



Youth Gang Prevention

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Overview of Presentation

- National Crime Prevention Centre
- Youth Gang Prevention Fund
- Examples of Projects
- Key Ingredients for Success
- Moving Forward



National Crime Prevention Centre

- Established in 1998 (Department of Justice/Solicitor General)
- Currently within the Community Safety and Partnerships Branch, Public Safety Canada
- NHQ in Ottawa and 6 Regional Offices (Staff: 85; Budget: \$63M)
- Policy analysis and advice; program management; research, evaluation and knowledge dissemination
- Administers the National Crime Prevention Strategy, working closely with the Provinces and Territories



NCPC Directions

Mission statement:

to provide national leadership on effective and cost-efficient ways to both prevent and reduce crime by addressing known risk factors in high risk populations and places

Core activities:

- supporting targeted interventions in local communities
- building and sharing practical knowledge with policy makers and practitioners



NCPC Priorities

- Children and youth at risk
- Priority crime issues (youth gang, drug-related crimes)
- Crime prevention in Aboriginal communities
- Prevent recidivism among high-risk groups



Why Youth Gangs?

- Gang members commit a variety of offences (e.g. assault, drive-by shooting, selling drugs, intimidation, robbery and homicide)
- Gang members commit a disproportionate number of offences, and commit serious and violent offences at a higher rate
- Gang-related homicides increased in 2008: 138 homicides reported by police to have been gang-related, an increase of 20 over previous year



Youth Gang Prevention Fund

- The Youth Gang Prevention Fund (YGPF) was created in January 2007 to address the specific risk factors associated with youth violence and gang membership and to provide alternatives to gangs for youth
- The YPGF provides time-limited funding for evidence-based promising or model prevention initiatives in communities where youth gangs are an existing or emerging threat
- Under this fund, the National Crime Prevention Centre works with the provinces and territories to identify municipalities and community-based organizations that are tackling gang issues, and provides grants/contributions to support youth gang prevention



Youth Gang Prevention Fund

This Fund allows the NCPC to:

- clearly identify the parameters for funding including the desired outcomes and the measurement of results and change for the identified risk factors
- focus efforts on disseminating specific knowledge, tools and resources to Canadians so that they can plan and implement the best possible activities and approaches for gang prevention
- deliver results and develop expertise on how to deal with youth gang issues by supporting rigorous third party evaluations of funded projects



Youth Gang Prevention Fund

- 19 projects have been funded under the YGPF in cities across the country
- These projects have reached over 1400 at-risk youth from communities that have been identified as having a current or emerging youth gang issue. Participants are generally between the ages of 12 to 24
- Funded projects are based on intervention models that have shown positive results in the U.S., and that have been adapted to the Canadian context. Interventions with the youth include mentorship, substance abuse prevention, and educational and job support



Youth Gang Prevention Fund

- The 2009 Interim Evaluation Report of the Youth Gang Prevention Fund concluded that:
 - Canada's youth gang problem has escalated and continues to escalate
 - At-risk youth are using the services offered through the YGPF
 - Positive changes related to risk factors have been observed among YGPF recipients
 - The YGPF is not being duplicated elsewhere by other levels of government, and
 - The YGPF is in line with current government priorities



Examples of NCPC funded Youth Gang Prevention Projects

- **Wraparound Surrey** (Board of Education Surrey School District #36), in Surrey, B.C., provides pro-social alternatives for youth at-risk of gang involvement, youth displaying gang associated behaviours, and those currently involved in gangs.
- The project offers supports that enhance social and problem solving skills to prevent youth from joining gangs and to assist them in exiting gangs.
- Program components include a detailed assessment and individualized care plan in which the participant is essentially “wrapped” in community supports and services.
- Partners include: City of Surrey, Surrey Gang Task Force, Surrey RCMP, YMCA, Surrey Youth Justice Services.



Examples of NCPC funded Youth Gang Prevention Projects

- **Youth at Risk Development Program** (City of Calgary Community & Neighbourhood Services and the Calgary Police Services), in Calgary, AB, is an early intervention program that supports at-risk youth aged 10-17.
- The project provides individual, coordinated and managed interventions that empower youth to make positive choices and recognize alternative solutions by involving the entire family.
- Program components include a detailed assessment and individualized service and case management plans.
- Partners include: Boys and Girls Club of Canada, Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Catholic School District, Calgary Housing Calgary Transit, Native Counselling Services of Alberta and YMCA.



Examples of NCPC funded Youth Gang Prevention Projects

- **Regina Anti-Gang Services** (North Central Community Association), in Regina, SK, works with gang-involved Aboriginal youth and young adults to reduce criminal activity committed by Aboriginal gang members.
- The project provides intensive support services to reduce involvement in gang life and to facilitate leaving gangs.
- Program components include intensive counselling, life skills/cognitive skills, cultural/faith-based programming, outreach, family programming and gang exit strategies.
- Partners include: Regina Police Service, Regina Board of Education, Saskatchewan Department of Corrections and Public Safety, Regina Aids Foundation, Canadian Heritage and Service Canada.



Examples of NCPC funded Youth Gang Prevention Projects

- **Project Prevention and Intervention Toronto (P.I.T)** (City of Toronto Social Development, Finance and Administration), in Toronto, ON., works with youth aged 13-24 at-risk of gang involvement, youth displaying gang associated behaviours, and those currently involved in gangs.
- The project provides individual, coordinated and managed interventions that empower youth to make positive choices and recognize alternative solutions.
- Program components include a detailed assessment and individualized service and case management plans.
- Partners include: the University of Toronto, the Canadian Training Institute, Toronto Youth Cabinet, Toronto Police Service, Toronto Community Housing, Toronto Public Health, and Jewish Vocational Services.



Moving Forward

- The provinces and territories have expressed a continued interest in YGPF and have established a youth gang prevention sub-committee of the Federal Provincial and Territorial Working Group on Crime Prevention and Community Safety
- A review of print media focused on youth gangs undertaken by the NCPC reveals that coverage of youth gangs and youth gang related violence has increased in the last two years



Moving Forward (Cont.)

- Certain researchers have suggested that Aboriginal gangs in the Prairie region may reach epidemic proportions due to the relative youth of the Aboriginal population as well as the disproportionate number of risk factors present in many Aboriginal communities
- Researchers have also highlighted that there is a growing number of female gang members especially in the Prairie region



Youth Gang Prevention

- The Government is committed to the continued reduction of crime and victimization
- Evidence-based crime prevention is an effective and cost-efficient approach to reducing the likelihood of offending among at-risk groups of the population
- Effective prevention is one of the surest ways to reduce victimization



Youth Gang Prevention

For more detailed information on youth gang prevention projects funded by the NCPC please see the publication:

Crime Prevention in Action: Youth Gang Prevention Fund

www.publicsafety.gc.ca

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