

FINDINGS FROM KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

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Overview

- ▣ Started here with a historical overview of gang prevention programs in OC
- ▣ Shared last time what the community had to say on this issue
- ▣ Today we will share what you had to say

Methodology

- ▣ Created an interview tool based on grant needs
- ▣ Invited all Stakeholders to be interviewed
- ▣ 13 agreed to take part in the process
- ▣ 1 retired before we started
- ▣ 12 interviewed between Oct & Dec 2009
 - Represent Countywide, Regional, & City Law Enforcement Agencies
 - Educational and non-profit agencies

Common Concerns

- ▣ Families/Parents in trouble
- ▣ Use of internet to promote gang lifestyle & recruit younger/new members
 - Mobility of gang members
- ▣ Lack of youth responsibility, society promoting “extreme lifestyles,” poor role models
 - Not much to counter any of these
- ▣ Understanding social & cognitive reasons behind gang behavior
- ▣ Violence
- ▣ Recidivism

Gaps

- ▣ Lack of a coordinated, countywide effort
- ▣ Lack of early prevention programs (K-3)
- ▣ No intervention programs for youth under 14
- ▣ Suppression vs. prevention dollars spent
 - Little social change happening
- ▣ Overcrowded schools
- ▣ Not enough places for kids to go/things to do
 - Lack of positive minority role models in community
- ▣ Lack of re-entry/job training programs

Strengths

- ▣ More awareness that the issue exists
 - Community awareness that it's not “just” law enforcement's job to fix
 - Law Enforcement seeing value of prevention
- ▣ Collaboration of efforts between County & City programs & CBO efforts
 - People willing to do this work
 - Willingness of law enforcement to work together
- ▣ Numerous CBO's with promising practices
 - ▣ Those creating neighborhood success seem to be doing the best
- ▣ Better laws – Truancy, Graffiti, “zero tolerance”

Training of Staff

- ▣ Police/Sheriff Academy have gang segments
- ▣ Ongoing (in house) : Roll Call, Patrol Updates, Internal Briefings
- ▣ OC Gang Investigators meeting (DA's Office)
- ▣ Cal-Gangs & State Prison System
- ▣ State & Federal Law Enforcement associations
- ▣ Conferences and trainings as they come along
- ▣ Not really enough Community Based resources

Trainings Offered to Others

- ▣ “Gangs 101” and other types of overviews
- ▣ “Is your child at risk”
 - Taught by a police officer paired with a parent
- ▣ Community updates – gang patterns of what’s going on
- ▣ Power of collaboration

Training That is Needed

- ▣ How to work with the younger children
- ▣ Emerging technology
- ▣ How to match resources to people in need
- ▣ Training for youth
- ▣ Team training/collaboration between law enforcement, education, FBOs & CBOs
- ▣ Emerging international challenges; Mexican & Latin American gangs
- ▣ Early gang prevention in the schools (K-3)

Funding & Limitations

- ▣ No direct specialized State or County gang prevention funding at this time
 - All gang work from general budget allotments.
 - Some Juvenile Justice Act money used by Probation for individual gang cases as needed (after arrest)
- ▣ Cost sharing agreements between law enforcement and other government agencies/CBOs
 - Fire Authority, CSP
- ▣ Law Enforcement can help CBOs bring money in
 - OC Reentry Partnership, GRIP
- ▣ CBOs & Schools using a variety of violence and drug prevention grants
- ▣ Challenge: models supported by research not always interesting to funders

Guidelines/Protocols Used

- ▣ Arrest, suppress, and incarcerate
- ▣ Federal & State laws, municipal codes
- ▣ County Policy Manual, Injunctions & internal mandates
- ▣ Comprehensive & local is best approach
- ▣ CBO's often push a strict "gang neutral territory" mentality for all programs
- ▣ Goal is to change behavior to reduce crime
- ▣ Challenge inherent in working with gang members

- ▣ Developed over time, reviewed annually, updated as necessary

Support for this Effort

- ▣ Law enforcement extends credibility by attending the meetings
- ▣ By being involved, a collaborative partner
- ▣ By helping funding sources to work together
- ▣ We can help with resident engagement
- ▣ Access to apartment managers group meetings
- ▣ Sharing our expertise: projects, programs, and ideas that have worked well
- ▣ Providing meeting or conference space
- ▣ Access to current or past gang members

Current Data Collection

- ▣ We collect all kinds of gang related data; membership, monikers, tattoos, associates, etc.
- ▣ Countywide “Cop-Link” database (not public*)
 - Allows one agency to enter a name to see if the kid has “hits” elsewhere in the County
- ▣ Statewide “Cal-Gangs” database for gang related crime (not public*)
- ▣ DA’s databases (not public*)
- ▣ DOJ/FBI stats (public)
- ▣ CBOs have intake data
- ▣ *Law Enforcement’s challenge is in sharing info that could create public safety issues.

Data/Research That Might Be Helpful

- ▣ Getting access to local crime data can be very difficult for CBOs
- ▣ Localized mental health data
- ▣ Violence related calls by neighborhood
- ▣ Risk factors and parenting issues of K-3 kids
- ▣ Reduction of recidivism
- ▣ Better inter-agency data sharing
- ▣ Studies on engagement in school as a risk/protective factor
- ▣ Reasons kids in high risk areas choose not to join gangs
- ▣ There is a need to locate resources for research
 - Connect efforts with local Universities

Key Findings

- ▣ Participants indicated that a coordinated, countywide approach would be beneficial to everyone
- ▣ Interventions need to be targeted at the family and community level
 - We need to be prepared to start much younger
- ▣ There is not agreement about funding
- ▣ There is not agreement about what non-confidential data can and/or will be shared

Interesting Ideas

- ▣ “Prevention Czar” – Charged with bringing grant dollars into County
- ▣ Resources are available, businesses will give when asked
- ▣ A way to publicize Countywide the gang prevention success stories we do have
- ▣ Certification program for gang prevention workers (like drug counselors)
- ▣ Citizen Academies for gang prevention work
- ▣ Why not collect gang data for youth like child abuse
- ▣ Database of all the kids in prevention programs?
 - This would allow us to see which interventions work and which don't

Contact Information



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