Preventing Youth Gang Violence in BC:
A Comprehensive and Coordinated Provincial Action Plan

UBCM Community Safety Forum
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Victim Services & Crime Prevention Division
302 – 815 Hornby Street,
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2E6
http://www.pssg.gov.BC.ca/victim_services
http://www.pssg.gov.BC.ca/community_programs
Overview of the Strategy

- Coordinated and implemented through collaborative partnerships with communities
- 4-year, multi-staged, community action model that is focused on:
  - building community capacity
  - supporting the direct efforts of local communities
The development of evidence-based, coordinated and integrated community plans in seven communities

Knowledge acquisition - the identification of effective practices for preventing youth gang violence
Several BC communities have reported an increased level of gang activity and violence:

- Over 100 South Asian males have been murdered over the past two decades, with more than 60 homicides since the beginning of 1999;
- Kidnapping offences in the Lower Mainland have increased;
- An increase in Aboriginal and Hispanic youth gang involvement and violence;
- Increase in youth possessing weapons (real and replica), sparked by gang activity.
Enforcement measures implemented:
- BC Integrated Gang Task Force
- Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit
- Violence Suppression Team

Rehabilitation measures (Courts):
- Intensive Support and Supervision Orders

Need for preventative measures with focus on younger ages – middle school years

Need for provincial coordination of activities to ensure effectiveness and to avoid duplication
Year 1 (06/07) and ongoing – Leadership, support and resources provided. Organizing community networks to submit proposals to develop action plans.

Year 1 and ongoing - Community networks supported to conduct needs assessments, inventory of current activities. Build on existing initiatives.

Year 2 (07/08) - Community networks develop integrated, collaborative community-led action plans. Focus on youth engagement and targeting risk/protective factors.

Year 3 (08/09) - Partnerships solidified. Community action plans implemented.

Year 4 (2010) and prior - Evaluation, sustainability planning. Development of provincial communications strategy and evidence-based prevention resources and tools. Wrapping up with a provincial conference.

Updated: June 20th, 2007
Vancouver (Urban Aboriginal): Partnering with the Vancouver Aboriginal-Youth Police Working Group through the Vancouver Aboriginal Community Policing Centre Society.

Vancouver School Board: To develop School-based preventative measures.

Surrey: Partnering with the School District, RCMP, City of Surrey and Youth Probation

South Asian Community (Lower Mainland): Partnering with MOSAIC and South Asian Community Coalition Against Youth Violence (SACCAYV)

Abbotsford: Led by Abbotsford Community Services with Abbotsford Youth Commission and Abbotsford Police Department

Richmond: Partnership with Touchstone Family Association and the RCMP

Kamloops (Rural/Urban Aboriginal): City of Kamloops in partnership with the RCMP and three area First Nations Bands (Kamloops, Skeetchetsn and Whispering Pines)
Community Engagement & Selection

- **Level of Need:** Targeting prevention in areas that are high needs, hot spots - where known, identified gang activity exists.

- **Level of Risk:** Communities that are at higher risk, greater vulnerability due to risk factors (e.g. socio-economic, history of racism, role of media, school experiences, cross-cultural barriers, lack of opportunities).

- Criteria includes building community capacity, strengths-based, positive youth development/engagement, collaboration, local government support.
2 Provincial Community Coordinators
- Coordinate information sharing, networking
- Identify and disseminate research and resources
- Attend all CAAN meetings serving as a liaison between community activities and the Provincial Strategy

Contracted evaluator
- To work with the Province and Communities throughout the strategy
- Key learnings inform the evolution of the strategy
Research into effective practices for the prevention of youth gang violence
- Conducted by Dr. Mark Totten
- Examining best/promising practices internationally
  - What works? What doesn’t work?
  - What are the elements of these practices that can be applied to the BC context?

Dissemination of existing tools and resources
- Print/Multimedia Resources
Youth Gang Violence Training Day
Electronic Learning Module – Youth Gang Associated Behaviour and Prevention Strategies
Information Sheet (Province-wide distribution)
Youth Against Violence Line Promotion
Youth Against Gang Violence Media Campaign
Research & Knowledge Acquisition (emerging issue) - Latin American gangs, their international nature and implications for BC and Canada
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