



## The California Cities Gang Prevention Network

Welcome to the sixth bulletin of the California Cities Gang Prevention Network! In addition to updating you regarding the recent work of your Network sponsors—the National League of Cities and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency—and recent activity in our partner cities that has been informed by this Network, this month we spotlight the efforts of three cities—San Diego, Santa Rosa, and Salinas—to intervene directly with gang-involved youth.

### ALERT

City leads will meet in San Jose on June 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007. If you are a city lead and have yet to RSVP, please contact Fabiana Silva at (510) 208-0500 x307 or [fsilva@sf.nccd-crc.org](mailto:fsilva@sf.nccd-crc.org) ASAP.

### NLC & NCCD ACTIVITIES

NLC's Jack Calhoun was asked to brief Governor Schwarzenegger's staff on April 3rd on the California Cities Gang Prevention Network. The meeting was chaired by Ross LaJeunesse, Deputy Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor to the Governor, along with four other staffers. The scheduled one-hour meeting stretched to a full 90 minutes. Calhoun shared various city-wide plans, quotes from recent mayoral speeches, and process results (e.g., Blue Ribbon Task Forces). He stressed each cities' commitment and willingness to expend effort, creativity, and funds to fight the gang issue, as well as the importance of a comprehensive city-wide plan to integrate prevention, intervention, and enforcement. Calhoun made the following recommendations:

- The Governor should take the state and national lead on the gang issue, as he has on the environment.

- The state needs to reconfigure its approach to gang prevention and should move toward supporting promising, comprehensive local efforts through numerous funding streams.
- There is a need for a quick action, such as an infusion of money to support summer jobs programs.

Jack Calhoun and NCCD's Angela Wolf spent the week of April 23<sup>rd</sup> conducting site visits in Los Angeles, Oxnard, and San Bernardino. This week, they will be visiting Oakland, Richmond, Sacramento, San Francisco, Santa Rosa, and Stockton. Site visits with the remaining cities are currently being scheduled. Calhoun, Wolf, and NCCD President Barry Krisberg met with the Network's funders on May 7<sup>th</sup> to review the Initiative's progress to date.

### CITY UPDATES – A quick sampling

We love to keep track of the activities of our participating cities. Please contact Fabiana Silva at (510) 208-0500 x307 or [fsilva@sf.nccd-crc.org](mailto:fsilva@sf.nccd-crc.org) with any news!

#### San Diego

Stop Gang-Related Violence in San Diego Now (Stop Now), an initiative of The San Diego Foundation and the City of San Diego, seeks to fund and provide capacity support to nonprofit community organizations with a track record of success in combating gang violence. This initiative sprung from strategic conversations between the City and the Foundation, which were informed by the work of this Network, as well as that of the City of San Diego Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention. For more information, please contact Lynn Sharpe-Underwood,

Executive Director, City of San Diego Commission On Gang Prevention and Intervention, by phone at (619) 236-5936 or by e-mail at [LSharpeUnderwood@sandiego.gov](mailto:LSharpeUnderwood@sandiego.gov).

### **Santa Rosa**

Santa Rosa has scheduled a 1/2-day gang prevention planning session in May. Ernesto Olivares, Manager of Santa Rosa's Gang Prevention and Intervention Services, shared that San Jose's Police Chief Robert Davis' speech at the Network's inaugural meeting, which stressed the importance of a city constantly re-evaluating its gang-related efforts, inspired this planning session. Olivares believes this session will be very helpful and is a sign of the willingness of city stakeholders to reprioritize and expand their efforts. The City Council's recently released goals for Fiscal Years 07/08 and 08/09 underscore the city's commitment and its desire to promote regional collaboration. Indeed, one of the stated goals is to develop regional gang prevention and intervention efforts. The Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force, Recreation and Parks, and Police will develop the specific action plan attached to this goal. For more information regarding Santa Rosa's work, please contact Ernesto Olivares by phone at (707) 543-3279 or by e-mail at [EOlivares@ci.santa-rosa.ca.us](mailto:EOlivares@ci.santa-rosa.ca.us).

### **Salinas**

Mayor Donohue's bold City at Peace speech, given on March 27<sup>th</sup>, stated that a great city was based on three key elements: Peace, Prosperity, and Image. As part of the Mayor's agenda of peace, he created the position of Community Safety Director, to which he appointed Trevor Iida, former Commander of the Salinas Police Department. Iida will work with city departments to see how they can incorporate preventative strategies into their operations and contribute to safer communities. Iida has already held a Town Hall meeting in an effort to hear from and involve citizens in the city's gang prevention initiative. Iida was pleased with the turnout and the quality of the dialogue regarding safety and gangs. The new position as well as the meeting resulted from the work that occurred during this Network's Inaugural meeting. For more information regarding these new efforts, please contact Trevor Iida at (831) 758-7999 or [trevori@ci.salinas.ca.us](mailto:trevori@ci.salinas.ca.us).

## **INTERVENING WITH GANG-INVOLVED YOUTH**

During the Network's inaugural meeting, participants expressed interest in learning more about existing programs that intervene with gang-involved youth. Below we spotlight three such programs in our participating cities:

### **California Youth Outreach**

California Youth Outreach (CYO) is a promising gang prevention and intervention organization, operating in San Jose, Fresno, and Oakland. CYO received the National Gang Crime Research Center's 2006 Thrasher Award for exemplary gang prevention and intervention programs. As part of this award, its Proud Parenting Program was designated as an exemplary program with proven effectiveness, replicable in other communities. CYO's founder and member of the Network's San Jose team, Pastor Tony Ortiz, was awarded the 2004 California Peace Prize Award.

California Youth Outreach aims to:

- Educate youth and young adults regarding the pitfalls of living a gang and drug lifestyle.
- Assist those that are looking to find their way out of a gang and drug lifestyle.
- Create alternatives that will enhance their "new" lifestyle.

### *Background*

In 1981, the Rev. Anthony Ortiz, an ex-gang member and ordained minister, founded Breakout Prison Outreach (Breakout Ministries) in order to meet the needs of gang- and/or drug-involved youth. The organization's name was later changed to California Youth Outreach in order to better reflect its mission. CYO has expanded its initial direct service work in California prisons and the Youth Authority, and now intervenes with gang-involved youth at an earlier stage.

California Youth Outreach is funded in part by the City of San Jose, the Santa Clara County Probation Department, the Fresno County Department of Education, and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

### *Programs*

Youth served by CYO's programs generally range from ages 13-21 (ages 22-25 for follow-up services). Central to CYO's work are its Youth Intervention Specialists (YIS) and mentors. YIS are individuals who have successfully moved away from the gang lifestyle, bringing first-hand knowledge of gang life to their relationships with the youth they serve. CYO mentors must be drug-free and have clean criminal histories. After first getting to know youth during weekly group mentoring activities and field trips, mentors are matched with youth with whom they feel a mutual connection. CYO staff receive extensive training in strategies for intervening with gang-involved youth. Some of the services provided by CYO include:

#### Restorative Justice Program

Funded by the Santa Clara County Probation Department, the Restorative Justice Program serves over 1,000 low-level offenders annually who are diverted from Santa Clara County's juvenile justice system. Depending on their offense and needs, youth are assigned to attend classes focused on vandalism and graffiti, violence, and/or drug/alcohol abuse. These 8-week classes are taught by CYO's Youth Intervention Specialists. After the classes, youth may enter CYO's Mentoring Program for another three months. The youth are assigned to do 50 to 100 hours of community service, such as city clean-ups, and may be referred to Gardener Counseling Center for group, individual, or family counseling.

#### Multi-agency Assessment Center (M.A.A.C.)

M.A.A.C. serves detained youth at Santa Clara's Juvenile Hall, and its girls' and boys' ranches. Services include weekly workshops, on issues such as Gang Intervention/Refusal Skills and Anger Management.

#### Proud Parenting Program

This program serves youth and young adults who are parents or are at-risk of becoming parents. It consists of a 12-week Survival Skills Curriculum focusing on helping youth develop the skills needed to remove themselves from a gang and substance dependency, and raise healthy children. Youth reside in Fresno and are referred by probation, schools, and the courts; CYA parolees are of special interest to the program.

### School-based Programs

These programs serve at-risk or gang-involved youth. They work to increase youth's school success and to promote positive alternatives to the gang and substance abuse dependent lifestyle. Youth work with mentors to set positive goals for themselves. Youth Intervention Specialists and CYO partners in the schools facilitate group discussions focused on violence awareness, resisting the gang lifestyle, substance abuse education, and problem solving.

#### San Jose B.E.S.T. Funded Programs

San Jose B.E.S.T., Bringing Everyone's Strengths Together, funded Adjudicated Youth Services, which aims to reduce recidivism by providing support to youth as they transition into the community from the criminal justice system, and City Wide Case Management, which assists at-risk youth in developing a lifestyle that is not dependent on gangs or substance abuse. Services include:

- A 90-day service plan tailored to the youth's service needs.
- One-on-one weekly meetings to review progress.
- Meetings with parents or guardians regarding the youth's progress, as needed.

Crisis intervention is also provided to youth in crisis, including assistance accessing shelters, food, and clothing.

To learn more about CYO, please contact Sandra at [cyooffice@cyoutreach.org](mailto:cyooffice@cyoutreach.org).

### **Second Chance**

Salinas' Second Chance aims to reduce gang violence in the Salinas Valley by directing at-risk youth toward healthy alternatives to a gang lifestyle. They seek to offer youth a second chance at life by promoting and presenting positive outlets for youth, without judging them for their past behavior.

### *Background*

Second Chance initially began as a response to youth violence spotlighted by a 1988 incident in which a family man was robbed, shot, and left to die as he was walking home. A group of teenagers was found to have

committed the crime, bringing much media attention and alerting the community to youth violence. With funding from private donors and local organizations such as the Salinas League of United Latin American Citizens, Second Chance began by conducting street outreach and providing counseling at youth's homes, with the understanding that youth without guidance and community could fall into a gang-involved lifestyle. In 1990, Second Chance won a bid issued by the City Council to provide gang prevention and intervention services.

According to Second Chance staff, a recent independent evaluation showed that youth on probation who received counseling services from Second Chance experienced a:

- 34% reduction in arrests after 6 months in the program;
- 66% reduction in new arrests after 12 months;
- 13% reduction in incarceration after 6 months;
- 28% citation rate for new offenses after 12 months, compared to a 66% citation rate among a comparison group.

#### *Services/Programs*

Second Chance provides services on the streets, in homes, and at schools. These services are provided by a bilingual, bicultural staff, trained in adolescent development and anti-gang intervention techniques. The organization serves anybody who expresses a desire to change. Counselors see themselves as a positive force that promotes alternatives to a gang-involved lifestyle, and steers youth toward positive paths. Services provided by Second Chance include the following:

- Counseling Services Program provides counseling in groups and one-on-one for youth and families.
- School-based Violence Reduction Program provides counseling to at-risk students.
- Tattoo Removal Assistance Program provides qualifying youth the opportunity to remove gang-related tattoos.
- Parent & Community Education Workshops provide the community ways to identify gang members and

activity, to encourage parents and the community to act to prevent the further escalation of gang involvement among the community's youth.

- Jazz-Up Program teaches youth to paint and provides opportunities for those mandated to perform community service as a condition of courts, school, or probation to paint low-income housing. Some of these youth are eventually hired to paint as part of a summer youth work program.

For more information about Second Chance, please contact Brian Contreras at [Brian@scyp.org](mailto:Brian@scyp.org).

#### **Mayor's Gang Prevention Initiative**

The Fresno Mayor's Gang Prevention Initiative (MGPI) in Fresno seeks to create an environment where gang members and "wannabe" gang members obtain educational services, job skills, and social skills to achieve success in a socially acceptable manner.

Although the Initiative is too new to have definitive outcomes, it has already generated considerable excitement around its effect on the youth and adults of Fresno and the large number of referrals attests to its popularity in the community.

#### *Background*

The Initiative, created in 2006 by the Fresno Police Department in cooperation with the city's Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department, was given a \$1.145 million budget for fiscal year 2006-2007 by the City Council. The four goals for the Initiative in Fiscal Year 2006-2007 are:

- Removing 50 validated gang members from the gang lifestyle.
- Preventing 120 wanna-be/associate level youth/adults from validation/escalating into full gang membership.
- Returning 80 "school drop-outs" who are validated or wanna-be/associate level youth/adult gang members back into the educational system.
- Facilitating the employment of 80 gang-involved individuals who have a desire to leave the gang lifestyle.

### *Services/Programs*

To achieve these four goals, the Initiative's caseworkers work with wanna-be and validated gang members. These gang members are self-referred or referred by parents, schools, internally through the Police Department, and by the Probation Department and State Parole Office. To be accepted into the program, potential clients have to express a desire to change and cannot currently face criminal charges. If they face such charges, their cases will be followed until they are eligible to participate in the program. To date, there have been 582 referrals to the Initiative; 177 of these youth and adults have been found ineligible. The MGPI staff process participants for a thorough needs assessment of those youth and adults accepted into the program. Based on their identified needs, participants are placed with local community service providers already working in the community. There are currently 82 service providers, offering mentoring, mental health care, parenting skills, vocational training, education, tattoo removal, substance abuse treatment, and anger management. Caseworkers have bi-monthly check-ins with clients, make sure they are attending their assigned services, provide some intervention services, and conduct post assessments. Mentors work with participants on a weekly basis in an effort to provide positive guidance in following through on their placements.

The Initiative is currently under the umbrella of the Police Department. Maggie Navarro, the Community Coordinator of the Initiative, believes that despite some initial concerns that youth and the community would be wary of an Initiative so closely aligned with the police department, the positive community feedback around the Initiative has allowed them to overcome this drawback. Furthermore, she believes that the link with the Police Department provides several benefits to the Initiative. The Police Department knows and has direct contact with the targeted population, thus facilitating information and referrals. The Initiative hopes to promote a more positive relationship between law enforcement, service providers, and the community. It is essential that enforcement and the service community are seen as partners in helping to create safer and better communities.

The Advisory Board, which consists of public and private representatives of local law enforcement, education, health, social services, community-based organizations, and businesses, will guide the Initiative's strategic planning. Additionally, a neighborhood component aims to identify local resources, serve as a community educational tool, provide an overview of the effects of gang violence, serve as a source of referrals to the Initiative, and allow residents to take leadership roles.

Questions about the Mayor's Gang Prevention Initiative should be directed to Maggie Navarro at [Maggie.Navarro@fresno.gov](mailto:Maggie.Navarro@fresno.gov).

The California Cities Gang Prevention Network Project is funded by grants from The California Endowment, The California Wellness Foundation (TCWF), the East Bay Community Foundation, and the Richmond Children's Fund. Created in 1992 as an independent, private foundation, TCWF's mission is to improve the health of the people of California by making grants for health promotion, wellness education, and disease prevention.

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