Gang Prevention and Intervention Taskforce

2017 Evaluation Report

Melissa Neuburger
Center for Student Assessment and Program Accountability
Sacramento County Office of Education
**Executive Summary**

Twenty-one agencies received grants in 2017 to support gang prevention and intervention programs and services. The agencies provided an estimated 75,000 service hours to 3,993 youth who were at risk of gang involvement or already gang involved, and provided services to 1,860 parents and family members, or other adults in the community, to empower them to support gang prevention and intervention. Grantees focused on providing services to the Valley Hi, Del Paso Heights, Oak Park, Meadowview, and Fruitridge/Lemon Hill areas.

Below is a summary of services for youth participants who were at risk of gang involvement or already gang involved:

- **By identified risk group**
  - 92% At risk for gang involvement
  - 6% Gang involved
  - 2% Hard core

- **By identified age group**
  - 43% Under age 13
  - 41% Ages 13-17
  - 8% Ages 18-24
  - 8% Over age 25

- **Youth receiving services in each area**
  - School-based support 1,262
  - Workforce readiness 438
  - Family support 695
  - Life skills/cognitive development 1462
  - Street outreach/crisis response/mediation 215
  - Community engagement 360

Programs supported by the grant provided a broad range of services to participants that included mentoring, family support, personal growth and development, tutoring, and intervention services. Grantees were able to demonstrate the outcomes of their program through specific program outcomes, testimonials, and highlights.
2017 Grant Program
The Gang Prevention and Intervention Taskforce (GPIT) grants were intended to reduce gang involvement and support gang prevention and intervention activities. In 2017, the City of Sacramento continued to fund grants through the taskforce to support the efforts of community agencies and coalitions. The city developed a framework for prevention and intervention that focused on identified populations, service areas, and geographic regions.

- Target Populations
  - At-risk for gang involvement
  - Gang involved
  - Hard core

- Service Areas
  - School-based support
  - Workforce readiness
  - Family-based support
  - Life skills/cognitive development
  - Street outreach/crisis response
  - Community awareness and engagement

- Geographic Regions
  - Valley Hi
  - Del Paso Heights
  - Meadowview
  - Oak Park
  - Fruitridge/Lemon Hill

Through a formal request for proposals, the taskforce identified 21 agencies throughout the city to conduct this work. The focus of the gang prevention initiative grants was to lay a foundation in the community that could address the needs of youth who were already involved in gangs and those who were likely to become involved. Youth were the focus of the grant; however, services were also provided to adults who could benefit from program services or who could provide strategic intervention and prevention support to youth.
By December 2017, nearly 75,000 program service hours had been delivered to 3,993 youth. In addition, 1,860 parents and community members received program services, and another 1,893 people received indirect, ancillary gang prevention information and support through the initiative. Although many of the agencies received a 6-month addendum to their grant, this report reflects only the work completed during the 2017 year and the programs and services administered directly to participants.

Evaluation components of the grant included progress reports for each agency as well as youth participant and support role participant surveys. The 2017 Summary Report provides cumulative year-long information about:

- Work completed in 2017
- Participant survey results
- Challenges and successes

**Youth Participants**

Youth participants received program services that ranged from crisis response and intervention to personal development and college preparation. Youth attended leadership academies, engaged in writing and self-expression courses, participated in sports leagues, and received academic tutoring and guidance. The following tables show that the 3,993 youth participants were primarily under the age of 18 and that 8% had been involved in gangs, a particularly difficult to reach population.

### Youth by Age Group

- **Under age 13**: 8%
- **Ages 13-17**: 43%
- **Ages 18-24**: 41%
- **Over age 25**: 8%

### Youth by Risk Factor

- **At Risk for Gang Involvement**: 6%
- **Gang Involved**: 2%
- **Hard-core**: 92%

A review of youth participants by ethnicity and location showed that the majority of participants were African American and Hispanic/Latino youth from the Valley Hi, Meadowview, and Del Paso Heights areas.

---

1 Some youth participated in multiple services across agencies, therefore this is not an unduplicated count.
Collectively, the youth participants received 74,916 hours of programs and services, most of which focused on cognitive and life skill development and academic support and guidance.

### Youth by Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>1927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other or Declined to State</td>
<td>446</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Distribution of Youth by Targeted Geographic Region

- **Valley Hi**: 39% (215 youth)
- **Meadowview**: 20% (1462 youth)
- **Del Paso Heights**: 17% (91 youth)
- **Oak Park**: 13% (118 youth)
- **Fruitridge/ Lemon Hill**: 11% (44 youth)

### Number of Youth Served in Each Area

- Life Skills/Cognitive Development: 1462 youth
- School Based Support: 1262 youth
- Family Support: 695 youth
- Workforce Readiness: 438 youth
- Community Engagement: 360 youth
- Street Outreach/Crisis Response: 215 youth
Family and Community Empowerment

To better serve and support the community, a number of agencies provided programs aimed to empower family and community members to prevent or intervene with gang involvement, essentially building external layers of support services for youth. In 2017, the grant programs served 1,860 adult participants who played a supportive role to those at risk for gang involvement. Some agencies provided crisis response support to families of youth who were involved in gangs or were victims of gang violence, while others worked to reduce isolation and build community connectedness. Overall, the investment in family and community members represented 15,168 program service hours.

As shown in the following charts, the majority of adult participants were community members, program volunteers, and parents or guardians.

As seen in the chart below, the support participants who received services were primarily located in the Del Paso Heights and Valley Hi regions. As compared to the youth, a much smaller percentage of support role participants were served in the Meadowview area.

---

\(^2\) This category was differentiated from the indirect and community event participant counts.
Services for these participants were spread across a number of support areas and focused mostly on fostering engagement in the community, instruction on providing academic support, and sharing tools and strategies to strengthen families’ ability to prevent gang involvement and cope with gang impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Support Participants Served in Each Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Based Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Skills/Cognitive Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Outreach/Crisis Response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Youth Participant Survey Results

Agencies administered the taskforce program surveys throughout the year to youth near the end of their completed program or service. The survey contained items that assessed risk, supports, perceptions and changes in beliefs. At the end of 2017, a total of 931 youth had completed the survey. The following charts show the survey questions and the summarized responses.

Preliminary results from the youth survey revealed that:

- Many youth still reported feeling safe even when they indicated that their surroundings might not be safe.
- Very small correlations were found between not having a responsible adult to go to when they had a difficult problem and:
  - youth who had been threatened or hurt, \( r(895) = .115, p < .01 \)
  - youth who hurt or threatened someone else, \( r(895) = .089, p < .05 \)
- The majority of youth understand the risks of being in a gang.
- Small shifts in youth perceptions about gangs were seen as a result of the program.

Collectively these preliminary findings validate the complexity of the dynamics that are involved with gang prevention efforts and help to identify areas for further assessment or additional programs and services.

---

3 The final data collection for all surveys will occur at the end of the extended grant cycle and a complete report of all survey findings will be compiled at that time.
Youth Survey: Percent Agree to **Support** and **Risk** Items

- Getting a good education is important to my parents/guardians. 91%
- If I have a difficult problem, I know that there is a responsible adult who would help me. 85%
- I have somewhere safe to go if things around me get dangerous. 77%
- I feel safe after school. 75%
- I feel safe in my neighborhood. 61%
- I hear gun shots in my neighborhood. 47%
- Someone in my family is, or was, a gang member. 44%
- I have friends who are in a gang. 38%
- Someone else has threatened or physically hurt me in the past year. 30%
- I have threatened or physically hurt someone in the past year. 30%

Youth Survey: Percent Agree for Program Impact

- This program helps me feel like I belong to something important. 86%
- This program helps me feel good about myself. 85%
- This program helps me stay safe. 81%
- I would tell a friend or another person to come to this program. 89%
- This program helped me to understand the risks of gang involvement. 75%
“How did this program help you?” (Representative selection)

- This program helped me get my grades back on track
- I didn’t really want to go to college but now I feel I can do it.
- Gives me a place and time to deal with all problems academic or not.
- It helps me understand the importance of getting an education.
- They took me in when I was at my lowest point in life and gave me hope.
- It provided me a chance to look into college and plan for my future.
- This program helped me stay off the streets.
- To trust and control my anger
- This program has helped me be an advocate for my underserved, underrepresented, and at-risk community
- This program helps me to understand time management and money management
- This program help me understand that I’m important even when I thought I wasn’t
- I was able to get an internship
- Helped me with my confidence
- It helped me stay on the right path, and to be a role model to others
- Writing freed my thought that were eating me up inside
- The program helped me by making me realize my life is worth something
- When I would write I could explain how I felt and escape through writing and not be ashamed
- It helped me become a better writer
- It helped me understand writing and made it easier for me to write better about the situations I been through. It also helped me be more confident on sharing me feelings.
Support Role Participant Survey Results
The support role participant survey mirrored the youth survey and assessed the same areas. At the end of 2017, a total of 153 support participants had completed the survey. The following charts show the survey questions and the summarized responses for the preliminary data. Note that a “not applicable” option was included for each survey item and that the percentages shown represent the valid percentages exclusive of the N/A option.

Preliminary survey results showed that the adults who received services experienced similar safety challenges. They worry about children’s safety and live in neighborhoods with known risks.

Support Role Survey: Percent Agree to Support and Risk Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important that my children get a good education.</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worry about the safety of my child after school.</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My children have somewhere safe to go if things around them get dangerous.</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel safe in my neighborhood.</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know people in my neighborhood who have been arrested in the past year.</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hear gun shots in my neighborhood.</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know people who are in a gang.</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone in my family is, or was, a gang member.</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been exposed to violence in the past year.</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence has happened in my neighborhood in the past year.</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This program helped me to understand the risks of gang involvement.
I would tell a friend or another person to come to this program.
This program helps me know where to get support if my children or family are involved in gangs.
This program helped me learn how to deal with violence.
This program increased my knowledge and awareness about gangs.

Support Role Survey: Changes in Beliefs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would worry about my child if he or she was involved with gangs.</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's ok to have friends that are in a gang.</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People will respect you if you are a gang member.</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence can be used to gain respect.</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“How did this program help you?” (Representative selection)

- Helped me understand gang involvement and risk of consequences
- To understand my children more and how to help them when they are in danger.
- It helped my son stop being a bully and get in less trouble at school/home.
- My son behaves better at home and has more respect.
- Gives me somewhere safe to go with the family
- It touched on the topic of gang violence which is really big problem nowadays
- Let’s me know what’s happening in my neighborhood
- Brought awareness to the fact that we don’t take time to get to know our neighbors
- Helping with knowing how to better manage myself when dealing with my son’s anger problems
- It helped me communicate better and understand more

Challenges and Successes

At the mid-year of the grant and at the December reporting period, grantees were required to submit progress reports that highlighted their work to date and identified their challenges and successes.

Based upon a review of the December 2017 grantee reports, it was evident that a number of grantees had difficulties in completing their contracted scope of work. The most common challenges were:

- Accessing the gang involved and hard core youth in their programs and services
- Changes in partners who had been relied upon to provide services
- Accessing schools and student populations
- Finding new locations for services when agreements fell through

Some of the successes shared by the grantees included several heart-felt stories. A few are provided here:

We met the mother in a family waiting room at UC Davis hospital. She shared that she was a single mother of four children, who all still lived at home. She found herself with very little support in raising them with absolutely no support from the father of her children, because he is serving life in a federal prison. She agreed to have us visit them once they were released from the hospital. Later, we learned that her son who was shot, had lost his best friend to the same gun fire that put him in the hospital. A few weeks later we visited her home and completed an intake. Her goals were obtaining an education, a job and receiving legal assistance. Within two weeks of having the mother in our family partner program, she found a job. We were able to connect her to free legal service to restore her criminal and credit record. We have successfully been able to provide support to her during court hearings by being present in the courtroom. She has expressed that without the program, she wouldn’t feel safe in her community. We’re all optimistic that through our program this family will find restoration from all the violence and trauma they have experience in the last four months.
One of the parents in our class has two daughters that he and his wife share custody of. The mother is not a good caregiver and the father, who is so ill he often cannot properly supervise or transport his daughters where needed, was devastated to learn that one of his daughters was suicidal due to bullying at school. In addition to connecting him to medical care, he also wanted to come to Parent Project. Due to our support to him and his daughter at the school and through therapy, both are feeling hopeful for the future.

By providing agencies with the means to implement programs and services, they can in turn help those who are impacted by gangs directly and indirectly. It was evident that their work made a difference to those who benefited from their programs.