning meeting NYGC Site Visit
<b>November</b>	Action Team/Assessment Team implementation planning meeting National Evaluation Team telephone interviews

<b>Year and Month</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>December</b>	Action Team/Assessment Team implementation planning meeting NYGC Site Visit National Evaluation Team telephone interviews Assessment Plan approved
<b>2003</b>	
<b>January</b>	Action Team/Assessment Team implementation planning meeting
<b>February</b>	Steering Committee meeting Second Project Coordinator hired - Robert Burley
<b>March</b>	Steering Committee meeting Second Project Coordinator resigned Revisions to Implementation Plan
<b>April</b>	Third Project Coordinator hired – Errika Fearbry Jones Revisions to Implementation Plan
<b>May</b>	Pittsburgh’s implementation of the GFS Project
<b>June</b>	Information unavailable
<b>July</b>	Steering Committee meeting
<b>August</b>	Project Coordinator trained target school personnel on GFS model
<b>September</b>	National evaluation workshop and logic model training Steering Committee meeting Intervention Team meeting Project Coordinator trained target school personnel on GFS model
<b>October</b>	Intervention Team meetings Pittsburgh Police Bureau modified gang incident reports Resource development - meetings with community organizations to determine programs available to GFS youth Special training for GFS staff - how to develop programs that build resiliency in African American males Special meeting with the FBI Project Coordinator trained target school personnel on GFS model
<b>November</b>	First GFS youth enrolled Steering Committee meeting Intervention Team meeting Resources development – meeting with community organizations to determine programs available for GFS youth Project Coordinator trained target school personnel on GFS model
<b>December</b>	Intervention Team meetings Resources development – meeting with community organizations to determine programs available for GFS youth Project Coordinator trained target school personnel on GFS model
<b>2004</b>	
<b>January</b>	Intervention Team meeting Project Coordinator trained target school personnel on GFS model
<b>February</b>	Intervention Team meeting Third GFS cluster conference, Houston, TX
<b>March</b>	Steering Committee meeting Intervention Team meetings National evaluation site visit – conducted Gang Membership Inventory (GMI) interviews Logic model finalized and approved
<b>April</b>	Intervention Team meeting Local Evaluation Associate (LEA) conducted GMI interviews
<b>May</b>	Intervention Team meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>June</b>	Intervention Team meeting National evaluation team conducted first round of focus groups in the target area

<b>Year and Month</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>July</b>	Intervention Team meeting
<b>August</b>	Intervention Team meetings National evaluation team conducted first round focus groups in the comparison area
<b>September</b>	Intervention Team meeting
<b>October</b>	Steering Committee meeting Intervention Team meeting
<b>November</b>	Intervention Team meeting National evaluation team conducted focus groups in the target and comparison area schools
<b>December</b>	Intervention Team meeting
<b>2005</b>	
<b>January</b>	NYGC trained the Outreach Team on how to improve outreach services provided to GFS youth Outreach worker performance subcommittee meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>February</b>	Intervention Team meeting
<b>March</b>	Intervention Team meeting Outreach worker subcommittee meeting
<b>April</b>	Steering Committee meeting Intervention Team meeting GFS community meeting in the target area LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>May</b>	Intervention Team meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>June</b>	Intervention Team meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>July</b>	LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>August</b>	LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>September</b>	Intervention Team meeting
<b>October</b>	Intervention Team meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>November</b>	Steering Committee meeting Intervention Team meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>December</b>	Intervention Team meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>2006</b>	
<b>January</b>	Intervention Team meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>February</b>	Intervention Team meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>March</b>	Intervention Team meetings
<b>April</b>	Intervention Team meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>May</b>	Intervention Team meetings OJJDP national teleconference with GFS project and community advocates on preventing gangs in the neighborhoods LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>June</b>	Steering Committee meeting National evaluation team site visit NYGC site visit OJJDP national teleconference with GFS project and community advocates on preventing gangs in the neighborhoods LEA conducted GMI interviews

<b>Year and Month</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>July</b>	NYGC site visit Data collection subcommittee meeting LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>August</b>	Intervention Team meeting
<b>September</b>	LEA conducted GMI interviews
<b>October</b>	Intervention Team meeting
<b>November</b>	Fourth GFS cluster meeting, Pittsburgh, PA National evaluation team conducted GMI interviews
<b>December</b>	Intervention Team meeting Data collection subcommittee meeting Changed research partners National evaluation team conducted the last set of GMI interviews
<b>2007</b>	
<b>January</b>	Intervention Team meeting
<b>February</b>	Data collection subcommittee meeting
<b>March</b>	Intervention Team meeting
<b>April</b>	Intervention Team meeting GFS presentation for Pennsylvania Gang Conference
<b>May</b>	Intervention Team meeting Data collection subcommittee meeting National evaluation team conducted the second round of target and comparison area focus groups in the schools and communities
<b>June</b>	Intervention Team meeting Data collection subcommittee meeting

## **B. Assessment Report Preparation Initial Activities**

*Selection of Target Area.* Initially, in determining a target area, the Steering Committee assessed the entire city of Pittsburgh due to the widely dispersed nature of crime over many areas of the city. The Steering Committee considered 23 areas from four regions of the city (North, South, East, and Central). To accomplish this, the Steering Committee undertook a comprehensive review of police activity for the previous three years. As part of this effort, they developed a set of criteria for reviewing police reports to identify gang involvement and define the term “gang” (see next section for further information).

### Exhibit 4-2

#### ACTION TEAM REPRESENTATION AT INAUGURAL MEETING

Agency	AGENCY TYPE										
	Law Enforcement (City)	Law Enforcement (County)	Criminal Justice	Pittsburgh Public Schools	Government (City)	Government (County)	CBOs	Other Nonprofits	Faith Community	Research Partner	Other
Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church									X		
Juvenile Probation			X								
Voices Against Violence							X				
Pittsburgh City Council	X										
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police	X										
Community Empowerment Association							X				
Shuman Detention Center			X								
Urban League of Pittsburgh								X			
Pittsburgh School Police				X							
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police	X										
Youth Policy Office (Mayor's Office)					X						
Pittsburgh Board of Education				X							

After reducing the total number of census tracts or target areas under consideration from 23 to 10, the Steering Committee convened a series of meetings designed to understand and interpret the data previously collected on the East Region. The Steering Committee's assessment considered a number of factors in the selection process. These factors included: the level of violence, number of potential gang members, the existence or absence of resources, and the probability of success based on direct intervention with the project. Following an in-depth assessment of these factors, the Steering Committee arrived at agreement on the East Region as the target area.



***Defining Gang.*** Several Steering Committee members expressed doubts that Pittsburgh's gang problems fit what they interpret as the GFS program requirements. Some of the Steering Committee members felt that Pittsburgh did not have a Los Angeles or Chicago-type gang problem, with formal structures and obvious signs and colors that define gangs in those cities. They did not want Pittsburgh to be penalized because it could not demonstrate the presence of these types of gangs.

A broad constituency contributed to establishing a definition of gangs. This constituency included members of the police department, the district attorney's office, school officials, community, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Exhibit 4-3 provides definitions for: 1) gangs; 2) gang member; and 3) gang-involved incident.

***Defining Problem Statements and Developing Objectives and Project Goals.*** Most of those interviewed—particularly if they had attended the training in Mesa, AZ—had a clear understanding that the goal of the assessment phase was to collect data to help clarify and define the city's gang problem. However, some community activists on the front lines of anti-gang work in Pittsburgh felt frustrated at what they believed was “a waste of resources in the midst of a crisis.” Some commented that they “had already done” an assessment, interviewed gang members long ago, or determined the communities most in need of resources and services. Others saw this effort as yet another bureaucratic, interagency effort that would yield little useful information. Many of the

### Exhibit 4-3

#### PITTSBURGH'S GANG DEFINITIONS

<p><b>Gang:</b> Three or more identified (self, police, community, school, behavior, etc.) individuals, who associate, in kind, to commit criminal acts together, a minimum of two times, for the benefit of the group association.</p> <p>Criminal acts consist of primary and secondary acts, however, the primary acts are more likely to be associated with gangs than the secondary acts.</p> <p>Primary offenses include: homicide, robbery, aggravated assault, motor vehicle theft, simple assault, criminal mischief (vandalism, graffiti, etc.), weapons offenses/trafficking, and drug offenses.</p> <p>Secondary offenses include: rape, burglary, larceny/theft, arson, loitering, stolen property (receiving, trafficking, etc.), prostitution, extortion, and witness intimidation/payment.</p>
<p><b>Gang Member:</b> An individual is identified as a gang member by confirmation of, at least, two identifying criteria as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Self declared membership and/or participation in a known gang;</li><li>· Has been identified by police and/or other law enforcement authorities as a gang member;</li><li>· Has been identified by community members as a gang member;</li><li>· Has been identified by school officials, teachers, etc., as a gang member;</li><li>· Has established gang involvement by exhibiting behavior consistent with gang involvement including, but not limited to: regular associations with known gang members; use of hand signs, symbols, and/or tattoos; communicating with known gang members; possessing and/or disseminating gang-related documentation; and possessing a past criminal record for gang-involved activity.</li></ul>
<p><b>Gang-involved Incident:</b> Any criminal act(s) (committed/participated in) by identified gang member(s).</p>

community activists agreed to suspend judgment until the project matured more fully.

These sentiments did not surprise the national evaluation team, given that the July 23 Steering Committee meeting was the first exposure to OJJDP's GFS program for most of the approximately 30 people who attended.

Despite the apprehension in the beginning of the GFS project, most members of the steering committee eventually bought into the project and have remained active. Every Steering Committee meeting has had approximately 30 attendees and comprised

representatives from the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Pittsburgh Police Department, Allegheny County Juvenile Probation, Allegheny County Adult Probation, Office of the Attorney General, juvenile detention centers, Community in Schools Academy, myriad youth and community organizations, and local and county government mental health agencies. Steering Committee members became very interested in the goals and objectives of the GFS projects. Some members were also willing to give their time to work on additional subcommittees to improve and further the advancement of the project's goals, such as the Outreach Taskforce Subcommittee and the Data Collection Subcommittee.

***Collecting Data.*** The assessment process consisted of data collection on gang crime and gang member information, school data, community demographics, and community perceptions.

#### **1. Gang Crime and Gang Member Information.**

*Type of Data Collected:* 1) Police records for 1999 through 2001 for each census tract in the city of Pittsburgh including data for homicides, aggravated assaults, and weapon and drug violations characterized as gang-involved (these data provided information about the offenders and victims of gang crime as well as information about location and time of commission), and 2) gang member interview data, which yielded a demographic profile of gang members, gang-related activities and crimes, their perceptions, and their relationships with family and peers.

*Process:* The research partner reviewed the police departments' electronic arrest, offense, and victim files for 1999 through 2001. The police department retrospectively reviewed all of the archived records of the crimes (1,631) to determine whether the crime was actually gang-involved. Community outreach representatives from the Steering Committee conducted 80 interviews with the gang members across the four main geographic regions of the city.

## **2. School Data**

*Type of Data Collected:* 1) Student surveys and school staff interviews on perceptions about gangs, risk factors for gang membership, and the occurrence of gang-involved activities, and 2) school records for 1998 through 2001 for six middle and four high schools, which included data on school and student body characteristics, disciplinary incidents, school police caseload for assaults, drugs, weapons, and probation.

*Process:* Members of the Steering Committee administered written surveys to the students in the middle and high schools and conducted the staff interviews. The research partner reviewed electronic records provided by the Pittsburgh School District.

## **3. Community Demographics**

*Type of Data Collected:* For the targeted census tracts the following data were collected: size of the population, age, gender distribution, racial distribution, education, employment and income statistics, and teen birth rate.

*Process:* The research partner amassed the data from the following sources: the Allegheny County Health Department, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Pittsburgh Public School District.

#### 4. **Community Perceptions**

*Type of Data Collected:* Community leaders, community residents, and parents provided perceptions of current gang activity.

*Process:* The Project Coordinator interviewed community leaders. The Steering Committee selected community residents and the YMCA and a police officer selected a sample of parents. The community residents and parents completed a written survey.

*Documenting Gang Crime and Gang Activity.* Limited data existed about the number of gang-related crimes in Pittsburgh, since the police did not routinely collect and record this information. Later in the project, the police department developed a form that they required officers in the Narcotics and Vice units to complete; a monthly report summarizing the resulting data is generated and submitted to the mayor's office. The Assessment Team then began a formal and detailed process of determining the presence of youth gang crimes in Pittsburgh with the help of the research partner.

The Steering Committee recognized that gang-related crime data from the school police was critical for the project, but it appeared that it would be very difficult to cull the agency's records for this information. The police department (at the suggestion of the

research partner) offered to help locate or develop appropriate software to extract the needed information and to provide the technical assistance required to collect this data.

## **PHASES OF ACTIVITIES**

***Determining a Target Population.*** Based on data collected during the Assessment Report phase, the Steering Committee selected primary and secondary target populations. At the time of assessment, the Steering Committee determined that three gangs dominated the East Region—the Bloods, Crips, and LAW—while other smaller gangs were beginning to emerge. The Steering Committee estimated that more than 300 individuals participated in the three major gangs, with membership evenly split among the three.

The primary target population included:

- African American males age 15 through 24 years old with a history as a criminally-involved gang member from: East Liberty, Homewood, Larimer, Lincoln-Lemington, and East Hills.

The secondary target population included:

- African American males age 12 through 18 year old with a history of at least two of the following criteria: 1) known gang member; 2) suspected gang member/family member; 3) two suspensions (fighting, assaults, weapon offense); or 4) one expulsion for 10 days or more for a violent/weapon offense. The individual must reside in East Liberty, Homewood, Larimer, Lincoln-Lemington, or East Hills.

## **LOGIC MODEL PLANNING PROCESS**

### **A. Logic Model Development Training**

In September 2003, the national evaluation team provided a one-day workshop training session to discuss logic model development with the key stakeholders in Pittsburgh. The workshop focused on the purpose of the national evaluation and developing the fundamental elements of the logic model, such as selecting activities to undertake. Unlike the other GFS sites, Pittsburgh did not have a second workshop given the conflicts in scheduling. Members of the national evaluation team, however, had several one-on-one discussions with Pittsburgh's project coordinator, including a meeting at the third GFS cluster conference in February 2004, to identify immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes and associating data with these outcomes. Pittsburgh GFS finalized its logic model in March 2004.

### **B. Strategies and Activities**

The logic model categorized all of the activities under four of the key strategies of OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model: 1) Suppression; 2) Organizational Change and Development; 3) Social Interventions; and 4) Community Mobilization. Summarized in Exhibit 4-4 are the activities identified by the project in its logic model (shown in plain text) and the status of, or revisions made to, the activities at the conclusion of the project (shown in bold text).

## Exhibit 4-4

### STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

#### STRATEGY: SUPPRESSION

---

**Activity:** Based on gang intelligence data, coordinate directed patrols between law enforcement agencies to address identified hotspots, activities likely to draw a gang presence, and gang trends as identified by analysis of gang incidents to suppress gang crime in the East Region Target Area (timing, frequency, and number of law enforcement officers to be determined). Work together to target gang youth and known associates at locations designated by the analysis of gang crime data.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

#### STRATEGY: ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE & DEVELOPMENT

---

**Activity:** Modify Pittsburgh Police Bureau incident report forms to add the question, "Incident gang related? Yes, No, Possibly, or Cannot Determine."

**Note:** *Experienced computer issues with capturing gang activity data. However, this activity occurred as stated, and the incident reports were modified appropriately in October 2003.*

---

**Activity:** Modify gang incidents/gang members database intelligence tracking system and equipment so that it will: 1. capture, catalog, summarize, retrieve, and manage information and photographs; and 2. videotape persons, gang houses, neighborhoods, etc.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated in 2005.*

---

**Activity:** Provide training to 100 percent of Pittsburgh Police Bureau officers on the incidents report form and five to seven officers in the Intelligence Unit on the gang incidents/gang members database intelligence tracking system. Provide follow-up training on these items and the Gang-Free Schools Model for new personnel assigned to Pittsburgh's Bureau of Police's Intelligence Unit.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated in 2003 and 2004.*

---

**Activity:** Provide training to college and university (i.e., University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon, Duquesne University, and Chatham College), School District of Pittsburgh, and City of Pittsburgh Housing Authority law enforcement agencies on the use of the modified "City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Police Incident Report Form and the definition of gang-involved incident. Provide training to a minimum of 50 law enforcement officers on gang incident identification and use of reporting forms.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

**Activity:** 1) Develop a process to collect and disseminate information about gang incidents among law enforcement agencies (e.g., Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, Housing Authority Police Department, Pittsburgh Public School District Police Department, and other interested agencies) operating in the East Region Target Area. This process will be developed through Intervention Team, Steering Committee, and individual meetings, however, these agencies will not use the Intervention Team members to gather intelligence. The Intervention Team is only assisting in the development of the process. 2) Promote use of and increase awareness of this information through roll call meetings and policymaking within the hierarchy of the Pittsburgh Police Bureau.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

**Activity:** Analyze law enforcement data in four major categories: 1) homicides, 2) aggravated assaults, 3) drugs, and 4) weapons.

The research partner will conduct the analysis of the data on a monthly basis to develop gang intelligence report. Send report to the police commander of the target zone in an effort to respond quickly and effectively to changing gang activities and trends and to the Intervention Team for discussion at their meetings.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

**Activity:** Establish a baseline, using City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Police Data, on the number of gang-involved crime incidents occurring in the East End Region of Pittsburgh.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

**Activity:** Convene and maintain a bi-monthly intelligence-sharing meeting of relevant law enforcement agencies working in the target area to share gang intelligence and information on gang trends across agencies.

**Note:** *This activity occurred as stated.*

---

**Activity:** Provide Student Assistant Program (SAP) Coordinators (one at each of seven schools) with MOUs and resource report from partner agencies to assist them in making informed decisions about referral options. In each of the schools, students who are experiencing educational, emotional, or behavioral problems are referred to the Student Assistant Program Coordinators. The student is then directly referred to a service provider or program.

---



---

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

**Activity:** Develop a baseline, using school district Code of Student Conduct Data, on the number of gang-involved incidents at schools in East End.

**Note: There is no evidence that this activity occurred.**

**Activity:** Provide training to Pittsburgh Public School (PPS) Data Entry Staff to identify gang-involved incidents at schools in the East End.

**Note: There is no evidence that this activity occurred.**

**Activity:** Execute MOU with partner agencies to formalize agreements. The MOUs will explicitly describe the services to be provided. The partner agencies and services to be provided will be determined in the near future.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated with agencies such as the Project Life Line and the East End Collaborative.**

**Activity:** Develop and maintain a comprehensive, web-based database and case management system that tracks gang involved youth and stores information on community and school offered youth programs that can be searched for programs that meet the need of individual youth. Provide training to those using database and make system easy to use.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

---

### STRATEGY: SOCIAL INTERVENTIONS

**Activity:** Provide at least two trainings and/or presentations for school personnel at each of the seven schools in the East Region Target Area on the Gang-Free Schools Model and on effective strategies in working with gang-involved youth. The presentations or trainings could be done in group meetings or teacher in-service trainings on gangs and gang violence. The training would be developed and provided by the Intervention Team members.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated. All school staff were trained on the Gang-Free Schools model.**

**Activity:** The Intervention Team will establish a case management system for enrolled youth. The Intervention Team will develop individual case management plans to coordinate services such as: 1) education services: tutoring remediation/education enrichment; 2) employment services: job training; 3) substance abuse services: drug and alcohol treatment; 4) counseling/conflict management/anger management services: anger management, conflict resolution, and other counseling/social service programs (specific providers to be determined); and 5) recreation services: to be determined. All newly referred youth will be reviewed on a bi-weekly basis and previously enrolled youth will be tracked quarterly. Dosage will be based on three levels of need: Level 1 = 10 contacts per month, Level 2 = 6 contacts per month, and Level 3 = 1 contacts per month.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

**Activity:** Conduct outreach to gang youth and families. Outreach workers will refer youth and their family members to the appropriate service providers. All newly referred youth and family members will be reviewed on a bi-weekly basis and previously enrolled youth will be tracked quarterly. Dosage will be based on three levels of need: Level 1 = 10 contacts per month, Level 2 = 6 contacts per month, and Level 3 = 1 contacts per month.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

**Activity:** Identify and recruit at least 18 more members of primary and secondary target populations to be enrolled in GFSC project by getting direct referrals from probation and intervention team, and by creating outreach strategies.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated. 81 clients consented between 2003 and 2006.**

---

### STRATEGY: COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

**Activity:** Identify and collaborate with other public safety groups and grass-root community groups in East Region Target Area (e.g., Weed and Seed) to present information to the community about the Gang-Free Schools Model to increase awareness and foster information sharing about safety and gang-awareness issues.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

**Activity:** Recruit Community Residents and Business Leaders for Steering Committee. Recruit a minimum of four new individuals, who hold leadership positions in their communities for membership on the Steering Committee.

**Note: There is no evidence that this activity occurred.**

**Activity:** Recruit youth who reside in the target area to form a Youth Council.

**Note: This activity did not occur.**

**Activity:** Facilitate (Project Coordinator, Pittsburgh Police Bureau, and Outreach Worker) two community

---

---

forums for a minimum of 25 community residents about safety and gang-awareness issues such as the Gang-Free Schools Model, taking safety precautions, and specific gang activities in the community.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

---

**Activity:** Have Youth Council identify three top issues and three top solutions that they think are connected to gang activity.

**Note: There is no evidence that this activity occurred.**

---

Source: Pittsburgh's Logic Model

## **ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE**

### **A. The Steering Committee**

At the Steering Committee meeting on July 23, 2001, the members elected George Simmons, from the Pittsburgh Human Rights Commission (PHRC) as the chairperson. Mr. Simmons, who worked at PHRC for 27 years, formerly held the positions of a teacher and a trained mediator working with delinquent youth. Mr. Simmons also served on a number of other steering committees.

Exhibit 4-5 shows that Pittsburgh's Steering Committee consisted of diverse representation, including members of the faith community, social service nonprofits, community-based organizations, government, law enforcement, criminal justice, and, of course, the schools. Among those not represented initially were businesses and the philanthropic community (Pittsburgh is home to several foundations and other charitable groups). The committee's chairperson expressed concern that having parents, youth, and businesses involved too early in the process can be counter-productive. He felt that these participants can often derail group discussions because they have strong views and a personal investment in the issues.

**Exhibit 4-5**

**STEERING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION DURING ASSESSMENT  
REPORT PHASE**

Agency	Agency Type										
	City Law Enforcement	Co. Law Enforcement	Criminal Justice Agencies	Pittsburgh Public Schools	City Government	County Government	Community-based orgs	Other Nonprofits	Faith Community	Research Partner	Other
University of Pittsburgh											X
Housing Authority Police Dept.	X										
Juvenile Probation			X								
Pittsburgh Board of Education				X							
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police	X										
Pittsburgh Public Schools—Peabody High School				X							
Community Empowerment Association							X				
Voices Against Violence							X				
Pittsburgh Human Rights Commission					X						
Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church									X		
Pittsburgh Board of Education				X							
Mayor’s Youth Policy Office					X						
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police	X										
Youth Works							X				
Urban League of Pittsburgh							X				
MH/MR Drug and Alcohol Programs						X					
Coroner’s Office						X					
Pressley Ridge								X			
Allegheny Co. DHS						X					
Shuman Detention Center			X								
Center for Violence and Injury Control, Allegheny-Singer Research Institute (Research Partner)								X			
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police	X										
District Attorney’s Office					X						
Pittsburgh YMCA								X			
Natl. Council for Urban Peace and Justice							X				
Pittsburgh City Council					X						

The project coordinator's original intent was to have a Steering Committee with a fairly open membership where individuals and agencies could attend as often or as little as they wish.

## **B. The Project Coordinator, Street Outreach Workers, and Research Partner**

*Project Coordinator.* The original Project Coordinator, Odell Richardson, worked with Pittsburgh youth for several years and worked as a local activist on youth issues. As noted earlier, he was Executive Director of a prior initiative, PYC, part of the Mayor's Youth Initiative. A variety of stakeholders in both public and community organizations considered him to be an outstanding candidate for position.

Other individuals considered for the position include, Khalid Raheem, Executive Director of the National Council for Urban Peace and Justice, and Richard Garland, Executive Director of YouthWorks. In fact, Raheem was presented at the Mesa training as the likely choice; he had been recommended by Dr. Christmas, who authored the original proposal. On returning from the training, Raheem and the Pittsburgh Public Schools came to a joint decision to find another coordinator, based on the fact that a full-time project coordinator was required, a commitment that Raheem could not make due to his other responsibilities.

School administrators intended for the Project Coordinator to be the lead contact for the Pittsburgh site, interacting with all the national partners (OJJDP, the National Youth Gang Center, COSMOS Corporation) and managing all aspects of the local work. Upon

Mr. Richardson's departure, Errika Fearbry Jones assumed the role of Project Coordinator. Ms. Fearbry Jones previously worked in the mayor's Youth Policy Office so she brought with her knowledge of the issues, an understanding of the city's politics, and familiarity with key stakeholders in the process. Ms. Fearbry Jones led the Intervention Team, coordinated the activities of the Steering Committee, worked with the key constituencies to develop project buy-in, developed and reported data as needed for various events, and disseminated information about the project and its activities on a large scale. Ms. Fearbry Jones' efforts brought the project to the next level and ultimately contributed significantly to sustaining and expanding the project.

***Street Outreach Workers.*** At the outset of the project, East-End Youth Outreach administered the overall outreach team responsibilities. The YMCA in Homewood/Brushton hired two individuals to provide direct intervention with the gang-involved individuals in the target area (Rasheed Jihad-later replaced by Jason Akers and Tone Walls). Inshira Jihada, of the YMCA, supervised the outreach workers since the YMCA technically employed the outreach workers. The YMCA provided these services on a subcontracting basis. Pittsburgh is the only site where direct links did not exist between the Project Coordinator and the outreach workers. This dislocation caused communication and supervisory problems when Ms. Fearbry Jones took over as Project Coordinator. Eventually, several discussions helped to resolve the issues and lead to a more coordinated undertaking.

***The Research Partner.*** Joyce D’Antonio, Ph.D., served as the first research partner. Amanda Cook assisted Dr. D’Antonio initially. Dr. D’Antonio conducted research for other projects administered by the school district. The research partners’ primary role included developing data collection instruments, providing ongoing data collection describing gang-involved activity, and providing information based on the data to the Steering Committee and the Project Coordinator. Both Dr. D’Antonio and Ms. Cook played a significant part in the development and analysis of data for the Assessment Report. As the project progressed, Dr. D’Antonio created instruments and tracking sheets in collaboration with the Project Coordinator to assist in monitoring activities. At various points in time, staff from NYGC, the Steering Committee, etc., expressed concern about the quality and timeliness of the work being delivered by Dr. D’Antonio. At times, it appeared that Dr. D’Antonio was overcommitted to other projects and unable to fully participate as needed on this project. In late 2006, Edward Mulvey, Ph.D., replaced Dr. D’Antonio as the research partner and continued in this position through the duration of the project.

### **C. Intervention Team**

Members from both the Steering Committee and the Assessment Team comprised the Intervention Team. The group established a core commitment to ensure sufficient incentive to participate on a long-term and consistent basis. The Intervention Team included the following representatives:

1. Project Coordinator (from Pittsburgh Public Schools);
2. Research Partner;
3. Outreach Workers (YMCA);

4. Adult Probation and Corrections;
5. Allegheny County Juvenile Probation;
6. Pittsburgh Bureau of Police;
7. Family Support Services;
8. Youth Works, Inc.; and
9. Teachers and Staff from the Target Area Schools (Pittsburgh Public).

## **ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED**

### ***Past or Current Gang Violence Reduction Programs***

Although most of the following initiatives were not specifically designed to address gangs and gang-related violence, they have focused on the risk factors associated with gang involvement: academic failure; family disintegration; substance abuse; inadequate supervision of youth; lack of social, recreational, and employment opportunities; and community violence and disintegration.

### **Past Activities**

***Interagency Council on Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons, and Violence.*** As noted earlier, in 1994 the city created Pittsburgh's Interagency Council on Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons, and Violence, whose mission is to "take all steps necessary to guarantee both a safe and drug-free environment in each of our schools and communities where our children live, learn, work, and play."<sup>26</sup> The council's partners included 17 law enforcement agencies and several dozen other government and social service agencies. Many members of the

---

<sup>26</sup>Pittsburgh GFS application, page 21.

council—which continued to meet on a monthly basis—also served on the GFS Steering Committee.

***Pittsburgh Youth Collaborative.*** On taking office in 1995, Mayor Tom Murphy “quickly realized that the only way Pittsburgh was going to be successful in dealing with the alarming increase in juvenile violence was to step into a larger circle of partners who deal with young people and their problems every day.”<sup>27</sup> Guided by a belief that only a small portion of serious, habitual offenders was responsible for the bulk of juvenile crime, the mayor established the Pittsburgh Youth Collaborative (PYC) to identify that small portion of serious habitual offenders and provide them with intensive services to help break the cycle of criminal behavior and bring adolescent offenders back into the community. Of the 88 social service agencies invited to participate, six eventually agreed to serve the 120 youths selected for the program. The University of Pittsburgh, the juvenile court, and several local foundations provided additional support. The Pittsburgh Public Schools hired PYC’s executive director, Odell Richardson, as the project coordinator for the GFS project during the assessment phase. PYC began winding down operations in 2000 due to a lack of funding.

***Safe Schools/Healthy Students.*** In 1999, Pittsburgh received a grant under the Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SSHS) Initiative, jointly funded by two federal agencies: the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education. Applicants submitted comprehensive plans that included formal partnerships with law enforcement and local

---

<sup>27</sup>Office of the Mayor, Youth Policy Office, downloaded August 2001 from its web site at [www.yconnection.com/yp-pro/](http://www.yconnection.com/yp-pro/)



mental health authorities as well as collaboration with families, local juvenile justice authorities, and community-based organizations. Pittsburgh's initiative included partnerships with two county social service agencies, the Center for Victims of Violent Crime, the Urban League, community-based nonprofits (including the National Council for Urban Peace and Justice), the Office of Juvenile Court Administrators, and the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police. Many of the partnerships formed under GFS's project, emerged from those originated in the SSHS Initiative.

With SSHS funds, the Pittsburgh Public Schools have been working to identify children at risk for violence and mental health problems and connecting these children to appropriate resources. Nine of the 93 area public schools will receive intensive interventions while the remaining schools will receive less intensive interventions. Additional activities will include training for parents, alcohol and drug prevention, and workshops to address violence.

***Operation Weed and Seed.*** Pittsburgh has been part of DOJ's Weed and Seed Program for nearly a decade. Weed and Seed is a comprehensive strategy to help communities bring together people and resources to prevent and control crime and improve the quality of life.

The Pittsburgh Weed and Seed Program began in 1992 with \$613,000 in federal funds targeting the Hill District. Currently, six neighborhoods are targeted: East Liberty, Lawrenceville, West End, Beechview, North Side, and South Pittsburgh. Former targeted

areas included: Hazelwood, Hill District, and Homewood.<sup>28</sup> Activities pursued with Weed and Seed funds include anti-gang education/training; dispute resolution and mediation; job training and job placement; anti-drug education; and youth leadership training. Economic development projects such as a business complex for the Hazelwood community also are part of Weed and Seed's comprehensive approach to community revitalization. In 1999, DOJ rated the Pittsburgh Weed and Seed site the best in the nation, as evidenced by a considerable drop in crime in the targeted areas and an increased sense of safety among its residents. An independent national evaluation of the Pittsburgh Weed and Seed program noted that, among other impressive accomplishments, the city's Weed and Seed program had "improved the quality of life in the community."<sup>29</sup> In September of 2000, Pittsburgh's Weed and Seed Program entered into a partnership with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center to pursue a \$1 million dollar lead-abatement initiative in addition to its job training, housing development, and economic revitalization efforts.<sup>30</sup>

***Curfew (Safety Zone).*** A city ordinance passed in 1995 established a curfew for youth aged 16 and younger. From Sunday through Thursday, the curfew lasts from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. (it begins at 11 p.m. during the summer); on Friday and Saturday, the

---

<sup>28</sup>Site of Pittsburgh Weed and Seed, "Target Areas," [http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/weednseed/html/target\\_areas.html](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/weednseed/html/target_areas.html), October 2007.

<sup>29</sup>Author unknown, "Sowing Seeds: Pittsburgh Makes the Most of a Federal Initiative," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, July 18 1999, page E-2.

<sup>30</sup>Tokarski, John, *Pittsburgh Weed and Seed Sites Partner with University of Pittsburgh to Create Healthier Communities*, Weed and Seed In-Sites: Creating Healthy Communities, Volume VIII, Number 3, August/September 2000, page 11.

curfew is in force from midnight to 6 a.m.<sup>31</sup> It remains unclear whether the curfew is currently enforced.

***Truancy Abatement Center.*** The mayor's office, the public schools, the juvenile court, the Allegheny County Office of Children, Youth, and Families, local law enforcement, and other agencies jointly administer this program. Truants are picked up by law enforcement officers and brought to the Truancy Abatement Center, located in the Pittsburgh police department's downtown office. After the parents are contacted, an assessment is conducted to determine the child's needs. In addition, the truant is referred to appropriate services as needed.

***Anti-Gang Services from YouthWorks.*** In the 1990s, the Pittsburgh Public Schools hired YouthWorks, a nonprofit organization, to provide services targeting gang-involved youth. The organization "coordinates workforce development as the core of the Three Rivers WorkForce Investment Board's (TRWIB) Youth Policy Council."<sup>32</sup> Mayor Tom Murphy and several City Commissioners convened TRWIB in 1999 and charged it with "creating a coherent and accountable local employment and training system." The city viewed this as the successor agency to the Pittsburgh Private Industry Council and the Allegheny County Commission for Workforce Excellence.

---

<sup>31</sup>Office of the Mayor, Youth Policy Office, downloaded August 2001 from its web site at [www.yconnection.com/yp-pro/](http://www.yconnection.com/yp-pro/)

<sup>32</sup>YouthWorks website, downloaded August 2001 from [www.youthworksinc.org](http://www.youthworksinc.org). Source: TRWIB website, [www.trwib.org](http://www.trwib.org).

***National Council for Urban Peace and Justice Initiatives.*** Khalid Raheem, a local activist, leads this community-based group. Mr. Raheem attended the initial GFS Cluster Meeting and made a number of critical comments about the Steering Committee at its initial meeting. On July 19, 2001 he led a small group demonstration at a city council meeting where officials were discussing the recent surge in violence.<sup>33</sup> Mr. Raheem and another Steering Committee attendee, Rashad Byrdsong, played a role in the First National Gang Peace Summit, held in Kansas City, MO in April-May 1993. The summit, a nationwide grassroots effort, brought together a diverse group of gang members, former gang members, clergy, and community activists from nearly 30 metropolitan areas around the United States to discuss how to bring about peace in communities experiencing violence and unrest. The summit participants identified five “principles” or objectives for target communities: 1) developing a vision or goal for the future; 2) facilitating political empowerment; 3) economic development; 4) improving social justice; and 5) improving respect for women in the community. The coalition of Pittsburgh attendees formally became known as the National Council for Urban Peace and Justice, which has sponsored or supported numerous local gang-peace summits around the country.

***Gun Buy-Back Programs.*** In December 2001, two gun buy-back programs offered gift certificates for operable, but unwanted, handguns, rifles, and shotguns. “Pittsburgh Gun Amnesty Day” was “aimed primarily at the African-American community,” and offered \$25 gift certificates redeemable at local grocery stores or the Toys “R” Us. The “Goods for Guns” program offered \$25 grocery store gift certificates.

---

<sup>33</sup>McNulty, July 19, 2001.

***“Taking Him to the Streets.”*** This grassroots initiative developed in July 5, 2002, after an eight-year-old was caught in the crossfire of a gang-related shooting in a local restaurant. Speakers at the event included “a female lawyer-turned preacher who was once a bank robber and gang member,” as well as a “drug dealer-turned-successful businessman” and others.<sup>34</sup>

### **Current Activities**

***Coordination with Other Agencies.*** PYIP has continued to hold regular meetings with service providers as well as give presentations on GFS. The site executed Memoranda of Understanding with several entities including the Allegheny County Department of Human Services and the District Attorney’s Office. Letters of agreement were also signed by the County Juvenile Court, Communities in Schools, Pittsburgh Community Services, and the PPS Student Wellness Office. PYIP also established formal agreements with partner agencies to provide specific services. Agencies involved included the Project Life Line and the East End Collaborative (a group of social service agencies providing services in the target area).

***Dissemination of Gang-Related Information to the Community.*** PYIP, with its partner agencies, collected, analyzed, and disseminated information about gang incidents. To increase awareness, the site also facilitated community forums and collaborated with other groups in the target area to present information to the community on the Gang-Free Schools Model. Some of the presentations were for entire communities such as the

---

<sup>34</sup>City Briefs, “Homewood: Crusade Against Crime,” Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, July 5, 2002.

Homewood community. Another example of involving the community was working with a high school to organize a 1-day conference on drug use and violence prevention.

***Collaboration with the Schools.*** Pittsburgh provided trainings and presentations for school personnel at all of the East Region Target Area schools on the Gang-Free Schools Model and on strategies in working with gang-involved youth. PYIP initially trained all vice principals, then principals, and over time, all school staff received training. PYIP also conducted a survey of all principals to learn, among other things, their top safety concerns. Ongoing presentations with school administrators and staff as well as collaboration with the schools have continued throughout the project.

***Job Training.*** PYIP made job-training available to enrolled youth by facilitating participation in apprentice programs offered through a construction company and a craftsmen's guild. Several youth who enrolled in the welding program achieved their Level 1 certifications through the apprenticeship opportunity. The funding for the welding program came, most recently, from diverse sources: OJJDP, Project Safe Neighborhoods, and the Board of Education. In addition to the welding program, training also was offered through an organization that trains creative and performing artists in the area. In addition to accessing training and mentorship through the organization, one of the youths had an opportunity to interview for a world-renowned music program. In addition to the apprenticeship programs, many participants worked on completing their GED in order to become employable.

## **SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS**

The national evaluation team conducted several focus groups in the target and comparison areas in Pittsburgh during two different stages of the project. The first round of focus groups was conducted toward the beginning of the project in the summer and fall of 2004, and the second round was done near the end of the project in the spring of 2007. The focus groups occurred in both target and comparison area schools with students and school personnel as well as in the communities with local residents. Each focus group meeting lasted about one hour. The main purpose of the focus groups was to elicit facts and obtain individuals' opinions and ideas about gangs, drugs, and violence in the schools and in the surrounding communities.

*Student Focus Groups.* In November 2004, the national evaluation team conducted the first round of school focus groups in five schools: three in the East End target area and two in the North Side comparison area. On November 8, 2004, seven students participated in the focus group held at Westinghouse High School (target school), and nine students participated in the focus group at Reizenstein Middle School (target school). On November 15, 2004, the evaluation team also conducted a focus group at Peabody High School (target school), in which seven students participated. Additionally, the national evaluation team conducted focus groups in two comparison area schools on November 16, 2004. Seven students participated at Oliver High School (comparison school), and six students participated at Columbus Middle School (comparison school).

In the first round of school focus groups, the students received gift cards valued at \$10, as well as pizza and beverages for lunch.

The national evaluation team conducted the second round of student focus groups on May 1-2, 2007. On May 1, 2007, the evaluation team conducted a focus group with seven students at Westinghouse High School (target school). Similarly, the national evaluation team conducted a focus group at Oliver High School (comparison school) with seven students. As an incentive to participate in the second round of school focus groups, the students in the target school received gift cards valued at \$20, and the students from the comparison school received gift cards valued at \$10. Both sets of student focus groups received pizza and beverages for lunch.

*Students' Likert Scale Data (second round).* Seven students (n= 7) in a target area school and seven students (n = 7) in a comparison area school completed a Likert scale questionnaire during the second round of focus groups in Pittsburgh. The Likert scale questions were as follows:

1. How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?;
2. How safe do you feel in your school?;
3. How serious is the gang problem in your neighborhood?; and
4. How serious is the gang problem in your school?



In response to question one, five out of seven target area students (71%) felt neither safe nor unsafe in their neighborhood, one student felt safe, and one student felt unsafe. In the comparison area school, three out of seven students (43%) felt very unsafe in their neighborhood, two students felt unsafe (29%), one student felt very safe, and one student felt safe.

In response to the question two, five students in the target area school (71%) felt safe in their school, one student felt unsafe, and one student felt neither safe nor unsafe. Similarly, six students in the comparison area school (86%) felt safe in their school, and one student felt neither safe nor unsafe.

In response to question three, three students in the target area school (43%) thought their neighborhood had a serious gang problem, three students (43%) thought their neighborhood had an average gang problem, and one student thought the neighborhood gang problem was very serious. In the comparison area school, four students (57%) thought their neighborhood had a very serious gang problem, two students (29%) thought their neighborhood had a serious gang problem, and one student thought the gang problem in the neighborhood was average.

In response to question four, four students in the target area school (57%) thought the school had an average gang problem, two students (57%) thought their school had a serious gang problem, and one student thought the gang problem in the school was very serious.

***Teachers, Administrators, and Staff Focus Groups.*** On November 8, 2004, six teachers, administrators, and staff participated in the first round of focus groups held at Westinghouse High School (target school). Ten teachers, administrators, and staff participated in the focus group at Reizenstein Middle School (target school). The evaluation team also conducted a focus group at Peabody High School (target school) on November 15, 2004, in which 13 teachers, administrators, and staff participated. Furthermore, the national evaluation team conducted focus groups in two comparison area schools on November 16, 2004. A total of 16 teachers, administrators, and staff participated at Oliver High School (comparison school), and two teachers, administrators, and staff participated at Columbus Middle School (comparison school).

On May 1, 2007, six teachers, administrators, and staff participated in the second round of focus groups held at Westinghouse High School (target school). The national evaluation team also conducted another round of focus groups at Oliver High School (comparison school) on May 2, 2007. A total of eight teachers, administrators, and staff participated. As an incentive to participate in the school focus groups, the teachers, administrators, and staff received lunch and beverages during the meeting time.

***School Personnel Likert Scale Data (second round).*** Five teachers, staff, and administrators (n = 5) in the target area school and eight teachers, staff, and administrators (n = 8) in the comparison area completed the Likert scale questionnaire during the second round of the focus groups. The Likert scale questions were as follows:

1. How well do you like working in your school?;
2. How safe do you feel in your school?;
3. How serious is the gang problem in your school?; and
4. Has the gang problem changed over the last three years?

In response to question one, three out of five school personnel (60%) in the target area school loved working in their school, and two school personnel (40%) neither liked nor disliked working in their school. Six out of the eight school personnel (75%) in the comparison area school loved working in their school, and two school personnel (25%) liked working in their school.

In response to question two, three school personnel (60%) in the target area school felt very safe in their school, one school member felt safe, and one school member felt neither safe nor unsafe. In the comparison area school, five school personnel (63%) felt safe in their school, and three school personnel (37%) felt very safe in their school.

In response to question three, all five of the school personnel (100%) indicated that there was some gang problem in their school. Five out of the eight school personnel (63%) in the comparison area school also believed that their school had some gang problem, while three school personnel (37%) thought that their school had an average gang problem.

In response to question four, three school personnel (60%) in the target area school noted that there had been no change in the gang problem over the last three years; one school member said the gang problem had improved; and one did not answer the question. In the comparison area school, two school personnel (25%) thought the gang problem had gotten slightly worse; two school personnel (25%) thought the gang problem had slightly improved; two school personnel (25%) thought the gang problem had improved; and two school personnel (25%) did not answer the question.

*Community Focus Groups.* On June 28, 2004, the national evaluation team conducted the first round of focus groups with three community resident groups in the East End target area comprised of a total of approximately 30 community residents (one adult and two youth focus groups) on June 29, 2004. The adult focus group occurred at the Homewood YMCA, and the youth focus groups occurred at Westinghouse High School and the Garfield Community Center. Additionally, on August 17, 2004, the national evaluation team conducted two focus groups in the North Side comparison area with approximately 25 community residents (one adult and one youth focus group). The evaluation team conducted the comparison area focus groups at the Bidwell Church and Training Center. The national evaluation team provided light food and beverages to both the target and comparison area focus groups. The youth participants also received gift incentive cards valued at \$10.

The national evaluation team conducted the second round of community focus groups on May 1, 2007 in two neighborhoods in Pittsburgh: one in the East End target

area, and one in the North Side comparison area. Fifteen adult residents from Homewood and several other East End communities, namely Lincoln/Larimer and Garfield, participated in the target area focus group. Seven adult residents from Manchester and a few other North Side communities, particularly Northview Heights and California Kirkbride, participated in the comparison area focus group. The national evaluation team provided light food and beverages to both the target and comparison area focus groups.

*Community Residents' Likert Scale Data (second round).* Twelve community residents (n = 12) from the East End target area and seven community residents (n = 7) from the North Side comparison area completed the Likert scale questionnaire. The Likert scale questions were as follows:

1. How well do you like living in your neighborhood?;
2. How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?;
3. How serious is the gang problem in your neighborhood?; and
4. Has the gang problem changed over the last three years?

In response to question one, five out of twelve community residents (42%) in the target area liked living in their neighborhood, four residents (33%) loved it; two (17%) hated it; and one resident did not like living in their neighborhood. Similarly, four out of seven community residents (57%) in the comparison area liked living in their neighborhood; two (29%) loved it; and a resident neither liked nor disliked living in their neighborhood.

In response to question two, six community residents (50%) in the target area felt safe in their neighborhood; three residents (25%) felt unsafe; one felt very unsafe; one felt very safe; and one resident felt neither safe nor unsafe. In the comparison area, four community residents (57%) felt neither safe nor unsafe in their neighborhood; two (29%) felt safe; and one resident felt very unsafe.

In response to question three, four community residents (33%) in the target area believed that their neighborhood had a serious gang problem, and three residents (25%) thought there was some gang problem. In the target area, two community residents (17%) thought their neighborhood had an average gang problem; two residents (17%) believed that the neighborhood gang problem was very serious; and one resident did not answer the question. Three comparison area residents (43%) opined that their neighborhood had a serious gang problem; two residents (29%) noted that their neighborhood had a very serious gang problem; and two (29%) believed the gang problem was average.

In response to question four, three community residents (25%) in the target area indicated that the gang problem had improved over the last three years, and three residents (25%) thought the gang problem slightly improved. Three target area residents (25%) noted that the gang problem had worsened over the last three years; two residents (17%) indicated that the problem was slightly worse; and one resident believed that there had been no change in the last three years. In the comparison area, four community

residents agreed that the gang problem had worsened over the last three years, while three residents noted that the gang problem had gotten slightly worse.

*Conclusions Drawn from the Two Rounds of Focus Groups.* After analyzing and comparing the answers of the three distinct focus groups conducted at two different times of the GFS program, several responses continued to surface. First, gangs and gang activity remained a problem in both the East End target and the North Side comparison areas in Pittsburgh. The community residents had mixed responses as to whether the gang problem had gotten worse or had improved over the last three years. Nevertheless, the residents, students, and school personnel agreed that a gang problem definitely existed, but the problem was not as bad as it was in the 1990s, when the notorious Larimer Avenue/Wilksburg (LAW) gang was very active in Pittsburgh.

The most well-known gang in the East End is the Crips, of which most are located in the Homewood and Lincoln/Larimer communities. Bloods are present mostly in the Garfield section of the East End. In the North Side comparison area, the popular gangs are the Crips and the Original Gangsters (OGs). The gangs are not necessarily affiliated with the nationally known Crips and Bloods, rather they are individual local gangs that are organized by particular neighborhoods, streets, or blocks in the East End or North Side sections of Pittsburgh (e.g., Race Street Crips, Northview Heights Crips, 5 Tre Bloods). Most of the community residents consider the recent local gangs to be “wannabes” who are imitating the real gangs in larger cities; however, they acknowledged that gang fights, shootings, and drug deals occur often in Pittsburgh

neighborhoods. The local gangs are predominantly male, even though the number of females involved in gang activity, especially fighting, is on the rise. During the second round of focus groups, many participants indicated that young people are getting involved in gangs at a much younger age, especially elementary and middle school children.

The primary gang activities are fighting, drug dealing, shootings, and tagging (graffiti). According to those interviewed in the second round of focus groups, it appears that robbery and prostitution also have become more common gang activities than in the first round. Prostitution is widespread in East End communities, and it has become prevalent due to the increased number of crack-addicted women who exchange sex for money and/or drugs. In both the target and comparison areas, young people typically use cigarettes, marijuana, prescription drugs, and alcohol. However, the youth typically sell illegal drugs, such as marijuana, crack cocaine, heroin, and prescription drugs like Oxycontin and Percocet.

Gang activity occurs in the daytime and nighttime. In the past three years, gang members have become more discreet with their activities and involvement; they do not hang on the streets, wear symbols or colors, or boast about their activities as in the past. According to the participants in the second round of focus groups, shootings and gun violence are a major problem because of the easy access for young people to buy and get guns. The majority of shootings occur during the summer months, which is known as the “killing season.”



Though fights and neighborhood conflicts still occur, the schools in the target and comparison areas appear to be safe havens where students can attend school and feel safe in the learning environment. The schools have increased security measures with cameras inside and outside the buildings as well as metal detectors. Some students, however, manage to bypass the metal detectors and bring knives, razors, and box cutters into the school buildings; some students hide weapons, such as guns, directly outside the building. The schools have official and unofficial policies that restrict students from wearing bandanas, monotone clothing (e.g., all red, all blue, or all black), shirts with symbols, gang or street names, or words like “RIP.” In general, the neighborhoods are more dangerous and filled with gang and drug activity than the schools.

The reasons why youth join gangs remained consistent in the target and comparison areas and in the first and second rounds of focus groups. The youth allegedly join gangs because of money, respect, the influence of family members and friends, loyalty to the neighborhood, boredom, the need to fit in, and the lack of parental involvement. Money is the primary reason why youth join gangs due to limited job availability in the East End and North Side areas, the necessity for young people to take care of their families, power, and materialism associated with money. Most of the focus group participants in the East End are concerned with an increase in gang violence and crime because many of the former LAW gang members who were convicted in the mid-1990s are now getting out of jail. The major concern is that these older gang members will want to assume their leadership positions in a gang, resume gang activities, and further influence young people

to get involved in gangs. Focus group participants in both the target and comparison areas agreed on myriad ways to prevent gangs and gang activity. The focus groups offered the following suggestions: 1) higher paying, legitimate jobs in the communities; 2) recreation centers with fun, challenging, and high tech activities; 3) more community and parental involvement; 4) additional outreach and mentoring programs for young people in the schools and communities as well as parents; 5) increased police presence in the neighborhoods; 6) funding for social service providers, such as tutors and mental health specialists; and 7) prevention programs for younger children in elementary schools.

This resource was prepared by the author(s) using Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice. Opinions or points of view expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **EAST CLEVELAND**

## CHAPTER FIVE

### EAST CLEVELAND

#### INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

While the Cuyahoga County Board of Commissioners is the official grantee for the East Cleveland Gang-Free Schools project, the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office (CCPO), the agency that submitted the grant application, served as the project's lead agency. Cuyahoga is the 20th largest county in the United States and includes 1.4 million people living in and around the city of Cleveland, Ohio. The county prosecutor (also called the prosecuting attorney) is William D. Mason, who was elected in 1999.<sup>1</sup> CCPO's primary mission is "to seek justice for victims of crime, punishment of those individuals who break our laws, and safer streets and neighborhoods for all citizens of Cuyahoga County."

*Description of the Community.* East Cleveland encompasses a relatively small area of 3.1 square miles, including two square miles of parkland. At the time, the site's application was submitted the city had just over 27,000 residents with a median age of about 34 years old,<sup>2</sup> of which:

- 93 percent were African Americans;
- 22 percent were between the ages of 10 and 24; and

---

<sup>1</sup>Mason was first appointed by the Democratic Party in January 1999 and then stood for office in November of that year, unopposed. He was sworn in on January 10, 2000.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 data.

- More than 33 percent were under the age of 21.

East Cleveland, in Cuyahoga County, first incorporated as a village in 1895 and subsequently passed its city charter in 1911 and became the first suburb of Cleveland. Since the late 1940s, the city has experienced major population shifts. By the 1960s, African Americans constituted an increasingly large portion of the city's population. By 1984, the city was one of the largest primarily black communities in the country with a population of 36,957. However, since the 1990s, the city has been in a state of steady decline with population declining to 27,217 by 2000 and further to an estimated 25,213 in 2006.<sup>3</sup> Along with declining population base, the city has experienced a high rate of poverty with its poverty rate significantly higher than state average. Based on the census data of 2000, about 28 percent of families and 32 percent of the population were below the poverty line, including 45.5 percent of individuals under 18.

*Ongoing Challenges in East Cleveland.* During site visits conducted by the national evaluation team to East Cleveland over the past several years, including the last visit in March 2006, the national evaluation team members have learned that the community continues to be plagued with myriad hardships that have impacted the economic, employment, and crime levels in the city. For instance, East Cleveland elected a new mayor because the former mayor was impeached following his conviction of fraud, conspiracy, and other criminal charges. East Cleveland continues as a financially challenged government. ECPD and other city government offices have been forced to lay off employees due to substantial budget cuts. Consequently, the East Cleveland

---

<sup>3</sup>City-data.com, East Cleveland, Ohio, 2007

community remains an impoverished community with a high unemployment rate as well as dilapidated buildings on nearly every corner. The median household income in East Cleveland is \$20,542, and the per capita income is \$12,602.<sup>4</sup> The median household income in the United States, however, is \$41,994, and the per capita income is \$21,587. Approximately 32 percent of the individuals and 28 percent of the families in East Cleveland live below the poverty level.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, only 55 percent of individuals who are 16 years of age or older work in the labor force, which is well below the United States' average of 64 percent.<sup>6</sup> In fact, during focus groups in East Cleveland, many of the young people admitted that they had never been outside of the city limits of East Cleveland for employment or social reasons.

Interviewees related to the national evaluation team a sense of hopelessness in this small community, and crime and violence do not appear to be unusual activities. While driving down Euclid Avenue, the main thoroughfare in East Cleveland, the national evaluation team noticed many boarded up residential and commercial buildings, several small corner convenience and liquor stores, as well as mom and pop chicken and barbeque restaurants, but very few national retail stores. In the mid-mornings and afternoons during the weekday, the national evaluation team also observed people of all ages walking up and down the streets and congregating on the corners. On one afternoon visit, the national evaluation team was riding in the car with one of the outreach workers, and two middle-aged African American men were arguing in front of a crowd of people. One of the men

---

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, 1999 data.

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 data.

<sup>6</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 data.

reached into the driver side of a car, pulled out a gun, and began chasing and threatening the other man with the gun in broad daylight. The people standing on the streets were not frightened or shocked by the dangerous behavior; they did not flinch or run away.

Unfortunately, police officers were nowhere to be found. Thus, the East Cleveland community has faced some serious challenges over the years in addition to gang and drug activity.

***East Cleveland's Gang Problem.*** Because of limited data on the number of gang-related crimes or the number of gang members in East Cleveland, the site's project staff and research partners relied on several secondary sources to identify the nature and extent of East Cleveland's gang problem. First, the stakeholders used a 1990 assessment of Cuyahoga gangs by the University of California that identified the dominant reasons that young people decide to join gangs.<sup>7</sup> Second, the planners used data from the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court that showed from the early to mid-1990s, East Cleveland youth were responsible for 41 percent of drug-related juvenile cases in the county's suburban areas.<sup>8</sup> The project's developers presumed a link between gangs and the drug trade. East Cleveland's GFS grant application also referred to a 1996 survey by the Ohio Department of Youth Services that showed that 10 percent of self-identified gang members said they were from East Cleveland.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup>"Gangs, Organized Crime and Drug-Related Violence in Ohio," Governor's Report, 1990. Cited in GFS grant application for East Cleveland, September 14, 2000, page 2.

<sup>8</sup>GFS grant application for East Cleveland. Although the juveniles are residents of East Cleveland, crimes may have occurred in other communities.

<sup>9</sup>Ohio Department of Youth Services, "A Report on 'Gang Study 1996,'" Office of Research, Columbus, OH: 1996. Cited in GFS grant application for East Cleveland, page 2.

During COSMOS's initial site visit in June 2001, the national evaluation team interviewed several East Cleveland Steering Committee members. Most acknowledged that gangs were prevalent in East Cleveland, but took a prevention-oriented approach to solving the city's gang problems. The executive director of the East Cleveland Neighborhood Center (ECNC), a key provider of youth programs, indicated that they served gang members through its Teen Service Center. ECNC had recently assumed responsibility from the police department for East Cleveland's juvenile diversion program, which operated as project RECLAIM (Reversing Events Challenging Life's Issues in Adolescence through Interventions and Mentoring). ECNC also had established Project C.A.R.E.S. (Collaborative Activities for Risk-Focused Prevention, Education and Strategic Planning) to identify the risk factors for a range of teen problems (including gang involvement) and to develop programs to mitigate those risk factors through "a seamless system of intervention and care."<sup>10</sup>

Another anti-gang effort, the Truancy Reduction Alliance, was an East Cleveland Public Schools project launched in May 2000 with strong support from the East Cleveland Police Department (ECPD). The police chief met with other agencies involved with the truancy reduction program during planning, and allowed police officers to sign up for special truancy details on their days off. A two-person police car was to patrol the streets several times a week from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., bringing out-of-school youth to the Martin Luther King Center, a truancy facility established at a local recreational center. The

---

<sup>10</sup>East Cleveland Neighborhood Center, "Project C.A.R.E.S.: Collaborative Activities for Risk-Focused Prevention and Strategic Planning," City of East Cleveland, 1999.



building housing the program was in very poor physical condition and was used only because other options were not available.

East Cleveland public schools were patrolled by private security firms: Force Security at the city's six elementary schools and Rand Security at the middle school (Kirk) and high school (Shaw). Force Security reported widespread gang activity in the elementary schools, and staff stated that they also intervened in an unofficial capacity when they observed gang-involved youth outside of school hours.<sup>11</sup> The two firms reportedly maintained records of all "incidents," although they did not consistently record whether they were "gang-related." Staff from the school district's Pupil Personnel Services and the Research Division also reported that they had gang-related suspensions, expulsions, and other incidents, although school records did not specifically record this data.

Even the city's juvenile police officer—there was only one in East Cleveland's Police Department at the time—believed that the primary solution to the city's gang problem was prevention. This officer wanted to establish a GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training) program in East Cleveland and already had taken informal actions to steer young people away from gangs.

There was evidence, however, that some members of the community believed that suppression and community mobilization should play a larger role in the city's anti-gang efforts. The People Patrol (a citizen's group), whose members walked the streets of East

---

<sup>11</sup>There are questions about the quality of data collected by both these firms, and the extent to which they will be able to identify (retrospectively) "gang-related" security incidents.

Cleveland in an attempt to deter criminal activity and served as a visible symbol of resident frustration with gangs, was identified. In addition, a gang-related drive-by shooting in June 2001 galvanized the community in two ways. First, in response to this incident and others like it, East Cleveland's new police chief established a Gang Unit that was to be staffed by two detectives (supervisors of the unit) and six patrol officers. At the time of the grant application submission, East Cleveland had 52 sworn officers and 14 civilian personnel.<sup>12</sup> One of the supervisors also was responsible for juvenile cases, homicides, and training for other officers. Second, a community rally ("Take Back Shaw Avenue") was held on June 27, 2001.<sup>13</sup> City of East Cleveland and the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office co-sponsored the event; and both the mayor and the County Prosecutor attended.

## **PROJECT TIMELINE**

The Steering Committee and other key project stakeholders undertook several initial activities including the development of the initial application, an Assessment Report, Implementation Plan, and logic model. Each of these will be discussed in a subsequent section. Exhibit 5-1 provides a timeline of the major project activities.

---

<sup>12</sup>Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Report*, Table 78, "Full-Time Law Enforcement Employees as of October 31, 1999."

<sup>13</sup>Karl Turner, "Gang's 'Muscle' Convicted of Murder," *The Plain Dealer*, July 16, 2002.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE INITIAL GFS APPLICATION

Isabella Sanchez, of the grants division of the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office, coordinated the development of the Gang-Free Schools grant application for East

### Exhibit 5-1

#### EAST CLEVELAND GFS ASSESSMENT PHASE–PROJECT TIMELINE

Year and Month	Activity
<b>2001</b>	
April	First GFS Cluster Meeting, Mesa AZ
May	<b>Project Coordinator hired</b> First Steering Committee meeting GFS orientation for the Steering Committee
June	Initial national evaluation site visit
July	Local data collection: gang member and community resident interviews
September	Local data collection: community leader and resident interviews
November	Local data collection: school survey (6 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> grades)
December	NYGC site visit National evaluation site visit
<b>2002</b>	
January	Local data collection: student and teacher focus groups, gang member interviews
February	Local data collection: gang member interviews
March	Second GFS Cluster Meeting, Mesa, AZ
April	Steering Committee meeting Activities inventory submitted for the period 1/02-3/02
June	<b>Second Project Coordinator hired</b> National evaluation site visit Assessment Report Submitted
<b>2003</b>	
	Implementation Plan Submitted
<b>2004</b>	
February	<b>Third Project Coordinator hired</b> Houston Cluster Meeting First client enrolled

Cleveland. Public school personnel and other key stakeholder groups (the county’s Department of Justice Affairs, Partnership for a Safer Cleveland, the Center for Family and Children Services) supported her efforts. All of the East Cleveland’s schools—six public

elementary schools; one public middle school; one public high school; and the sole parochial school—submitted letters of support and agreed to serve on the Steering Committee. Organizational partners listed in the application pledging participation on the Steering Committee or agreeing to more general involvement are presented in Exhibit 5-2.

### Exhibit 5-2

#### AGENCIES INITIALLY PLEDGING INVOLVEMENT IN STEERING COMMITTEE OR GENERAL SUPPORT FOR EAST CLEVELAND’S GFS PROJECT

Agency	Identified in Application	Letter Pledging Steering Committee Participation	Letter Pledging General Support
Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office	X	X	X
East Cleveland School District	X	X	X
Flannery, Daniel (research partner)	X	X	
Fleisher, Mark (research partner)	X	X	
Partnership for a Safer Cleveland (research partner)	X	X	
East Cleveland Police Department	X	X	X
East Cleveland Neighborhood Center	X	X	X
City of East Cleveland, Office of the Mayor		X	X
Cuyahoga County Alcohol & Drug Addiction Services Board	X		X
Cuyahoga County Community Mental Health Board			X
Cuyahoga County Department of Justice Affairs	X		
Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court	X		
East Cleveland Churches	X		
East Cleveland Neighborhood Center	X	X	X
East Cleveland Public Library		X	X
East Cleveland Straight Talk	X		
Funeral Homes	X		
General Electric	X		
Meridia-Huron Road Hospital	X	X	X

## THE ASSESSMENT REPORT

### A. Key Participants

*The Assessment Team and the Research Partners.* Exhibit 5-3 presents East Cleveland’s activities during the site’s assessment phase and data collection efforts, ending June 2002. The East Cleveland Assessment Team—referred to as the “Management Team” in its grant application—was composed of four members: the former Project

### Exhibit 5-3

#### STATUS OF DATA COLLECTION FOR EAST CLEVELAND GFS PROJECT

Data	Data Collected*
School Survey (DRP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 160 student surveys completed</li> <li>• Student survey scale means tabulated</li> </ul>
School Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expulsion and Suspension Days, 1997-1998; 1999-2000; 2000-2001</li> <li>• Percent students eligible for free/reduce lunch 1997-2000</li> <li>• Demographic data compiled (age, race, gender) by school grade</li> </ul>
Community Leader Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59 interviews completed</li> <li>• Interviewees include 11 business owners, 18 government representatives, and 30 other community leaders</li> </ul>
Interviews with Gang Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 54 gang member interviews completed</li> <li>• Interviewees include 49 males, 5 females</li> </ul>
Community Resident Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 113 interviews completed</li> <li>• Interviewees include 42 males, 71 females</li> </ul>
Community Description/ Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Census data compiled</li> <li>• Report completed</li> </ul>
Gang Intelligence Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 distinct gangs identified</li> <li>• Approximately 465 gang members in total</li> </ul>
Crime Data*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part I and Part II incident reports from 1998-2001 reviewed</li> <li>• 57 gang-related arrests identified for 1998-2001</li> </ul>

Source: East Cleveland GFS Preliminary Assessment Report

\* In June 2002, the research team was asked to conduct a reanalysis of the crime data. Project Coordinator and other staff from Office of the Prosecutor are reviewing hundreds of additional cases, to be reviewed by police gang unit detectives.

Coordinator Pam Clay and research partners that included Dr. Daniel J. Flannery (Kent State University's Department of Criminal Justice Studies), Dr. Mark Fleisher (Illinois State University's Department of Criminal Justice Sciences), and Michael Walker (executive director of Partnership for a Safer Cleveland, a nonprofit agency). Mr. Walker recruited both Drs. Flannery and Fleisher, having worked with both men on other research projects.

The research partners apparently played a decisive role in determining the methodology for the data collection and analysis activities. Ms. Clay felt that the researchers resisted input from her and other members of the Steering Committee. Other members of the Steering Committee also described the researchers as condescending, and at the March 1, 2002 retreat to review the assessment findings, members raised questions about the accuracy of the data.

When Ms. Bickerstaff was appointed Project Coordinator, she concluded that the researchers were "disengaged" and began making plans to replace them. She did not understand, for example, why the researchers did not attend Steering Committee meetings, especially when data-related issues were being discussed. The researchers decided not to attend the initial session in May 2001 because the Steering Committee would be constructing a definition of "gangs" that would inform all subsequent data collection and Implementation Planning; the researchers' rationale was that they did not want to influence the Steering Committee's deliberations. Over time, however, not attending Steering Committee meetings became their standard practice.

## **B. Assessment Report Preparation Initial Activities**

*Selection of the Target Area.* The Steering Committee conducted a scan of the Cleveland metropolitan area to determine what geographic locale to focus on. They selected the entire city of East Cleveland as the target area rather than attempting to target particular neighborhoods within the city of East Cleveland. The Steering Committee made this decision based on the following reasons:

1. According to local East Cleveland sources (e.g., ECPD), gangs were uniformly distributed throughout East Cleveland;
2. According to local East Cleveland sources (e.g., ECPD), gangs were linked to violent and non-violent crime in most neighborhoods in East Cleveland (as opposed to any one neighborhood in particular);
3. At the time ECPD did not formally track gang crime therefore a lack of data existed to assist in precise documentation of neighborhoods most affected by gang crime in East Cleveland;
4. East Cleveland has one high school that is fed by multiple schools from around the city. Selecting one (or multiple) neighborhood(s) to receive service for gang-afflicted students, as opposed to others would have created logistical and managerial challenges;
5. The Steering Committee believed that selecting just one area within East Cleveland would pose ethical concerns; and
6. Local agencies have historically served the entire community rather than an isolated section of East Cleveland. The Steering Committee did not want to change this long-standing approach.

*Defining “Gang.”* During the second Steering Committee meeting, held in June 2001, they conducted an exercise that left members feeling more directly involved in the project, they began to develop a local definition for the terms “gang,” “gang-related,” and “gang-involved.” As a homework assignment, the members were asked to put together working

definitions and submit them to the Project Coordinator, who then developed a composite definition that was presented at the July Steering Committee meeting (Exhibit 5-4).

*Defining Problem Statement and Developing Objectives and Project Goals.* The Steering Committee worked in groups to develop the overall project objectives and goals. Each group created problem statements, objectives, goals, and activities for one of the five

### Exhibit 5-4

#### EAST CLEVELAND GANG DEFINITIONS

**GANG:** Groups varying in size gathered with common features/purposes with common identification, i.e., name, colors, traits, etc. There must be assent and knowledge of their alliance[,] usually pride is involved. The intent/purpose of the group can vary from minor to major criminal activities. Some by-products of the group can be economic benefits, social outlets, family, support, protection, territory, bonding, bravado, sociological coming of age, and parental support. The group's activities can be minor to major. The groups provide members with independence and often use private "scripts" for communication in order to confuse non-gang members. The groups rule with force, threat or intelligence. Generally, education is less valued than economic success.

**GANG-INVOLVED:** Direct participation in gang activities whatever they may be. The participation in, and actively doing the work of, the gang. Activities that are sanctioned by the gang.

**GANG-RELATED:** Case-by-case factual determination. Anyone who is indirectly related to gang involvement. Risk category includes victims, neighbors, bystanders, siblings and family members. Also actions involving grooming younger kids, parental involvement such as benefiting from economics derived from gang activity, fighting others in an effort to induce them into joining the gang. Any indirect consequences of gang activity.

Source: East Cleveland GFS document, "Gang Definitions, Steering Committee Meeting Held on June 11, 2001."

key findings from the Assessment Report. The five key findings included: 1) gang members are actively involved in gang activity in the East Cleveland school district; 2) gang members in East Cleveland are creating community fear through the commission of assaults and robberies; 3) East Cleveland's population is being increasingly affected by poverty and social disorganization, which has contributed to its gang problem; 4) East



Cleveland gang-involved youth report that family problems, lack of recreational activities, and poverty are the leading causes of gangs in East Cleveland; and 5) community resource inventories indicate that East Cleveland is lacking in resources to handle the city's gang problem. The Steering Committee members provided feedback to each of the other groups, and the groups then reconvened to incorporate the feedback. As the final steps in the process, the Steering Committee prioritized the activities and identified organizations and service providers who could perform the suggested activities.

***Identifying and Addressing Deficiencies in the Assessment Report.*** NYGC identified numerous problems in the initial draft of the Assessment Report, the most fundamental being that the data presented offered little evidence that East Cleveland had significant levels of gang-related crime.<sup>14</sup> Other problems with the Assessment Report included:<sup>15</sup>

- Several gang-related shootings that occurred earlier in the assessment phase were not included, which suggests that the researchers had not conducted a comprehensive review of police records;
- The report suggested that the major crime problems in East Cleveland were graffiti and drugs, which are not violent crimes;
- The report lacked intelligence data on East Cleveland gangs (the number of gangs, number of sets within gangs, size of gangs, age of members); and
- The report did not include information on the types of crimes most likely to be committed by gang members, nor did it contain information on victims of gang crime.

---

<sup>14</sup>Michelle Arciaga, "East Cleveland Site Visit Report (5/15-5/16/2002)," electronic mail dated May 21, 2002.

<sup>15</sup>Remarks by Michelle Arciaga cited in COSMOS report on June 25-26, 2002 Site Visit to East Cleveland, OH.

In June 2002, a NYGC technical assistance provider spent several days with Ms. Bickerstaff reviewing police incident reports. Of approximately 700 files from 1998-1999, 200 files appeared to be gang-related; these were forwarded to an ECPD gang detective, who used departmental intelligence and other sources to determine whether the incidents were gang-related. NYGC staff also met with senior prosecutor Doug Weiner<sup>16</sup> to review the weaknesses in the Assessment Report and to get the researchers to conduct additional analysis.

Finally, representatives from the NYGC assisted the Steering Committee in developing a new gang definition during their June 2002 visit. Both the NYGC and OJJDP had made a number of attempts earlier in the assessment phase to encourage East Cleveland to revise its definitions, without success.<sup>17</sup>

### **C. Assessment Report Phase Summary**

*Challenges Encountered During the Assessment Phase.* East Cleveland faced enormous challenges during the initial assessment phase. The first Project Coordinator was replaced; and the new Project Coordinator inherited an Assessment Report that was judged inadequate. Despite staffing problems and external issues, the project nonetheless completed the assessment phase with a core group of participants who were willing to contribute time and resources to implementing the GFS project.

---

<sup>16</sup>Weiner has since left the Prosecutor's Office to start his own business.

<sup>17</sup>Michelle Arciaga, "Report on the SC Meeting of the East Cleveland GFS Project," electronic mail dated May 15, 2001; Michelle Arciaga, "Gang Definitions," electronic mail dated July 25, 2001; Phelan Wyrick, "Gang Definitions," electronic mail dated July 26, 2001; Michelle Arciaga, "Gang Definitions," electronic mail, July 31, 2001.

A more or less seamless transition to a new Project Coordinator benefited the program site. Ms. Bickerstaff attempted to expand the Steering Committee by recruiting more residents, businesses, and social service agencies. An expanded Steering Committee was sought to help distribute the workload and reduce the burden on what heretofore had been a handful of agencies. She established a number of subcommittees where members assumed responsibility for portions of the Assessment Report.

In a city as small as East Cleveland, any comprehensive initiative was bound to involve the same group of organizations and individuals. For example, the city had funding for a juvenile diversion court, a minority health initiative, and a truancy program. The individuals involved in these projects were the same people being asked to serve on the Gang-Free Schools Steering Committee. Broadening the membership was hoped to build a constituency for the initiative throughout the local community.

East Cleveland faced several other local-level problems as it completed its Assessment Report and prepared to initiate the implementation phase.

***City Government.*** Ohio state legislators placed East Cleveland under a “financial emergency” in 1998, and since then the city was forced to operate within the confines of its budget, which was \$16.4 million for 2002.<sup>18</sup> Earlier that year, the city realized a budget shortfall of approximately \$1.5 million. The state-appointed fiscal commission that monitors the city’s budget recommended that the mayor submit a ballot initiative

---

<sup>18</sup>Jesse Tinsley, “State Overseers Urge E. Cleveland Tax,” *The Plain Dealer*, July 16, 2002.

requesting an increase in taxes. With the city in imminent danger of bankruptcy, the mayor proposed drastic cost-cutting measures that included laying off 10 percent of the city's workforce of 330, including reductions in the number of police officers and fire fighters. The mayor also planned for reducing work hours for non-union employees from 40 to 32 hours a week.

***The Courts.*** The mayor asked the East Cleveland Municipal Court to cut staff by more than 50 percent (from 24 to 10) in an effort to help balance the city's budget. On July 11, 2002, the local newspaper, *The Plain Dealer*, reported that Municipal Court Judge Una Keenon declared that she did not plan to reduce her staff, which "was already at a minimum."<sup>19</sup> The municipal court budget was not under the mayor's jurisdiction.

In the summer of 2001, Judge Keenon shut down the municipal court and jail for more than a week because of concerns about "air quality and structural safety."<sup>20</sup> The court is part of a patchwork of structures that comprise the East Cleveland City Hall, which also contains the mayor's office, police department, fire department, and other city agencies.<sup>21</sup>

***The Police Department.*** In January 2002, the police department was forced to shut down all of its special units (including gangs and narcotics) because there was no money in the city's budget to pay for the overtime that allowed the units to operate. In addition, 15 police officers were laid off and four were forced to retire. During the national evaluation

---

<sup>19</sup>Thomas Ott, "E. Cleveland Mayor Wants Job Cuts," *The Plain Dealer*, July 11, 2002.

<sup>20</sup>Jesse Tinsley, "E. Cleveland Gets to Work Inspecting Shut-Down Jail," *The Plain Dealer*, July 10, 2001.

<sup>21</sup>Jesse Tinsley, "Judge is Closing Jail in East Cleveland," *The Plain Dealer*, July 7, 2001.

team's June 2002 site visit, it was reported that the chief had secured a state grant to be used for reestablishing the gang unit. The GFS implementation grant application submitted by East Cleveland includes funds to cover the salary of a detective from the gang unit.<sup>22</sup>

***The School System.*** The Ohio Department of Education issues "Local Report Cards" to every public school district in the state, and results for the 2000-2001 academic year showed that East Cleveland Public Schools "received the lowest score in the state, meeting only three out of 27 standards."<sup>23</sup> East Cleveland's schools were declared to be in a state of "Academic Emergency," meaning that it met eight or fewer standards set for students in grades 4, 6, 9, and 12. The state of Ohio also issued a school district report card, and the East Cleveland School District ranked lowest in the state for the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 academic years; also the school district met only two of 27 standards. During the school year of 2005-2006, the district met just three out of 25 state indicators and entered into its second year in district improvement status. Although the district remains on improvement status and has not met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), in 2005-2006, the school district was upgraded from the lowest designation of "Academic Emergency" to "Academic Watch."<sup>24</sup> In 2006-07, the East Cleveland School District did not make AYP and did not meet any of 30 state academic indicators, thereby entering into its third year in program improvement.

---

<sup>22</sup>The detective being assigned to GFS is apparently not held in very high esteem by either the chief of police or the new Project Coordinator.

<sup>23</sup>Janet Okoben and Scott Stephens, "Cuyahoga's Top-Ranked Schools," *The Plain Dealer*, January 8, 2002.

<sup>24</sup>Ohio Department of Education, "East Cleveland City School District, 2005-2006 school year report card" from [www.ode.state.oh.us/reportcard](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/reportcard).

In April 2002, a two-week teacher's strike left the city's 5,800 students in the hands of 56 substitute teachers and 16 teachers who decided to cross union picket lines.<sup>25</sup> The teachers ultimately won concessions in the areas of "safety, benefits, and instructional supplies," and also received annual salary increases of two to three percent over the next three years.<sup>26</sup>

***Lack of Organizational Capacity.*** Several factors determined East Cleveland's readiness to implement its GFS project successfully. First, the site had the daunting task of reviewing hundreds of additional police records to determine whether there were sufficient numbers of gang-related incidents not included in the original analysis conducted by the initial research partners. The recently hired Project Coordinator had to complete the review of additional cases with assistance from several assistant district attorneys. The results of this supplementary gang-crime analysis helped clarify the city's gang problem.

East Cleveland needed new skilled research partner(s) to collect gang-related crime data during the assessment phase and provide research technical assistance to the coordinator and members of the Steering Committee. In addition, the site did not quickly develop a process for identifying researchers with the appropriate mix of skills and experience to complete these tasks.

---

<sup>25</sup>Thomas Ott, "East Cleveland Teachers Strike; only 72 Available for 5,800 Students; Attendance Down," The Plain Dealer, April 16, 2002.

<sup>26</sup>Editorial, "After the Strike, Work to Do," The Plain Dealer, April 30, 2002.

Finally, East Cleveland lacked much of the administrative infrastructure to launch and manage such a multifaceted project as the GFS program. For example, the site did not secure office space in time for implementation, and the Project Coordinator did not have the basic office equipment or staff support to provide strong administrative assistance to the Steering Committee and implementation team. Moreover, while the Steering Committee's participating organizations offered their endorsements for the initiative, and provided time for their representatives to attend the meetings, they had very few human, technical, and financial resources to commit on an ongoing basis.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ACTIVITIES**

NYGC provided implementation plan training for the Steering Committee members in 2002. A major activity of the implementation planning process included determining what individuals would comprise the primary and secondary target populations.

*Determining a Target Population.* The Steering Committee decided that the primary target population would be composed of two subgroups. These subgroups included:

1. School-age male and female known or suspected gang members between the ages of 11 and 17; and
2. Adult males between the ages of 18 and 24, who are known or suspected gang members of the Hot Sauce Hustlers, the Tribe, the Valley Lows, or the Avenue Boys.

In the first subgroup, of the five violent crime categories (homicide, robbery, simple assault, aggravated assault, and weapon offenses) both male and female youth committed simple and aggravated assaults most frequently. Individuals in the second subgroup committed 40 percent of all violent gang crimes in East Cleveland. Male gang members committed almost all of the homicides, robberies, and weapon offenses.

The Steering Committee decided on a secondary population that would include the family members of juvenile, known or suspected gang members. Since gang members frequently cited family issues as the primary reason to join a gang, the Steering Committee believed its services could detour siblings or other family members from joining a gang.

## **LOGIC MODEL PLANNING PROCESS**

### **A. Logic Model Development Training**

The national evaluation team provided two workshop training sessions to discuss logic model development to the key stakeholders in East Cleveland in 2003 (October and December). The first workshop focused on developing the fundamental elements of the logic model, such as selecting activities to undertake. During the second workshop, the participants identified immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes and associating data with these outcomes. In between the first and second meeting, the national evaluation team worked with the Project Coordinator to narrow down the original list of activities to a list that took into account actual service providers, available staff, data sources, and other



realities of the East Cleveland community. The site continued reducing the number of activities throughout the first quarter of 2004.

## **B. Strategies and Activities**

The logic model categorized all of the activities under four of the key strategies of OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model: 1) Organizational Change and Development; 2) Suppression; 3) Social Intervention; and 4) Community Mobilization. Summarized in Exhibit 5-5 are the activities identified by the project in its logic model (shown in plain text) and revisions made to the activities at the conclusion of the project (shown in bold text).

## **ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED**

### **Past Activities**

***Gang Violence Reduction Programs.*** Because of the “skyrocketing crime rate” among juvenile offenders, in 1995 the Ohio Attorney General created an Anti-Gang Unit (AGU) to “facilitate and coordinate the exchange of information throughout the law enforcement community on gang-related activities across the entire state.”<sup>27</sup> The Attorney General also announced the creation of the Gang Unit Access and Research Databank (GUARD), which would “aid law enforcement agencies in identifying gangs through graffiti, tattoos, and other gang information.” These initiatives were to be overseen by a Juvenile Justice Section (which replaced what had theretofore been known as the

---

<sup>27</sup>Office of the Ohio Attorney General, “Attorney General Montgomery Creates Juvenile Justice Section to Help Fight Juvenile Crime: Montgomery First Unveils Plan to Prosecutors,” Press Release, June 26, 1995. The Attorney General also noted that “Ohio’s juvenile murder arrest rate increased 101 percent between 1988 and 1992.”

Children's Protection Section). The new Juvenile Justice Section "provided a wider range of services to prosecutors and law enforcement agencies in the area of juvenile crime." The Attorney General cited research showing that Ohio had the fourth-largest number of gang members in the U.S., behind California, Illinois, and Texas.<sup>28</sup> In 1998, the governor signed special anti-gang legislation, and by May 1999, several gang members had been successfully prosecuted under the new law.<sup>29</sup>

***Vertical Prosecution Program.*** The County's vertical prosecution program was launched in 1999 with a grant of \$135,000 from OJJDP's Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) program. Serious, violent, and repeat juvenile offenders were transferred to adult court, and their cases were handled from start to finish by the same prosecutor.<sup>30</sup>

***Community-Based Prosecution Program.*** More direct efforts to address East Cleveland's juvenile crime problems also were launched in 1999. After conducting a series of community meetings, distributing a Community Assessment Survey, and reviewing local crime data, the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor and Mayor Emmanuel Onunwor announced on April 10, 1999 that East Cleveland would be the first Community-Based Prosecution

---

<sup>28</sup>Office of the Ohio Attorney General, "New Program Unites *Ohio Against Gangs*," Guest Column by Attorney General Betty D. Montgomery, January 24, 2000.

<sup>29</sup>Office of the Ohio Attorney General, "Ohio's First Statewide Gang Prevention Effort Launched: Dual Approach Aims to Combat Criminal Gang Activity," Press Release, January 24, 2000. The Attorney also stated that "[w]e are seeing the number of gang members outnumber law enforcement on this country's streets; we don't want the same thing to happen in Ohio." She was referring to a 1998 National Youth Gang Center survey that found there were 780,000 gang members in the United States, while the Bureau of Justice Statistics reported only 641,000 police officers.

<sup>30</sup>Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office web site, "Vertical Prosecution Program," downloaded July 2001 from [www.cuyahoga.oh.us/prosecutor](http://www.cuyahoga.oh.us/prosecutor).

## Exhibit 5-5

### STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

---

#### STRATEGY: ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE & DEVELOPMENT

---

**Activity:** Enhance E. Cleveland's Gang Crime Reporting and Gang Intelligence Analysis Information. Better intelligence information about gang crimes in E. Cleveland will enhance the project's suppression, social intervention, and community mobilization activities. A gang crime incident form will be developed for use by the ECPD. Crimes reported to ECPD will be reviewed for gang-involvement. In order to institute the new reporting system, ECPD officers will be trained to recognize gang crimes and to fill out the forms properly. This information will be gathered and analyzed by ECPD's Gang Officer, Ricardo Williams.

ECPD will install a system to track gang incidents on a weekly basis. ECPD's gang officer will use a gang crime review sheet to determine whether reported crimes involving homicides, robberies, assaults, weapons offenses and drug cases were gang-related, using the following criteria: a) was the "gang-related" check-off-box marked on the incident report; b) did the crime meet the project's gang crime definition; and c) were there other notations by the reporting officer.

**Note: The tracking form was developed. However, due to extreme budget cuts and severe staffing reductions, only two ECPD staff received training and used the form. A heavy workload prevented the two ECPD staff persons from routinely filling out the forms. The East Cleveland Gang Unit only operated intermittently between 2001 and 2003, and ceased to exist in 2003. Beginning in 2004, ECPD only had two police officers on patrol at any given time.**

---

**Activity:** Train ECPD Officers: ECPD will train all of the department's officers to use the new gang incident form and tracking system.

---

**Activity:** Train Teachers at Shaw Academy to Identify Gang Youth.

**Note: Detectives from ECPD, the project's gang officer, the project coordinator, and an FBI gang unit officer trained teachers at Shaw Academy to identify gang youth and how to refer youth to the GFS program.**

---

#### STRATEGY: SUPPRESSION

---

**Activity:** Gang Hotspot Patrols.

Based on gang intelligence data developed by E. Cleveland's Gang Officer, patrols of "hotspot" areas and other law enforcement activities to suppress gang crime in the target area will be conducted twice a week. The city's gang officer, will work with other members of ECPD to target gang youth and known associates at locations designated by the analysis of gang crime data.

---

**Activity:** Enhanced prosecution of offenders charged with gang-related offenses.

The county prosecutor has made a commitment to prosecute all E. Cleveland gang robberies and assaults committed by gang members. Two assistant prosecutors are assigned to handle juvenile and adult crimes in E. Cleveland.

Planning will be initiated with the Prosecutors Office to target gang members who commit violent gang crimes.

**Note: This activity was not fully developed.**

**Instead of requesting that the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's office increase prosecution of adult and juvenile robbery and assault cases in East Cleveland, the Steering Committee asked that the prosecutors handling East Cleveland cases convene meetings to determine an effective plan of action for prosecution of gang-involved project youth. The purpose of this was to shift the focus away from mandatory prosecution to considering the best safety plan for each youth and the community. The first meeting took place in April 2004, but did not continue with the expected regularity of one meeting per month.**

---

---

### STRATEGY: SOCIAL INTERVENTIONS

---

**Activity:** Targeted Youth Case Management.

East Cleveland's Intervention Team will establish a case management system for the enrolled youth. The IT will develop individual case management plans to coordinate services such as substance abuse treatment, job training, mentoring and tutoring for target youth. All newly referred youth will be reviewed on a weekly basis, and previously enrolled youth will be tracked quarterly.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

---

**Activity:** Street Outreach Workers will conduct outreach to gang members and their families.

Outreach to gang youth and families at times of year when gangs are most active. Outreach workers to refer youth to providers such as Berea Children's Home, E. Cleveland Neighborhood Center, E. Cleveland Straight Talk, and Shaw Alternative High School.

**Note: This activity occurred as stated.**

---

**Activity:** Participation by adult and juvenile probation in the target youths' case management.

With a strong commitment from both adult and juvenile probation, these two agencies will enhance their target youth supervision and monitoring activities. These agencies will participate in Intervention Team meetings to share information on the youth with other members of the IT.

**Note: This activity was not developed.**

**Juvenile probation officers attended IT meetings starting in October 2003, and actively engaged in case management. Adult probation officers participated on a sporadic basis throughout.**

---

**Activity:** Life Skills Curriculum for Shaw Academy Students.

A 16-week life skills curriculum will be given to 50 known or suspected male gang members attending Shaw Academy. The curriculum is designed to provide youth with improved conflict resolution, and pro-social coping and survival skills.

**Note: This program began, but was discontinued due to a lack of service providers.**

---

**Activity:** Intervention Team will address issues of school attendance and truancy.

**Note: This activity was not developed due to the lack of attendance by relevant Intervention Team members.**

---

**Activity:** Group Counseling for Female Gang-Involved Youth.

Female gang members accounted for almost 40 percent of simple assaults and 27 percent of aggravated assaults. As a result, a group counseling program will be developed by the East Cleveland Neighborhood Center staff for 40-50 female students in grades 7-12 who commit assaults and/or acts of bullying or intimidation, and who are known or suspected gang members. The ten-week program is designed for 10-12 persons per ten-week cycle. Each session lasts 90 minutes and will cover the development of specific skills (i.e., improved self esteem, more effective conflict resolution behaviors, less attachment to gangs, reduced incidents of bullying, improved school attendance and achievement, and positive personal life goals). Group activities and teaching techniques to include: Writing exercises; Group discussions; Self-assessments; Surveys; Games/role playing; Lectures; Videos; and Evaluation.

**Note: This activity was not fully developed. The Steering Committee could not generate the support needed for this activity.**

---

---

### STRATEGY: COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

---

**Activity:** Prosecutor's Advisory Group.

Surveys of members of the Prosecutor's Advisory Group and approximately 50 residents will be conducted to allow residents to "voice concerns" and share ideas about gang violence in the community.

**Note: This activity was not developed.**

---

Source: East Cleveland's Logic Model

(CPB) partner.<sup>31</sup> A satellite branch of the Prosecutor's Office was set up in the heart of East Cleveland, with three Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys (APAs) stationed there. The East Cleveland CBP program indicted more than 350 felony cases, "ranging from homicides to illegal drug crimes, and APAs assigned to East Cleveland were immersed in the community, tracking and prosecuting individual criminals, talking daily with residents and police, and geographically tracking crime." During this period, felonies dropped 22 percent in East Cleveland.

*Ohio Against Gangs*, billed as "Ohio's first statewide gang prevention and suppression effort," was inaugurated in January 2000. Ohio's Attorney General described the two components of the new initiative as follows<sup>32</sup>:

The first part of *Ohio Against Gangs* is a prevention component. Law enforcement agencies, teachers unions, and juvenile courts will unite to educate young people about the dangers of gangs.

During the first year of this program, professionals working to combat youth gangs will travel around the state gathering information on local communities' risks, needs, and resources at town meetings. That information will help us develop a flexible gang prevention program that meets the needs of individual communities....

In the second year, law enforcement, education, and juvenile court professionals will help local communities implement gang prevention programs.

The second component is gang suppression and enforcement. We have expanded the staffing and resources of my office's Anti-Gang Unit to help communities form local and countywide gang task forces which will enable local law enforcement agencies to share

---

<sup>31</sup>Office of the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor, "County Prosecutor William D. Mason and East Cleveland Mayor Onunwor to Host Town Meeting on Fighting Crime," Press Release, April 6, 1999.

<sup>32</sup>Office of the Ohio Attorney General, "New Program Unites *Ohio Against Gangs*," Guest Column by Attorney General Betty D. Montgomery, January 24, 2000.

information about criminal gang activity in their area, and plan anti-gang strategies. Gangs are a local problem, and efforts to solve that problem need to be established locally.

The summit for the Cleveland area was held April 27, 2000, and was co-hosted by the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office, the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court, the East Cleveland Police Department, and many other government, law enforcement, and criminal justice agencies from the Cleveland metro area. According to a Cleveland Police Department survey conducted in 2000, the city had 65 gangs with more than 5,000 members.<sup>33</sup>

The FBI's Uniform Crime Report (UCR) does not include the city of East Cleveland in its detailed table of "Offenses Known to the Police, Cities and Towns 10,000 and Over in Population." A web site containing 2000 UCR data for Cleveland and surrounding areas does not include information for East Cleveland, stating that it is one of several sites that "did not respond to requests for Uniform Crime statistics."<sup>34</sup>

***East Cleveland Gang Unit.*** The East Cleveland Police Department formed its own gang unit in the aftermath of a particularly brazen gang-related murder in June 2001. When the city realized it was facing a severe budget shortfall in January 2002, the unit was disbanded. In June 2002 the police department was expecting a new grant to help re-establish the division.

---

<sup>33</sup>Office of the Ohio Attorney General, "Solutions Sought to State's Gang Problem: Local Summit Part of Statewide, Two-Prong Effort," Press Release, April 27, 2000.

<sup>34</sup>[www.cleveland.com/crime/index.ssf/crimestats](http://www.cleveland.com/crime/index.ssf/crimestats)

***Operation Second Chance.*** The June 2001 gang-related murder also spurred East Cleveland's Mayor Onunwor to become personally involved in anti-gang efforts. In an initiative he dubbed "Operation Second Chance," the mayor began meeting with local gang members, hiring some of them to work in city government offices. In one case, the mayor employed a young man with an outstanding arrest warrant—which posed problems for the Prosecutor's Office.

***The Comprehensive Anti-Gang Initiative.*** In the summer of 2006, the City of Cleveland along with five other target areas received \$2.5 million in grant funds from the U.S. Department of Justice. The Comprehensive Anti-Gang initiative incorporates prevention and enforcement efforts as well as programs to assist released prisoners as they re-enter the society.<sup>35</sup> The U.S. Department of Justice is integrating prevention, enforcement, and prisoner re-entry into one initiative in order to address gang membership and gang violence at every stage.

According to U.S. Attorney Greg White of the Northern District of Ohio, the Cleveland area has approximately 90 loosely organized gangs. Given that East Cleveland abuts the City of Cleveland, some of these loosely organized gangs may include East Cleveland gangs. The City of Cleveland received \$1 million to support prevention efforts such as the Gang Reduction Program that focuses on youth gang crime and violence, \$1 million to support enforcement programs that focus on law enforcement efforts on the most significant violent gang offenders, and \$500,000 to create re-entry assistance programs that

---

<sup>35</sup>U.S. Department of Justice News Release dated March 31, 2006, "Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales Announces Six Sites for Comprehensive Anti-Gang Initiative."

will provide transitional housing, job readiness and placement assistance, and substance abuse and mental health treatment to prisoners re-entering society. While it is unclear whether the East Cleveland community will specifically benefit from this federal gang reduction program, some of the East Cleveland residents may benefit from some of the prevention efforts and prisoner re-entry programs.

Other social service or criminal justice projects and grants are summarized in Exhibit 5-6. It is not clear whether all of these projects (particularly those at the county level) included or targeted East Cleveland.

### **Current Activities**

For reasons cited previously and also in the summary remarks portion of this section, the East Cleveland GFS site realized little to no success in implementing any long-term activities. The project encountered many obstacles to implementation including budget shortfalls, lack of participation by service providers, staffing issues within the service providers, lack of facilities, lack of regular and committed participants on the Steering Committee (which would have helped to recruit service providers), absence of jobs to place youth into (with the exception of five placed youth in 2005), and lack of a research partner to provide direction on effective activities. The changing of project coordinators led to an inconsistent vision and management of the project. Some activities began in earnest never realized fruition. These would include such activities as a life skills class (e.g., Save Yourself), a program aimed at female gang members, and an on-line, self-taught curriculum. Following are brief descriptions of some of the activities the site undertook.



### Exhibit 5-6

#### SOCIAL SERVICE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROJECTS AND GRANTS

Applicant	Funder/Grant Program	Description
Cuyahoga County Department of Justice Affairs	U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration	High-Risk Youth Employment, Leadership Development and Community Investment Project (\$1 million)
Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office	Comprehensive Criminal Justice Planning Grant, OJJDP	Gang-Free Schools Project (\$150,000)
Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office, with Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital	National Children's Alliance	Cuyahoga County Child Advocacy Center (\$35,000)
Criminal Justice Services Agency	OJJDP	Reapplication, details unknown (\$600,000)
Criminal Justice Services Agency	Unknown	700-bed adult jail facility (\$35 million)
East Cleveland Neighborhood Center	OJJDP Title V Grant (Community Prevention Grants Program), "dedicated to delinquency prevention efforts initiated by a community-based planning process focused on reducing risks and enhancing protective factors to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system."	Unclear; may support the RECLAIM Project or Project C.A.R.E.S.
Board of County Commissioners	Unknown	Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved purchase of 16.1 acres of land in Cleveland for construction of a Juvenile Intervention Center.

Sources:

- \* Cuyahoga County Board of Commissioners, "Cuyahoga County Commissioners Find Site for New Juvenile Intervention Center," Press Release, February/March 2000; Criminal Justice Services Agency, downloaded July 2001 from [www.cuyahoga.oh.us/ja/cjsa](http://www.cuyahoga.oh.us/ja/cjsa).
- \* National Criminal Justice Research Service (NCJRS) web site at [www.ojjdp.ncjrs/titlev/index/html](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs/titlev/index/html).
- \* June 25, 2001 interview with staff from East Cleveland Neighborhood Center

**Various Athletic Events.** As reported by the outreach workers, the most appealing activities to the youth involved participating in a range of athletic events. These included an after-school basketball program, which included target youth and other at-risk youth. In

order to play, the youth had to maintain their school status, do their homework, etc. Near the end of the grant period, the outreach workers started a boxing program and enrolled a small number of youth. They attempted to start a weight-training program, but that never occurred.

***Hot Spot Patrols.*** Due to the city's fiscal crisis, ECPD's gang unit was active intermittently from 2001 forward. The gang unit, which operated on an overtime funding basis, ceased in September 2003. The project then relied on ECPD detectives to patrol hot spots. By May 2004, only two police officers remained on the staff of ECPD.

***ECPD Tracking System.*** Prior to the city's fiscal crisis, ECPD reported that the department would begin tracking gang cases using a supplemental incident form, which would have been a blank supplement to the department's existing form. ECPD agreed to provide training on the use of the form. However, as a result of the budget reductions, the project relied on only two ECPD detectives to complete the forms, which were never consistently or thoroughly completed.

## **ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE**

### **A. The Steering Committee**

The East Cleveland GFS site held monthly Steering Committee meetings during its first year. The site's activities inventories and meeting agendas showed that Steering Committee members were briefed on a range of issues, including the gang definition to be

used by the site, steps for mobilizing the community, structural and management issues, and data collection (Exhibit 5-7). Although official documents show participation of about three-dozen people representing 16 constituencies (Exhibits 5-8 and 5-9), the Steering Committee had about 10 core members who attended regularly (Exhibit 5-10).

The Steering Committee members acknowledge that there were some important gaps in representation. Almost all interviewees said that businesses were key to the initiative but were not yet parties to it. General Electric (which has its world headquarters in East Cleveland) and Huron Hospital (which submitted a letter of support for East Cleveland's application) were the city's two major businesses. By obtaining the commitment of these organizations during the planning phase, it was hoped they would offer their sizable resources during implementation. A General Electric employee attended only one Steering Committee meeting (August 13, 2001) and representation from Huron Hospital was not recruited. When a new Project Coordinator was hired in June 2002, the Steering Committee renewed discussion of strategies for involving other local businesses, specifically many local businesses (owned almost exclusively by Arab Americans), fast food restaurants, and chain stores (such as Walgreens, Rite Aid, and Foot Locker).

East Cleveland has many places of worship and two clerical coalitions: the Ministerial Alliance and Concerned Pastors. However, with the exception of St. Philomena's Catholic Church, the faith community was not represented on the Steering Committee.

### Exhibit 5-7

#### EAST CLEVELAND GFS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND KEY AGENDA ITEMS

Key Steering Committee Agenda Items	2001								2002					
	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Gang Definition	X	X	X	X								**	**	**
GFS Model Training*	X	X						X				**	**	**
Community Mobilization		X										**	**	**
Assessment Team		X										**	**	**
Project Reports/Timeline			X	X	X			X	X	X	X	**	**	**
GFS Structure/Management			X									**	**	**
Data Collection/Review***				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	**	**	**
GFS Cluster Meeting	X										X	**	**	**

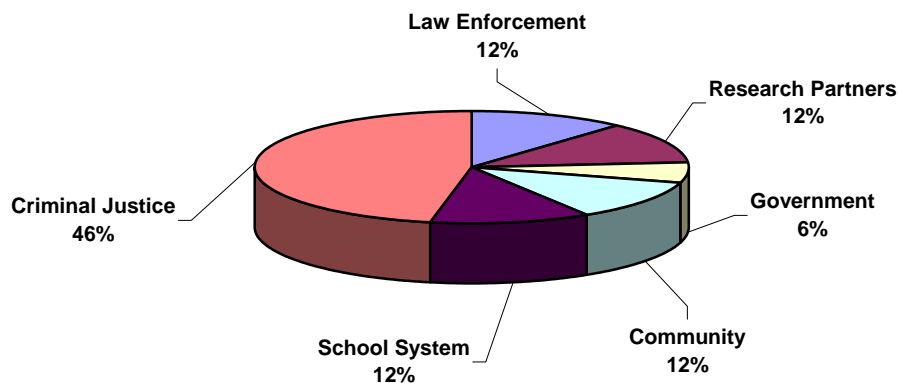
\* Includes technical assistance meetings with the Gang Center and with OJJDP staff.

\*\* Data not available at time of this report.

\*\*\*Includes Steering Committee retreat on March 1, 2002 to review preliminary Assessment Report with research partners.

### Exhibit 5-8

#### EAST CLEVELAND STEERING COMMITTEE COMPOSITION



### Exhibit 5-9

#### ATTENDANCE BY CORE STEERING COMMITTEE CONSTITUENCIES

Constituency Represented	Steering Committee Meetings												% Meetings Attended by Constituency
	2001						2002						
	# Reps.	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Local Residents	2		X		X	X			X				36
Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office*	5	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	100
EC Public Schools	2	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	92
Social Services (ECNC)	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	100
EC Police**	3	X									X		18
Research Partners	4	X			X					X		X	36
Faith Community	2		X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	73
Attorney General's Office	4	X	X	X	X	X			X				55
Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court***	2			X		X		X	X	X	X	X	64
EC Juvenile Court Probation	2			X	X		X	X			X	X	55
<b>TOTAL REPRESENTATIVES</b>	<b>27</b>												

\* Includes Project Coordinator.

\*\* In October 2001, the police chief (who was the Steering Committee chair at the time) suffered a heart attack and did not return to the department until early 2002.

\*\*\* Includes Steering Committee chair elected after the police chief's heart attack.

Staff from the county's juvenile probation department attended just over half of the Steering Committee meetings. When the GFS was launched, the East Cleveland branch of the probation department was under the leadership of a new manager who felt that staff caseloads were too high to allow for a binding commitment to the GFS program. The Project Coordinator at the time noted that the involvement of the probation department "is so crucial and yet their availability is so limited."

**Exhibit 5-10**

**EAST CLEVELAND: STEERING COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION\***  
**(As Reported in Activities Inventory Reports, January 2002 through March 2005)**

ORGANIZATION	Fiscal Year 2002				Fiscal Year 2003				Fiscal Year 2004				Fiscal Year 2005	Total Meetings**
	Qtr 1 (n=3)	Qtr 2 (n=3)	Qtr 3 (n=3)	Qtr 4 (n=1)	Qtr 1 (n=3)	Qtr 2 (n=1)	Qtr 3 (n=1)	Qtr 4 (n=2)	Qtr 1 (n=0)	Qtr 2 (n=3)	Qtr 3 (n=3)	Qtr 4 (n=2)	Qtr 1 (n=1)	
1. Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office	3	3	3	1	3	1	1	2	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	2	1	20
2. East Cleveland Schools	2	3	3	1	3	1	1	2	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	1	1	18
3. East Cleveland Neighborhood Center	2	3	3	1	3	1	1	1	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	15
4. East Cleveland Straight Talk	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	2	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	14
5. Berea Children's Home	-	-	3	1	3	1	1	1	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	2	1	13
6. Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court	2	3	2	-	-	-	1	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	1	-	9
7. St. Philomena Church	3	1	3	1	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	8
8. Ohio Attorney General's Office	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	4
9. East Cleveland Police	1	1	2	-	-	1	-	2	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	1	-	8
10. Huron Hospital	-	-	1	1	3	1	-	2	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	8
11. Cuyahoga County Adult Probation	-	-	2	-	1	1	1	2	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	1	8
12. Cuyahoga County Juvenile Probation (East Cleveland Branch)	1	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	1	1	7
13. Cuyahoga County Justice Affairs	-	2	3	1	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	6
14. Youth Opportunities Unlimited	-	-	1	1	3	-	-	1	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	6
15. East Cleveland Mayor's Office	-	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	5
16. Christ the King Catholic Church	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	1	-	5
17. Manna House Recovery Center	-	-	2	1	1	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	4
18. Illinois State University	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	2
19. City of East Cleveland	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	3
20. Community Residents	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	2
21. Kent State University	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	1
22. East Cleveland Municipal Court	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	1
23. Energetic Foundation, Inc.	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	2
24. Case Western Reserve University	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	2
25. Youngstown State University	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	1	1	2
26. The Dawson Law Firm	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	1	-	1
27. New Spirit Revival Church	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	1
28. World Overcomers Outreach, Inc.	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	1
29. Partnership for a Safer Cleveland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	-	-	0
30. Willis, Blackwell, and Watson	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	No Rpt	N/A	N/A	1	-	1
<b>Totals by Quarter:</b>	18	29	39	13	24	8	9	19				12	6	177

\*Each organization is counted once regardless of the number of attendees from the organization

\*\*Number of all meetings attended by at least one organization member.

Most of East Cleveland's Steering Committee members and other stakeholders initially interviewed by the national evaluation team expressed their desire that the project implement general prevention- or intervention-oriented activities for GFS project: "to help as many young people as possible to redirect their lives; to put a dent in the gang problem; or to educate the children to stop the empowerment of gangs." Not surprisingly, the person with the clearest and most expansive ideas about project goals was Pam Clay, the project's initial coordinator. According to Ms. Clay, the GFS program was designed to increase community cohesion and collaboration; "solve the gang problem within the community; cut down on the gang problem; reduce fear among citizens in general and the children who are going to and from school; and increase community involvement in solving this and other problems."

Local East Cleveland resident representation also was noticeably absent during the assessment process. In fact, the Project Coordinator and other Steering Committee members remarked that 'outsiders' were the dominant presence at the group's first meeting in May 2001. Of the 16 persons attending, only five could be considered local representatives. The presentations during that initial meeting left a lingering negative influence on the stakeholders' attitudes about the project. Some felt that the national technical assistance presenters accorded too much emphasis on the OJJDP model, which caused concern about whether the GFS program was flexible enough to accommodate the particularities of East Cleveland.

The limited resident participation mirrored the low level of social capital and civic engagement found in East Cleveland, more than a reflection of the site's inability to recruit local community interests. Consequently, some Steering Committee members argued that strong local agencies and institutions—the schools, the East Cleveland Neighborhood Center, St. Philomena's—should be considered proxy representatives of the community.

East Cleveland's Chief of Police, Patricia Lane, was a strong initial supporter of the GFS project, attending the national training sessions, and was eventually elected chairperson of the Steering Committee. Chief Lane's participation was limited subsequently after having some medical setbacks. Replacing Chief Lane on the Steering Committee as chair was Ethel Keith, an employee with the intake division at Cuyahoga County Probation. Ms. Keith attended the second national training session, and was an active and committed member until April 2002.<sup>36</sup>

Between 2002 and the first-quarter of 2005, the number of Steering Committee meetings as well as the number of participating organizations diminished. As previously mentioned, the Steering Committee initially met approximately 12 times a year, which meant once a month, or three times a quarter. In 2002, however, the Steering Committee had 10 meetings, which decreased to 7 meetings in 2003. At the end of the first quarter of 2005, the Steering Committee met one time. Although there are approximately 30 participating organizations reported on the Steering Committee's roster, only about 6 or 7

---

<sup>36</sup>During that month, Pam Clay resigned from the project and Keith followed suit. She has since agreed to return as a member of the Steering Committee, but will limit her involvement because of family responsibilities.



organizations attended at least half of the meetings each year. As the number of meetings declined after year-end 2002, the attendance of the participating organizations also fell off. Throughout most of the GFS project, the core members on the Steering Committee represented the following organizations: 1) Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office; 2) East Cleveland Public Schools; 3) East Cleveland Neighborhood Center; 4) East Cleveland Straight Talk; 5) Berea Children's Home; and 6) Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court (Exhibit 5-10).

## **B. The Project Coordinator, Street Outreach Workers, and Research Partner**

***Project Coordinator.*** In its GFS grant application, the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office stated that a staff member at the Center for Families and Children would serve as the GFS Project Coordinator. However, after the initial April 2001 GFS Cluster Meeting in Mesa, Arizona, the job was assigned to Assistant Prosecutor, Pamela Clay, the Community-Based Prosecutor handling juvenile cases for East Cleveland. Several reasons were given for this change. First, the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office realized it would be hard to fill a position that would last, technically, for only 12 months (the duration of the assessment phase), and the agency concluded that it might be more efficient to appoint someone from within. Second, because of the racial profile of East Cleveland, the Prosecutor's Office believed it was important that an African American fill the position. These facts and other considerations led to Ms. Clay's full-time assignment as the Project Coordinator effective May 1, 2001. She was considered a good fit because she was ending her rotation in the juvenile division and would therefore be available to fill the Project Coordinator position, and she was African American. Moreover, as the CBP attorney, she

had established strong and positive relationships with many of the individuals and agencies that would be involved in East Cleveland’s Gang-Free Schools project—the police department, parole and probation, and public school personnel.

For a variety of reasons, the Project Coordinator had a much more “hands-on” role than was anticipated by the County Prosecutor’s Office. For example, because she was an assistant prosecuting attorney, Ms. Clay was able to gain access to actual police arrest records. Since these are very sensitive materials, she assumed responsibility for physically retrieving the files, overseeing others who reviewed them, and conducting some of the record review as well.

East Cleveland’s stakeholders saw the Project Coordinator as “crucial” to the success of this initiative, and described the role as that of “peacekeeper, facilitator, cheerleader, data collector, and momentum builder.”<sup>37</sup> Among the more specific duties listed for the coordinator were:

- Arranging Steering Committee meetings;
- Overseeing data collection and assessment efforts; and
- Working directly with organizational liaisons (i.e., consultants/research partners, Steering Committee members, COSMOS Corporation, the national evaluators, OJJDP, and the National Youth Gang Center).

---

<sup>37</sup>GFS grant application for East Cleveland, page 10.

Support services for the Project Coordinator were to be provided by administrative staff from the County Prosecutor's Office, ensuring that she would be relatively free of clerical and logistical duties.

The basic administrative support that was planned for at the start of the initiative—suitable office space, computers and other equipment, support staff— did not materialize during the assessment phase. Ms. Clay was located in the CBP satellite office, a rundown building in East Cleveland; the phone system was unreliable; there were problems with logistical support, and the secretarial help that was planned for did not materialize. She spent a significant amount of time on tasks that were administrative, not those of a GFS's Project Coordinator. As a result some felt that the Ms. Clay was disorganized, and complained that key tasks, such as recruiting pivotal Steering Committee members and scheduling meetings, did not receive the attention they required.

In April 2002, Ms. Clay's supervisors informed her that she was being taken off the GFS project and she submitted her resignation on May 3. Another Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Valerie Bickerstaff, replaced her, another young African American who felt GFS would allow her to make a more "proactive" contribution to reducing crime in East Cleveland.

Ms. Bickerstaff thought she was inheriting a project that was preparing to be implemented, and was surprised to learn that there were serious problems with the Assessment Report that had already been developed, and that these problems might

jeopardize the viability of the project. She immediately set out to expand Steering Committee membership and met with local organizations. Before convening her first Steering Committee meeting in May, she called or met with the current members to introduce herself.

Ms. Bickerstaff immediately sought technical assistance from the National Youth Gang Center concerning the Assessment Report submitted by the research team and the former Project Coordinator. The Gang Center identified a number of shortcomings in that document, and Ms. Bickerstaff requested a thorough briefing on how to rectify these deficiencies.

In 2004, Michelle Earley replaced Ms. Bickerstaff as the Project Coordinator for the GFS project in East Cleveland. Like her earlier counterparts, Ms. Earley is an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office, and she is a young African American woman. Ms. Earley became the third and final Project Coordinator for the GFS Project in East Cleveland. Ms. Earley remained the Project Coordinator until the end of the grant.

***Street Outreach Workers.*** The Berea Children's Home Service Agency provided two full-time street outreach workers for the East Cleveland GFS project. Similar to the other sites, the Street Outreach Workers recruited youth to the program, maintained persistent contact with the youth, and monitored hot-spot and other troubled areas. The Street Outreach Workers also conducted the initial and ongoing assessments of the service needs

of the youth and his/her family. They served as case managers and advocates for the youth while monitoring their school attendance, probation status (if applicable), service compliance, and ability to live a gang-free lifestyle. Monroe Williams and Jemond Riffe served as the Street Outreach Workers for the East Cleveland project throughout the duration of the grant period. They both grew up in the area and personally knew many of the youth and their families. During the tenure of the third Project Coordinator, both expressed extreme dissatisfaction with her frequent absence from the office, lack of communication amongst them, lack of the provision of guidance and direction from her, and her “adversarial” managerial style.

***The Research Partner.*** The East Cleveland GFS project suffered many set backs due to the lack of a research partner throughout the grant period. Initially, Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) served as the research partner. At the outset of the project, CWRU participated on the Intervention Team. Their efforts included preliminary data collection and assessment, authoring descriptions about the target population, informing the Steering Committee and other key stakeholders as necessary, and assisting in the development of an information system. Due to conflicts between East Cleveland GFS project management and CWRU, they terminated their agreement. After this incident, the project languished without an official research partner. Youngstown State University provided some research services, but the project was unable to finalize a contract for their service over the course of multiple years.

### **C. Intervention Team**

Six groups composed the original Intervention Team. These included: the Project Coordinator (discussed above); research partner (discussed above); Street Outreach Workers (discussed above); the police department; probation; and East Cleveland School District.

The ECPD assigned two part-time police officers to participate on the Intervention Team. The officers averaged approximately 16 hours per week at the beginning. Their primary duties include maintaining daily contact with other team members; attending team meetings, working with the research partner to collect gang-crime information and data; conducting gang crime investigations; geo-coding gang crime hot spots; gathering gang intelligence information; and providing targeted enforcement operations. As noted earlier in this chapter, ECPD suffered budget cuts, staffing shortages, and staffing changes. Their participation on the Intervention Team declined as a result of these issues.

The Cuyahoga County Probation Department supplied a probation officer from both the juvenile and adult divisions who acted as liaisons to the East Cleveland GFS project. Their role primarily consisted of supervising and monitoring target youth who were on probation and maintaining communication with other team members as necessary. The probation officers worked collaboratively with other team members to develop case plans and probation plans. Probation officers also contributed to suppression activities (e.g., petitioning the court to place sanctions against probation violators).

The East Cleveland School District assigned a full-time liaison/mediator to the GFS project with the specific goal of encouraging academic achievement among target youth. This role consisted of helping the schools to identify gang-involved youth and referring them to the GFS project; contributing to the development of a comprehensive case plan; monitoring academic performance; tracking school attendance (and taking disciplinary action if necessary); teaching a course in conflict resolution, anger management, and life skills; and serving as a mediator between the youth and the school.

## **SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS**

During our site visits over the past several years, the national evaluation team has conducted focus groups with youth and adults in the schools and in the community. Additionally, the evaluation team has conducted individual interviews with key stakeholders involved in the GFS project. These interviews have provided valuable insight during the evaluation process with regards to the perceptions of the GFS Program and the impact that it may have had on the East Cleveland community.

*Interviews of Stakeholders.* In March 2006, the national evaluation team interviewed approximately 11 stakeholders involved in the East Cleveland's GFS Project in various capacities, including school principals, outreach workers, juvenile probation officers, the ECPD, a truancy officer, and members of the Steering Committee and Intervention Teams in order to ascertain some impressions of the program's mission, structure, and accomplishments. The stakeholders who were interviewed were generally in agreement

with regards to the mission and goals of the GFS project. They acknowledged that the overall mission of the program is to identify gang-involved youth and to dissuade them from gang, violent, and criminal activity by making a positive impact on the youth's life and providing the necessary individual and family services. Additionally, the stakeholders noted that the GFS program is supposed to aggressively promote and expose the youth to constructive activities, such as educational endeavors, community involvement, and lawful employment opportunities. In spite of the stakeholders' understanding of the GFS mission and goals and the collective belief that the Steering Committee and Intervention Team members were in agreement with the vision, the majority of the stakeholders who were interviewed opined that there had been great difficulties with achieving the GFS mission.

The stakeholders stated that one of the major difficulties with the GFS Project achieving its goals was the fact that the coordinator changed three times in three years. Moreover, the stakeholders mentioned that there had been a waning commitment and motivation with the individuals and organizations originally involved with the GFS project after needs or expectations were unmet or because of budget constraints. Organizations and individuals that were said to have reduced their involvement over the past few years include the East Cleveland Neighborhood Center's diversion program, ECPD, Black on Black Crime, Inc., motivational speaker and author Derrick Pledger, and community activist Art McCoy. Specifically, Messrs. Pledger and McCoy had pending contracts to work with the project, but these contracts were cancelled by Michelle Earley, Project Coordinator, for unknown reasons. In terms of the ECPD's involvement, a stakeholder commented that the ECPD would respond to emergency situations and would occasionally



patrol the East Cleveland community, but they were not actively involved in the GFS program because of budget cuts and layoffs. The ECPD confirmed the reduction of personnel and man-hours devoted to the GFS project, but they assured the national evaluation team that police officers were patrolling gang “hotspots” on a daily basis, and one police officer was consistently tracking gang-related crimes.

A recurring theme that emerged in the interviews was the project’s lack of direction and leadership. According to some of the stakeholders, there have been personality conflicts between the current Project Coordinator, Ms. Earley, and other key stakeholders. Specifically, an individual stated that the GFS program, “lacked direction from the Steering Committee and Project Coordinator; there was no plan for the program. [The Coordinator] tried to silence the people (e.g., community activists) who wanted to be involved, and they were asked not to participate.” Others noted that there was a lack of commitment, employees, quality programs, motivation, and community support afflicting the project. A key stakeholder mentioned that there was a constant challenge with defining roles and responsibilities within the GFS program, which often led to conflicting agendas between organizations. For example, Berea Children’s Home and Family Services was more family and community-focused in its approach to the GFS project, while the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office was more law and order focused in its approach. Furthermore, an Intervention Team member remarked that the East Cleveland community and government did not fully cooperate with the GFS program because the money and supervision flowed through the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office, which had an antagonistic relationship

with East Cleveland's local government since the former mayor had been under investigation.

During site visits, the national evaluation team observed the uncertainty and frustration of stakeholders, namely the outreach workers, probation officers, and a school principal, due to the lack of guidance in achieving the project's goals. Most stakeholders were concerned that Michelle Earley's continued activity of litigating criminal cases for the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office was taking her time and attention away from the GFS project in East Cleveland. In most instances, Ms. Earley was not present during the national evaluation team's site visits and was generally unresponsive to our questions or requests made through letters and e-mail correspondence regarding the project.

*Summary of Focus Groups.* In 2004, the national evaluation team conducted community and school focus groups. The evaluation team conducted three community focus groups on July 22, 2004. The school focus groups were completed on November 22, 2004 at Shaw Alternative High School (now known as Shaw Academy) and Heritage High School (now known as Shaw High School).

#### **A. Community**

Two of the three focus groups were comprised of youth: all of whom were young men from the high school football team who were not enrolled in the GFS project. The third group consisted of adults, most of whom were parents of the football team participants.

Most of the youth in the focus groups indicated that there was a problem with gangs in East Cleveland neighborhoods, and the gangs have street-associated names. The most common gang activities were selling and using drugs, mainly marijuana, and participating in vandalism. The national evaluation team determined that females do not have their own gangs, but they are a part of the male gangs. The youth stated that the weapons of choice for male youth are guns, bats, and sticks, while the female youth primarily use knives, razor blades, and box cutters. The youth focus groups posited that the major reasons that youth join gangs are for protection, money and friendship. Moreover, the youth stated that the reasons for gang activity in their neighborhoods were due to the lack of jobs and recreation centers in East Cleveland.

Unlike the youth focus groups, the adult focus groups did not believe that there are currently gang problems in East Cleveland. The adults made a clear distinction between organized gangs in East Cleveland (e.g., the Bloods and Crips) back in the 1970s and 1980s and what are considered today's gangs, which are more of a "neighborhood thing." The adult focus groups acknowledged that there is drug-selling going on, but it is about making money and not about being involved with gangs. The adult participants feel safe in their neighborhoods, and they believe that violence in their community is attributed to people coming into the East Cleveland neighborhoods from other areas.

Despite the divergent views of the presence of youth gangs in East Cleveland, both the youth and adult community focus groups identified very similar reasons for youth-

involved crimes and violence. The adults noted that the major contributors to youth problems are: 1) lack of jobs, particularly summer jobs for youth in East Cleveland; 2) lack of recreation centers and activities like basketball courts; 3) very little police presence in East Cleveland because most officers have been laid off due to budget cuts, and the police who are present are corrupt like the former mayor; and 4) lack of parental involvement in the youths' lives.

### **B. Shaw Academy (formerly Shaw Alternative High School)**

At Shaw Academy, two separate focus groups were conducted, one with students and one with administrators, teachers, and staff. Neither of the school focus groups were aware of any formal school policies regarding gang activity or membership, but the teachers and administrators mentioned that the school discourages wearing “gang colors.”

The students at Shaw Academy were aware of the GFS Project, and they would approve if one of their friends were in the program “trying to better their life.” The students in the focus group did not believe that there is a gang problem or gang activity in the school. They acknowledged that there used to be highly organized gangs in the 1980s and 1990s, but today it is about friends hanging out in school and associating by the neighborhood elementary schools they attended together. Additionally, the students indicated that they are aware of “tagging” or graffiti in the schools, which identify neighborhoods and street names. The fights that occur in school are typically one-on-one fistfights, and occasionally students fight with bricks, bats, knives, box cutters, and blades, but no guns.

Although the students do not think there are gangs in the school, they stated that there are gangs present in the larger East Cleveland community, which are identified by streets or neighborhoods. In the surrounding neighborhood, gang activity typically consists of hanging out on the corner, drinking, smoking, and selling drugs, namely marijuana. The students mentioned that the reasons why youth join gangs are to get money, for protection, for status and respect, and because of peer and family influence. Finally, the students at Shaw Academy recommended the following solutions: 1) provide job opportunities in or near East Cleveland; 2) bring job recruiters to the school; 3) provide training on how to conduct oneself in the workplace; and 4) provide training on filling out job applications.

The administrators, teachers and staff in the focus group were aware of the existence of the GFS Project. They believed that there is a very low level of gang activity occurring in the school, but they are aware of gangs existing outside of the school (e.g., Hot Sauce Hustlers, Crips and Bloods). The school officials stated, however, that gang problems were worse in East Cleveland five or more years ago. This focus group indicated that the fights that occur in school are not gang-related, and that drug activity happens outside of the school on lunch breaks but not inside the school.

The administrators, teachers and staff believed that youth join gangs for the following reasons: 1) the media's glorification of gangs; 2) to get money; 3) a lack of parental guidance; 4) a lack of etiquette skills (e.g., youth do not know how to behave on a job); and 5) negative peer influence. The school officials made the following recommendations:

1) provide job opportunities; 2) get companies to make a commitment to East Cleveland and create stable jobs for the community; 3) develop job training courses in the school; 4) educate the youth on crime and its repercussions (most do not understand the basics of the law); and 5) increase awareness about jail/prison life through site visit to jails/prisons, discussions with ex-cons, and videotapes. One of these recommendations has become a reality. A Steering Committee member, who is also an attorney, teaches a law class at Shaw Academy once a week. He counsels students on legal issues, specifically criminal laws and penalties, and the legal consequences of crime and gang activity. Approximately 60 percent of the youth that he teaches are enrolled in the GFS project.

### **C. Shaw High School (formerly Heritage High School)**

At Shaw High School, a focus group was conducted with students, but not with administrators, teachers and staff due to an unexpected scheduling conflict. The students in the focus group agreed that there is no gang or drug activity in the school, but there is in the surrounding community. The students identified “neighborhood crews” that associated by certain streets in East Cleveland, but organized gangs like the Bloods and Crips were “old-school.” Gang activity typically consists of hanging out on the corner, drinking, smoking, and selling drugs. Drug activity is the reason for violence, vandalism, and people leaving the community.

The students indicated that fights between students were one-on-one fistfights, but bricks, bats, knives, box cutters, and blades would be used if someone was getting jumped. Students were unaware of guns being used by gang members. The students did not know

of any girl gangs, but females are involved in gangs when they are the girlfriends of gang members. The focus group members stated that the girls are more likely to fight, and the fights are usually over boys. Furthermore, the students were not aware of any school policies regarding gang activity inside the school.

The students contended that the reasons why youth join gangs is to be cool, to have a better reputation, to belong, to make money (related to drug sales), to get attention, and because their family members are involved in gangs. The students believe that nothing can be done to improve the situation in the neighborhood. They all made comments about the lack of a police presence in the community because of recent budget cuts. Nevertheless, the students did not think that more police would help with the problems in East Cleveland because the officers are corrupt and involved in drug trafficking. These students painted a bleak and hopeless picture, and they look forward to leaving East Cleveland as soon as they are able.

## **SOME HIGHLIGHTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

*Highlights.* Despite the community problems and personality conflicts between individuals involved with the project, there were successes with the GFS program in East Cleveland. The national evaluation team has witnessed and the stakeholders have acknowledged the close and trusting relationships that have developed between the outreach workers, the enrolled youth, and their families as well as some school personnel and the youth. Most of the stakeholders noted that the outreach workers were the backbone

and strength of the East Cleveland GFS program, and they were making a strong effort to accomplish the project's goals. The outreach workers believed that mentoring the GFS youth and visiting with their families several times a week was a positive step to building relationships and making a change in the youth's behavior. Nevertheless, they felt that the mentoring was not enough without the added benefits that educational, employment, and social programs could have provided to the youth.

The stakeholders further commented that some major accomplishments were that some youth are no longer actively involved in gangs, many of the young people's behavior has improved, and they are attending school more often. One person boasted that since the implementation of the GFS program, there has been a decline in gang-related crimes, and the community and ECPD have done a better job in identifying gang-involved youth. Additionally, none of the youth have been killed because of gang violence, and some of the gang-involved youth in the program are gainfully employed. A Steering Committee member aptly stated that "the school is a little safer and young people have hope. [The GFS program] created a better environment for learning and a respect for learning." Generally, the stakeholders were pleased that the GFS project presented the opportunity for several unlikely groups and agencies to work together, such as Berea Family and Children Services, Black on Black Crime, Inc., and the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office. They were hopeful that alliances would form in the future to positively impact the East Cleveland community. Unfortunately, none of the stakeholders believed that such a comprehensive program like the GFS Project could continue without financial support from the Federal government or other outside sources.



*Lessons Learned Unique to East Cleveland.* The East Cleveland GFS site presented an interesting set of facts, situations, and obstacles from which one may learn for similar projects in the future. First, East Cleveland is a small, isolated community that has been beleaguered with financial problems, crime, and corruption amongst its city officials for many years. This type of political and social environment created an atmosphere of distrust and conflict between the East Cleveland community, City Council, and the East Cleveland Police Department from the beginning of the GFS project. The city's budget restraints also led to the ECPD having less police officers and serious problems maintaining the necessary gang crime data collection, implementing crime suppression activities, and actively monitoring gang activity in the schools and neighborhoods.

Second, the residents have developed a feeling of hopelessness and helplessness because they have felt separated from the larger City of Cleveland community and the available jobs. East Cleveland citizens lack transportation and job opportunities in their own neighborhoods. Given the disconnect, most of the people in the town seemed apprehensive about any outsiders coming into their community and schools, especially another political and law enforcement agency like the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office, claiming to help them. The GFS enrolled youth and their parents were responsive primarily to the outreach workers, school personnel, and some probation officers because these individuals were more familiar, trusting, and consistent figures in the East Cleveland community.

Finally, the GFS project changed Project Coordinators three times in three years, so there was a lack of stability and direction in running the project and committing to a plan of action. This lack of stability and direction ultimately resulted in many of the original participating organizations and corporations retreating and withdrawing their support. Furthermore, all of the Project Coordinators were assistant prosecutors. Some Steering Committee members opined that the coordinators represented more of a rigid law and order mentality than a caring family and community-focused mentality, which created discord between some of the involved parties.

Many of the circumstances that East Cleveland experienced are not unusual and should be considered in other similar projects. Some communities may not be as conducive to accepting or responding to a crime intervention or prevention program without the proper individuals and organizations that the residents trust or respect in place to plan and administer the project's activities. Researching the history and current political and socioeconomic dynamics of a city may be the first step to take before committing a project's time, funds, and resources to that city.

This resource was prepared by the author(s) using Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice. Opinions or points of view expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

**CHAPTER SIX**  
**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**

## CHAPTER SIX

### MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

#### INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) lead the effort for the Miami Gang-Free Schools project (later named the Miami Partnership for Action in Communities Task Force or Project MPACT) and is the administrative arm of the School Board of Miami-Dade County. The school board “sets school district policy and appoints a superintendent,” and the superintendent heads MDCPS and carries out board policy through MDCPS.<sup>1</sup>

MDCPS is the fourth-largest county level school district in the nation, with an active enrollment of 362,070 students in 394 schools, including 76 magnet schools and 14 “controlled choice” schools.<sup>2</sup> Student population has been increasing by about 8,000 students a year for the past nine years. Like the county itself, the demographic make-up of the student body is quite diverse. Eleven percent of the students (Pre-K to 12th grade) are classified as White Non-Hispanic; 31 percent are Black Non-Hispanic; 56 percent are Hispanic; and 2 percent are classified as Other.<sup>3</sup> There also are 55 charter schools in the

---

<sup>1</sup>“The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida,” February 2002, <http://www.dade.k12.fl.us/board>.

<sup>2</sup>The district’s Web site reports that “controlled choice” (controlled open enrollment) is a public delivery system that allows school districts to make student school assignments using parents’ indicated preferential school choice as a significant factor, while maintaining the racial/ethnic diversity and balance of a multifaceted community. Information retrieved from National Center for Education Statistics, <http://www.nces.ed.gov>, August 2007.

<sup>3</sup>Miami-Dade Public Schools, “Statistical Highlights 2000-2001,” no date, <http://www.dade.k12.fl.us>.

county, many of them elementary schools.<sup>4</sup> Miami-Dade Public Schools Police Department is the second largest school police agency in the United States, with over 200 sworn personnel including detectives, bicycle police, K-9 officers, and school resource officers.<sup>5</sup>

***Description of the Community.*** Miami-Dade County is located in southeast Florida and has a population of over two million residents. According to the 2000 Census, Miami-Dade ranked 12th as the fastest-growing county on the East Coast.<sup>6</sup> Miami-Dade County includes the city of Miami (with a population of 362,470), Miami Beach (87,933), Hialeah (226,419), and many other suburbs and rural areas.<sup>7</sup>

Miami-Dade County covers 1,946 square miles and is ethnically diverse, with a very large Hispanic population. The 2000 Census<sup>8</sup> revealed that, of those identifying themselves by one racial code, 69.7 percent identified themselves as White and 20.3 percent as Black or African American. Hispanics (who may be of any race) were 57.3 percent of the population. Largely because of its proximity to Central and South America, Miami is one of the leading cocaine distribution areas in the United States and is considered the gateway for the Colombian heroin trade.<sup>9</sup>

The target area included three areas in Miami-Dade County: the Northwest Miami-Dade area of the county, under the jurisdiction of the Miami-Dade County Police

---

<sup>4</sup>Miami-Dade Public Schools, Charter Schools Directory, <http://www.charterschools.dadeschools.net>, retrieved August 2007.

<sup>5</sup>Miami-Dade Schools Police Department, <http://police.dadeschools.net/>, retrieved August 2007.

<sup>6</sup>“How We’ve Changed,” downloaded from *The Miami Herald* Web site at <http://www.miami.com/herald/special/news/census2000> on October 26, 2001.

<sup>7</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 data.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Miami GFS application, page 1.

Department; the north area of Miami Beach (zip codes 33141, 33140) under the jurisdiction of the Miami Beach Police Department; and a section of Hialeah (zip codes 33010, 33012, 33016) under the jurisdiction of the Hialeah Police Department. As a result of mapping juvenile arrests between 1999 and 2001, it became evident, that the Northwest area of Miami-Dade County was in particular need, reflecting a large number of arrests over three years.

***Miami-Dade's Gang Problem.*** Although they could provide no research or other documentation, many of those interviewed during the national evaluation team's first site visit in October 2001 agreed that Miami-Dade had a serious and unique gang problem because Miami-Dade gangs were transient: gang members drive to other areas to commit their crimes. For example, in Port Saint Lucie—a city about 100 miles and four counties north of Miami—local police reported on the trend in a 2000 news account:

For at least the past two or three years, we have seen an increase in crimes which have occurred in our area which we fear are attribut[able] to individuals from the Miami-Dade area. They're people down here that are just reaching out farther and farther north from the Miami area looking for an easy target... There's plenty of convenience stores [in Port St. Lucie], however, perhaps their vehicles are known to the police down in [the Miami] area, it's just too hot for them, so they come up here... and they come into an area which looks serene like Port St. Lucie does... and they hit and run.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup>Greenloe, Will, "Thugs Coming North to Steal," *Port St. Lucie News*, September 17, 2000.

The visibility and nature of Florida gangs have changed over the last decade. Gang affiliation used to be evident because members wore certain colors, flashed gang signs and symbols, and hung out together in public places. This is no longer strictly the case, according to law enforcement officials and others interviewed by the national evaluation team. Their observations are supported by newspaper reports. For example, the head of the State Attorney's Organized Crime and Gang Unit in Broward County recently stated:

The old days of hanging out on the corner, wearing colors and flashing signs have gone away. They've graduated into the moneymaking business, dealing drugs, and running money. They're not just shooting and beating up on each other.<sup>11</sup>

At the time of the initial grant award, two of the most notorious and active gangs in the Miami area were the Boobie Boys and the John Does. The Boobie Boys alone were held responsible for 35 murders during the 1990s, as well as an \$85 million dollar cocaine-smuggling operation extending from Florida to 12 other states. In June 2000, the leader of the Boobie Boys was sentenced to life in prison without parole.<sup>12</sup> More recently, the La Mara Salvatrucha gang, commonly known as MS-13, found its way to Miami. The Miami-Dade Police Department's (MDPD) top gang unit constantly patrols for MS-13 members, considering it the most violent gang in the city.

---

<sup>11</sup>Rhor, Monica, "Crackdown on Gangs Effective...For Now," *The Miami Herald*, October 7, 2001.

<sup>12</sup>Boodhoo, Niala, "Miami Gang Leader, Others Sentenced to Life in Prison," *The Associated Press*, June 6, 2000.

Miami's gangs also have become more sophisticated, according to the Steering Committee and Assessment Team members. Gangs are more likely to use portable technologies such as cell phones, walkie-talkies, and pagers to communicate with each other, transact business, and to warn other gang members about police in the area.

Gang membership continued to rise through the late 1990s into 2001, although at a much slower rate than in the early 1990s. Exhibit 6-1 illustrates the growth of gang membership from 1994 to 1998 in Miami-Dade County. From 1990 to 1994, the number of gang members rose from 2,423 to 4,710 gang members, or 94 percent. Since that time, the rate of increase in gang membership has been low: about one percent every year from 1994 to 1997, and a 2.8 percent increase from 1997 to 1998. Many of those interviewed by the national evaluation team cautioned that lower rates of gang membership may reflect poor reporting by law enforcement rather than an actual decline in gang membership and low self-reporting by gang members during arrests.

### Exhibit 6-1

#### GANG MEMBERSHIP IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, 1994-1998

Year	Total Gangs	Total Gang Members	Change in Membership Over Prior Year (%)
1994	92	4,710	-
1995	104	4,761	1.06
1996	82	4,812	1.07
1997	60	4,863	1.06
1998	84	5,000	2.82
2001	109	1,256	

Source: United Way of Miami-Dade County, *The 1999-2000 Children's Report Card*, 1999. National Drug Intelligence Center, "Florida Drug Threat Assessment" Johnstown, PA, July 2003.



It is estimated that 109 gangs were active in Miami-Dade County with 1,256 members in 2001.<sup>13</sup> The groups include street gangs, motorcycle gangs, interstate gangs, and those based in prisons. Exhibit 6-2 is an illustrative list of many of those gangs and some more recent ones as well.

From 2001 to 2005, gang-related arrests increased by 15 percent.<sup>14</sup> Gangs were involved in homicide, drug trafficking (marijuana, methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, MDMA, etc.), firearms trafficking, assault, intimidation and extortion, carjacking, possession of firearms, auto theft, burglary, arson, graffiti, and vandalism.<sup>15</sup> Miami serves as the main supply area of cocaine for at least eight other states, and cocaine trafficking from Miami to other parts of the country has increased.<sup>16</sup> Gangster Disciples, Latin Kings, Vice Lords, and Sureños 13 handle much of the retail drug sales for crack cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, and heroin in south Florida.

**Youth Violence.** In 2007, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice reported that since 2001-2002, most indicators of juvenile violent crime have been declining.<sup>17,18</sup> This

---

<sup>13</sup>United Way of Miami-Dade, "An Impact Area Brief (2006): Youth," 2006.

<sup>14</sup>United Way of Miami-Dade, "An Impact Area Brief (2006): Youth," 2006.

<sup>15</sup>National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations, *2005 National Gang Threat Assessment*, 2005.

<sup>16</sup>National Drug Intelligence Center, *Florida Drug Threat Assessment 2003*, July 2003. National Drug Intelligence Center, *National Drug Threat Assessment 2005*, February 2005.

<sup>17</sup>According to Florida statutes, "'child' or 'juvenile' or 'youth' means any unmarried person under the age of 18 who has not been emancipated earlier by order of the court and who has been found or alleged to be dependent, in need of services, or from a family in need of services; or any unmarried person who is charged with a violation of law occurring prior to the time that person reached the age of 18 years." The 2001 Florida Statutes, Title XLVII, section 985.03.

<sup>18</sup>Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, *2005-2006 Delinquency Profile*, 2007.

## Exhibit 6-2

### GANGS ACTIVE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, 2002-2005

10th Street Thugs	Flip Side Posse	Northside Nation
112 Avenue Boys	Gang Colors	Nuestra Familia
12 Nation Street Gang	Gangster Disciples	Opa Locka Boys
18th Street Gang	Hell's Angels	Outlaws
205th Street Players	Imperial Gangsters	Pagans
21 Jump	Insane Gangster Disciples	Second Power
22 Ave. Players	International Posse	Side by Side Boys
299 Street Boys	Jamaica Posse	Skinheads
29th Street Players	King Garden Boys	Skullheads
2nd Street Fellows	Ku Klux Klan	Spanish Cobras
305P	La Familia	Spanish Gangsters
35th Street Players	La Raza	Spanish Lords
56 Ave. Players	Latin Counts	Street Action Posse
Baby Demons	Latin Disciples	Sureños 13
Black Gangster Disciples	Latin Eagles	T.N.S.
Blackheart	Latin Folk	Terrorists
Black Tuna Gang	Latin Kings	The Konneticut Kids
Bloods	Latino Bad Boys	Vados Locos
Brown Sub Boys	Legion of Doom	Vice Lords
BTP	Lincoln Fields Gangsters	Victory Park Zoe Pound
Carol City Lynch Mob	Mafia Boys	Vonda's Gang
Crips	Maniac GD	Warlocks
Dogg Pound	Maniac Latin Disciples	Westside Boys
Eastside Boys	Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)	White Aryan Resistance
El Rukn	Miami Boyz	Y.L.O.
Five Percenters	Neta	Zoe Pound

Sources: Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Drug Court Clearinghouse, "Frequently Asked Questions Series: Policies Re Admitting Eligible Drug Court Participants with Suspected Gang Affiliation," American University, Washington, DC, March 7, 2006. Florida Department of Corrections, "Gang and Security Threat Group Awareness," no date.

includes referrals for murder/manslaughter and aggravated assaults and for other crimes such as auto theft, and burglaries. The authors of a 1999 report published by United Way

of Miami-Dade found a 56 percent drop in juvenile gun-related deaths from 1993 to 1998, matching a national trend.<sup>19</sup>

Between 1999 and 2000, Miami-Dade processed more than 104,000 juveniles for delinquency. This is a slight decrease from 1997 to 1998, when Miami-Dade processed more than 108,000 delinquent juveniles.<sup>20</sup>

Exhibit 6-3 presents juvenile crime rates for 2000 based on data from police records from Miami Beach, Miami-Dade County, and Hialeah police departments, and the Miami-Dade school police department, collected for the assessment project.

***State Gang Laws.*** The Criminal Street Gang Prevention Act of 1996 (Chapter 874 of the Florida state code) defines a “criminal street gang” as “a formal or informal ongoing organization, association, or group that has as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal or delinquent acts, and that consists of three or more persons who have a common name or common identifying signs, colors, or symbols and have two or more members who, individually or collectively, engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal street gang activity.” An individual is identified as a “criminal street gang member” if that person meets at least two of the following criteria:

---

<sup>19</sup>The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Web site at <http://www.djj.state.fl.us/statsresearch/keytrends.html>, retrieved October 26, 2001.

<sup>20</sup>United Way of Miami-Dade County, “The 1999-2000 Children’s Report Card,” 1999.

### Exhibit 6-3

#### JUVENILE CRIME RATES: TOTAL ARRESTS, 2000-2006

Location	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Miami-Dade County</b>							
Total Arrests	84,337	83,700	67,801	65,095	57,023	46,526	41,663
Total Juvenile Arrests	10,193	9,125	5,545	4,762	4,102	3,751	3,312
Juvenile Arrests as Percent of Total Arrests	12.1%	10.9%	8.2%	7.3%	7.2%	8.1%	8.0%
<b>Miami Beach</b>							
Total Arrests	8,316	7,554	7,807	8,646	10,290	10,180	12,887
Total Juvenile Arrests	401	333	274	516	321	377	371
Juvenile Arrests as Percent of Total Arrests	4.8%	4.4%	3.5%	6.0%	3.1%	3.7%	2.9%
<b>Hialeah</b>							
Total Arrests	4,490	4,553	3,899	3,796	3,512	3,477	3,997
Total Juvenile Arrests	685	706	570	568	437	407	367
Juvenile Arrests as Percent of Total Arrests	15.3%	15.5%	14.6%	15.0%	12.4%	11.7%	9.2%
<b>Miami-Dade County Public Schools</b>							
Total Arrests	2,667	2,801	2,578	1,716	1,302	2,279	2,191
Total Juvenile Arrests	2,295	2,435	2,187	1,460	980	1,819	1,652
Juvenile Arrests as Percent of Total Arrests	86.1%	86.9%	84.8%	85.1%	75.3%	79.8%	75.4%

Sources: Florida Department of Law Enforcement, "Annual County and Municipal Arrest Data," 2000-2006.

- Admits to criminal street gang membership;
- Is identified as a criminal street gang member by a parent or guardian;
- Is identified as a criminal street gang member by a documented reliable informant;
- Resides in or frequents a particular criminal street gang's area and adopts their style of dress, their use of hand signs, or their tattoos, and associates with known criminal street gang members;

- Is identified as a criminal street gang member by an informant of previously untested reliability;
- Has been arrested more than once in the company of identified criminal street gang members for offenses which are consistent with usual criminal street gang activity;
- Is identified as a criminal street gang member by physical evidence such as photographs or other documentation; and
- Has been stopped in the company of known criminal street gang members four or more times.<sup>21</sup>

The state defined a “pattern of criminal street gang activity” as “the commission or attempted commission of, or solicitation or conspiracy to commit, two or more felony or three or more misdemeanor offenses, or one felony and two misdemeanor offenses, or the comparable number of delinquent acts of violations of law which would be felonies or misdemeanors if committed by an adult, on separate occasions within a three-year period.”

Florida’s statute on what constitutes a “gang member” or “gang-related activity” is important because the Florida Supreme Court held unconstitutional the sentencing enhancements based on those definitions. On September 26, 2001, the Supreme Court ruled that section 874.04 of the Florida Statutes (Supp. 1996)—which provided enhanced penalties for criminal street gang activity—violated due process guarantees therefore ruling it unconstitutional. Referring to an earlier decision, the Court stated: “The defendant in [*State v. O.C.*, 748 So. 2d 945 (Fla. 1999)] received an enhanced sentence merely because he was a member of a street gang....[T]he penalty for ‘mere association’ violated the defendant’s substantive due process rights because there was no relation between the enhancement and the offenses.” The Court’s 2001 decision made the appropriate changes

---

<sup>21</sup>The Criminal Street Gang Protection Act of 1996, Chapter 874 of the Florida State Code.

to the existing punishment code sheet that mandated sentencing enhancements for gang membership.<sup>22</sup>

## **PROJECT TIMELINE**

Exhibit 6-4 provides a summary of key project activities.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE INITIAL GFS APPLICATION**

A district supervisor in the Federal Programs and Grants Administration division of the MDCPS oversaw the preparation of the project's application. It was originally thought that one of the large police departments (there are more than 30 law enforcement agencies in the county) would play a lead role in the project. However, a sergeant in the General Investigations Unit of the MDCPS (the school police department), successfully argued that his agency should be a major partner since the public schools are a natural hub for both gang activities and social services. The school police department provided some of the funds used to hire the University of Miami to write the application, and other agencies also wrote key portions or provided useful data.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup>2001 Fla. LEXIS 1929; 26 Fla L. Weekly S 626, September 16, 2001.

<sup>23</sup>For example, the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) provided data on juvenile arrests and wrote parts of the application. JAC is a full-fledged division of the Miami-Dade Police Department, the county's law enforcement agency.

### Exhibit 6-4

## MIAMI-DADE GANG-FREE SCHOOLS PROJECT TIMELINE

Date	Activity
<b>2001</b> <b>April</b> <b>May</b> <b>June</b> <b>July</b> <b>September</b> <b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial GFS Cluster Meeting, Mesa AZ</li> <li>• Initial Project Meetings</li> <li>• Initial Stakeholders Meeting</li> <li>• Target Area Defined</li> <li>• Initial Assessment Team Meeting</li> <li>• First Project Coordinator Hired</li> <li>• Initial Steering Committee Meeting</li> <li>• Local Data Collection Begins</li> <li>• First National Evaluation Team Site Visit</li> </ul>
<b>2002</b> <b>Date Unavailable</b> <b>February</b>  <b>March</b> <b>July</b>  <b>August</b> <b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of Economic Development Awarded MPACT a \$70,000 Grant For on the Job Training and Education</li> <li>• First Project Coordinator's Contract Expires</li> <li>• Interim Project Coordinator Appointed</li> <li>• Evaluation Team Site Visit</li> <li>• Second Cluster Meeting, Mesa, AZ</li> <li>• NYGC Site Visit</li> <li>• National Evaluation Site Visit</li> <li>• Northwest Portion of Target Area Redefined</li> <li>• Current Project Coordinator Hired</li> <li>• Assessment Report Submitted</li> </ul>
<b>2003</b> <b>February</b>  <b>May</b>  <b>June</b> <b>July</b> <b>August</b>  <b>September</b>  <b>October</b>  <b>November</b> <b>December</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation Plan Submitted</li> <li>• Evaluation Team Site Visit</li> <li>• National Evaluation Workshop for the Miami-Dade GFS</li> <li>• Logic Model Training</li> <li>• NYGC Intervention Training</li> <li>• MAGTF Ride Along</li> <li>• MAGTF Ride Along</li> <li>• Steering Committee training</li> <li>• Initial Intervention Team Meeting</li> <li>• Steering Committee training</li> <li>• Follow-up Workshop to the National Evaluation Workshop</li> <li>• Approval from MDCPS Research Review Committee to conduct GMIs with school students</li> <li>• Steering Committee training</li> <li>• Implementation Plan Approved</li> <li>• Implementation Funding Awarded</li> <li>• Follow-up Interviews to the National Evaluation Workshop</li> <li>• Approval from Western Institutional Review Board, Olympia, WA (IRB of record for the National Evaluation) for the Miami-Dade Site to Collect Data for the Study</li> <li>• Intervention Team training</li> </ul>
<b>2004</b> <b>January</b>  <b>February</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First GFS Client Enrolled</li> <li>• On the Job Training Pilot with Palmetto Homes</li> <li>• Third GFS Cluster Meeting, Houston, TX</li> </ul>

Date	Activity
<b>April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at Newly Built Home in Empowerment Zone</li> </ul>
<b>May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First MIS Data Submission</li> <li>• First Set of Crime Data (from Marcelo)</li> </ul>
<b>June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gang Awareness Training at Carol City Senior High School</li> <li>• Presentation Given at Church To Promote Community Collaboration</li> </ul>
<b>July</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation Team Site Visit—First GMIs Administered</li> <li>• Awards Ceremony, 40 Awards Given</li> </ul>
<b>August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request to JAC for Assistance in Identifying and Recruiting Comparison Area Youth</li> </ul>
<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation Team Visit</li> <li>• Hialeah-Miami Lakes Senior High School Added to Target Area</li> <li>• Personal Development Classes Held as Part of OJT Pilot Program</li> </ul>
<b>November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GFS Presentation</li> <li>• Opa-Locka Crime Prevention Meetings</li> <li>• Evaluation Team Visit</li> </ul>
<b>December</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NYGC Site Visit</li> <li>• Know Gangs Conference</li> <li>• Initial School and Community Focus Groups</li> </ul>
<b>2005 May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities Inventories Submission Requirement Terminated</li> </ul>
<b>December</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 125 Clients Enrolled</li> </ul>
<b>2006 January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation Team Visit</li> </ul>
<b>March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation Team Visit</li> </ul>

In the spring of 2001, as the project commenced, the school system encountered numerous problems. Budgetary shortfalls at the state level forced MDCPS to cut more than \$80 million from its budget. The region’s largest newspaper, the *Miami Herald*, regularly reported on school corruption, mismanagement, and poor performance.<sup>24</sup> In September of that year, the school board fired the superintendent. On October 18—by a vote of five to three—the board hired a new interim superintendent with a long career in business and government.

<sup>24</sup>See for example, “Stinging Rebuke,” *The Miami Herald*, May 2, 2001; “Double Sessions Suggested for Crowded Dade Schools,” *The Miami Herald*, May 11, 2001; “Cuevas Vows Land-Deal Reforms,” *The Miami Herald*, May 16, 2001; “School Official Spends \$2,316 on Police Gear,” *The Miami Herald*, May 21, 2001; and “School Wiretap Plot Alleged,” *The Miami Herald*, May 20, 2001.



MDCPS's police department received the majority of the project's funds for the assessment phase. The MDCPS police, the Miami Beach police, the Miami-Dade police, and the Hialeah Police Department spearheaded most of the data collection effort during the assessment phase. These four police agencies ranged in size from a few hundred to several thousand employees, and all had gang units, sometimes as part of criminal investigations or special investigations departments (see Exhibit 6-5). Shortly after the grant award, the City of Miami's police department decided not to participate in the project because the city was already involved in several federal law enforcement grant projects, and had neither the time nor the personnel to take part in the project.

### Exhibit 6-5

#### NUMBER OF OFFICERS IN THE FOUR INVOLVED POLICE AGENCIES (2001)

	Miami-Dade Police Department <sup>(a)</sup>	Hialeah Police Department <sup>(b)</sup>	Miami Beach Police Department <sup>(b)</sup>	Miami-Dade Schools Police Department <sup>(c)</sup>
<b>Number of Sworn Officers</b>	2,999	344	376	206

Source: Florida Department of Law Enforcement, "2006 Criminal Justice Agency Profile Report," 2006.

During the application phase, 30 to 40 officers participated in the MAGTF, each representing different municipalities within the county.<sup>25</sup> MAGTF members meet monthly to exchange information about local gang activity and inform one another of upcoming events that may attract gang members (e.g., the Miami-Dade County Youth Fair or other youth-oriented events).<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup>From the Miami GFS application, p. 19.

<sup>26</sup>Miami Beach Police, <http://www.ci.miami-beach.fl/mbpolice/gang.htm>.

## **THE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The national evaluation team obtained information on assessment phase activities through several sources. First, the national evaluation team interviewed Steering Committee members and other key stakeholders during site visits conducted in October 2001, February 2002, and July 2002. The national evaluation team scheduled visits to coincide with local Steering Committee meetings or sessions with the technical assistance team (the National Youth Gang Center) or staff from OJJDP. The national evaluation team obtained copies of important project documents (sign-in sheets, meeting minutes, meeting agendas, reports, etc.) during these visits.

The national evaluation team also tracked performance through the Activities Inventory that the grantees submitted on a quarterly basis. The activities inventories collected detailed information on local planning, including information on meetings, stakeholder involvement, decision-making, and project outcomes.<sup>27</sup>

### **A. Key Participants**

*Steering Committee.* During the first half of 2002, the Steering Committee concentrated heavily on the position of Project Coordinator. It was decided that the Project Coordinator would be an administrator working directly with the school police but not within law enforcement. The Steering Committee selected her in July.

---

<sup>27</sup>Miami's activities inventories have been submitted several months after their due date. The initial reason for this problem was that the site did not have a Project Coordinator during its first six months of operation and the most recent inventory was prepared without the benefit of files or other materials from the former Project Coordinator.

The Steering Committee increased the target area of incorporated Miami-Dade and accepted this area as the Northwestern Miami-Dade Site. The Steering Committee agreed to form a Review Board that would meet biweekly to review the Assessment Report and enhance or rewrite the Implementation Plan.

Miami Beach declined representation to the Steering Committee due to reported crime statistics. It was recommended that the counselor hired for the implementation liaise with the school system and Project Coordinator to assist with student surveys. It was noted that there was a lack of information on juveniles on probation who are gang members in the area. MDPD agreed to formulate a plan to get information on gang-related incidents from the target area on a weekly or monthly basis.

The Steering Committee also focused on specific tasks needed for the second phase implementation paperwork for OJJDP. The University of Miami stated that it would not seek to be the research partner for the grant's second phase.

Throughout 2003, during regularly scheduled Steering Committee meetings, outstanding MOUs, new hires including a new secretary, and training activities were announced; and Assessment Reports and the budget were reviewed. A new referral process was adopted. Motions were made to change the term "gang sweep" to "directed patrol," eliminate the gun buy back program, and increase tutoring and adult and vocational training. Project Jump Start was introduced to the committee members, and members elected to not use funds at this time for the project.

Committee members voted in March to make outreach workers into school board employees to make it easier to access student records. For the interview process, it was decided to hire one full-time and two part-time employees with flexible schedules. When hired, Street Outreach workers were granted part-time status pending project need and performance evaluation.

In August, a gang training session was conducted. The project's technical assistance provider conducted Intervention Team training in December. Staff from the national evaluation team visited in December and interviewed each active agency to review information and services for the logic model.

The Steering Committee met regularly throughout 2004. Members discussed the budget and need contracts or invoices from agencies requiring fees for service, and MOUs were discussed. Training was conducted for newcomers and members who had not been trained. A pilot program for an In-House Suspension Program to keep kids off the streets when they are suspended from school was proposed. The idea was tabled pending further research.

It was decided that a review should be made of Steering Committee members and their representatives who have not been in regular attendance. The new Steering Committee chief was unable to attend due to a schedule conflict. He rescheduled his visit for the September meeting. The committee decided that all crime stats must be submitted at each Steering Committee meeting.

***Review Board.*** The Review Board met weekly in July and August 2002 to discuss the progress of the Assessment Report. The report would focus on the new target area of northwest Miami-Dade between 67th and 27th Avenues and 175th Street to County Line Road. Crime data comparisons were given for 1999-2001. A list of community resources was added to the report as a reference. At the final August meeting, agencies in the target area were discussed and suggestions were made on how to solicit their participation in the project.

***Assessment Team.*** In December 2001, the project received IRB approval. The University of Miami collected Census information, descriptions of communities, and surveys. The University conducted surveys of gang members, their parents, community members, and focus groups. Survey distribution met with the issues of coordination and of persuading gang members to participate. Gift cards proved to be a successful incentive.

Law enforcement from Miami Beach PD, Hialeah PD, Miami-Dade, MDPD, and MDSPD conducted crime analyses based on definition and crimes outlined by the Steering Committee. The initial information needed to be reassessed because the data were not significant regarding the level of violence for Hialeah and Miami Beach; the areas needed to be expanded. Resources became an issue in the reassessment. MDPD and MDSPD committed to total reassessment of the target area and schools.

In 2002, the Assessment Team discussed the progress of data collection for the Assessment Report, and all parties updated their data on crime statistics, school discipline,

and history of gang prosecution in Miami-Dade County. In March, representatives from Miami Beach and Hialeah stated that they would not be able to commit to reassessment of their target areas due to limited resources, time, and manpower. MDPD committed to reassess its target area to include 2001 statistics, and MDSPD committed to reassess all schools within three target areas. The Implementation Plan was written by the team.

The Assessment Team identified 50 gang members who were identified to check for crime patterns. Vista Verde and MDSPD cross referenced the gang members for crime trends. Vista Verde captured statistical information regarding the types of crimes gang members had been involved in by incident and throughout the county. Miami-Dade, Miami Beach, and MDSPD did the same. The data revealed that these 50 members committed crimes within their neighborhoods within the boundaries on the new target area of Northwestern Miami-Dade County, and they were not transient. Hialeah could not provide information due to resource issues. The Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) confirmed that all of the arrests of the gang members had occurred in their communities and not within Hialeah or Miami Beach.

***Implementation Team.*** Assessment Team members met on March 26, 2002 regarding the grant application for the implementation of the project's second phase. They used existing data and created goals and objectives for the second phase. The team also developed the management plan and budget. The final product was delivered to OJJDP for second phase funding.

In 2003, the Steering Committee Work Group discussed members of the interview panel, projected interview dates, and the application process. The school board process to seek approval for a hiring freeze waiver was discussed. The group chose an interview panelist and postponed interview dates until second year funding had been approved. The group reviewed agency commitments and signature requirements for document approval. A former gang member presented detailed information on gang lifestyle and suggested elements that should be included in the Implementation Plan, including gang members as program participants. The group refined the referral process.

***Intervention Team.*** In 2003, when the referral process was finalized, the Intervention Team designed a flow chart for point-of-entry and steps to review referrals for participation approval. The team decided upon which cases to accept and gave assignments to outreach workers. The Intervention Team received referrals and accepted new cases.

At the Intervention Team's 2004 meetings, many new cases continued to be reviewed and accepted. The On the Job Training (OJT) Program began in January 2004, orientation occurred on January 15. The project staff placed emphasis on getting the students into the classroom to begin training. Many students were dropped from the program and pending cases were moved in to replace them. In March, eight new cases presented, and all had pending paperwork. Some of the student completed the first part of the OSHA training.

During the late summer and early autumn, disturbances came from the Zoe Pound Gangsters at MacArthur North Senior High School and the gang, 305P, at Hialeah-Miami Lakes High School. New gang tagging had been seen at American Senior High School. Officers recommended that Hialeah-Miami Lakes High School be included as a target school.

## **B. The Assessment Report Preparation Initial Activities**

*Training Activities.* Implementation Training occurred in Mesa, AZ March 11-13, 2002. The Implementation team received needed training for writing the Implementation Plan and for guiding the Steering Committee toward goals and objectives.

*Selection of the Target Area.* Steering Committee and Assessment Team members provided varying accounts of how the initial scan was conducted. Originally they reported that the Project Coordinator first approached the “four largest police departments” in the county (Miami, Miami Beach, Hialeah, and Miami-Dade County) to request data on gang crimes (see Exhibit 6-6). Although the Steering Committee and Assessment Team members deemed the gang crime information collected by these departments unreliable (many officers do not capture whether a suspect or a crime is gang-related), the Project Coordinator and members of the Assessment Team felt that this information sufficiently identified gang-related crime clusters and hotspots in the county.



### Exhibit 6-6

#### INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF GANG-RELATED CRIMES IN HIALEAH, MIAMI BEACH, AND MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, 1999-2001

<i>Crime</i>	<b>Miami Beach</b>	<b>Hialeah</b>	<b>Miami-Dade County*</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Violent Crimes</b>	167	80	40	287
<b>Property Crimes</b>	266	23	51	340
<b>Drug Crimes</b>	188	10	14	212
<b>Weapons Offenses</b>	23	2	1	26
<b>Other</b>	118	16	0	134
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>999</b>

\* Only includes data for the target area in northern unincorporated Dade County.

Members of the Assessment Team identified additional information to narrow the possible target areas even further. For example, a representative from the state's Department of Corrections provided information on the residences of juvenile probationers and parolees, and a staff member from the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) prepared a map showing the location of juvenile arrests. These two sets of data were cross-referenced with crime data from the participating police departments. The assessment committee narrowed the potential target areas to three locations:

1. The City of Hialeah—an area in the northwest part of the county;
2. Unincorporated Miami-Dade County known as Miami Lakes and Carol City—an unincorporated section of the county, to the immediate north of Hialeah—the project's original target area; and
3. The City of Miami Beach—an area of the city called North Beach.

As noted earlier, Miami-Dade's initial project planners hoped that the City of Miami would participate in the project, but the city declined, stating their involvement in several

other gang-related grant projects. Further refinement of the target area occurred later in the project.

During subsequent conversations with the national evaluation team, many of the original planning group reported that JAC arrest data helped the initial identification of potential target areas, and then—based on the crime clusters that emerged from the JAC data—the site obtained crime data from local police departments to confirm the findings from the JAC data.<sup>28</sup>

***Description of the Target Area.*** The target area lies outside of the city of Miami to the northwest and to the east. The total population was 396,471, as of the 2000 Census, with 87,938 youth aged 17 and under (22%). Miami Beach has the lowest percentage of youth (13%), while Carol City has the highest (30%). Sixty-two percent of the population is foreign-born, mostly hailing from Latin America. Youth make up approximately one quarter of the populations of Hialeah and Miami Lakes. Selected demographic data for Hialeah, the Miami Lakes-Carol City area, and Miami Beach in Miami-Dade County are shown in Exhibit 6-7. A map of the Miami area is shown in Exhibit 6-8, with the target area shaded.

---

<sup>28</sup>See page 2-26 for a description of the target area. Need additional information describing the target area, including a map; demographic info; and crime info.

**Exhibit 6-7**

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TARGET AREAS FOR  
MIAMI'S GANG-FREE SCHOOLS PROJECT (2000)**

**Race/Ethnicity**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Youth, Aged 17 and Under</b>	<b>% Hispanic*</b>	<b>% Non- Hispanic White</b>	<b>% Black</b>	<b>% Other</b>	<b>% U.S. Native**</b>	<b>% Foreign Born</b>
<b>Miami Beach</b>	87,933	11,815	53.4	40.9	4.0	4.0	44.5	55.5
<b>Hialeah</b>	226,419	52,017	90.3	8.1	2.9	5.5	27.9	72.1
<b>Carol City</b>	59,443	18,407	42.0	6.4	49.7	1.9	62.8	37.2
<b>Miami Lakes</b>	22,676	5,699	66.5	28.1	2.3	3.1	52.4	47.6

**Education and Employment**

<b>Location</b>	<b>% HS Diploma or Higher</b>	<b>% Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b>	<b>% Over 16 in Labor Force</b>	<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>% Individuals Below Poverty</b>
<b>Miami Beach</b>	78.8	33.5	56.8	\$27,322	21.8
<b>Hialeah</b>	49.8	10.4	50.8	\$29,492	18.6
<b>Carol City</b>	61.0	9.7	58.0	\$38,652	16.5
<b>Miami Lakes</b>	84.9	34.9	70.4	\$61,147	4.9

\* May be of any race.

\*\* Born inside or outside the United States.

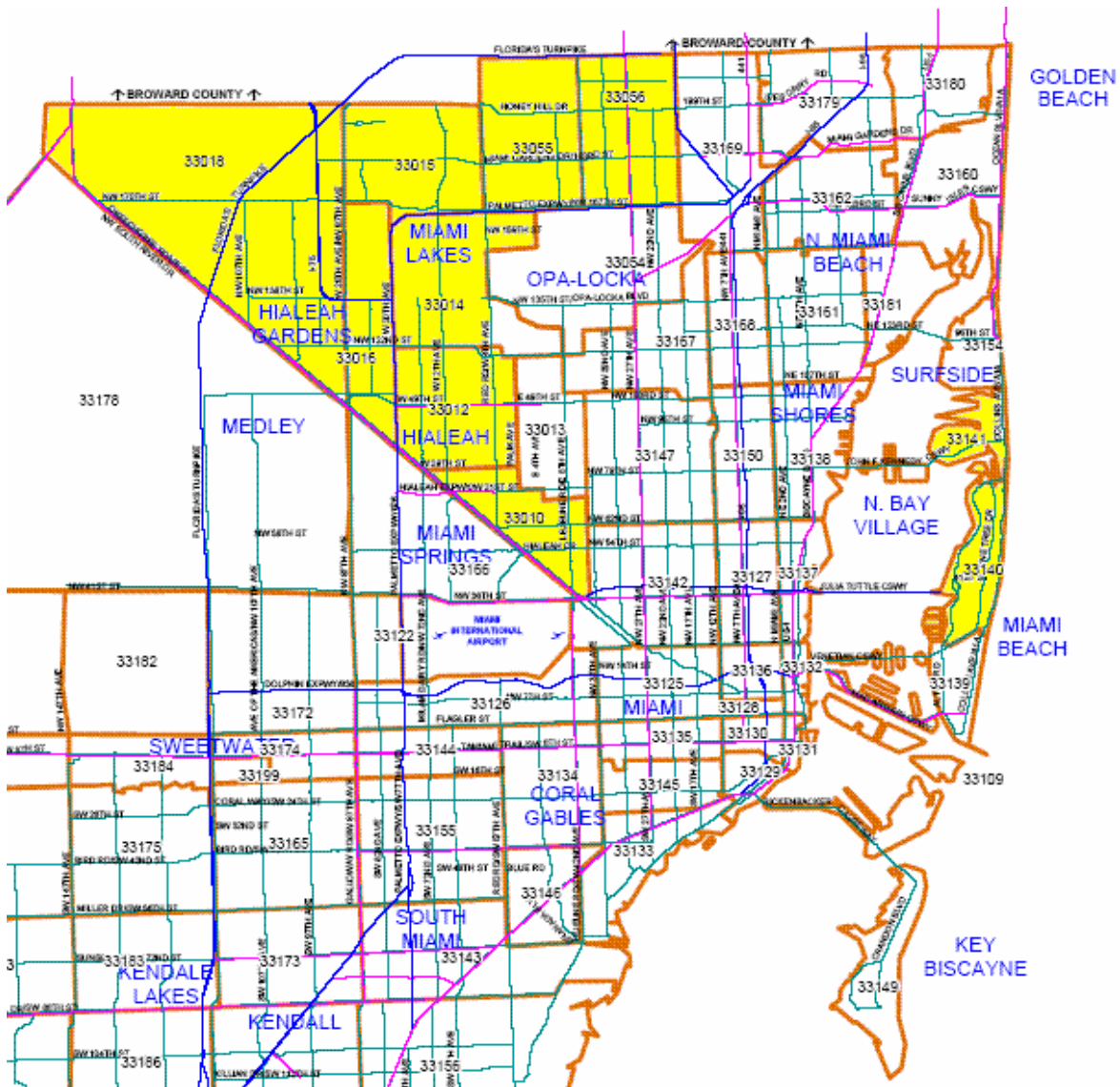
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 data.

*Defining “Gang.”* Before deciding on the “gang” definition that would be used for this project, a representative from the State Attorney’s Office (SAO) briefed the Steering Committee on the definitions in the Florida statutes. (As noted earlier, the statute had been deemed unconstitutional for sentencing purposes.<sup>29</sup>)

<sup>29</sup> A person could be convicted of a gang-related act, but could not be given additional sentencing based on that conviction.

## Exhibit 6-8

### TARGET AREA MAP



The “gang” definition, ultimately approved by the Steering Committee was a modified version of the Florida statute. The research team incorporated the definition into a protocol, which was then used by the four police agencies (Hialeah, Miami Beach, City of Miami, and Miami-Dade County) when they reviewed their crime records for gang-related crimes.

***Defining Problem Statements and Developing Objectives and Project Goals.*** The Steering Committee work group met nine times to review the Assessment Report in detail, identify priority problems, draft problem statements, and create goals and objectives before proceeding with planning activities to accomplish the stated objectives.

***Goals and Objectives.*** The work group sought to define existing gang problems and then develop appropriate goals and objectives to address them. Exhibit 6-9 shows the four problem statements and the accompanying program goals and objectives.

Using the problem statements, goals, and objectives, the implementation team developed an Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan provides a strategy (suppression, organizational change and development, social intervention, opportunities provision, and community mobilization) and detailed activities to address each of the problems.

In addition, they provide a list of barriers and possible solutions. Finally, the plan describes who will be responsible for each activity and further provides timeline for beginning and concluding tasks.

***Collecting Data.*** Miami-Dade collected data in those categories via interviews with community leaders, school staff, gang members, and community residents; focus groups with parents; an inventory of community resources; census and school data compilation; and examination of gang crime and activity data in police records and previously submitted data.

### Exhibit 6-9

#### PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Problem	Goal	Objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steady increase in violent and drug-related gang crime in target area over 3-year period.</li> <li>• 51% increase in violent crime in target area by youth 15-21.</li> <li>• 43% of gang members interviewed during the assessment process stated that they have threatened or attacked a person with a weapon.</li> <li>• Three gang-related homicides in the target area during 2002.</li> <li>• Community residents significantly concerned about drug-related crime.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal 1.1:</b> Identify, track, and reduce gang-related crime within the target area.</p>	<p><b>Objective 1.1.1:</b> Reduce gang-related crimes in the targeted area by 5% the first year and 5% each subsequent year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of unemployment among gang members and lack of comprehensive services (including recreation, substance abuse, mental health, job training, and support services):               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep youth in the target area trapped in the gang lifestyle well into early adulthood, and</li> <li>- Contribute to involvement in criminal activities, including drug dealing.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• High percentage of gang members regularly use and sell illicit drugs.</li> <li>• 67% of gang members interviewed report not employed.</li> <li>• 27% of households received public assistance and non-cash benefits.</li> <li>• Jobs, recreation, and access to school programs listed as significantly impacting individuals' decisions to leave the gang lifestyle.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal 2.1:</b> To recruit gang members into the GFSC Program and provide comprehensive, targeted intervention services</p> <p><b>Goal 2.2:</b> Decrease the use and distribution of drugs and alcohol by target gang members.</p> <p><b>Goal 2.3:</b> Increase school participation, attendance and success for school-aged target youth.</p>	<p><b>Objective 2.1.1:</b> To recruit 60 gang members (40 between ages 13-18 and 20 between ages 19-21) into the GFSC Program by the end of FY 2006 and provide them with comprehensive and targeted intervention services.</p> <p><b>Objective 2.2.2:</b> Assess drug usage by all target youth through use of a drug screen upon entering the GFSC program, reduce drug positive screens by 20% within six months of entry into the program for all target youth.</p> <p><b>Objective 2.3.1:</b> Increase school attendance by 25% for school-aged youth in the target program by the end of FY 2003 as measured by school attendance records.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violent and entrenched gang activity in target area led to increased resident fears and feelings of powerlessness.</li> <li>• Based on community resident surveys, over two-thirds of residents agreed there is a gang problem in the target area.</li> <li>• 57.7% of community residents interviewed felt less safe than they had two years prior.</li> <li>• Residents' top concerns included gangs, drugs, and low police activity.</li> <li>• Residents noted unrealistic community response to gangs: denying the problem and feeling that nothing can be done about it.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal 3.1:</b> Provide community members (including businesses) with current information about gangs and involve them in mobilizing to reduce gang problems in the target area.</p>	<p><b>Objective 3.1.1:</b> GFSC and Community staff will provide at least 4 training sessions (FY 2003) to provide information about gang activity and available resources for gang intervention.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gang problems in and around schools in the target area increasing.</li> <li>• 43% increase in aggravated assaults by gang members in schools in target area, according to school crime data.</li> <li>• 40% of students indicated that there are gangs in school.</li> <li>• Crime data reflect a high percentage of crimes committed in the target area schools.</li> <li>• School faculty emphasized increased gang problem over past academic year.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal 4.1:</b> Decrease gang problems in and around the target area schools.</p>	<p><b>Objective 4.1.1:</b> Reduce disciplinary issues by 25% for school-aged target youth by the end of FY 2003 as measured by school incident reports.</p>

During the Gang-Free Schools national cluster meeting in March 2002, Miami participants met with staff from OJJDP and the National Youth Gang Center to discuss the status of the data collection effort and as a result the participants conceded that a number of problems existed with their data collection efforts, including:

- There were problems with the reported crime data; the Assessment Team had only recently begun to review police records by hand and were planning to reanalyze the data;
- There were large gaps in the school-related data, and a great deal of information had not yet been turned over to the research partners;
- Only a fraction of students (60) from four schools had returned active consent forms signed by their parents to participate in the student surveys; and
- In order to complete the gang interviews, the Project Coordinator had engaged the help of an organization that law enforcement personnel said was a recruiting arm for a major Latino gang.

The site also grappled with other data-related problems:

- *Student Surveys.* The Project Coordinator met with the principals of the schools<sup>30</sup> in the target communities to get their support for the student survey. Some schools did not distribute the consent forms on the assigned date, which delayed survey administration. The research partners conceded that the participating students probably were not representative of the general school population;
- *Parent Focus Groups.* The schools selected parents for the focus groups, which they convened on school grounds. The research team felt that the sample may not have been representative;
- *Gang Crime and Gang Activity.* The research partner believed that the Hialeah and Miami-Dade Police Departments gang data were under-reported, based on the low number of recorded gang crimes. It was felt it was a combination of factors—1) that patrol officers were neglecting to record information on whether suspects

---

<sup>30</sup>It is not clear whether all schools in the target area were included, or only selected schools. Some of those interviewed noted that 16 schools were included, while the research partner's report and other sources identified only 8 schools.

were gang-involved, or crimes were gang-related, or 2) the officers themselves did not have enough experience to identify gang members and gang-related crimes; and

- *Interviews of Gang Members and Their Parents.* The research partner provided graduate students to interview a total of 15 gang members per candidate target area, along with their parents. The research partner offered no stipends or other incentives. Some members of the Assessment Team (particularly police officers) were skeptical about the ability of graduate students to obtain candid information from gang members. The officers argued unsuccessfully that law enforcement personnel should conduct the interviews, participate in them, or train the graduate students doing the interviews. The Project Coordinator selected the 45 gang members to be interviewed from police lists of known gang members. However, the Project Coordinator did not give the police any criteria for selecting gang members. The lone Assessment Team member who was cast as a “community” representative expressed concern about the use of police data to select gang member interviewees, believing that the police were apt to misidentify youth as part of a gang.

At its July 2002 Steering Committee meeting, a representative of the MDSPD reported on the status of the site’s Assessment Report. The research team completed its analysis of the gang crime data provided by the MDPD after manually reviewing additional incident reports. Sections of the Assessment Report that were dependent on the crime data were to be completed after the research team completed its analysis.

### **C. Assessment Report Phase Summary**

At the Steering Committee meeting held on July 2002, the attendees made joint decisions about how to complete the Assessment Report, and agreed to assign staff with decision-making authority to sit on a special Review Board to help determine the final content of the report.

Evidence of institutional change and cross-fertilization exists. The MDSPD changed its computer systems so that an officer was unable to assign a case report number without



first checking a box that indicates whether the incident was gang-related. The MDSPD also has instituted a policy whereby officers are required to send all reports to the Criminal Intelligence Bureau so that they can be reviewed to determine whether the crime involves gang members or is gang-related. The new system eliminated the need for the kind of manual review of police reports that was necessary in this project's assessment phase.

***Gang Violence.*** On July 4, 2002, two gang-related drive-by shootings occurred in north Miami-Dade County that resulted in the death of a 13-year old and injury to seven others. More shocking to police was that no one wanted to come forward because, as reported in the Miami Herald, “[m]ost area residents [are] terrified of retaliation.”<sup>31</sup> It is believed that the shootings were the result of a gang war between two Haitian gangs, Zoe Pound and the Terrorists.<sup>32</sup>

In an incident involving unspecified Haitian gangs during summer 2006, an 18-month-old baby was killed during a drive-by shooting. The following month, his father was arrested in connection with a retaliatory ambush that killed three men and injured a fourth.<sup>33</sup>

Two members of the T.O.Y.S. gang fired on police officers with an AK-47 in November 2006. One was later arrested. The other held police at bay in a standoff at his

---

<sup>31</sup>David Cisneros and David Green, “Shootings Unnerve N. Dade,” *The Miami Herald*, July 6, 2002, page 1B.

<sup>32</sup>David Green and Nick Spangler, “North Miami Officials Plead for Information on Shootings,” *The Miami Herald*, July 9, 2002, page 3B.

<sup>33</sup>“Deadly Ambush Blamed On Escalating Gang Violence: Police Identify Those Killed In Ambush Shooting,” Local 10 News, June 6, 2006.

home with an assault rifle. He died by self-inflicted gunshot. T.O.Y.S. is known for violent robberies.<sup>34</sup>

In January 2007, six members of MS-13 invaded a home and kidnapped two of the residents. They shot one victim and left her to die on a railroad track; she survived. The other victim escaped unharmed.<sup>35</sup>

The MDPD has demonstrated that it has enormous difficulty acquiring intelligence or developing a law enforcement response when residents are fearful of gangs in their neighborhoods.

**Conclusions.** The project's assessment phase had to overcome numerous difficulties and needed key resources for implementation:

- There appeared to be a strong, cohesive Steering Committee that had the resources to implement the project, and its members were willing to provide these resources to the project during implementation;
- Although the Project Coordinator position remained vacant for an extended period, the roles and responsibilities of that position were filled informally by an officer in the school police department;
- This site had a committed research team whose members agreed to prepare the Assessment Report and Implementation Plan. The team continued its work during the implementation phase, and their collaborative working relationship with the Steering Committee's law enforcement partners was an asset during implementation; and
- The law enforcement representative from the MDCPD was committed to the project, and made the institutional changes necessary to collect gang data on an ongoing basis for this project.

---

<sup>34</sup>Dellagloria, Rebecca and David Ovalle, "SWAT Leader: 'This is About as Dangerous as it Gets...'" *The Miami Herald*, November 15, 2006.

<sup>35</sup>"Police Blame Abduction, Shooting on a Gang," *The Miami Herald*, January 18, 2007.

Miami-Dade's major challenge during the assessment phase included securing the involvement of residents, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders in the target community. This constituency had had very little involvement during the assessment period.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN ACTIVITIES**

The Steering Committee was directly involved in the development of the Implementation Plan. Because the Steering Committee was made up of agency heads from large metro organizations serving the entire county, Steering Committee members elected to designate representatives from their agencies to serve as a work group to develop the plan. NYGS delivered training on planning for implementation to the work group, utilizing training materials prepared by the NYGC. Several members of the work group received training on planning for implementation at an OJJDP Implementation Training.

At each stage of development, the progress to date was presented to the Steering Committee, and work group members briefed their agency heads regularly on progress and plans. The work group also acquired the Memorandums of Understanding that commit their agencies to specific tasks and responsibilities related to the project. The approval of the Steering Committee was required on all plans.

***Determining a Target Population.*** Beyond the initial assessment activities, the Implementation Plan needed to determine the primary and secondary target populations.

The primary target population for the project was comprised of two sub-groups: 1) school-aged youth, male and female who were known gang members involved in criminal activity between the ages of 13 and 18; and 2) adult males and females who were known gang members active in crimes in the target area, between the ages of 19 and 21.

**1. School-aged youth, male or female, who are known gang members involved in criminal activity between the ages of 13 and 18 and reside in the target area.**

After two years with no gang-related homicides recorded, four of the 21 homicides committed in MDCPS during 2001 took place in the target area, and all were gang-related. While youth between the ages of 15 to 17 years represent the smallest bracket of the population in the target area, this segment represents the largest group of offenders committing gang-related crimes in the area. Of the aggravated assaults, youth between the ages of 15 and 17 represented the highest number of incidents. Of the simple assaults, this age group was most active, roughly representing half of all incidents in the target area.

**2. Adult males and females who are known gang members active in crimes in the target area, between the ages of 19 and 21 and reside in the target area.**

The MDCPD established a formal database of known gang members in the Northwest Miami-Dade area. The estimated populations of local gangs listed in the Assessment Report approximate gang members to be male and between the ages of 14 and 24 years, with the exception of the 6th Avenue Boyz whose gang members extend beyond 40 years of age. Thirty-two percent of known offenders in the target area represent this age range. When comparing the age of the offender by the year of offense, the 18 to 21-age interval

increases significantly. Twenty-eight percent of youth in this age range committed an offense during 2000, with 40 percent committing an offense in 2001.

The secondary target population for the project includes the family members and siblings of known or suspected gang members from the target area, as well as suspected juvenile gang members with a lesser degree of criminal offending and those who would be classified in Florida Statute 874 as gang associates who reside in the target area.

## **LOGIC MODEL PLANNING PROCESS**

### **A. Logic Model Development Training**

The national evaluation team conducted its first logic model development training for the project in May 2003. The Project Coordinator identified 39 people to be invited to the session (in many cases, as a courtesy without any expectation that they would attend). Training certificates were given to the 15 people who ultimately participated.

Through a combination of training, follow-up conference calls and site visits, the national evaluators used information provided by the sites to develop a detailed program logic model that has served as the template for and summary of the research design. At this initial training, the evaluation team briefed project participants on the use of logic models to identify the underlying theory or logical connections between:

- The youth gang **problem**;

- The programmatic **response** to the problem using the five GFS “strategies” and specific activities to implement each strategy;
- The **expected outcomes** from each activity in terms of immediate, intermediate and long-term changes in GFS youth and participating institutions); and
- The **goal** of reducing youth gang activities and violence in the project’s target area.

The national evaluation team drafted a preliminary logic model outline for the project using information from the site’s Assessment Report and Implementation Plan. This draft served as the starting point for a series of work group exercises designed to accomplish the following:

- To assist the national evaluation team to identify the core activities that were designed to impact the target youth;
- To identify core activities’ reasonable and measurable outcomes in order to gauge the successes and challenges of Miami-Dade’s MPACT project; and
- To identify the data collection tools, methods, and sources of information for the outcome evaluation.

In the course of the group exercises and ensuing discussions, participants began to realize that their Implementation Plan needed additional detail in order to craft a fully developed program logic model. Some of their goals and objectives were deemed unrealistic; the proposed implementation of certain strategies had to be reconsidered in light of resource limitations; and other activities had to be dropped or added.

The chairman of the Steering Committee and the Project Coordinator agreed that an existing work group would meet to consider these issues and recommend changes to the full Steering Committee. Once the Implementation Plan was revised, the national evaluation team scheduled a site visit with a much smaller group of participants. That work group provided the information used in the final logic model. The result was a document containing much more detail than the version used for the initial training. In January 2006, the national evaluation team revisited the logic model with the Project Coordinator and the SOWs to update and revise it as needed to reflect any changes to the implemented and proposed activities.

## **B. Strategies and Activities**

The initial logic model categorized all of the activities under the five key strategies of OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model: 1) Suppression; 2) Organizational Change and Development; 3) Social Interventions; 4) Opportunities Provision; and 5) Community Mobilization. The Steering Committee worked to refine the initial logic model. The final logic model expanded upon the original logic model, detailing activities, revisions, and the status of activities. The revisions to the activities reflect:

1. Changes in personnel;
2. Having a better understanding of the activity or circumstances (e.g., Project MPACT now realizes that youth generally do not reveal that they are in a gang to JAC so JAC did not make as many referrals as anticipated);
3. Changes in policy administration (e.g., JAC now administers some programs previously administered by the SAO);

4. Having a better understanding of policies (e.g., the Miami Job Corps Center did not develop an anger management course as planned because most of the youth have felonies, therefore making them ineligible for Job Corp services);
5. Decreased budgets (e.g., due to budget cuts there are now fewer probation officers to make contacts than originally predicted);
6. Adoption of new processes (e.g., because of the growth of the number of youth enrolled in the program, the Steering Committee revised the review process to be on a rotational basis instead of every 30 days);
7. Having a better understanding of where services should be located and to whom they can be provided (e.g., the Workforce program has no youth application center in the target area and only works with individuals 18 and above, therefore severely limiting the number of youth who participate);
8. Encountering administration or legal issues (e.g., the OJT program is on hiatus until issues with liability insurance and workers compensation can be resolved); and
9. Having greater awareness about the participating schools (e.g., American High School has a very low tolerance for gang members so not many youth were eligible to participate in the tutoring program).

## **ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED**

***Past or Current Gang Violence Reduction Programs.*** At the time of proposal award there were several concurrent gang initiatives in the Miami area. These initiatives are described below.

### **Past Activities**

***Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) Programs.*** MDCPS currently spends over \$30 million annually to ensure safety in its schools. The school district's approach to crime includes prevention, punishment, rehabilitation, security, and also includes the following:



- Its own police agency (the Miami-Dade School Police Department) with 135 police officers;
- Seven police stations, district headquarters, and sub-stations in the six MDCPS administrative regions;
- School resource officers for each middle and senior high school;
- 500 full-time and 300 part-time security monitors;
- A private agency to operate metal detectors in secondary schools;
- 24-hour Crime Hotline (Youth Crime Watch);
- Prevention programs infused into the curricula that include conflict resolution, drug abuse prevention, gun safety, alternative schools, and peer mediation strategies;<sup>36</sup> and
- Participation in D.A.R.E.

***Gang Resistance Education and Treatment (GREAT)***. GREAT is an initiative of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. The program is designed to “help children set goals for themselves, resist pressures, learn how to resolve conflicts without violence, and understand how gangs and youth violence impact the quality of their lives.”<sup>37</sup> In Miami-Dade County, GREAT officers make presentations to 7th and 8th grade students at selected middle schools.<sup>38</sup> Although various Miami police departments participate in the program, initially there was no coordination of efforts between GREAT and Project MPACT. More recently, Project MPACT referred appropriate inquiries to the GREAT program. GREAT continues to offer training to officers of the Hialeah, Miami-Dade,

---

<sup>36</sup>United Way of Miami-Dade County, “The 1999-2000 Children’s Report Card: A Profile of the Status of Children in Miami-Dade County,” 1999.

<sup>37</sup>U.S. Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, <http://www.atf.treas.gov/great/history.htm>.

<sup>38</sup>Miami GFS application, p. 6.

Miami Beach, and Miami Police Departments, who in turn provide training to students of their communities.<sup>39</sup> Over 3,000 students complete the GREAT program every year.<sup>40</sup> In 2005, MDPD received a grant of \$213,425 from the Department of Justice to help combat youth violence and gangs.

***Truancy Intervention Program (TIP).*** TIP is a collaborative effort of the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office (SAO) and the school district for reducing truancy rates. First piloted in 1994 in four elementary schools, there are now 201 elementary schools, 14 middle schools, and 2 high schools participating in TIP. The program was "the largest cooperative effort ever undertaken by the [State Attorney's Office] and MDCPS."<sup>41</sup> It uses the MDCPS database to "flag" students who have missed school more than five times. When flagged, the student attends a mandatory meeting among various parties to reduce future absences. That meeting includes the student, parents or guardians, a representative from the State Attorney's Office, an officer from the MDSPD, school attendance personnel, counselors, and any necessary representatives from local social service agencies. "TIP envisions attendance in school as the beginning, not the end, of the processes needed to provide meaningful and effective intervention that may prevent future delinquency."<sup>42</sup> The program includes educational counseling and a home visit by a social worker. TIP is ongoing, and the school system provides a manual for truancy intervention to teachers.

---

<sup>39</sup>The United States Conference of Mayors: Best Practices Center, *Best Practices of Community Policing in: Gang Intervention and Gang Violence Prevention 2006*, March 15, 2006.

<sup>40</sup>Miami-Dade County, "FY 2005-06 Children and Families Budget and Resource Allocation Report," 2005.

<sup>41</sup>Miami GFS application.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*

The school police department also participates in “truancy sweeps,” a countywide effort conducted periodically throughout the year whereby local law enforcement pick up truant youth and return them to school so that they can be assessed by social workers.<sup>43</sup> Data from United Way of Miami-Dade indicated that school attendance in the county was up: the rate increased from 92.6 percent for the 1992-1993 school year to 93.2 percent in the 1996-1997 school year.<sup>44</sup> Truancy sweeps continue, and MDSPD purchased vehicles to return truant students to school. The school system also activated a truancy hotline for concerned citizens wishing to report truant students throughout the county; the initiative is supported by the Dade Chiefs Association.<sup>45</sup>

***The Multi-Agency Gang Task Force (MAGTF)***. MAGTF’s mission is to: “create a coalition of law enforcement agencies and the community at large, to coordinate a comprehensive program which will result in the prevention, control, and reduction of youth gangs.”<sup>46</sup> MAGTF operates out of the MDPD. The group organizes monthly directed patrols in areas with high gang concentrations in Miami-Dade County, Broward County, and Palm Beach County. MAGTF formed in 1996 after a 1993 grand jury report first raised alarm about the gangs in Broward County. One of its major accomplishments involved a three-year investigation that led to the incarceration of 70 members of the Latin Kings.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup>Miami-Dade School Police Department, <http://www.dade.k12.fl.us/police/programs.htm>.

<sup>44</sup>United Way of Miami-Dade, “The 1999-2000 Children’s Report Card: A Profile of the Status of Children in Miami-Dade County,” (p. 125), 1999.

<sup>45</sup>Miami-Dade Public School District, “Truancy Hotline 305-371-SKIP,” no date, <http://www2.dadeschools.net/features/truancy/truancy.htm>.

<sup>46</sup>“Palm Beach County Multi-Agency Gang Task Force ‘MAGTF’” and “Together Against Gangs”, <http://www.publicrelations.nu.tag/mission/html>.

<sup>47</sup>Rhor, Monica, “Crackdown on Gangs Effective...For Now,” *The Miami Herald*, October 7, 2001.

***The Gang Strike Force.*** The Gang Strike Force operates out of the Gang Prosecution Unit in the State Attorney's Office (SAO), and two Assistant State Attorneys direct the effort. The Gang Strike Force includes a specialized group of detectives from the following police departments: Coral Gables Police, Miami Police, Miami Beach Police, Miami-Dade County Police, Hialeah Police, and the Miami-Dade County School Police. The strike force partnership includes partners from among these law enforcement agencies, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Florida Department of Corrections (Probation division), and the U.S. Department of Immigration and Naturalization Services. The strike force targets gangs for proactive investigation. Investigations are aimed at eliminating entire gangs in one arrest sweep and a single RICO-focused indictment. The strike force prosecutes cases using provisions of the Criminal Street Gang Act of 1996, Chapter 847 of the Florida Statutes and the RICO statute.<sup>48</sup> In 2001, the Gang Strike Force added a special unit targeting gangs with Caribbean roots, the Caribbean Basin Violent Crimes Enforcement Group. The strike force remains active in the investigation of gang activity, however MDPD is the only remaining law enforcement agency within the strike force due to staffing issues that caused other agencies to remove their members.<sup>49</sup> In June 2006, members of the task force were on hand at the arrest of gunmen who ambushed and murdered three people in broad daylight. The men were suspected of being part of a Haitian gang and of taking part in a string of gang-related shootings in North Miami.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup>The Florida State Attorney's Office, <http://www.myflorida.com/sa11/overview.htm>.

<sup>49</sup>Alfonso, Hector, "Strategic Assessment of Gang Enforcement in Miami-Dade County," Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Law Enforcement Analyst Academy Class, 2003.

<sup>50</sup>Ovalle, David, "Police Probe Gang Links," *The Miami Herald*, June 7, 2006.

*Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC).* The Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC), an innovative program pioneered in the state of Florida during the early 1990s, is “designed as a full-service entry point” for any juvenile who is picked up by either the county police or officers from more than 30 cities and municipalities in Miami-Dade County.<sup>51</sup> JAC staff complete a full intake (including fingerprinting) and an assessment of the child’s needs, including substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, and other services. There are now 19 JACs located in 16 special JAC districts across the state.<sup>52</sup>

The Miami JAC opened in January 1997 as a community partnership under the leadership of the MDPD. In other parts of the country, social service agencies generally administer JACs. According to Miami’s application, the Miami JAC is unique in part because it “processes a complete arrest population in an established geographic area” and it is the only JAC in the country that has an integrated, systemwide information system and database.”<sup>53</sup> The Information Resource Center is a data warehouse developed jointly for the JAC by MDPD and IBM. The data warehouse contains data on over 98,000 arrests and allows access to information on the population with a specification that no other community in the United States has. The JAC includes representatives from the Public Defender’s Office, the State Attorney’s Office, social service agencies, and the school board.

---

<sup>51</sup>Miami-Dade County Clerk’s Office, “Frequently Asked Questions: Juvenile Court,” <http://www.metrodade.com/clerk>.

<sup>52</sup>Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, “First Stop: Juvenile Assessment Center,” <http://www.djj.state.fl.us>.

<sup>53</sup> Miami GFS application.

During its first year, the JAC defined new procedures to process youth. Previously, it took up to six weeks to process a non-detainable juvenile offender. Due to JAC's revision in procedures the process now takes two hours. Police officers, formerly spending approximately six hours processing juveniles are in and out of JAC in about 15 minutes. The JAC successfully identifies, classifies, and refers juvenile cases. The county government recognized its usefulness and now appropriates funds for its continuation.

In 1999, the Miami JAC received a \$3 million grant from the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office at the U.S. Department of Justice to conduct a national demonstration project. The initiative collected more detailed information about the county's criminal youth population. The work ultimately led to the replacement of the JAC's current database with "Rite Track," a system that allows for collection of even more detailed information about juveniles who enter the system. The system runs sophisticated queries that enable the JAC to identify trends in juvenile crime and service needs. Because it includes several fields about gang membership and gang-related activity, Rite Track allows Miami to separate gang crimes from all other juvenile crimes.

In 2002, the Miami JAC received a second grant of \$1 million to continue the work of the national demonstration project and to undertake additional research. One project will focus on identifying and assessing the needs of three specific at risk populations:

1. Young girls, who commit 23 percent of crimes but do not receive a corresponding portion of service dollars;
2. Haitian youth, who account for 9 percent of all juvenile arrests; and

3. The younger siblings of youth who are already part of the Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program (SHOCAP, described below).<sup>54</sup>

JAC's Post-Arrest Diversion (PAD) program aims to keep first-time offenders arrested for minor crimes from being rearrested. PAD addresses personal and family issues and works with the juvenile offenders to keep them from returning. When a youth completes the program, he or she has the opportunity to erase the arrest record.<sup>55</sup>

From its beginning in October 1997 through December 31, 2006, JAC served over 120,000 arrested youths.<sup>56</sup> JAC became an independent county department in 2002. In 2003, JAC partnered with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to help reduce substance abuse among adolescents.<sup>57</sup> Other recent JAC accomplishments and activities include:

- Highlighted in President's National Drug Control Strategy, March 2004, as one of only 5 local programs. While the JAC is an arrest processing facility, it was recognized for "Intervening Early;"
- The JAC was selected to participate in The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) 25 Cities Project to pilot new and innovative methods at addressing substance abuse through a partnership with Informed Families to provide parent training along with the Post Arrest Diversion Program to prevent re-arrest;
- The JAC participates in the Federal Gang Reduction Program to reduce and prevent gang membership in the Haitian community in partnership with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice and the North Miami Beach Police Department;

---

<sup>54</sup>COSMOS site visit interviews and follow-up telephone interviews that were conducted in October 2001. See also the Miami GFS application, page 2.

<sup>55</sup>United Way of Miami-Dade, "An Impact Area Brief (2006): Youth," 2006.

<sup>56</sup>Miami-Dade Juvenile Services Department, <http://www.miamidade.gov/jac>, no date, retrieved August 2007.

<sup>57</sup>Miami-Dade, "Juvenile Assessment: About Us," no date, <http://www.miamidade.gov/JAC/about.asp>.

- The JAC will implement a new research-based initiative to continue to impact recidivism by developing a new protocol to serve young offenders (12 years old and under) which emerged as a local, state, and national issue. To address this serious issue, a special pilot effort will begin applying research-proven assessment and case management protocols in partnership with the JAC, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice and US DOJ Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention. This pilot is intended to develop a model for serving this population that will be implemented statewide and nationally; and
- The JAC has documented the increasing number of girls arrested each year and in recognition of the special needs of girls, a Girls Advisory Group of local stakeholders has been formed and meets regularly to identify data trends with girls' arrest trends, appropriate services for girls and funding opportunities. Specialized training for system stakeholders and providers was conducted by a national expert, funded by the JAC's NDP to raise the skill level of staff in the entire community and how they serve female offenders. The JAC will use its National Demonstration Project to evaluate the local Girls Advocacy Program, the only program serving detained girls in the State of Florida and thereby establish a model for replication statewide.<sup>58</sup>

***Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program (SHOCAP) and Serious Habitual Offender Tracking (SHOT) Program.*** SHOCAP is an OJJDP-funded, interagency program in communities throughout the nation. The Florida SHOCAP program commenced in the mid-1990s. SHOCAP's underlying premise—supported by extensive research—states that a very small number of juveniles are responsible for a large percentage of juvenile crime, and that by targeting these youth and providing them with services, juvenile criminal activity will be reduced.

[SHOCAP attempts to] arrest the worst of the worst...and [put] them in secure detention, [and then provide] help and diversion and aftercare services to children that can

---

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.



benefit from it.<sup>59</sup> Offenders become part of SHOCAP once they accumulate one felony adjudication and 21 “arrest points” (points are assigned based on the nature of the offense).

SHOCAP uses a networked approach wherein schools, law enforcement, courts, social service agencies, the state’s Department of Juvenile Justice, and prosecutors work together to respond in the most appropriate fashion to each juvenile’s case. Police officers play a critical role in SHOCAP: they not only arrest offenders, they also are charged with monitoring serious habitual offenders (SHOs), testifying about their cases in court proceedings, and interacting with family members and service providers. SHOs also receive academic instruction, substance abuse treatment, anger management training, and whatever services are indicated based on the juvenile’s assessment profile.

SHOCAP presumes that a community has the resources to provide the kind of intensive tracking and follow-up that are crucial to reducing criminal acts by these high-risk offenders.

However, in Miami-Dade County only five officers track about 1,200 SHOs. With such high caseloads, they replaced SHOCAP with the Serious Habitual Offender Tracking (SHOT) program, and under SHOT, the role of police officers has primarily been limited to carrying out arrests for outstanding warrants.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup>FDLE SHOCAP Videotape, OJJDP, 1995. Video included interviews with police officers from Miami-Dade County.

<sup>60</sup>COSMOS interviews with SHOT officers that were conducted in October 2001.

The benefits of SHOCAP have varied among Florida's communities, but overall they have included:

- Enhanced communication between agencies;
- Efficient utilization of existing resources;
- Effective handling of serious habitual offenders;
- Reduced juvenile crime; and
- Increased public safety.<sup>61</sup>

***Gang Reduction Activities and Sports Program (GRASP).*** GRASP is a Miami City Police Department program that attempts to divert at-risk youth from becoming involved in gangs. GRASP outreach workers recruit youth identified as susceptible to gang involvement and paired with a police officer. After a two-day exercise to build trust and facilitate bonding between the two, youth take part in a range of recreational and education activities. In addition, they receive case management services, tattoo removal, field trips, and wilderness camping training. There also is a program evaluation component.<sup>62</sup>

***Miami-Dade Police Department's "Join a Team, Not a Gang" Program.*** The "Join a Team, Not a Gang" program, in existence since 1987, is a collaboration among the Police Athletic League of the MDPD, the MDCPS, the University of Miami Athletic Department, and Florida Power and Light Company. It targets 5th grade students "through presentations by the police that provide information on nearby gangs and gang

---

<sup>61</sup>FDLE SHOCAP Videotape, OJJDP, 1995.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

activity, negative consequences of gang membership, and alternative activities.”<sup>63</sup> In addition, 5th graders are periodically taken to University of Miami sporting events and given “Join a Team, Not a Gang” t-shirts. Another part of this program is the “Most Improved Student Award,” given to the student who shows the most improvement in academics, behavior, and attendance. Two students are selected from each participating school, and a total of 40 students receive awards annually. The objectives of the program include: “to increase the awareness of students about the dangers and risks of joining a gang; to increase the awareness of students about the available alternatives to gang involvement; to develop positive relationships between police officers and students; [to] provide positive role models for students; [and] to reward students for improved academics, behavior, and attendance.”<sup>64</sup> The program reaches approximately 17,000 children in more than 100 schools.<sup>65</sup>

In 2004, the OJJDP established the Gang Reduction Program at four sites, including North Miami Beach, which focuses more heavily on prevention.

PanZOu, in North Miami Beach, concentrates on the reduction of gang violence through prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry, specifically targeting Haitian youth and their families. *Panzou* is a Creole word meaning “to reclaim or take back.” Involvement in the program may be voluntary or court-ordered; some youth are involved in gangs, while others are at-risk. PanZOu’s programs teach leadership skills to girls, keep suspended students off the street, encourage students who have been suspended to

---

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Miami-Dade County, “FY 2005-06 Children and Families Budget and Resource Allocation Report,” 2005.

complete their schoolwork and learn skills in leadership and conflict resolution, and return truant students to school. Family programs are offered in neighborhood resource centers, and the project provides the North Miami Beach Police Department with approximately \$300 thousand annually to bolster patrols in high-crime areas.<sup>66</sup>

In 2004, the Alliance for Human Services received funds from the Dade-Miami Criminal Justice Council for a three-year Gang Prevention Initiative (2004-2007). Three programs came out of the initiative: the Youth Gang Hotline, the Gang Unit Exit Strategy Service (GUESS), and the Youth Gang Resource Center.

The Youth Gang Hotline, a grantee of the Switchboard of Miami, a nonprofit multiservice agency, provides assistance to youth, their families, and community members, providing information and referrals to help keep youth out of gangs or to help them leave. The Switchboard maintains a database of gang-related information and provides training for personnel who assist hotline callers.

GUESS is a grantee of the Children's Psychiatric Center, which provides mental health services to children and their families. GUESS provides support to youth and their families as the youth exit gangs and break gang affiliations. Participants and their families

---

<sup>66</sup>City of North Miami Beach, "PanZOu Project," [http://www.citynmb.com/index.asp?Type=B\\_BASIC&SEC=%7B0529EE51-6CFD-4AA4-9420-29882A68AFD1%7D](http://www.citynmb.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC=%7B0529EE51-6CFD-4AA4-9420-29882A68AFD1%7D), retrieved August 2007.

are offered services for approximately three months. Case management, in-home therapy, tattoo removal, and relocation assistance are among the services offered.<sup>67</sup>

The Youth Gang Resource Center is another outreach activity of the Children's Psychiatric Center, Inc. and a partner with JAC. The center provides information services to families and the community, referrals, gang awareness education, support to law enforcement and the community, and training for youth workers and social service.<sup>68</sup>

### **Current Activities**

***Targeted Surveillance, Gang Sweeps, and Target Area Patrols.*** Project MPACT implemented multiple suppression activities in the target area. Using intelligence gathered from a wide range of sources, police officers conducted targeted surveillance and monitoring of selected gang members. MAGTF also carried out gang sweeps in the target area (mostly occurring in 2006), resulting in some arrests. MDPD and MDCPS led both covert and overt police patrols in the target area to coincide with high-gang offending patterns (time of day, day of the week, etc.). MDPD and MDCPS received training on gang identification and learned to use gang incident forms and fill out field interview cards.

***Coordination with other Agencies.*** Project MPACT worked with local and state agencies to implement some of their activities. For example, they held discussions with the State Attorney's Office (SAO) and they agreed that the SAO would recommend

---

<sup>67</sup>The Thurston Group, *Youth Gang Prevention Programs: Year 2 Final Evaluation Reports (July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006)*, North Miami, FL, 2006.

<sup>68</sup>Youth Gang Resource Center, <http://www.ygcenter.org>, last updated November 2005.

diversion for GFS youth who are first-time offenders. Diversion options included JAC's Post-Arrest Diversion Program (MPACT also worked with JAC directly on this activity), the Department of Juvenile Justice's Community Control Program and Juvenile Alternative Services Program, Community Arbitration, Teen Court, or other non-judicial programs. Project MPACT worked with juvenile and adult probation departments to get them to refer offenders to Project MPACT.

***On-the Job Training.*** Project MPACT received a grant for the Office of Economic Development to administer an on-the-job training program focused on developing carpentry skills. The participating youths completed classroom training modules prior to going to work on the job site. Youths received a \$250 bonus for completing the training and once on the job received minimum wage. The South Florida Workforce agreed to provide referrals to social service agencies to reduce the barriers to employment (note that they never opened an office in the target area and only served individuals 18 and older). The South Florida Workforce Carol City One-Stop Center provided employment services to out-of-school youth, including job listings, referrals, resume writing tools, and interview and job preparation. They also offered GED study, classes, and materials to out-of-school youth. The Miami Job Corps Center committed to providing employment screening, job training, internships, placement, and GED services for youth. The Children's Psychiatric Center (CPC) offered a math tutoring to Project MPACT youth.

***Anger Management Classes and other Mental Health Services.*** CPC provided anger management classes to youth referred to the program. CPC also provided mental

health counseling to youth on an as-needed basis. Miami Bridge agreed to provide on-site counseling and education services for youth and families and emergency shelter to youths experiencing a crisis.

***Trainings.*** Project MPACT provided training on gang and served as a resource to schools and the community for information about gangs. For example they conducted gang awareness training at target schools and target area community venues.

***Athletic Activities.*** One outreach worker started a football program for at-risk youth in the target area. Some of the Project MPACT youth enrolled in the program.

## **ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE**

### **A. The Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee was composed of key agencies providing services throughout metropolitan Miami-Dade County, with a focus in the Northwest Metro Dade target area. The Steering Committee also had representatives from faith-based organizations, community groups, community residents, and small grass-roots social services and youth-serving agencies located in the target area. The committee provided oversight to the project and tried to ensure that the five core strategies of the model were implemented by the project in the target area. In the initial states of implementation, the Steering Committee made decisions regarding project personnel, allocation of funding, work made decisions in regards to project management and facilitated organizational

change and development as required in their own agencies to meet the goals and objectives of the project. The Steering Committee, as a collective body, held participating agencies accountable for fulfilling their stated commitments to the project. The Steering Committee met on a monthly basis to manage the project.

As the project advanced, the Steering Committee continually assessed project priorities and objectives, and developed new strategies as needed to address issues brought forward by the Intervention Team and project personnel. They also identified future funding opportunities and methods for facilitating sustainability of the project beyond 2006.

The first official Steering Committee meeting convened on October 15, 2001.<sup>69</sup> Initially, the Steering Committee experienced difficulty in getting members to volunteer for the chair and vice-chair positions, with one of the main concerns being the time commitment that would be required. The group ultimately decided, by consensus,<sup>70</sup> that the positions would be filled on an interim basis by the Assistant Director of Investigative Services for the MDPD (interim chair) and the new chief of the Miami Beach Police Department (vice chair *in absentia*). These appointments eventually became permanent. The school police chief strongly supported the choice of the two representatives, who knew both officials and felt they would foster an effective working relationship with his agency.

---

<sup>69</sup>A Steering Committee meeting was held in June 2001, but the meeting focused on orientation to the GFS project. The October 2001 meeting was the first to deal with the official business of the Steering Committee.

<sup>70</sup>The group has put some issues to a vote, using Robert's Rules of Order.



Also during this meeting, the Steering Committee discussed the adoption of bylaws and narrowing the target area options down to three choices (see further discussion of this in *Selection of the Target Area*). The Steering Committee approved adopting the sample bylaws included in the NYGC's Assessment Manual, with the understanding that modifications could be made at a later date. The Steering Committee established a subcommittee to study the bylaws, but the group never materialized. One person noted that Miami's membership did not include most of the constituencies recommended in the bylaws.<sup>71</sup>

During the initial Steering Committee meetings it is not clear whether minutes were taken for the meetings, or even that the responsibility was assigned to a particular individual. As the Steering Committee became more organized, a Project MPACT staff person developed agendas prior to each meeting, kept meeting minutes, and summarized the discussion.

***Project Goals.*** The Steering Committee also developed a set of overarching goals for the project. During the initial national evaluation site visits, the project goals listed by Steering Committee members ranged from very general statements (for example, reducing gang violence in schools and communities) to more sophisticated plans to develop cross-institutional, coordinated systems to provide services to gang-involved youth. The Steering Committee developed a set of goals that were included in the Implementation Plan. As a group, the site's law enforcement officers were the least likely to discuss

---

<sup>71</sup>National Youth Gang Center, *Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem*, Chapter 4, Exhibit 4.1, page 24.

overall program goals, although they clearly felt that Miami's gang problem could not be solved through policing efforts alone.

From the start, Project MPACT was concerned that including community members or others from prospective target communities during the assessment phase could backfire: with such a diverse population, community representatives involved during the early stages might be disappointed if their communities did not get selected for the implementation phase. To avoid such an outcome they limited Steering Committee membership to those from larger organizations and institutions with a countywide outreach. The project would add residents, community-based organizations, businesses, faith institutions, school principals, and others once they made a final decision on where to implement the project.

As a result, the Steering Committee has several representatives from law enforcement and the school system.<sup>72</sup> One Steering Committee member became the "community representative" by default: she served as an outreach worker for a nonprofit social service agency, and lived in a neighborhood that had some of the same problems as the communities that were prospective target areas at the start of the project. As Project MPACT predicted, this member was angered when she learned that neither the area that she lived in, nor the one she worked in were selected as target areas. She also felt dissatisfied with the Steering Committee's explanation—that her communities (which had large African American populations) were ineligible because their problems stemmed primarily from "drug dealers" and not "gang members."

---

<sup>72</sup>Based on the agenda from the October 15, 2001 Steering Committee Meeting. Chart includes individuals listed as "resource persons", such as the grant manager and research partner.

One important feature of the Steering Committee was that agency directors, rather than subordinates, were to attend the meetings, which was a measure of their commitment to the program. Later, the Steering Committee would revisit this issue deciding that it needed “the implementers” and “the doers” at the table.

Since 2001, the type of organizations participating in the Steering Committee had changed. The Steering Committee started with a small group during the planning and assessment phase, which was primarily composed of representatives from the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County School Board, county and local police departments, a juvenile justice organization, and the research partners from the University of Miami (see Exhibit 6-10). As the project evolved over the years, so did the Steering Committee membership. By 2005, Miami’s Steering Committee consisted of myriad representatives from various schools within the Miami-Dade County Public Schools as well as representatives from the Miami-Dade County Schools Police Department, the Miami-Dade County Police Department, the Office of the State Attorney, state and local government agencies, juvenile justice and law enforcement agencies, community groups, employment agencies, and mental health organizations. This evolution was indicative of the ongoing maturation and growth of the entity as it changed to meet the projects needs.

## **B. The Project Coordinator, Street Outreach Workers, and Research Partner**

*Project Coordinator.* The Project Coordinator served as the administrator for the project, oversaw the day-to-day activities of the project, and reported directly to the

**Exhibit 6-10**

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP -  
PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION REPRESENTED</b>	<b>COMMENTS (if applicable)</b>
2001	Miami-Dade County School Board	Assessment Phase/Report
	Miami-Dade County Police Department	Assessment Phase/Report
	University of Miami	Research Partners – Data Collection for Assessment and Planning
	Miami Beach Police Department	Assessment Phase/Report
	Juvenile Assessment Center	Assessment Phase/Report
	City of Miami	Assessment Phase/Report
	2002	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
	Miami-Dade County Schools Police Department	
	University of Miami	
	Miami Beach Police Department	Following the May 2002 meeting, the Miami Beach PD declined representation on the Steering Committee due to the crime statistics reported in the Assessment Report. They no longer participated in the Steering Committee from that point forward.
	Juvenile Assessment Center	
	Department of Children and Families	Attended meetings in February and May 2002
	Department of Corrections	
	Alliance for Human Services	Attended the May 2002 meeting
	Switchboard of Miami	
	Children’s Psychiatric Center	
2002	Office of the State Attorney	
	Dade County Council PTA/PTSA	
	Miami Job Corps Center	
	Miami Bridge Youth and Family Services	
	Department of Juvenile Justice	
	Family Christian Association of America	
	South Florida Work Force	
	Youth Crime Watch	
	YMCA	Attended the November 2002 meeting
	Center for Family Child Enrichment	Attended the November 2002 meeting
2003	Juvenile Assessment Center	Anthony Cos – Steering Committee Chair
	Dade County Council PTA/PTSA	Dannie McMillon – Co-Chair
	Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) – Student Services	
	MDCPS – Principals from Carol City High, Miami Lakes Ed. Ctr., Lake Stevens Middle, American Senior High	
	Youth Crime Watch	
	Office of the State Attorney	
	Juvenile Assessment Center	
	Probation and Parole	
	Citrus Health Network	
	Citizen’s Crime Watch	
	Switchboard of Miami	
	Miami Job Corps Center	
	Miami Bridge Youth & Family Services	
	Miami-Dade County Schools Police Department	
	Miami-Dade County Police Department	

YEAR	ORGANIZATION REPRESENTED	COMMENTS (if applicable)
	Family Christian Association of America	Did not attend any meetings
	Bethel Full Gospel Baptist Church	Did not attend any meetings
	Center for Family and Child Enrichment	
	Department of Corrections	
	Children's Psychiatric Center	
	Jackson North Community Mental Health Center (CMHC)	
	Counseling on Educational Consulting	Research Partners - Drs. Marcel Castro and James Pann had been working as the research partners since the planning and implementation phase in 2001. They were associated with the University of Miami prior to working for Counseling on Educational Consulting.
2004	Office of the State Attorney	Chadd Lackey - Chairperson
	Miami-Dade County Schools Police Department	Maj. John Hunkiar – Co-Chair
	Juvenile Assessment Center	
	Project MPACT/MDSPD	Renee Parker – Project Coordinator
	Dade County Council PTA/PTSA	
	Probation and Parole	
	Department of Juvenile Justice	
	MDCPS – Principals of Lake Stevens Middle, Mac Arthur High, and Principal and Asst. Principals for American Senior High	
	Youth Crime Watch	
	Miami Job Corps, Inc.	
	Miami Bridge Family Youth and Family Services	
	South Florida Work Force	
	Miami-Dade County Schools Police Department	
	Miami-Dade County Police Department	
	Counseling on Educational Consulting	Research Partner – Drs. Marcelo Castro and James Pann
	Jackson North CMHC	
	Switchboard of Miami	
2005	Office of the State Attorney	Chadd Lackey – Chairperson (resigned at the July 2005 meeting)
	Miami-Dade County Schools Police Department	Major Hunkiar – New Chairperson
	Project MPACT/MDSPD	Renee Parker – Project Coordinator
	Juvenile Assessment Center	
	South Florida Work Force	
	Miami-Dade County Police Department	
	Department of Juvenile Justice	
	Jackson north CMHC	
	Counseling on Educational Consulting	Research Partner
	Miami-Dade County Public Schools	In September 2005, letters were sent to the new principals in the target schools with invitations to attend the Steering Committee meetings

Note: The national evaluation team made repeated requests for a list of Steering Committee members for 2006, and the Project Coordinator never responded to the request.

Steering Committee, which had oversight of the project. The coordinator's responsibilities included:

- Coordinating the Intervention Team meetings;
- Working with Steering Committee agencies to facilitate policy changes needed to assist the Intervention Team members in their work with the target gang members;
- Supervising the street outreach workers;
- Serving as the staff coordinator to the Steering Committee;
- Preparing progress reports to OJJDP and the national evaluation team;
- Working with the research partner on ongoing data collection activities; and
- Serving as the public “face” for the project to introduce community members and organizations to the project and facilitate ongoing collaboration and cooperation.

The Project Coordinator also served as a bridge between OJJDP, NYGC, national evaluation team, and the project, facilitating technical assistance as needed and responding to requests for project specific tasks.

When Project MPACT representatives arrived at the April 2001 Cluster Meeting in Mesa, AZ, they had initially decided that a sergeant from the Miami-Dade School Police Department would fill the Project Coordinator’s position once the grant was funded. The Steering Committee believed that he could handle this job, while continuing with his other duties as a school police sergeant and union representative. However, OJJDP staff at the meeting made clear that the scope of work during the assessment phase would require a full-time person. The position was filled in early summer 2001 by a candidate with extensive ties to the law enforcement community, a former deputy commander with the Sunnyvale, Florida Police Department<sup>73</sup> who also had worked with the Florida Association

---

<sup>73</sup>Murray had been hired by Sunnyvale to help the city formally incorporate as a legal entity. The city’s new police department eventually hired her as a deputy commander.

of Chiefs of Police. Accounts conflicted of how long the Steering Committee expected her to serve as Project Coordinator—through the assessment phase or through the implementation phase.<sup>74</sup>

During the national evaluation team's second site visit in February 2002, the project's Steering Committee had decided to seek new applicants for the Project Coordinator position. A job description was developed that was expected to meet school board approval at its March 2002 meeting, with interviews to ensue within a few weeks, and the position filled by late March or early April. The officer who worked initially on the project decided not to apply because he felt that having a sworn officer head the initiative would pose conflicts of interest.

The process of selecting a coordinator for the assessment phase of the project illuminated some of the underlying conflict within the Steering Committee. Law enforcement officials and representatives who supported the current coordinator's continued tenure believed the Steering Committee should have the final authority to hire her. However, school system officials and members of the research team who wanted to replace the coordinator believed that, as the formal grantee, the school system and the school board were the only authorities to make this decision. After the February 2002 Steering Committee, the parties contacted the National Youth Gang Center and OJJDP to clarify this issue. As a result, representatives from the National Youth Gang Center and

---

<sup>74</sup>Staff from OJJDP and the National Youth Gang Center reported that grant manager Anita Sandler expressed interest in the Project Coordinator position; but she had been dissuaded from pursuing the post, because her other responsibilities might prevent her from working on GFS full time. Ms. Sandler is now taking a leave of absence from her job in order to run for a seat on the school board.

OJJDP met with the project's key planners and stakeholders to go over the expectations of the Project Coordinator and the tasks to be completed for the remainder of the assessment phase and during project implementation.

In addition, the representatives from the participating police departments—Miami Beach, Hialeah and Miami-Dade County—shared the impression that their agencies would equally distribute project funds to be allocated for law enforcement activities during the program's implementation phase. These representatives ultimately learned that the selection of the target area would be determined by the findings from the assessment process. After the research team's preliminary findings suggested that most of the gang-related crime was not centered in Hialeah or Miami Beach, those two police departments withdrew from Project MPACT. This left the unincorporated section of Northern Dade County as the target area for the project.

As a result of these misunderstandings, and with a better appreciation of expectations of the Project Coordinator, the Steering Committee did not renew the Project Coordinator's contract. The site's planners began a search for a new coordinator to lead the project through the implementation phase. They used an existing job description that already had met school board approval, even if it attracted candidates who were not qualified for the position.<sup>75</sup> Miami offered the coordinator's job to an individual with no prior ties with the Miami-Dade school district. The new coordinator began in late August 2002.

---

<sup>75</sup>The red tape involved in hiring staff through the school district is exemplified by the fact that Miami originally planned to have a new Project Coordinator on board in mid-May 2002 (Michelle Arciaga, "Miami Contact Memo," electronic mail dated April 1, 2002); then in mid-June (Ian Moffett, "Coordinator Position,"



***Project Secretary and Street Outreach Workers.*** Project MPACT's staff also included a project secretary and outreach workers. The project secretary held responsibility for the majority of the project's administrative functions including preparing meeting agendas, taking meeting minutes, coordinating meetings, providing office management, and submitting the MIS tracking data to the national evaluation team. Presently, Project MPACT employs three street outreach workers. Previously, the project had two other Street Outreach Workers. Their primary responsibilities included:

- Meeting with clients' family members to identify service needs such as anger management, psychological counseling, substance abuse, job training, job placement, and financial support;
- Documenting contacts with clients and family members;
- Making presentations and meeting with school personnel; and
- Attending Intervention Team meetings and providing updates on clients.

The Street Outreach Workers were not intended to be professional or clinical service providers, but rather to reach out to the target population and link them to services available in the community and to mainstream institutions of which they may be skeptical or intimidated. The Street Outreach Workers helped gang-involved youth by advocating on their behalf, ensuring they had access to services and opportunities, and acting as their link to community institutions. Their specific goals were to reach out to gang-involved youth in the target area and recruit and retain them in the project by providing access to resources, pro-social role modeling, and encouragement. The Street Outreach Workers

---

electronic mail dated May 3, 2002); then early August (Ian Moffett, June 14, 2002 telephone call to COSMOS).

received training from the NYGC to ensure understanding of the project and the importance of their role as the main source of contact for intervention strategies.

***Research Partner.*** The University of Miami served as the project's first research partner. After the departure of the first Project Coordinator and the University of Miami, the school police representative stepped set up the gang crime record review process. Over 16,000 crime records were reviewed manually by police officers to identify gang-related crimes, and this information was used to designate the candidate target neighborhoods. The project then hired a research partner from the University of Miami in Counseling and Educational Consulting. He organized and collected much of the assessment data. At the outset, he recognized the problem of developing an ongoing mechanism or procedure for collecting gang crime data in Miami-Dade County. He was responsible for performing routine data analysis and collection, assisting participating agencies with issues related to data collection and analysis as part of the ongoing assessment process. He also served as the local contact to keep the project focused on the strategies of the Comprehensive Gang Model. He assisted in development of any information systems used to track both targeted youth receiving services, ongoing crime incident reporting, crime analysis used to facilitate law enforcement responses to gangs in the target area, and other data analysis as required by the project for either service delivery or reporting requirements.

### **C. Intervention Team**

The Intervention Team was formed to meet on a weekly basis to address current issues and review the case management plans for enrolled clients. The Intervention Team is composed of representatives from the following agencies:

1. Miami-Dade County Police Gang Task Force;
2. Juvenile Assessment Center;
3. Miami-Dade County Public Schools Student Services Representative;
4. Miami-Dade County Public Schools Police (SRO)/GIU;
5. Florida Department of Juvenile Justice;
6. Department of Children and Families; and
7. Department of Prevention Services (JASP).

The Intervention Team met on a weekly basis to manage cases of the target youth participating in the project and to develop an intervention plan for each youth.

Intervention Team members screen referrals to the program and interact with target youth during the performance of their routine duties. They also interacted with target youth on both a formal and an informal basis, providing intervention and referrals to services as needed for both primary and secondary target young people and their families.

The Intervention Team was supplemented on an as-needed basis by the following agencies that were called upon when youth need specialized services:

1. Miami Job Corps;
2. South Florida Work-Force/Carol City One Stop;
3. Miami-Dade County School District TRUST Counselors from the targeted schools;
4. Miami-Dade County Targeted Schools/Education Center Representatives;
5. Youth Crime Watch;
6. Children's Psychiatric Center;
7. Center for Family and Child Enrichment;
8. 5000 Role Models and other school-based mentoring programs; and
9. Miami Bridge.

#### **D. The Assessment Committee and Other Committees**

Project MPACT stakeholders determined that the assessment committee should include agencies with access to the data needed to complete the Assessment Report (e.g., police departments and the school system). In 2001, like the Steering Committee, law enforcement was the dominant constituency of the Assessment Team.<sup>76</sup>

Initially, the Steering Committee did not elect a secretary or other officers, nor did it establish an executive board made up of key committee members. Based on national evaluation team interviews, the apparent lines of communication (dashed) and direct oversight (solid) suggest that the Steering Committee was not involved in directing the work of the Assessment Team or various sub-committees; instead, decision-making seemed to be delegated to (or perhaps assumed by) the Project Coordinator. In fact, some

---

<sup>76</sup>Based on agenda from October 16, 2001 Assessment Team Meeting. Includes three people who were not listed: two CBO staff members and the research partner.

key decisions were made by the site's original Project Coordinator. For example, the selection of communities to include in the initial scan (discussed later in this report) was made by the Project Coordinator, in consultation with law enforcement representatives on the Assessment Team.

The Assessment Team formed three subcommittees, all of them identified during a meeting in October 2001. Their responsibilities included:

1. *Law Enforcement Committee.* The Steering Committee charged representatives from the four police departments (school police, Hialeah, Miami Beach, and the county) with collecting crime data using the "gang" definition agreed upon by the Steering Committee. At one point, the Project Coordinator wanted to establish a "communications committee" that would encourage law enforcement agencies to collect gang data in a systematic way using common definitions;
2. *Special Programs Committee.* Led by a representative from the school's Student Services division a comprehensive list of services available to youth through the school system and other social service agencies was developed; and
3. *Membership Committee.* This group identified community residents and others to serve on the Assessment Team and the Steering Committee. Two representatives, both of the nonprofit Human Services Coalition, agreed to serve with this group.

## **SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS**

The national evaluation team conducted several focus groups in the target area for the Miami GFS program. These focus groups sought to elicit the perceptions and opinions of students, teachers, administrators and community members from the local neighborhood. Each of the focus groups typically ran one hour in duration, during which members of the national evaluation team questioned participants on gang activity, prevalence of drugs, and the frequency or intensity of violence in their community.

*Teachers, Administrators, and Staff Focus Groups (December 2004).* In December 2004, the national evaluation team conducted three focus groups at three separate schools in the target area of the Miami-Dade GFS project. The schools included one middle school, (Lake Stevens Middle School) and two high schools, (Hialeah Miami-Lakes Senior High and MacArthur North High). The focus group at Lake Stevens Middle School included a total of eight teachers and student counselors. The Hialeah Miami-Lakes Senior High focus group included 10 teachers/administrators, and the third focus group, MacArthur North High School had 12 teacher/administrators.

The teacher and administrator focus group participants provided a wide range of responses relating to gangs and gang activity at their schools. It is important to note that the differences observed between focus groups may be influenced by unforeseen factors, including the grade span of the school, and the community in the immediate vicinity of the school. Focus group participants from the two high schools, MacArthur and Hialeah, readily acknowledged the presence of gangs in their school. Focus group participants from Lake Stevens Middle School reported that their school currently did not have a gang problem, though previous school years have had gang problems. The participants attributed the lack of gang activity to “good administration practices.” The Lake Stevens participants differentiated between social groups and street gangs, stating that although students tend to organize themselves into “cliques” or small groups, this organization has no relationship to gang activity. Teachers and administrators from the two high schools, MacArthur North High and Hialeah Miami-Lakes Senior, cited graffiti, fights, and gang colors or symbols as evidence of gang activity within their schools. The focus group

participants elaborated on the alleged gang fights that have occurred in the past at their schools. One group explained how a gang-fight a few months earlier included 23 individuals. Another group articulated the severity of violence by providing anecdotal stories of students requiring hospitalization after a fight, one student was even rendered paralyzed after an altercation. One school reported that an aggravating factor for gang activity in their school is the mixing of certain, opposing neighborhoods. Students from rival neighborhoods are mixed into close proximity in school, thus creating friction among known enemies. The focus group participants felt that relationships among these neighborhoods should be taken into consideration when drawing school district borders.

Similar to the discussion on the presence of gang activity, the focus groups varied in their acknowledgement of drug activity in their school. Participants from both high school focus groups reported that drugs were definitely a problem within their school grounds. Meanwhile, the teachers and administrators from Lake Stevens Middle school only reported very rare instances when students have been caught with drugs on campus. Those reporting the presence of drugs on their campuses, MacArthur North High and Hialeah Miami-Lakes Senior High, stated that the most common drug was marijuana.

Although schools have a varying degree of drug activity on their campus, all focus groups reported that weapons were rarely an issue for their school. Participants from Hialeah reported that they have encountered weapons on campus. MacArthur participants stated that they seldom encountered weapons, though they frequently hear students discussing weapons, indicating ownership and use outside of school. The teachers and

administrators from Lake Stevens Middle school said that they have not encountered students with weapons inside the school building.

Although teachers and administrators are aware of gang activity and the use of weapons and drugs, all participants reported that they have no fear in teaching or working at their school.

The school staff's perception of safety and varying degrees of gang, drugs, and violent activity associated with each schools student body may in part be related to individual school policies. All focus groups reported a myriad of school policies or efforts intended to prevent gang activity or the presence of drugs and violence on their campus. All responding groups indicated that their school utilized a referral program for youth suspected of gang activity. These referral programs use a "trust counselor," "visiting teacher," or outreach worker to engage the student and their family outside of the school environment. Often, the focus groups cited GFS outreach workers as a component of this referral program.

In addition to referral based programs the individual schools have implemented a variety of other methods for minimizing gang activity. Lake Stevens Middle School and Hialeah Miami-Lakes Senior High contracted service providers who randomly check student bags or subject students to metal detectors. Another policy implemented at Hialeah Miami-Lakes Senior is the use of "data" on gangs. This intelligence system includes pictures of known gang-involved youth, lists of colors, symbols and gang names.



Similarly, school staff from Lake Stevens Middle reported that previous school years have had literature or training on gang awareness, which informs school staff on gang colors and other identifiable symbols.

Other school policies discussed by focus group participants include a closed-campus lunch, and a district-wide zero tolerance policy towards gangs. The closed-campus lunch allows school administrators to have more control over the student body by increasing supervision.

When the school staff focus group participants were asked to speculate on the reasons why youth join gangs, several common responses emerged. Participants from all three focus groups believed that money, or the financial gains associated with the gangs criminal activities attracts many youth in to the gang lifestyle. Additionally, friends and family already active in gangs would not only provide an opportunity to initiate gang involvement, but would provide a source of peer pressure, a strong external force drawing youth in to gang activity. Similar to peer pressure, many thought that youth are often striving to find a sense of belonging and group membership, and gangs provide a source of social acceptance. Some focus group participants opined that coming from a broken or unsupportive family increased a youth's desire for group membership and acceptance. Some focus group participants felt as though the environment in which the youth are raised normalize gang involvement, subsequently gang members do not have a fear of death or imprisonment. Other participants pointed to a lack of education, poor living conditions and a desire for independence as major influences in youth gang involvement.

Though many of the focus groups identified similar reasons why youth join gangs, their responses were more varied when asked what additional measures could be taken to further combat gang participation. The most consistent response was to increase parental involvement. Other proposed interventions include the use of additional outreach workers, counselors, or mentors to work with the youth and to engage parents into the child's life. The focus group participants felt as though preparing all students for college education was not appropriate, insisting that students should have access to more vocational training since college was not a realistic goal for many students. By providing better job opportunities, youth would find the financial incentives associated with gang activity less appealing. Some focus group participants believed that school staff needs to make more of an effort to build relations with their students and getting to know individuals better, and then the staff could provide more effective support for them when they need help. The teachers who had received gang awareness training in previous years endorsed these types of training programs.

All of the focus groups indicated that they had heard of the Gang Free Schools program. Not only were the school staff members aware of the program, two of the groups commended the efforts made by the outreach workers, saying that they had witnessed the effectiveness or benefits with the youth involved in the program.

*Student Focus Groups (December 2004).* In 2004, the national evaluation team conducted three focus groups with students from the target area schools, including two high schools and one middle school. The number of participants in each focus group

varied. The focus group conducted at Lake Stevens Middle School included 12 students, while the other two focus groups at Hialeah Miami-Lakes Senior High School and MacArthur North High School contained nine and three students respectively.

It is important to note that the sample of students selected to participate in the focus groups for the Miami site may not be totally representative of the Miami target community because the method the school administration employed to select the sample of students to participate in the focus groups. The reasons the administrators selected certain groups of students remains unclear, and their selection criteria did not ensure a sample of students that is representative of the school. One of the focus groups, for example, suffered from low participation, while another contained all students who live outside the schools immediate local neighborhood and were members of the student government, a student organization which may in itself constitute a homogenous sample. It is important to keep these potential limitations in mind when analyzing focus group responses.

In general, the students did not perceive gangs to be a highly pervasive problem in either the school or the community. Students who reported living in neighborhoods closer to the school reported gang activity more frequently than students from outside the school's neighborhood. A few students were not only aware of the gangs in the area, but admitted to being an active gang member; however these students represented a minority across the focus groups. Most of the participants indicated that gangs had little if any presence inside the schools. Those students that did acknowledge the presence of gangs

noted that the gang activity has diminished recently compared to previous years. The students associated gangs with car theft, drug sales, fights, and bullying.

All focus group participants reported that either drug use or sales seemed commonplace on their school campus. Though all students recognized some form of drug sales taking place on their school grounds, they noted that drug sales are usually done covertly. Very few students reported witnessing drug use on campus, those who did report evidence of drug use, referred to smelling smoke and marijuana in a bathroom. Students from Hialeah Miami-Lakes Senior High reported that the prevalence of drugs in their school is low compared to earlier school years.

Despite the fact that students recognized drug and gang activity within their school grounds, all students reported feeling safe on campus. The students reported on the various school policies designed to curb gang activity on the school grounds. One focus group was not aware of any specific administrative policies that were targeted towards gang activity or drug use. Another set of focus group participants reported that their school had implemented a dress code policy. The third focus group reported an increased number of security guards and a “zero tolerance” policy. Although the perceptions of safety within the school environment remained consistent across all focus groups, the range of responses increases when the students were asked about feeling safe in their community. The differences in perception of safety in their neighborhoods likely reflect differences in the sample of students selected to participate in the focus group discussions.

The students provided a wide range of reasons that youth join gangs. The more popular responses related to social perceptions; these include an elevated social stature, increased esteem and a more popular perception by peers or “looking cool.” The students also indicated that youth join gangs for more common reasons, like protection, money, and fun. It is interesting to note that some of the students felt that parental rejection was another component likely to affect a youth’s gang involvement.

Though the focus group participants readily identified numerous factors attracting youths to gangs, they were less forthcoming with solutions to combat gang activity. Students from two of the focus groups suggested that increased parental involvement in their children’s academic and social lives could reduce the likelihood of the child engaging in gang activity. Participants suggested providing more after school activities to give students alternative constructive activities. Again, the students provided few responses to alternative interventions to target youth gang activity.

***Community Focus Groups (December 2004).*** On December 8, 2004, the national evaluation team conducted a focus group with eight adult community members. The participants had worked in mentoring programs for youth and were currently in the process of starting a new mentoring program. The national evaluation team provided light food and beverages. The purpose of the focus group was to assess the impact of gang activity on the target community and methods for combating gang activity.

The community focus group participants believed that gangs were highly prevalent in their community. They perceived gangs as mainly a drug dealing enterprise; all other gang activities, like controlling territory, violence, and use of weapons play a supporting role in the main drug venture. In order to operate a successful drug dealing business, gang members are required to control territory for distribution rights. To secure a prime location, gang members must fight for control and assert their power over rival gangs who pose as direct competitors in the drug market. Gang members gain an intoxicating sense of power from this control over neighborhoods, the use of weapons, and allocation of money which helps perpetuate gang activity, drugs and violence in the neighborhood. The focus group participants explained the impact on other community members, how females are increasingly exploited as “mules” or agents for the delivery of drugs to shield gang members and drug dealers from potential legal ramifications for possessing illegal drugs. When gang members do enter the justice system, incarceration does not adequately prevent or deter future infractions. In fact participants described how prison is a “university” for gang members, providing them with further training in gang activity and crime.

Another phenomenon described by the participants is the “foreign” gangs, which are gangs that originated out of the country, but have immigrated in to the Miami community. When compared to the “local” gangs or those that originated in the Miami area, the foreign gangs are perceived as more treacherous.

Community residents provided several reasons why youth join gangs. As described earlier, gang members may gain an inflated sense of power from criminal activities. This

heightened sense of power is an attractive force drawing the respect and admiration of other young adolescents in the community. Participants cited the lack of education as an exacerbating factor for gang activity. Coupled with the economics of an impoverished neighborhood, a lack of education may restrict legitimate sources of substantial income, seemingly providing very few alternatives to crime and violence. Another factor drawing youth into the gang lifestyle is the breakdown of family support. It remains unclear whether the community members felt the breakdown was a result of a weakening relationship between parents and children or whether it was due to the structure of the family. The community residents expressed that a young individual without a valid support network may seek alternative sources of support and belongingness.

The community residents participating in the focus group discussion were a pre-established group with the common intention of starting a mentoring program, and most had previously been involved with mentoring programs for youth. Therefore, when asked how to combat the gang activity in their neighborhood, the participants unanimously felt that a strong mentoring program would be most adapt. The residents provided specific details on components of a successful mentoring program. The development of a strong partnership between an individual youth and a mentor allows the youth to build trust into the relationship. Additionally, the program should seek to isolate the youth from his peers, the residents explained since youth group dynamics limit the responsiveness of the individual. A mentoring program should also provide job training and age appropriate programs.

***Conclusions Drawn from the Focus Groups.*** There are several themes and inconsistencies that emerge when looking across all focus groups conducted in the Miami target area. At the broadest level, all groups presented a different picture of the prevalence of gangs in the neighborhood or schools. The students and teachers diminished the role of gangs both in the school and outside. Though many of the students acknowledged the presence of gangs outside the school, they perceived the gangs to be far less of a problem when compared to the community residents. While the students implied that gangs were not a major issue in the neighborhoods, the community residents associated many of the neighborhood problems with gang activity. All focus groups were readily aware of the high prevalence of drugs in the community; the difference between the focus groups is their attribution of drug activity to gang members.

Several suggestions for preventing or deterring gang activity were consistent across all focus groups. All focus groups emphasized increasing the relationship youth have with parents or authority figures. Similarly, many of the groups indicated that a youth's lack of education was a risk factor for gang activity.



This resource was prepared by the author(s) using Federal funds provided by the U.S. Department of Justice. Opinions or points of view expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

## **REFERENCES**

## References and Other Resource Materials

- Allison, Graham, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1971.
- Allison, Graham and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, Second Edition, Longman, New York, 1991.
- Bardach, Eugene, *The Implementation Game*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1971.
- Bardach, Eugene, "On Designing Implementable Programs," in G. Majone and E. Quade (eds.), *Pitfalls of Analysis*, John Wiley and Sons, London and New York, 1979, pp. 248-269.
- Battin-Pearson, S.R., T.P. Thornberry, J.D. Hawkins, and M.D. Krohn, "Gang Membership, Delinquent Peers, and Delinquent Behavior," *Juvenile Justice Journal*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, DC, October 1998.
- Bickman, Leonard (ed.), *Using Program Theory in Evaluation*, New Directions for Program Evaluation Series (no. 33), Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1987.
- Box, G.E.P., and G.M. Jenkins, *Time Series Analysis: Forecasting and Control, Revised Edition*, Holden Day, San Francisco, CA, 1984.
- Burch, J.H., and B. Chemers, "A Comprehensive Response to America's Youth Gang Problem," *OJJDP Fact Sheet #40*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, March 1997.
- Burch, J.H., and Candice Kane, "Implementing the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model," *OJJDP Fact Sheet*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, July 1999.
- Burnett, G., and G. Waltz, "Gangs in Schools," *ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education Digest*, ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, New York, New York, 1999.
- Chase, Gordon, "Implementing a Human Services Program: How Hard Will It Be?," *Public Policy* 27, Fall 1979, pp.385-436.
- Chaiken, Marcia, "Violent Neighborhoods, Violent Kids," *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, March 2000.
- Chandler, K.A., C.D. Chapman, M.R. Rand, and B.M. Taylor, "Students' Reports of School Crime: 1989 and 1995," Office of Educational Research and Development, National Center for Education Statistics, and U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Washington, DC, 1998.

- Chen, Huey-Tsyh, *Theory-Driven Evaluations*, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA, 1990.
- Chen, Huey-Tsyh, and P.H. Rossi, "The Theory-Driven Approach to Validity," *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 1998, 10:95-103.
- Connell, J.P., and A.C. Kubisch, "Applying a Theory of Change Approach to the Evaluation of Comprehensive Community Initiatives: Progress, Prospects, and Problems," in K. Fulbright-Anderson, A.C. Kubisch, and J.P. Connell (eds.), *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives, Vol.2*, The Aspen Institute, Washington, DC, 1998, pp. 15-44.
- Corcoran, T.B., "Effective Secondary Schools," in R.M.J. Kyle (ed.), *Reach for Excellence: An Effective Schools Sourcebook*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1985.
- Duke, D.L., "School Organization, Leadership, and Student Behavior," in O.C. Moles (ed.), *Strategies to Reduce Student Misbehavior*, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC, 1989.
- Esbensen, Finn-Aage, and D.W. Osgood, "National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T.," National Institute of Justice Research in Brief, National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, November, 1997.
- Goggin, Malcolm, *Policy Design and the Politics of Implementation*, The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, TN, 1987.
- Gottfredson, D., "An Evaluation of an Organization Development Approach to Reducing School Disorder," *Evaluation Review*, 1987, 11:739-763.
- Gottfredson, D., G.D. Gottfredson, and L.G. Hybl, "Managing Adolescent Behavior: A Multiyear, Multischool Study," *American Educational Research Journal*, 1993, 30:179-215.
- Gottfredson, G.D., and D.C. Gottfredson, *School-Based Prevention Programs Defined and Taxonomies of School-Based Prevention Activities and Objectives Used in the National study of Delinquency Prevention in Schools*, Gottfredson Associates, Ellicott City, MD, 1997.
- Gottfredson, G.D., and D.C. Gottfredson, *Survey of School-Based Gang Prevention and Intervention Programs: Preliminary Findings*, paper presented at the National Youth Gang Symposium, Las Vegas, NV, July 1999 ([www.iir.com/NYGC](http://www.iir.com/NYGC)).
- Hargrove, Erwin C., *The Missing Link: The Study of the Implementation of Social Policy*, The Urban Institute, Washington, DC, 1975.
- Hill, Karl G., L. Christiana, and J.D. Hawkins, "Early Precursors of Gang Membership: A Study of Seattle Youth," *Juvenile Justice Bulletin—Youth Gang Series*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, DC, December 2001.

- Howell, J.C., "Youth Gangs," *OJJDP Fact Sheet*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, December 1997.
- Howell, J.C., "Youth Gangs: An Overview," *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, August 1998.
- Howell, J.C., and S.H. Decker, "The Youth Gangs, Drugs, and Violence Connection," *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, January 1999.
- Howell, J.C., and J.P. Lynch, "Youth Gangs in Schools," *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, 2000.
- Institute of Medicine, *Reducing Risks for Mental Disorders: Frontiers for Prevention Intervention Research*, National Academy Press, Washington, DC, 1994.
- Kadish, T.E., B.A. Glaser, G.B. Calhoun, and E.J. Ginter, "Identifying the Developmental Strengths of Juvenile Offenders: Assessing Four Life-Skills Dimensions," *Journal of Addiction and Offender Counseling*, 2001, 2:85-21.
- Kaufman, Herbert, *Administrative Feedback*, The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, 1973.
- Kaufman, Philip, Xianglie Chen, S.P. Choy, S.A. Ruddy, A.K. Miller, K.A. Chandler, C.D. Chapman, and M.R. Rand, *Indicators of School Crime and Safety 1999*, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, 1999.
- Leitman, Robert, Katherine Binns, and Ann Duffett, *Between Hope and Fear: Teens Speak Out on Crime and the Community: A Survey Conducted for the National Teens, Crime, and the Community Program*, National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law, Washington, DC, 1995.
- Lipsey, Mark. W., "Theory as Method: Small Theories of Treatments," in L.B. Sechrest and A.G. Scott (eds.), *Understanding Causes and Generalizing About Them*, New Directions for Program Evaluation, 1993, 57:5-38.
- Lizotte, A. and D.I. Sheppard, "Gun Use by Male Juveniles: Research and Prevention," *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, DC, July 2001.
- Maddala, G., *Limited Dependent and Qualitative Variables in Econometrics*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1983.
- Majone, Giandomenico and Aaron Wildavsky, "Implementation as Evolution," in Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky (eds.), *Implementation*, Third Edition, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1979, pp. 163-180.

- Merton, Robert, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, The Free Press, New York, 1968.
- Miller, W.B., *Crime by Youth Gangs and Groups in the United States*, Washington, DC, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, 1992 (Revised from 1982).
- Moore, J.P., and I.L. Cook, "Highlights of the 1998 National Youth Gang Survey," *OJJDP Fact Sheet*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, December 1999.
- Police Executive Research Forum, "Addressing Community Gang Problems: A Model for Problem Solving," *Monograph*, Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, January 1997.
- Pressman, Jeffrey and Aaron Wildavsky, *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington are Dashed in Oakland*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1973.
- Rein, Martin, *From Policy to Practice*, M.E. Sharpe, Inc., Armonk, NY, 1983.
- Sabatier, Paul A. and Daniel Mazmanian, "The Implementation of Public Policy: A Framework for Analysis," *Policy Studies Journal*, 1980, 8:538-560.
- Scheirer, Mary Ann, "Designing and Using Process Evaluation," in Joseph Wholey, Harry Hatry, and Kathyryne Newcomer (eds.), *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*, Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1994, pp. 40-68.
- Shadish, W.R., Jr., "Program Micro- and Macrotheories: A Guide for Social Change," in Leonard Bickman (ed.), *Using Theory in Evaluation*, New Directions for Program Evaluation, 1987, 33:93-108.
- Sheppard, D.I., H. Grant, W. Rowe, and N. Jacobs, "Fighting Juvenile Gun Violence," *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, DC, September 2000.
- Sherman, L.W., D.C. Gottfredson, D.L. MacKenzie, J. Eck, P. Reuter, and S.D. Bushway, *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, Washington, DC, 1998.
- Simon, Herbert, *Models of Man: Social and Rational*, Wiley, New York, 1957.
- Simon, Herbert, "Human Nature in Politics: The Dialogue of Psychology and Political Science," *American Political Science Review*, 1985, 79:293-304.
- Spergel, Irving, K. Ehrensaft, Alba Alexander, Robert L. Laseter, *Youth Employment: Technical Assistance Manual*, National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program, Juvenile

Justice Clearinghouse, Rockville, MD, 1991, available April 7, 1998 at <http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles/d0025.txt>.

- Spergel, I.A., and A. Alexander, *A School-Based Model*, from the National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program, School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, January 1993.
- Spergel, I.A., R. Chance, K. Ehrensaft, T. Regulus, C. Kane, R. Laseter, A. Alexander, and S. Oh, "Gang Suppression and Intervention: Community Models (Research Summary)," *OJJDP Summary*, Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, October 1999.
- Van Horn, Carl and Donald Van Meter, "The Implementation of Intergovernmental Policy," In Charles O. Jones and Robert D. Thomas (eds.), *Public Policy in A Federal System*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, CA, 1976, pp. 39-64 (Reprinted in *Policy Studies Annual*, Edition 1, Stuart Nagel, Beverly Hills, 1977, 1(1):97-113).
- Van Meter, Donald and Carl Van Horn, "The Policy Implementation Process: A Conceptual Framework," *Administration and Society*, February 1975, 6(4):445-488.
- Weiss, Carol H., *Evaluation Research: Methods of Assessing Program Effectiveness*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1972.
- Weiss, C.H., *Evaluation: Methods for Studying Programs and Policies*, Second Edition, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 1998.
- Weiss, C.H., "Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-Based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families, in J.P. Connell, A.C. Kubisch, L.B. Schorr, and C.H. Weiss (eds.), *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods, and Contexts*, The Aspen Institute, Washington, DC, 1995.
- Wholey, J.S., *Evaluation: Promise and Performance*, The Urban Institute, Washington, DC, 1979.
- Wholey, J.S. (ed.), *Organizational Excellence: Stimulating Quality and Communicating Value*, Lexington Books, Lexington, MA, 1987.
- Williams, Walter, *Social Policy Research and Analysis: The Experience in the Federal Social Agencies*, Elsevier, New York, 1971.
- Williams, Walter, "Implementation Analysis and Assessment," *Policy Analysis*, 1975, pp. 531-566.
- Williams, Walter, *The Implementation Perspective*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1980.

Yin, R.K., *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 1994.

Yin, R.K., "Rival Explanations as an Alternative to Reforms as Experiments," in L. Bickman (ed.), *Validity & Social Experimentation*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2000, pp. 239-266.