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Institut pour la prévention de la criminalité
Institute for the Prevention of Crime

uOttawa

WORKSHOP REPORT:

DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO CRIMINAL YOUTH GANGS

March 9, 2010

Ross Hastings

Institute for the Prevention of Crime

University of Ottawa

March 2010

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3. Literature on Criminal Youth Gangs in Canada: Preliminary Bibliography, 2000-2010. Laura Dunbar and Melanie Bania, Institute for the Prevention of Crime, University of Ottawa (Summary only – the full report is available at: www.ipc.uottawa.ca)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of this workshop was to contribute to the development of a national strategy to address the issue of criminal youth gangs in Canada.

The workshop built on two recent reports published by the Institute for the Prevention of Crime at the University of Ottawa: *Building a Safer Canada* (National Working Group on Crime Prevention, 2007) and *Effective Planning for Crime Prevention* (Hastings, 2009). Together, they describe the elements of a comprehensive national crime prevention strategy and the steps involved in designing and implementing such an approach. The workshop used the planning framework and processes identified in these two reports, and applied them to the challenge of imagining a comprehensive response to the issues of youth gangs, crime and violence.

The workshop focused on three main issues:

1. Describing and discussing different approaches to defining the problem of criminal youth gangs. This involved an attempt to come to grips with the different ways of defining our objectives in this regard and to identify some measures and indicators of success we could use to assess our progress. The key theme that emerged in this area is the need to go beyond a focus on enforcement and suppression and on individual intervention – we must also incorporate a strength-based approach in our responses to youth gangs.

2. Imagining the dimensions of a comprehensive action plan and exploring some of the successes and the challenges faced by a few examples of current initiatives in this domain. The key theme in this section is the need to go beyond individual initiatives to a more holistic and integrated approach to youth gangs, and to the multiple risk and protective factors that are associated with this phenomenon.

3. Exploring the challenges of governing and administering comprehensive initiatives, with a particular emphasis on the roles and tasks of responsibility centres. The key theme in this section is the need to design a national strategy that recognizes the responsibilities of different orders of government and different sectors and agencies while, at the same time, providing the supports necessary for effective local planning and action.

The workshop concluded by exploring some avenues for supporting research on evidence-based approaches to problem-solving in the area of criminal youth gangs, and for developing networks of researchers and practitioners who are involved in this area. There was general agreement that this type of meeting was useful, and a hope that there would be opportunities to continue this conversation in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**REPORT ON THE WORKSHOP ON
DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO
CRIMINAL YOUTH GANGS
March 9, 2010**

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this workshop was to contribute to the development of a national strategy on criminal youth gangs, with a specific focus on those youth who are involved with the criminal justice system or who are at high risk of becoming so. More specifically, the workshop had two main objectives:

➢ To describe and test a strategic planning process for developing comprehensive problem-solving initiatives.

➢ To apply this process to the issue of youth gangs. In order to provide some focus for the discussion, the Ottawa Youth Gang Prevention Initiative (OYGPI) was used as a case in point and as a reference for our discussions.

1.1 Overview of the workshop

The first presentation was by Ross Hastings, Director of the Institute for the Prevention of Crime and one of the organizers of the workshop[1] Hastings indicated that the workshop built on two recent reports published by the Institute for the Prevention of Crime IPC) at the University of Ottawa. The first of these, by the National Working Group on Crime Prevention (2007) is entitled *Building a Safer Canada*). It focuses on identifying the required elements of a crime prevention strategy, and on assessing the current state of the situation in Canada. The second, *Effective Planning for Crime Prevention* identifies the key steps in designing a crime prevention initiative and describes some of the knowledge, skills and resources required to plan effectively.

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[1] Copies of all the documents and presentations mentioned in this report are available on the web site of the Institute for the Prevention of Crime at: www.*ipc.uottawa.ca*

Together, these reports argue that an effective strategic planning process must include:

1. An action plan that identifies the goals of the strategy (with measurable success and benchmark indicators), specifies the means to achieve these goals, and sets in place a network of responsibility centres to assure support, collaboration and problem-solving partnerships and accountability mechanisms.
2. The willingness and the ability to concentrate investments where needs are greatest.
3. A commitment to using evidence-based approaches in all aspects of planning and implementing the strategy.
4. Adequate and sustained supports and resources – especially for local communities
5. Public support and engagement in all aspects of the process.

This workshop used the framework and the planning process described in these reports, and applied them to the specific problem area of criminal youth gangs. The workshop was organized along the lines of a problem-solving exercise (see Diagram 1 below). The basic idea is that success will depend on the capacity of an initiative to successfully cope with the challenges posed at each of the four main phases of the project. The first two phases require agreement on the definition of the problem and on its causes, and on which of the relevant causal factors should be addressed as a priority. The third phase requires a capacity to apply evidence-based knowledge from research and practice to the design and delivery of a comprehensive response. The final phase involves an evaluation of the effectiveness of the response and of its efficiency in terms of the use of resources.

Diagram 1: The Problem-Solving Process
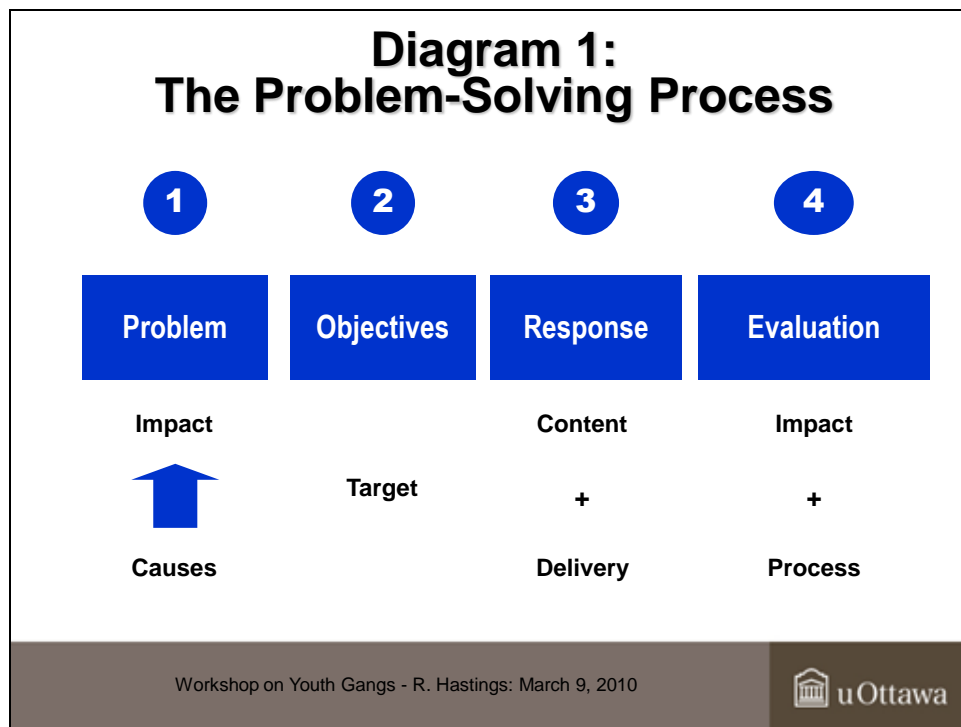
This general approach was then applied to the case of criminal youth gangs. Hastings argued that prevention initiatives should focus on the causes of gang membership and gang behaviour, and not just on the criminal behaviours that are symptoms or results of participation in gangs. This is in no way to argue against the need for an effective enforcement response to gang-based criminality - the justice system has an essential role to play in this regard. Rather, the point is that there are limits to the capacity of the criminal justice system, in terms of resources and especially in terms of mandates, to address the multiple risk factors that predispose youth to join gangs. Moreover, the justice system can do relatively little to provide alternative outlets or options that assure some of the same benefits that youth seek through gang membership.

Hastings then proposed that one way of approaching such a challenge was to think of youth who join gangs as following a career path that involves at least three basic stages (see Diagram 2 below). The first is the "before" phase: the concern here is to identify the individual, relational, local and structural risk and protective factors associated with gang membership, and to deliver effective programs to those youth most at risk of joining gangs. The second stage begins with the decision to join a gang. The focus here is on the gang as a collective solution to individual problems, one that provides some benefits to the individual members. The problem of course is that gang membership can encourage, facilitate and even require criminal activity, some of which may involve violence. Many of those youth involved in crime and violence will eventually come to the attention of the justice system. The third and final phase involves exiting from the gang. The challenge is to provide the youth with options or incentives that give them some of the same benefits as gang membership and that encourage them to avoid crime and violence.

Diagram 2:
Youth Gangs and Career Paths

BEFORE * GANG INVOLVED * EXIT

COLLECTIVE SOLUTIONS

CRIME/ VIOLENCE

YOUTH JUSTICE

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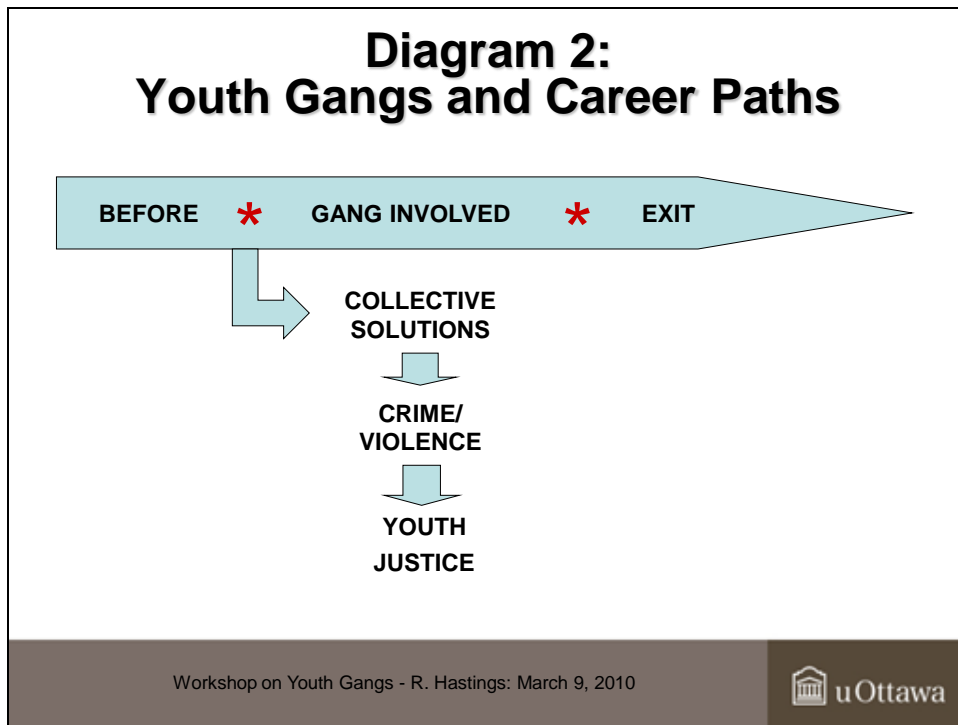
The basic idea here is to avoid limiting our approach to a problem by over-emphasizing reactive solutions – these focus primarily on those individuals who come to the attention of the criminal justice system and attempt to deter or incapacitate them. One advantage of this alternative approach is that it is "problem-based" – it starts with the identification of the problem and the key elements of a solution, and only then does it start asking which actors or institutions might be best suited to deliver such interventions.

Gord Boyd and Mike Justinich, the Co-chairs of the *Ottawa Youth Gang Prevention Initiative* (OYGPI) then gave a presentation that described the initiative and its progress to-date, and discussed some of the concerns they are facing. The OYGPI aims to develop a collaborative, holistic, evidence-based approach to youth gang prevention, one that also meaningfully engages and empowers youth in all aspects of the process. The four components of the approach are healthy neighbourhood cohesion, prevention, intervention and suppression. The OYGPI will attempt to deliver these components to a number (6) of defined priority areas. The experience of the OYGPI to-date, and the challenges they are facing, provided the participants with a concrete example around which to frame much of the discussions to follow.

In the exchange that followed, the participants raised a few other issues of concern. To begin, it was pointed out that it was imperative to recognize the realities and the experiences of young women who are affected by gangs or gang-involved. Our responses must be responsive to their realities and their needs. Another concern was raised about the importance of working with the families and communities involved and being responsive to their concerns. This will require that our planning processes be sensitive to the relative capacities of different communities to mobilize effectively for action and that they allow the time necessary for communities to become involved on their own terms.

The rest of the workshop was organized around three questions relevant to this type of problem-solving exercise:

1. How do we define the problem of youth gangs, and how can we come to grips with the challenges they pose?
2. Are there examples of comprehensive action plans that might serve to inspire our work?
3. How can we govern and administer such complex initiatives?

2. DEFINING THE PROBLEM AND COMING TO GRIPS WITH THE CHALLENGE

One of the major challenges in any area of crime prevention is to develop a common language and a shared set of indicators to identify the problem and assess the situation. There is general agreement that gangs are a problem, but there is no consensus over the definition of a criminal youth gang or the motives that lead youth to join a gang (or to want to leave one). There is even less certainty over what programs work, or at least show promise, in achieving desired outcomes.

We asked Scot Wortley of the Centre of Criminology at the University of Toronto to lead the discussion in this area. His presentation was entitled *Setting the agenda: Defining gangs and gang related violence in the Canadian context.*

One of Professor Wortley's main themes is that the absence of standardized definitions of what we mean by gangs and gang criminality or violence makes it hard to measure what exactly is going on or to assess whether the problem is getting worse (or whether public concern reflects media coverage and gang imagery in popular culture). The definitional issue reflects a lack of agreement on basic questions such as the number of members required to constitute a gang, the stability or duration of activities, territorial boundaries, level of organization, identifiers and the link to involvement in criminal activity. The point is that decisions on definitional criteria will greatly influence estimates of gang membership and gang activities. It is also worth noting that different groups may prefer different definitional criteria in order to advance their own interests.

There are three main approaches to measuring the gang phenomenon: police intelligence, self-identification by youth and academic research. Professor Wortley's work has favoured the last two of these approaches. He described some of the results of the *Toronto Youth Crime and Victimization Survey*. The most important results for our purposes were that:

➢ Street youth were more likely than students to report being involved in gang activities in general and in criminal gang activities in particular.
➢ Current criminal gang members were significantly more likely to report being involved in selling drugs and in violence during the past year.
➢ Criminal youth gang members were also much more likely to have been assaulted or victimized during the past year.

Professor Wortley also insisted on the importance of differentiating the various types of motives for gang violence. Such violence can reflect a desire to make money, to protect turf, to intimidate witnesses, to resolve business-related disputes or to maintain one's reputation (the reader can consult the presentation for illustrations of each of these). It is unlikely that each of these motives can be addressed in the same way.

He also described a gang member intervention program in Toronto in which he is currently involved. The program focuses on both youth at high risk of joining a gang and youth who are currently involved in gangs and criminality. It is designed to identify the youth at highest risk through a screening and needs assessment process, to reach out to them, and to offer an eight week group training session that aims to provide some of the supports and alternatives required either to prevent them from joining a gang or allow them to exit successfully from gang involvement.

In conclusion, Professor Wortley argued that we must address four key needs if we are to achieve progress:

1. A standardized "gang" definition;
2. A standardized definition of what we mean by gang-related crime;

3. A standardization of both the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in this area; and
4. Longitudinal studies that will allow us to get a better picture of what is happening and a better understanding of what we might do about it.

A number of themes were raised by the participants in the discussion that followed. One was the importance of the so-called "exit issue" and of the need to do a great deal more in this area, both in terms of defining success (using both negative success indicators such as the lack of recidivism and positive indicators such as successful integration into relationships, education and work) and of developing evidence-based programs in this area. Another area of discussion revolved around the tension between the desire for better data in order to target initiatives more effectively, and the need to be sensitive to the risks of the labelling and stigmatization that can accompany the use of this data. There was also agreement that law enforcement officials need to develop criteria for removing suspected or alleged gang members from any "watch" list that may be developed. A final area involved the importance of addressing the criminal attitudes of gang-involved youth and of encouraging and supporting these youth to develop and follow strategic life plans. All agreed that this was necessary and important. However, some also pointed out that training and preparing youth for life plans and careers also depended on providing them with the realistic hope and expectation that there will be jobs and careers for them. A focus on individual intervention can not successfully address this societal level economic goal.

3. IMAGINING A COMPREHENSIVE ACTION PLAN

Having identified some of the difficulties with defining and measuring the problem of youth gangs and their criminal activities, we shifted gears and began a discussion of how we might start to pull together some of the pieces of a comprehensive strategy for addressing this problem.

We asked Professor Rick Linden of the Department of Sociology of the University of Manitoba to lead the discussion in this area. His presentation was entitled *Individualized deterrence as part of a comprehensive gang strategy.*

Professor Linden told the story of two large scale crime prevention and suppression strategies with which he has been involved. Both illustrate the benefits of good strategic planning and intersectoral collaboration, and of concentrating resources on those individuals at highest risk and delivering effective responses to them. Both of the programs start with an acknowledgement of our limited ability to deter crime by simply increasing the severity of punishment. The problem, as he indicates, is that the most common punishment for a crime is nothing – most offenders simply do not get caught or punished. Part of the innovation in both the experiences he described was a shift to focused or individualized deterrence, one that combines effective enforcement with the provision of services for the people concerned and with an attempt to get the moral voices of their communities to condemn their behaviour. The approach is heavily influenced by the success of Operation Ceasefire in Boston. The key elements of the program are:

➢ To let gang involved offenders know they were under scrutiny;

- ➢ To tell them that their activities would get special attention;
- ➢ To inform them of what would happen if they do not cooperate;
- ➢ To inform them of what they needed to do to avoid enforcement action; and
- ➢ To tell them what opportunities and supports could be provided to them.

The first example of the use of this approach is the Winnipeg Auto Theft Suppression Strategy (WATSS). WATSS produced a 75% reduction in auto thefts in Winnipeg between 2004 and 2009. This reduction is three times greater than the national reduction during the same period, and it is estimated that it accounts for savings of approximately $38 million per year.

The second and more recent example is the relatively new *Gang Reduction and Suppression Program* (GRASP). The goals of the program are to reduce violent recidivism in each targeted offender, to reduce violent gang-related crime in Winnipeg, and to facilitate the successful reintegration of offenders into the community. GRASP essentially uses a "carrot and stick" kind of approach. Its operational framework involves the following elements:

- ➢ A comprehensive approach that balances suppression and intervention;
- ➢ A concentrated focus on individualized deterrence – specific threats of punishment are communicated to specific offenders (in this case, the 50 offenders rated as the most dangerous and the highest risk of re-offending) and there is an emphasis on the realistic consequences of the next instance of intervention;
- ➢ Clear rules and an assurance that promises will be kept – the focus is on letting people know they are being monitored and on assuring them of the swiftness and certainty of consequences;
- ➢ Probation and bail conditions are fully enforced to make community corrections a meaningful alternative;
- ➢ Sustained relationships between authorities and offenders are established; and
- ➢ A commitment to address criminogenic factors and to provide services and supports to the targeted individuals.

Further details on the GRASP process are available in Professor Linden's presentation.

Obviously, neither WATSS nor GRASP addresses all the dimensions of the problem of gang-related crime and violence, nor all the components of a solution to these problems. Nevertheless, they are important examples of what can be accomplished with the right combination of imagination and collaboration and the commitment of adequate resources.

A lively discussion ensued during which the participants raised a number of issues. To begin, a concern was expressed about the plight of Aboriginal offenders and Aboriginal youth who are at high risk. It was argued that their situation reflects a systemic failure to provide the necessary supports and resources early enough and in a sustained enough manner for our interventions to be effective. A similar argument was made in the case of individuals who are experiencing mental health challenges and difficulties. There is little in the way of integrated help for these individuals, and they and their families are often left to fend for themselves until the situation warrants a justice-based punitive intervention. Other participants also pointed to the need to address issues related to housing and to the hope of employment opportunities.

Another stream of the discussion focused on the realities of planning comprehensive initiatives. One participant noted that communities that use a strength-based approach to defining problems and planning initiatives are able to make better decisions at all stages of the problem-solving process. Another participant reminded us of the difficulties related to the issues of confidentiality and accountability. Agencies are often reluctant to share the information they have, either because of legal constraints or because of concerns that such openness could work against their interests. This is understandable, but it makes it more difficult to accurately assess either the scope of a problem or the overall needs of an individual. It also creates challenges when it comes time to undertake program evaluations or to track an individual's progress. It was clear to all that this is an issue that requires further analysis. Finally, one participant reminded us that centralized planning can be a high cost activity for both governments and community-based agencies. It was argued that the Provincial/Territorial and Federal orders of government should provide more adequate and sustained support in this area.

4. THE GOVERNANCE OF PREVENTION: RESPONSIBILITY CENTRES AND THE CHALLENGES OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

The final theme to be addressed was the challenge of designing the types of responsibility centres that would allow us to collaborate effectively across different orders of government and among different agencies and institutions. The issue here was how to manage and administer comprehensive prevention initiatives that address youth gang violence.

Professor Ross Hastings of the Institute for the Prevention of Crime led the discussion in this area. His presentation was entitled *The governance and administration of comprehensive initiatives.*

His basic theme was that success ultimately depended on starting with the problem, and on organizing agents and institutions around what is required to solve that problem. This sounds obvious, but it is quite different from our usual tendency to start with what is already in place and limit our responses to those aspects of the problem that are relevant to the mandate and within the resource constraints of the organizations or agencies involved.

Hastings argued that we need a new approach to governance, one that effectively supports the strategic planning required to design, implement and evaluate a comprehensive initiative. This new approach should begin with the identification of the multiple capacity elements required at each of the stages of the problem-solving process (see Diagram 3 below for an illustration). The result is a planning grid that serves to identify the required capacity elements in terms of knowledge and data, skills and resources.

The next step is to do a gap analysis in order to determine what capacity elements are available, and to identify those that are missing. This assessment provides the basis for identifying possible collaborators and partners who might be in a position to "fill in the blanks" in capacity.

Diagram 3:
Problem Solving: What Do We Need?

	Problem	Objectives	Program	Evaluation
Knowledge & Data				
Skills				
Resources				

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But, who will do this work? In recent years, experts and practitioners have increasingly turned to the notion of a responsibility centre. The basic reason is that the work of directing large scale initiatives and of assuring the collaboration of partners from different sectors requires a combination of expertise, resources and authority that is usually beyond the scope of any particular group or agency. To be successful, a responsibility centre must (see *Building a Safer Canada*, 2007: 20-22):

- ➢ Be able to exercise leadership and to hold participants accountable;
- ➢ Have political and administrative influence and be central to decision-making at a high level;
- ➢ Be able to assure and sustain problem-solving capacity;
- ➢ Be able to attract and retain key partners and to maintain links to other sectors of activity; and
- ➢ Play a role in educating and engaging the public.

Hastings' final point was that the division of powers and responsibilities in the Canadian political system requires us to think through how the different tasks and activities of a responsibility centre can be allocated to different orders of government. His suggestion is summarized in Diagram 4 (below). The basic argument is that most significant prevention actions and initiatives will be driven by local actors, and that other orders of government should get organized to support local action. In practical terms, the distribution of responsibility should be triaged in the following manner:

1. Local action and initiatives: The reality is that most of the work of designing and implementing a comprehensive initiative gets done at the local level and involves some combination of municipal government, the justice system, non-governmental organizations, and the volunteer sector. The main challenge for local actors is to assure and sustain the resources necessary to take on new work, especially in new and innovative areas where mandates and spheres of action and accountability may not be clear.

2. Provinces and Territories: The fact is that most of the main risk factors associated with crime and victimization fall within the constitutional responsibilities of the Provinces and Territories (e.g., family, education or welfare policies). It should be their responsibility to set standards and targets for performance in these areas, to provide the supports necessary to allow the delivery of effective evidence-based programming, and to hold local authorities accountable for performance in these areas.

3. The Federal role: The focus on evidence-based practices points to the importance of investing in research and development in crime prevention, and of assuring the effective dissemination of the lessons learned to the different types of audiences who will "consume" this information. Given the economies of scale involved in large-scale research initiatives, the Federal Government is arguably in the best position to assume this role.

Diagram 4:
The Prevention Pyramid

LOCAL ACTION & INITIATIVES

PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES

FEDERAL ROLE

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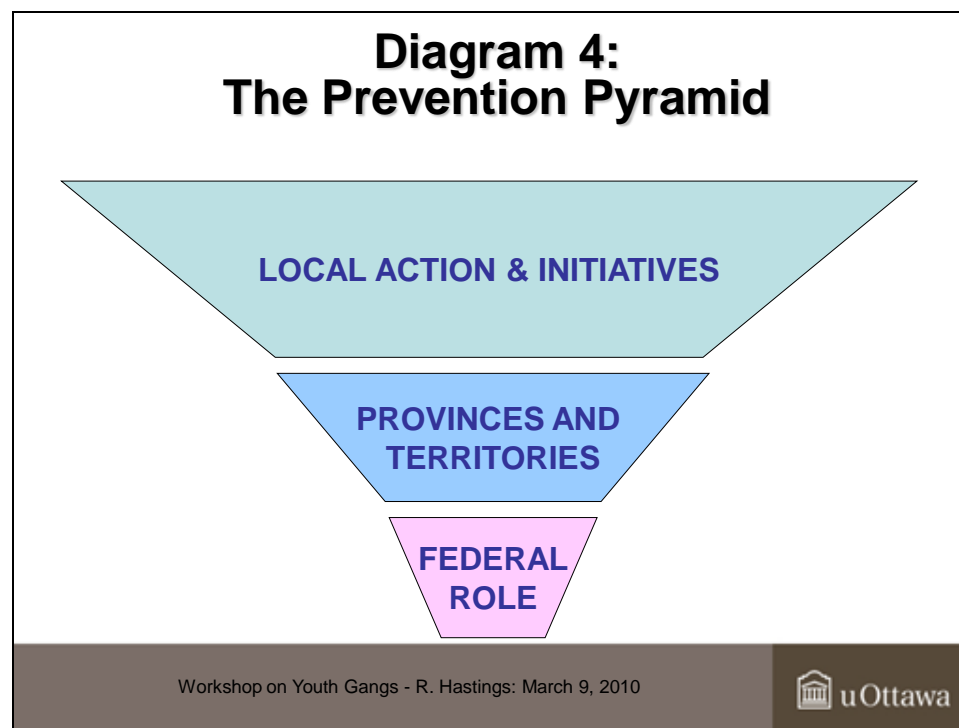
Finally, there is the question of how responsibility centres should do their work. Hastings argued that there are three basic options in this regard. The first is that responsibility centres could try to lead by providing the type of knowledge or information that might inspire others to action – this is the ideal role for the Federal Government in our system. A second option is to lead by providing the kinds of incentives (usually financial) that will "seduce" others into action – this is primarily the role of provincial and territorial governments, though municipal governments also have a role to play here. Finally, there is the possibility of leadership through discipline and accountability – all orders of government have a role to play in this area, though arguably local orders might be more focused on outputs and efficiency while more central orders of government might address the issues of impacts and results. The bottom line in all cases is that there must be some agreement of how to design and implement responsibility centres if governments are to make crime prevention part of the ongoing business of governing.

A wide range of issues and concerns were raised in the discussion that followed. Most agreed that the keys to success were a commitment to a holistic approach to prevention and effective leadership at the local community level. That said, others pointed out that local action requires public support and involvement. This requires the development of a common language around problem definition and the promise of prevention, and much greater investment in public education and the social marketing of prevention. There was also support for the idea of defining success in a positive manner using performance indicators such as progress in terms of social determinants of health or the notion of a healthy community as a means of illustrating the wider benefits of investing in prevention. The key here is to take on the challenge of selling long-term investment in prevention as an essential part of a long-term comprehensive solution.

5. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The presentations and discussions during the day were wide-ranging and covered a large number of issues and concerns. Yet, in spite of the diversity of perspectives and opinions, there did seem to be a fair bit of agreement that our ability to develop an effective comprehensive response to the issue of youth gang violence would be dependent on how well we can move forward in addressing three key issues: the nature of the problem, identifying evidence-based responses, and organizing effective collaborations in order to assure that the necessary work gets done.

1. How to define problem and come to grips with the challenge?

The challenge here involves some basic definitional issues, as well as a decision on how we should focus on the issue of youth gangs and their behaviour.

The first definitional issue is to decide what we mean by youth. The notion obviously includes young people from 12 – 17 who are covered under the provisions of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act.* However, two other groups must also be included. The first is youth under the age of 12; it appears they are increasingly active in youth gangs, and it would seem foolish to wait until they are old enough to come under the provisions of the YCJA before we intervene. The second and larger group is those young people who are still making the transition to adult status. In this sense, the concept of youth needs to be expanded to include young people from 18 to somewhere

between 25 and 30, and our interventions should take greater account of the realities of this transition process. Finally, we also have to go beyond the impression that is sometimes given by the media that all youth crime is gang related and that and all gangs are violent. The reality is that much of youth crime and violence is not gang related, and much gang behaviour is not violent.

The next question is how to come to grips with the problem? The challenge is to agree on what we consider to be the "problem" of youth gang violence, on what we would consider a "solution" and on how we might measure whether we are moving in that direction. The point here is that we need to distinguish the problems caused to victims and communities by criminal youth gang violence from the reasons why some youth get involved in this type of activity. The former approach tends to favour responses that attempt to suppress youth gang violence through enforcement and repression. While necessary, this type of response does not address the risk factors that lead youth to join gangs and get involved in crime, nor (on its own) can it provide meaningful alternatives to the benefits conferred on youth by gang membership. We need to acknowledge the strengths of youth gangs as well as the difficulties they cause us, and to design a response that addresses both these dimensions.

2. When and where to intervene?

As indicated earlier (see diagram 2), there are different points at which we could intervene to address the issue of youth gangs. We could start before a youth joins a gang, and try to mitigate the impact of the individual, relational, community and social-structural risk factors to which a youth is exposed. In this context, most of the workshop participants emphasized the importance of focusing on children between the ages of 6 and 12 and providing effective programs to them and their families. Or, we could focus on youth who are actively considering joining a gang or are already gang involved. This is the point that will involve the greatest need for collaboration between enforcement agencies and social service or community-based agencies. Finally, a great deal more attention needs to be paid to the issue of leaving gangs, especially for youth who are in custody. The concern is that leaving a gang or leaving custody do not, in and of themselves, assure successful insertion and integration into prosocial worlds. The failure to provide effective supports at this stage can leave the youth isolated and vulnerable to the appeals to returning to the gang.

3. How to develop a national strategy for a comprehensive response to youth gang violence?

A recurring theme during the workshop was the importance of a systematic and collaborative approach to planning and implementing a comprehensive response to the issues of youth gangs and youth gang violence. The ideal would be to develop a national strategy in this regard, one that specifies the roles and responsibilities of different orders of government and of different sectors of the worlds of researchers and practitioners. However, such a strategy would have to find a way to walk the fine line between central leadership through supports and incentives and the need to be inclusive of the local actors who do neighbourhood-based planning and deliver programs and services on the front lines. We must be respectful of local autonomy.

4. Where to next?

The workshop participants did not formulate any specific recommendations for next steps. However, there were a few issues on which there seemed to be considerable agreement, and a few interesting suggestions that emerged from our conversations. These ideas are presented here in list form in the hope that they will contribute to further discussions in this area:

➢ There was a sense that it is important to continue having meetings and conversations of this type since many are struggling with similar issues and felt inspired by the ideas and approaches of others and the possibilities they represent. One suggestion was to consider holding more meetings of this type on a regional basis, and building to the possibility of a national summit of the issue of youth gangs.

➢ There was considerable interest expressed in having more and easier access to evidence-based information in this area. Given that most programs are relatively limited in their reach, there was also interest in thinking further about how different approaches could fit together better. Suggestions in this regard involve using something like the approach suggested earlier (see Diagram 2) as a basis for sorting and classifying current research and practices. This could possibly be supplemented by some combination of an academic journal that would encourage Canadian research in this area, and a more user-friendly publication designed to respond to the concerns of decision-makers and practitioners.

➢ There was support for the idea of developing more formal networks of researchers and of practitioners, so that people could have an easier time learning what everyone else is doing. This would involve some combination of a web site and regular meetings – the key is to make it easier to tie things together.

The Institute for the Prevention of Crime

In collaboration with

The Ottawa Youth Gang Prevention Initiative

Crime Prevention Ottawa

The Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa

Presents

WORKSHOP:

DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO

CRIMINAL YOUTH GANGS

The goal of the workshop is to contribute to the development of a national strategy to address the problem of criminal youth gangs. The workshop will build on a recent IPC report entitled *Effective Planning for Crime Prevention* (2009) which describes the steps involved in designing and implementing a comprehensive prevention strategy. The workshop will use the framework and processes described in this report, and apply them to the task of imagining a comprehensive response to the issue of criminal youth gangs.

Tuesday, March 9th, 2010
Room 3120 – Desmarais Building (DMS)
55 Laurier Avenue East

TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2010
8:30   **Meet & Greet with Continental Breakfast**

9:00   **1. Introduction and Overview of the Workshop**
 	
    ▪   **Introduction**
        Ross Hastings, IPC / Department of Criminology, University of Ottawa
 	
    ▪   **The Ottawa Youth Gang Prevention Initiative**
        Gordon Boyd, Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa
 	
        Michael Justinich, Crime Prevention Ottawa

10:15   **Health Break**
10:30   **2. Coming to Grips with the Challenge: Problem and Objectives**   Scot Wortley, Centre of Criminology, University of Toronto
12:00   **Lunch**
1:00   **3. Imagining a Comprehensive Action Plan: Prevention, Enforcement and Integration**   Rick Linden, Department of Sociology, University of Manitoba
2:30   **Health Break**
2:45   **4. The Governance of Prevention: Responsibility Centres and the Challenges of Organizational Change**   Ross Hastings, IPC / Department of Criminology, University of Ottawa
4:00   **5. Wrap-Up & Next Steps**
4:15 – 5:30   **Wine & Cheese Reception for Participants**

APPENDIX 2

Developing a Strategic Approach to Criminal Youth Gangs
Workshop Participants

First Name	Last Name	Organization	E-mail	Phone Number
Peggy	Austen	United Way / Centraide Ottawa	pausten@unitedwayottawa.ca	(613) 228-6707
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Steve	Bell	Ottawa Police Service	bells@ottawapolice.ca	(613) 236-1222 ext. 5346
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APPENDIX 3

LITERATURE ON

CRIMINAL YOUTH GANGS IN CANADA

Preliminary Bibliography: 2000-2010

(Available at www.ipc.uottawa.ca)

Laura Dunbar & Melanie Bania

March 2010

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this bibliography is to begin compiling an inventory of Canadian research in the area of criminal youth gangs. A preliminary review of both published and unpublished materials relating to Canadian research in this area over the last ten years was conducted via literature and internet searches. The search was conducted in February of 2010, and covers the period from 2000 to February 2010.

By bringing this material together, we hope to increase access to this knowledge and to contribute to the development of a more effective national strategy in response to criminal activity by youth gangs.

The bibliography draws from the following sources:

- Articles from academic journals:

    o Canadian Journal of Criminology (2000-2003)
    o Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice (2003-2010)
    o Canadian Journal of Sociology (2000-2009)
    o Canadian Revue of Policing Research (2004-2005)
    o Canadian Review of Sociology (2008-2010)
    o Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology (2000-2007)
    o Criminologie (2000-2009)
    o Globe, revue internationale d'études québécoises (2000-2009)
    o Institute for the Prevention of Crime Review (2007-2009)
    o Journal of Gang Research
    o Journal of Urban Health
    o Nouvelles Pratiques Sociales (2000-2009)
    o Sociologies et sociétés (2000-20009)

- Books and book chapters.

- Reports and other publications produced or sponsored by government agencies.

The material within each type of source (and each journal) is presented in chronological order, starting with the most recent.