



Suburban King County Coordinating Council on Gangs

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Comprehensive Gang Model

MODEL OVERVIEW

In 1987, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), a division of the U.S. Department of Justice, began designing a comprehensive approach to reduce and prevent youth gang violence. This effort resulted in the development and adoption of the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model (CGM). This model is now used as a national best practice for gang intervention and prevention throughout many communities in the United States. The CGM assumes that many factors contribute to gang involvement. These include: poverty, lack of education and opportunity, socio-economic and geographic status, family histories of violence and trauma, and drug and alcohol use. The CGM posits that successful reduction in gang violence must be based on a theoretical understanding of gangs, as well as monitored data collection and evaluation of many different types and scales of interventions. The CGM includes five key strategies to address gang-involved youth and families. Communities committed to implementing the CGM are encouraged to use a combination of all five strategies in order to achieve a comprehensive, sustainable result. Each strategy is briefly outlined below. In addition to these strategies, the CGM encourages communities use both policy change and direct service provision to create multidisciplinary partnerships and leverage existing programs and resources to better serve the affected population.

FIVE STRATEGIES

I. COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

Community mobilization is the act of mobilizing members of a community around an issue. This CGM strategy requires participation of agencies and organizations that work with youth grassroots and cultural community groups, community members, parents, and youth. In order to begin this process, the model recommends that participating communities form a steering committee. This group is comprised of key organizational and community leaders representative of the larger population. The steering committee serves as the governing body of the project, and works to define the gang problem, develop a plan to address the problem, and implement the project.

II. OPPORTUNITIES PROVISION

Gang-involved youth and families need viable opportunities as a positive alternative to gang involvement and associated violence. The CGM encourages communities to establish realistic plans and strategies to provide education, training, and job prospects. These strategies are to be integrated with existing social service activities such as mental health or substance abuse counseling. Community agencies and grassroots organizations play a key role in providing services such as tutoring, mentoring, apprenticeships, and job development and placement.

III. SOCIAL INTERVENTION

The CGM conducts social intervention through implementation of a multidisciplinary Intervention Team. This Team works to provide coordinated service delivery to gang-involved youth and families. Community agencies, Law enforcement, service providers, school representatives, probation staff and others are active participants in this team approach. The Team works together to leverage existing agency resources and provide or refer clients

to services such as such as tutoring and credit retrieval, internships and job placement, drug and alcohol counseling, and extracurricular activities such as arts workshops and sports. The CGM brings many youth-serving organizations together in a regularly-scheduled Intervention Team meeting. Team members review and enroll new referrals, create coordinated case management plans and ensures that clients benefit from an organized and well-documented network of coordinated services.

Street Outreach staff are key members of the Intervention Team. Outreach workers connect face to face with hard-to-serve youth and function as a liaison between clients and team members. The outreach staff's role is to identify a client's needs and goals, provide mentorship, coordinate crisis responses to violence, assist the family in meeting basic needs and addressing conflict, and participate in team based case management provided by the intervention team. The main goal of Street Outreach staff is to advocate for clients and help them progress toward meeting their goals.

IV. SUPPRESSION

In the context of the CGM, suppression closely resembles community policing, and includes formal and informal methods. Law enforcement works collaboratively with the Intervention Team to address safety concerns and collect data on gang related incidents consistently. Local law enforcement is also involved in ongoing gang crime data collection and analysis, joint police and community activities and continuing professional development.

V. ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

Organizational change and development requires that policies and practices of key organizations, especially those represented on the Intervention Team and Steering Committee, conform to the goals and objectives of the CGM. Developing and adapting policies and practices to become more inclusive and community-oriented ensures the optimal use of agency resources. Key organization change and development strategies include legislative change, re-entry policy reform, uniform data collection across agencies and increased collaboration and resource sharing.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to successfully implement the CGM, the community must acknowledge and commit to addressing an existing gang issue. Next a lead agency is chosen and a Steering Committee comprised of elected officials, policy makers, school superintendents, community leaders, service agency directors and Law Enforcement leaders is convened. The Steering Committee serves as the governing body for the project and guides all project activities and policy decisions. In the initial stage of implementation the lead agency or research partner will conduct a thorough assessment to understand the nature and scope of the current issues faced by the community. Based on the key findings of the community assessment, the Steering Committee and other representatives will develop a comprehensive plan that incorporates all five strategies of the model to address the problem. The Intervention Team is a key component of this comprehensive plan, and supplements the policy initiatives of the model with the provision of targeted direct service to gang-involved youth and families. In order to evaluate success and inform future project efforts, the community must conduct ongoing evaluation of model implementation and outcome data. For further information please visit <http://ccyj.org/initiatives/council-on-gangs/>, or contact Anica Stieve, SKCCCG Project Manager at astieve@ccyj.org.