Public Safety Canada | Sécurité publique Canada

ARCHIVED - Archiving Content

ARCHIVÉE - Contenu archivé

Archived Content

Information identified as archived is provided for reference, research or recordkeeping purposes. It is not subject to the Government of Canada Web Standards and has not been altered or updated since it was archived. Please contact us to request a format other than those available.

Contenu archivé

L'information dont il est indiqué qu'elle est archivée est fournie à des fins de référence, de recherche ou de tenue de documents. Elle n'est pas assujettie aux normes Web du gouvernement du Canada et elle n'a pas été modifiée ou mise à jour depuis son archivage. Pour obtenir cette information dans un autre format, veuillez communiquer avec nous.

This document is archival in nature and is intended for those who wish to consult archival documents made available from the collection of Public Safety Canada.

Some of these documents are available in only one official language. Translation, to be provided by Public Safety Canada, is available upon request.

Le présent document a une valeur archivistique et fait partie des documents d'archives rendus disponibles par Sécurité publique Canada à ceux qui souhaitent consulter ces documents issus de sa collection.

Certains de ces documents ne sont disponibles que dans une langue officielle. Sécurité publique Canada fournira une traduction sur demande.

Canada

Taking Action Together:
Addressing Gangs in Our City

Recommendations Report

Report Date: November 26, 2012

CRIME PREVENTION OTTAWA / PRÉVENTION DU CRIME OTTAWA

2002–2012 OCH LCO

OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA
Working together for a safer community
La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe

YOUTH SERVICES JEUNESSE

Table of Contents

1 Event Overview....3

2 Key Messages....4

3 Recommendations....4

3.1 Guiding Principles.... 4

3.2 Systemic Recommendations.... 5

3.3 Thematic Recommendations.... 6

4 Next Steps....8

Report prepared by:

Custom Made Solutions That Help You Succeed
275 Slater Street, Suite 1001, Ottawa, ON K1P 5H9
tel (613) 236-3333 / fax (613) 236.4440
www.lansdowne.com

1 Event Overview

In October 2012, the Ottawa Police Service, Crime Prevention Ottawa, the Youth Services Bureau, and Ottawa Community Housing co-hosted a Public Forum and a Leadership Symposium "*Taking Action Together: Addressing Gangs in Our City*" with the aim to engage community members and stakeholders to collectively propose strategies to address gangs in Ottawa.

The Public Forum was held at Ottawa City Hall on October 17 and was attended by over 220 members of the public and community stakeholders. Participants heard from Ottawa Police Service and Crime Prevention Ottawa that provided background information, the local landscape and an assessment of the current state of gangs in the City of Ottawa. They also heard a personal account from Jabari Lindsay of the Toronto experience and their programs dealing with gang members at its grass roots.

The Leadership Symposium was held the following day and had over 150 community stakeholders in attendance. Participants heard from Ottawa Police Service, Crime Prevention Ottawa, the Justice System and Academia.

The Public Forum and subsequent Leadership Symposium built on five key themes that together start to define the complexity and the multiple facets of this issue. These are:

- Working with families for prevention
- Identification of those at risk of gang involvement
- Building a trusting relationship between the community and police
- Intervention and service coordination for high risk children and youth
- Exit strategies, especially for 18 years and over

Through a series of breakout sessions, the Symposium addressed each of these themes, and the 150 participating community members shared their perspectives and insights to:

- better understand the current situation and key issues in our community;
- envision desired outcomes; and
- propose strategies to address these issues, collectively.

Following each event, participants were further consulted through an online consultation, which reaffirmed the discussion held at both the Public Forum and the Leadership Symposium.

2 Key Messages

A number of common messages emerged from the comments most frequently cited during the two events and the online surveys. These stem from both the panels and the community inputs, and are listed below (in no particular order):

- An approach which engages the community as a partner in addressing the problems and finding solutions – "*this is not a problem we can arrest our way out of" – OPS Chief*
- Collaboration and partnerships between all community stakeholders is required and would be enabled through a shared understanding of existing stakeholder resources and roles and responsibilities
- Increased efforts in prevention are required, with an emphasis on early identification and early intervention
- Efforts should be youth centered, culturally responsive, and grassroots to align with individual, family and community needs
- Exit strategies should include an assessment of individual and family needs, skills development and provision of meaningful opportunities
- Multi-level government efforts are required to build a shared vision and a common framework for addressing gangs in our communities and for leveraging successes
- A coordinated, resourced and sustainable effort is needed, which could include common assessment tools, clear agreement for sharing information, seamless referral processes, and a common set of outcomes

3 Recommendations

3.1 Guiding Principles

It is recommended that a set of Guiding Principles (GP) be defined to reflect the beliefs and assumptions that will guide our collective response to gangs. These proposed principles emerged during the Public Forum and the Leadership Symposium as the community engaged in open and frank dialogue. It is suggested that subsequent recommendations and future action embrace at least one or more of these guiding principles. These include (in no particular order):

1 **Youth centered** – apply a needs-based approach driven by the needs of children and youth at risk and their affected families

2 **Youth engagement** – ensure that youth are given opportunities to provide their perspective on the issues that affect them, and are empowered to take a leadership role in shaping the services that best suit their needs

3 **Family engagement** – work in partnership with families to identify and address the needs of children and youth at risk or wanting to exit

4 **Community-based** – initiatives should recognize the unique needs of communities and foster youth, family and community engagement to develop and deliver grassroots, community led prevention and intervention solutions that reflect unique community needs and that are culturally responsive

5 **Evidence-based/risk-based/results-focused** – proven initiatives and successes should be identified and leveraged to encourage similar initiatives adapted to our community needs based on our shared assessment of risk. Initiatives undertaken by stakeholders should be evaluated for impact

6 **Integration, collaboration and partnerships** – foster a collective effort and multi-disciplinary collaboration through partnerships among community, police, all levels of government and agencies, where results are far greater than any one organization could provide independently. A coordinated and horizontally integrated approach is required to address the multi-faceted issues pertaining to community safety and broader youth issues such as metal health, addiction, youth violence, and family violence.

7 **Information sharing** – foster an openness to lawful and appropriate sharing of information between individuals and organizations in a timely and accurate manner

8 **Increased investment in prevention** – shift resources (funding and human resources) to proactive measures (evidence-based prevention) from reactive measures (intervention and enforcement)

3.2 Systemic Recommendations

Systemic recommendations (SR) are intended to lay the foundation for an overarching and horizontally integrated approach to addressing gangs in our city. These draw from the outcomes of the consultation, the work currently underway in our community, and reflect on best practices and lessons learned from other communities in their efforts to address gangs.

1. Clarify leadership and community stakeholders' roles and responsibilities (e.g. schools, police, and agencies).

2. Build from the holistic framework developed by the Ottawa Youth Gang Prevention Initiative (OYGPI) and adequately resource the OYGPI as the vehicle to:
    - Develop a common vision, guiding principles, goals, strategic directions, and outcomes
    - Define leadership and stakeholder roles and responsibilities within the framework
    - Coordinate the execution of the framework

3. Adopt a community-wide risk identification protocol

4. Adopt a case management approach (post identification of those at risk) with:
    - A formal partnership between community partners
    - Established agreements and protocols for lawful, appropriate and timely information sharing

- A personalized approach to intervention (prevention or exit)
- A common methodology for identifying needs and an integrated approach to addressing those needs
- Shared training to improve the communication between partners and build a stronger network

5. Advocate for increased investment from all levels of government in proven strategies for prevention and exit focused on individual, family and community needs at the grassroots.

3.3 Thematic Recommendations

The following set of thematic recommendations are derived from the 28 proposed strategies that emerged from the Leadership Symposium, which were prioritized by the participants based on what the community believes would have the greatest impact on addressing gangs in our city. All recommendations proposed at the Leadership Symposium are documented in the *Record of Proceedings*. These represent the top two recommendations, by theme. Note that if a recommendation is addressed, in whole or in part, in the Guiding Principles (GP) or the Systemic Recommendations (SR), a cross-reference is provided.

Theme	**Proposed Strategies of highest priority by theme**	**Guiding Principles (GP) addressed**	**Systemic Recommend-ations (SR) addressed**
Working with families for prevention	• Create information and support networks for parents before problems arise (e.g. addictions, mental health, justice, integration services)	GP1, GP2, GP3, GP4, GP5, GP8	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5
	• Invest in the creation of community intervention teams to support the needs of families	GP1, GP2, GP3, GP4, GP6, GP7	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5
Identification of those at risk of gang involvement	• Develop formal protocols and partnerships for identifying and working with youth with complex needs	GP1, GP3, GP4, GP5, GP6, GP7	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5
	• Shared training to improve communication and opportunities to connect	GP5, GP6, GP7	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5

Theme	Proposed Strategies of highest priority by theme	Guiding Principles (GP) addressed	Systemic Recommend-ations (SR) addressed
Intervention and service coordination for high risk children and youth	• Encourage the development of sustainable youth and community engagement strategies using a youth centred approach	GP1, GP2, GP3, GP4, GP5, GP6, GP7, GP8	SR2, SR5
	• Build on existing approaches, successes and leverage resources through improved service coordination	GP5, GP6, GP7, GP8	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5
Building a trusting relationship between the community and police	• Develop strategies for building an improved and sustained trust-based relationship, in particular after a high impact incident, and enhanced communications between the community and police (e.g. improve overall communication and specifically post-response communication	GP1, GP2, GP3, GP4, GP5, GP6, GP7	SR1, SR2, SR4, SR5
	• Look for positive opportunities to engage in dialogue. In particular, involve youth	GP1, GP2, GP5, GP6, GP7	SR1, SR2, SR4, SR5
Exit strategies, especially for 18 years and over	• Build an asset based approach to skills development and meaningful opportunity	GP1, GP2, GP3, GP4, GP5	SR2, SR3, SR5
	• Improved sharing of information and enhanced communication at a systems level with better sharing of information among and between organizations and agencies to break down silos	GP5, GP6, GP7	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR5

4 Next Steps

As the co-hosts of the Public Forum and Leadership Symposium, Ottawa Police Service, Crime Prevention Ottawa, the Youth Services Bureau, and Ottawa Community Housing commit to reviewing the recommendations in this report and set the course for a sustainable, long term approach to improving the way we take action to address gangs in our city. In addition, immediate next steps have been identified that align with the highest priority recommendations identified by the Leadership Symposium participants, as follows:

- Crime Prevention Ottawa will fund the development and delivery of training for diverse community leaders to increase cross cultural awareness of existing services and to increase understanding of institutions such as the justice system. The goal will be to empower local leaders to be a community resource who can make connections and reduce barriers. The grant of $60,000 will be allocated to LASI-WorldSkills, part of the coalition of Local Agencies Serving Immigrants. Timeline: Starting immediately and continuing for 18 months.

- Youth Services Bureau, in partnership with Ottawa Police Service, Crime Prevention Ottawa will host a shared training event for service agencies and community-based organizations on the identification of those at risk of gang involvement based on the Toronto experience and building on the positive reception of Mr. Jabari Lindsay at the Public Forum. Timeline: Q1 2013

- Building on an existing program to meet with individuals who are in conflict with the law or in custody and about to reintegrate in the community, the Youth Services Bureau will expand its program to include the engagement of Ottawa Police Service with the community leaders, family members, mentors, and other youth services organizations with the aim of building a trusted relationship between at risk youth, their family and support network, and a community police officer. Timeline: Q1 2013

CRIME PREVENTION OTTAWA / PRÉVENTION DU CRIME OTTAWA

www.crimepreventionottawa.ca

2002–2012 OCH LCO

www.och.ca

OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA
Working together for a safer community
La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe

ottawapolice.ca

YOUTH SERVICES JEUNESSE

www.ysb.on.ca