

The Implementation of the Comprehensive Gang Strategy

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What do we need to know to create successful gang Prevention,
Intervention, Suppression and Re-entry strategies?

Community characteristics, assets, and deficits.

Gang **member** characteristics – race/ethnicity, age, gender, siblings,
family structure, neighborhood, education.

Gang Characteristics – turf, age of the gang, initiation rites, exit rites,
link to prison gangs, hanging out.

Gang **Organizational** Characteristics – rules, roles, leaders, meetings,
handling of money.

Gang **Activities** – crime and non-crime.

Gang **Crime** – involvement in gang versus non-gang crime, drugs, guns,
violent crime, property crime, rivalries.

Characteristics of Gang Definitions

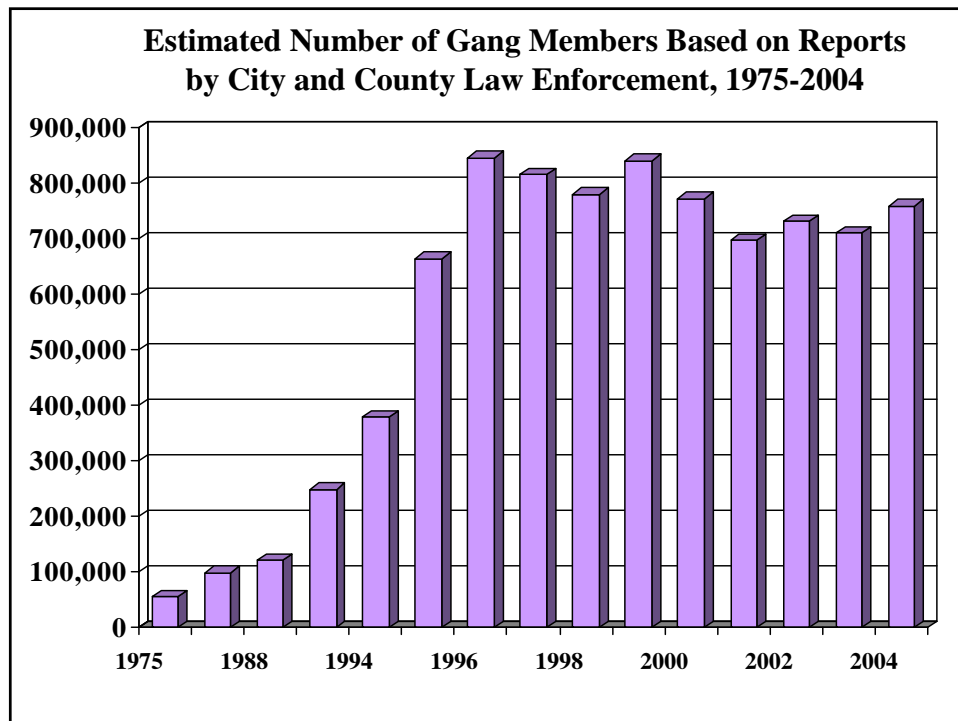
Group characteristics.

Symbols of membership.

Persistence of membership.

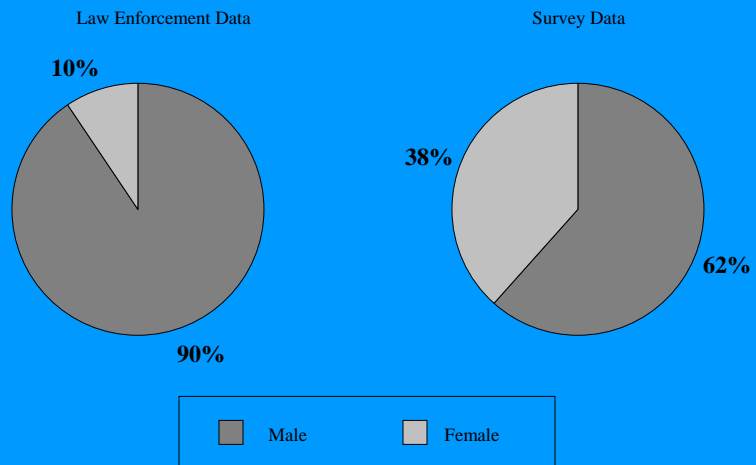
Self-identification.

Criminal involvement.



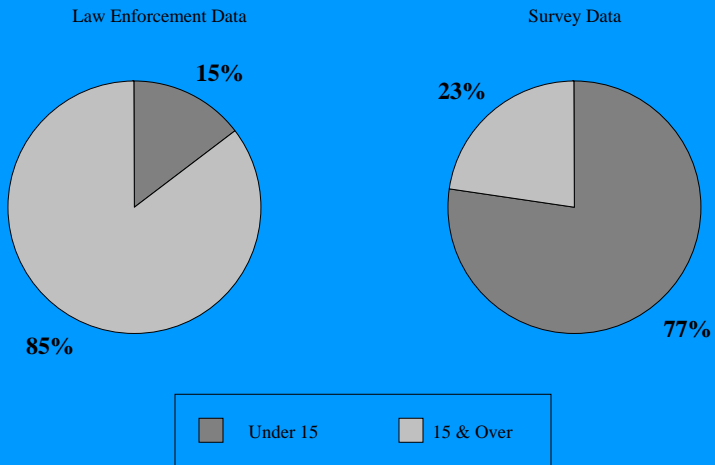
Characteristics of Gang Members

Gender of U.S. Gang Members



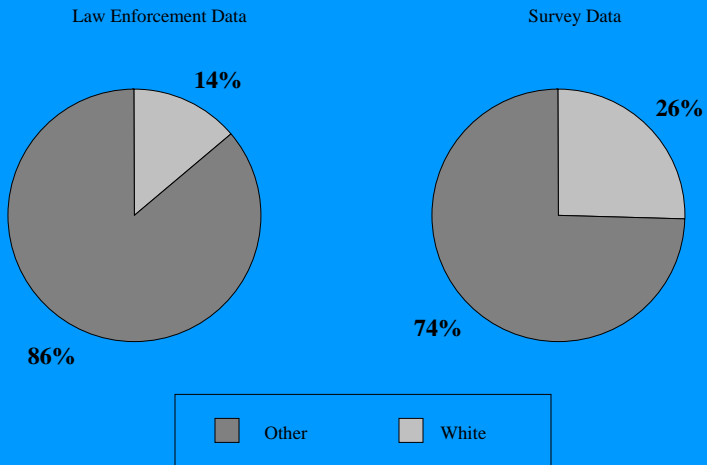
Data Sources: NYGC 1996 Survey, Esbensen & Winfree (1998)

Age of U.S. Gang Members



Data Sources: NYGC 1996 Survey, Esbensen & Winfree (1998)

Ethnicity of U.S. Gang Members



Data Sources: NYGC 1996 Survey, Esbensen & Winfree (1998)

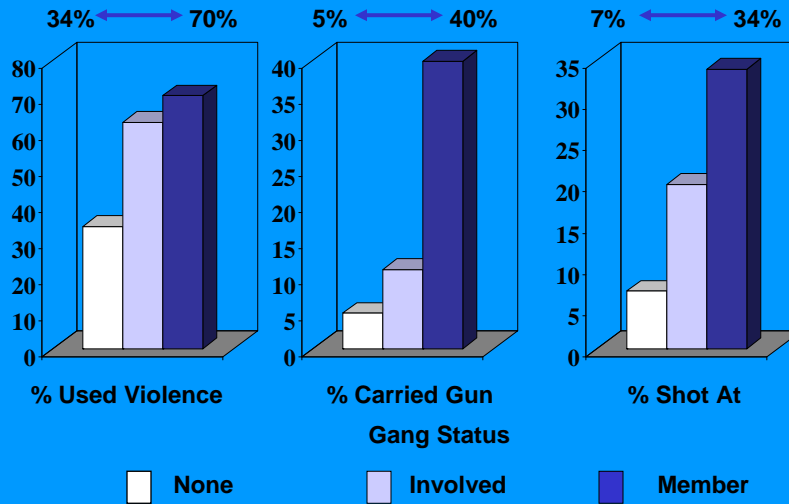
Six Risk Factors for Gang Membership

1. Poor parental supervision
2. Early childhood aggression
3. Delinquent belief systems
4. Significant negative life events
5. Peers that are gang members
6. Commitment to street oriented peers

Number, Intensity, Duration, Early Onset

Characteristics of Gang Behavior

Gang Status & Self-Reported Delinquency St. Louis STG Study



Organizational Structures of Gangs

Corporate

Super Gangs
National Presence
Older Members
Long life of the Gang
Prison involvement
Profit motives dominate

Cells

Purposive
Small
Focused
Specialists
Isolated
Criminal events

Episodic Groups

Local Gangs
Cafeteria offending
Younger members
Non purposive
Hanging out
Cafeteria style crime

How are gang members organized in your community? What is your source of information about their organizational structure?

What are the implications for **understanding** gangs? Human Smuggling? Terrorism? Drug Smuggling?

What are the implications for **responding** to gangs by law enforcement, the community, social services and NGOs for each type?

Responding to Gangs

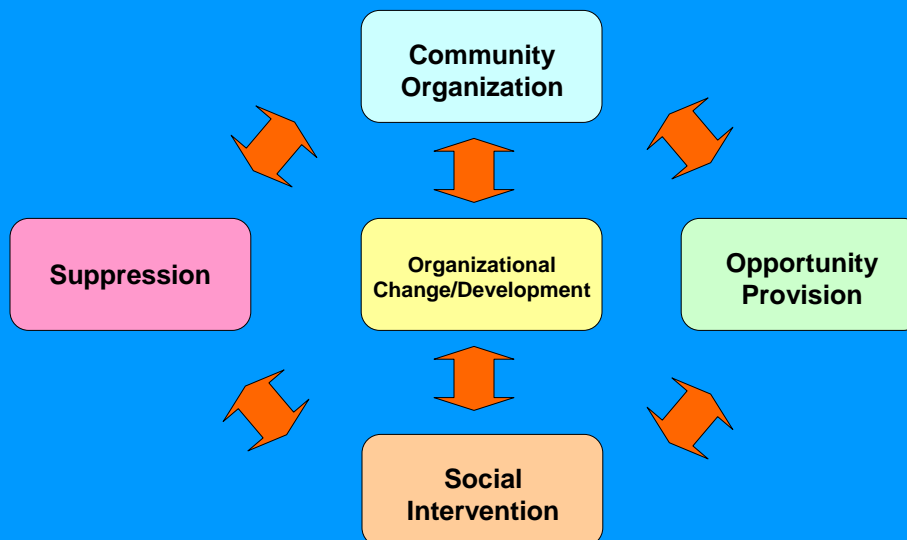
Gangbuster?



The Basics of a Response to Gangs

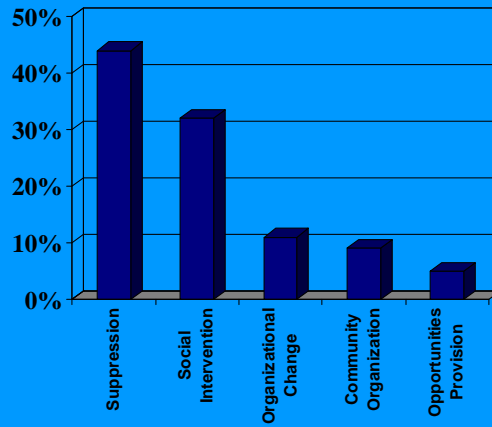
1. Diagnose the problem
Gangs? Delinquency?
Violence? Drugs?
2. Does the response match the problem?
3. Is the dose big enough? Can it be delivered? (implementation)
4. Can the response be sustained?

Five Strategies for Responding to Gangs



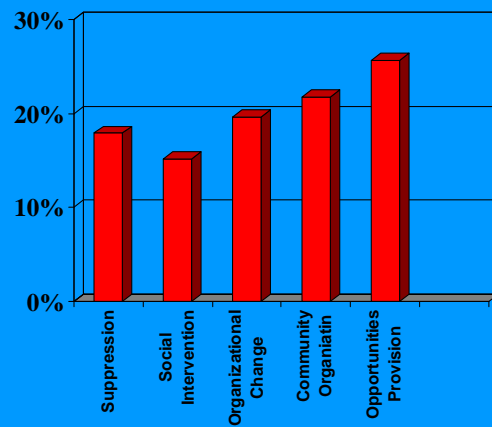
Source: Spergel & Curry 1990, 1993; Spergel 1995

Five Strategies for Responding to Gangs
Levels of Application as Primary Strategy
1988 National Youth Gang Survey



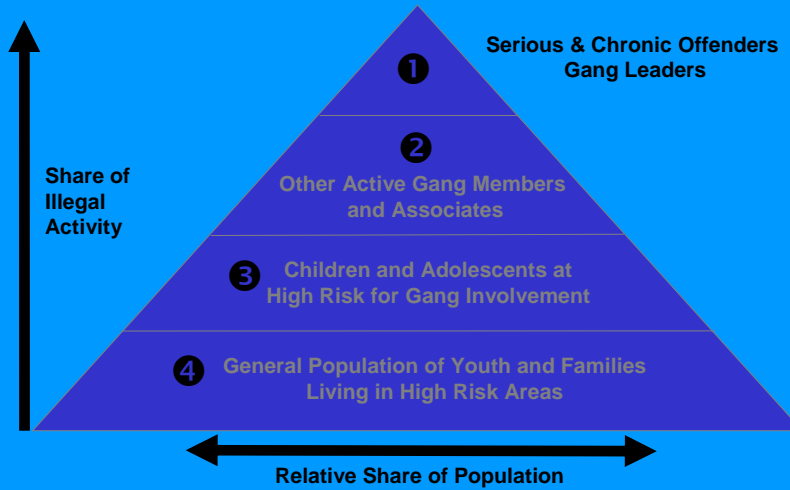
Computed from ICPSR Data Base

Five Strategies for Responding to Gangs
Perceived Effectiveness Ratings
1988 National Youth Gang Survey

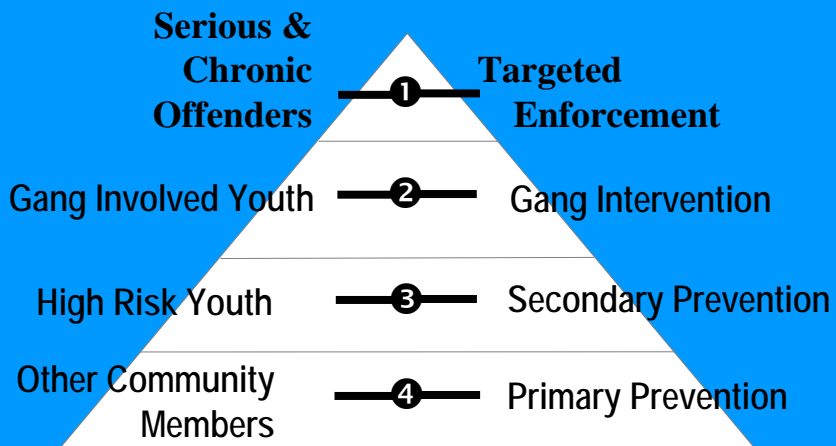


Computed from ICPSR Data Base

Who is “involved”?



Focusing Anti-Gang Strategies



Prevention

1. Community Organization
2. Improving Conditions
3. Creating Opportunities
4. Early Childhood Programs “School Readiness”
5. School-Based Programs (GREAT)
6. After School Activities
7. Operation Nightlight
8. Consent to Search Programs
9. Weed and Seed (link to existing resources)

Intervention:

Pulling Levers, Pro-Social Involvement and Alternatives

1. Outreach Workers
2. Crisis Intervention
3. Boys and Girls Clubs
4. Emergency Room Interventions
5. Victim Programs
6. Evening Reporting Centers
7. Notification Meetings

Suppression

1. Prosecution

Vertical Prosecution
PSN and Case Review

• Police

Directed Patrol – Intelligence Led Policing
Gun Focused Policing
Surveillance of Gang Members
Worst of the Worst

• Intelligence, Mapping and Tracking Systems

Valid and timely data bases of incidents and members
Real time incident maps

A Community Guide to Helping America's Youth

www.helpingamericasyouth.gov

Strategies to Address Gang Crime: A Guidebook for Local Law Enforcement

www.cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ResourceDetail.aspx?RID=459

Implementation Issues

Safe Futures (St. Louis, Boston, Fort Belknap, Imperial Valley, Costa Mesa, Seattle)

Five City Spergel Model (Mesa, Riverside, Bloomington, San Antonio, Tucson)

GRP (Milwaukee, East Los Angeles, Richmond, North Miami Beach)

Rural Gang Initiative

Implementation Challenges

- leadership

- funding

- agency cooperation and boundaries

- definitional issues

The St. Louis Safe Futures Experience

- Police fail to cooperate

- Most successful program is terminated by the church

- Control youth (no services) do better on arrest and juvenile court contact than program youth

- Failure to provide multiple services to youth (target was six per youth, mean was under two)

- Failure to screen outreach workers effectively

- Mayoral change

- Evaluation concludes, "It may be easier to change the behavior of youth who violate the law than the system that responds to those youth."

The Perils of Misunderstanding Gangs

Why is it important to understand gangs?
What errors does it lead us to make for policy, practice and programming if we misunderstand gangs?
Who suffers from such a misunderstanding?

Police.
Youth.
Youth Workers.
Society.
Gang members.
Family members.
Community.
Civic culture.



**Archbishop
Rigali . . .**

Welcome!



**CATHOLIC
CHARITIES
OF SAINT LOUIS**

**Sixty-two programs & agencies helping people in need
in the St. Louis Archdiocese.**