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Comprehensive Analysis of Youth and Gang Violence with Defined Solutions and Recommendations

The State of New Jersey can no longer sit idly by nor afford the gang culture and precipitating youth violence that is negatively impacting our communities on every socio-economic level. Rampant violence has continued to rise at an exponential rate in New Jersey and the nation without any indication of decreasing in severity. Reasons for the escalating number of young people organizing and joining gangs is well documented by social scientists, law enforcement, and medical professionals. We all know that young people are attracted to the gang culture in response to feelings of inadequacy and hopelessness. Their developmental and emotional need for acceptance from peers seems to go unmet, as bullying and teasing has become a daily occurrence in their schools. The stability sought by many within their own family units, their community and society in general, continues to deteriorate with each new generation borne out of this advanced age of information and technology.

Young people are surrounded by negative and violent images glorified by the mass media and the entertainment business especially in the realms of music videos, news broadcasting, movies and video games. For many young people this only adds to the mystique of wanting to experience the so-called “Thug Life” or to emulate the perceived image of, and give homage to the “Gangsta” mentality as the thing du jour. Our children while in their pre-adolescent stage have not yet matured enough in their capacity to differentiate illusion from reality; and it is our responsibility to educate them on the truth.

Under these circumstances, it is necessary to provide gang violence prevention education and prevention programs for young people either before or during their middle school years, in order to counteract-even on some minimal level, the amount of exposure to negative stimuli they experience on a daily basis.

Now more than ever, the public health and societal issue of youth violence in our communities must be addressed. It is arguably true, that the problem is multifaceted and

multidimensional; but needless to say, we must begin to work together and to seek out solutions for the sake of our children's present; let alone their futures.

The Violence Prevention Institute and other organizations have developed programs that address both the prevention of violence and intervention for youth identified by schools, communities, and law enforcement as being at greater risk for certain patterns of violence behaviors (See Attachment A). Indicators for the propensity to engage in violent behavior include, but are not limited to:

Poor Conflict Resolution Skills
Bullying and Teasing
A History of Domestic Violence in the Home
A History of Family Dysfunction
Dating or Acquaintance Violence
The Inability to Communicate Feelings of Anger, Stress, Anxiety, or Depression Effectively With Respect to Peers and/or Adults
Poor Academic Achievement
Drug and/or Alcohol Use
Gang Influence or Involvement

STATISTICS

The statistics that support the need for violence prevention and intervention programs at as early an age as possible are alarming:

- The leading cause of death in African Americans between the ages of 10 and 24 is homicide.
- 1 out of 3 African Americans are incarcerated, 1 out of 6 Latinos, 1 out of 17 whites that cost taxpayers \$40 to \$60 thousand dollars per inmate year.
- 126 Billion dollars per year paid to treat gunshot wounds in the USA.
- Every hour 2 children are killed in the USA do to firearms.
- 77% of murdered juveniles 13-19 are killed by firearms.
- The average cost of emergency treatment and inpatient hospitalization for critically injured gunshot victims is \$322,000.
- 40% of teens know someone who has been shot.
- 59% of student's grades 6-12 know where to get a gun within 24 hours (Harvard School of Public Health).
- As of 1994, 44 million Americans owned more than 192 million firearms, 65 million of which were handguns.
- There are enough guns in the U.S. to provide every adult with one gun, but only 25% of adults own firearms; with 74% of gun owners possessing two or more firearms.
- Each year since 1989, 3.5 million new guns have been introduced to the U.S. market either through manufacture or import. (Bureau ATF).
- There are nearly 17,000 reported gang members in New Jersey.

- 37% of the communities that, four years ago, reported no gang activity now indicate the presence of gangs.
- 39% of suburban communities report gang presence, up from 27% in 2001.
- 46% of the communities that report a gang presence also indicate that gangs are active in the local schools.

Before prevention and intervention programs can effectively deter youth violence, an environment where gangs cannot thrive must be created throughout the State of New Jersey. Unfortunately there is no quick fix to this problem, and the solution lies in a long term commitment on the part of public and private law enforcement and violence prevention professionals to provide a well-planned and highly coordinated statewide initiative both in schools and in juvenile detention facilities. Using a five-tiered approach comprised of prevention, intervention, interdiction, incarceration, and re-entry; this strategy offers the best possible solution to this multidimensional crisis of youth violence.

PREVENTION

Prevention programs provided by the Violence Prevention Institute and other programs with a positive track-record for outcome effectiveness must be provided for young people before they become involved in the criminal justice system. When it comes to saving the lives of our children, everyone needs to be on the same page. Programs that help to strengthen families and communities including those that offer parenting skills, family advocacy, mental health, substance abuse, housing, employment and job training along with any and all available supportive social and community services from faith-based organizations, schools, and recreational facilities must be coordinated accordingly in order to provide and maintain the seamless scope of services necessary to achieve optimal results. Various initiatives and programs that could be instituted on a wide-scale basis to deter youth violence may include:

- Community Public Service Advertising Campaigns
- Mandatory In-service Education for Law Enforcement and Educational personnel including Cultural Sensitivity
- Partnerships: Municipal Government, Community-Based Organizations, Schools, Parents and Youth.
- Anti-Loitering Ordinances
- Curfews
- Holistic Youth Development Programs: SCOOP, COPS and DOCS, OJJDP's Gang Reduction Program, YAP, Inc.
- Mentoring
- After-School and Weekend Programs
- Aggressive Anti-Truancy Programs with significant follow-up
- K-12 Violence Prevention Programs in Schools.
- Community Safe Zones

Everyone in every community is a stakeholder; whether they are a business owner, political leader, city official, agency, institution, church, family or individual. As such, they are all relevant for ensuring that a comprehensive and fully integrated anti-gang/violence solution be established and then commit to its implementation and ultimate success.

RESEARCH

Through its research and evaluation infrastructure VPI has assembled a team of academics, researchers, social scientists, statisticians and university students who have developed a structured comprehensive needs assessment tool. It has been previously and currently administered in the following: Newark, East Orange, West Orange, and Paterson School Districts, Essex Youth Probation Services, and Newark's Jr. Police Academy. Through the experience and expertise gained in the aforementioned initiative, VPI is well positioned to guide a statewide needs assessment initiative. Additionally, the VPI research and evaluation consultant team have the skills to conduct program evaluations and to monitor and assess the efficacy of violence prevention programs that are currently being implemented in New Jersey. Supporting this initiative are findings from similar undertakings in other states including Oregon, California, Boston, and Washington State (See Example Attachment E).

INTERVENTION

Intervention programs, such as the Violence Prevention Institute's Intensive Violence Intervention Program, should be considered to be provided during a young person's first encounter with the criminal justice system (See Attachment A).

Reviewing programs from other states that have shown promise can be modified and incorporated to coincide with current programs in New Jersey that aid in effectively deterring recidivism among the more at-risk youth and aid in facilitating gang negotiations and extractions, all areas of social services and family support, and violence prevention-based behavioral modification therapies. Examples from around the country include:

- YCS: Multi-Systemic Therapy Program (NJ)
- Council for Unity, Inc. (NY)
- OJJDP: Gang Reduction Program (Washington, DC)
- Oregon Youth Authority: County Diversion Program (OR)
- Youth Advocate Programs, Inc.: Detention Aversion Program (NJ)
- California Youth Authority: Gang Tattoo Removal Program (CA)
- Violence Prevention Project (MA)

INTERDICTION

In the State of New Jersey, public safety has to be our number one concern. In relation to the gang problem, this plague must be addressed from a law enforcement

standpoint. Successes in East Orange and Trenton can lead the way to a state-wide approach to reducing gangs and crime for the safety and well-being of its citizens. Increased police presence, better intelligence, and the coordinated efforts of municipal, county, state and federal law enforcement must make a concerted effort at working together in order to successfully reduce the incidences of gang related crime and gang recruitment of minors.

Acknowledgement is the first step at looking at, and solving the problem. There is no longer a need to identify it anymore, since it is already an established fact that we have a nationwide problem. Research has been completed by numerous social scientific experts, and it is now time to coordinate and properly implement what is necessary to stave off future problems and youth risk factors. Consistent prosecution with the use of state and federal resources has already been publicized and proposed by U.S. Senators Menendez (D-NJ) and Feinstein (D-CA) asking for federal legislation mandating harsher sentencing penalties for violent gang crimes.

Consideration and empathy should be given to victims offering more tangible services and resources to them as opposed to those who perpetrate crimes against them. This is the single most important reason why prevention has to be at the forefront of everyone's efforts; before another young person makes the decision as to whether or not they will commit a crime.

With the use of new technology e.g. shot identification, video surveillance cameras, DNA, good old-fashioned street-level police intelligence, special court proceedings such as gun and drug courts and consistent prosecution, there are no excuses for not having enough evidence to remove dangerous criminals from our communities. There has to be realistic goals and timelines, with a design metric in place to obtain satisfactory outcomes. Publicizing on-going public relations programs that show clear improvements in communities helps to build a sense of safety for citizens and establish the commitment necessary to maintain safe neighborhoods.

INCARCERATION

Inmates are at best a captive audience, with 70% of inmates returning back into New Jersey communities within 5 years. This is prime time to provide them with the tools necessary to lead a productive and crime free way of life. Meaningful education/GED and job training, substance abuse and mental health treatment, aggressive anti-drug campaigns and drug testing, family counseling, parenting and violence prevention education services, etc. can make the transition from inmate to re-entering citizen less traumatic and as a result they will be less likely to recidivate. We should consider making participation in these programs a condition of parole. Facilities need funding to increase much needed professional personnel to assist with implementing these changes. Medical providers working in correctional facilities can provide comprehensive services and programs with an emphasis on medical education and information to inmates.

Juvenile detention facilities should also provide violence education for victims of violence and perpetrators with an emphasis on educating young people that today's perpetrator of violence could be tomorrow's victim. VPI's Intensive Intervention Program has already been implemented with Essex County Youth Probation Services with promising results (See Attachment B). It is understood that some criminal behaviors require harsher penalties therefore must also be part of the overall approach to safety. These may include special gun courts and mandatory sentencing for habitually dangerous offenders.

RE-ENTRY

The aspect of looking at the whole person from incarceration to re-entry must take into account what the individual needs in order to be productive and not inclined to return to a life of crime. Therefore, having the following comprehensive services and community support systems in place help deter recidivism and provides protective factors for the safety of the general public which may include:

- Mandatory Parole Requirements
- Transitional and Supportive Housing
- Continued Substance Abuse and Mental Health Treatment
- Faith-Based Assistance and Support
- Community Resource Manual
- Transitional Housing
- High intensity Parole supervision
- Family Counseling

Problem Statement: Reintegration of former gang members into the community is hampered by various structural deficiencies and legal/social barriers which discourage reintegration and may in fact contribute to recidivism.

RECOMMENDATION: Prioritize service provision for gang members.

Rationale: Because gang members may be at higher risk of recidivism and have more urgent needs for services and support than the general prison population, immediacy of assessment, support, and services are key. While gang members face the same barriers to reentry that other offenders face, the immediacy of their need requires that support and services be tailored to fit their heightened risk profile.

RECOMMENDATION: Full implementation of standardized comprehensive needs assessment including physical and mental health assessments.

Rationale: Reentry should begin at intake. Corrections statistics indicate that a large number of New Jersey prison inmates have low literacy levels, few job skills, physical and emotional health issues, and other risk factors for recidivism. Preparation for reintegration into the community must address these issues. To most effectively target services comprehensive needs assessments should be completed for all inmates upon

incarceration. The DOC currently mandates that such assessments must be done within the first twenty-one days. Assessments include administration of LSI-R, and other assessment instruments and is conducted at three points—at intake, as part of the parole process, and as follow-up after parole. This program should be universally implemented.

RECOMMENDATION: Implement and expand proven cost-effective programs in place in New Jersey’s prisons.

Rationale: New Jersey’s Department of Corrections already has in place several programs to provide job training, education, counseling, and other services to prisoners, including gang members. Unfortunately these programs are under funded. Expansion of programs such as education for inmates over the age of 21, and other reintegration programs need to be the goal.

RECOMMENDATION: Commissioning of a cost/benefit analysis of current prison programs.

Rationale: Resource allocation for corrections programs is often problematic because the benefits and cost savings are not fully understood by legislators and the public. Research on the national level and in other states has found significant cost savings from rehabilitation programs, but no such long term cost-benefit analysis has been conducted in New Jersey. Such an analysis could be of use in moving resources away from failed programs and towards effective programs that reduce recidivism and increase the likelihood of a successful reintegration into society.

RECOMMENDATION: Ensure that some part of all prison sentences involve support and supervision.

Rationale: An increasing number of inmates are provided with no support upon their release from prison. Because riskiest time for offenders in terms of re-arrest is the first year out of prison, it is important that supervision and support be provided during this time. While sentences should not be extended, some provision should be made to provide at least a short period of support and supervision upon release for all prisoners.

RECOMMENDATION: Increase coordination among all relevant agencies, organizations, and communities involved in the reintegration process.

Rationale: Currently there is a lack of coordination among agencies and services involved with individuals released from prison. Governmental agencies such as the Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, Transportation; local service providers such as treatment facilities, faith-based organizations, job readiness programs, and other social service agencies must be coordinates with the Department of Corrections in order to provide continuous and effective service provision and support for reintegrating individuals. The Department of Corrections has instituted an Office of Transitional Services to facilitate this process.

RECOMMENDATION: Discharge planning should be conducted for all inmates prior to release. This planning should be based on a comprehensive needs assessment and the plan should be shared with field officers.

RECOMMENDATION: Local and neighborhood interventions services should be implemented to support parolees and their families.

Rationale: Along with coordination of services, there must be an emphasis on neighborhood services that can be accessed not only by the parolee by his or her family. Many such programs already exist but lack the resources to meet the current need. These programs should be supported and expanded. Where possible, “one-stop shopping” models for services should be implemented making navigation of the system and access to services as simple as possible.

Rationale: Successful reintegration requires effective planning and support. Housing, employment, health services, and other requirements must be in place upon release. As previously stated, the highest risk period for released inmates is the first year out of prison. Failure to have necessary plans and services in place only increases the risk of failed reintegration and re-incarceration.

RECOMMENDATION: Increased awareness of and programs to address racial and ethnic disparities regarding incarceration, economic stability, and social need.

Rationale: One of the dangers of an increased awareness of gang activities is the possibility of an increase in stereotypes regarding racial and ethnic minorities. Minorities already account for a disproportionate percentage of the incarcerated population. Stereotypes of minority youth and the social stigma attached to such stereotypes not only makes it more likely that such youth will join gangs as a way of getting “respect” but also militates against reintegration of youth and older individuals.

Minority communities often economically disadvantaged face greater challenges in providing necessary services to individuals reintegrating back into society while at the same time accepting a disproportionate number of returning prisoners. Programs such as job readiness programs, social service support programs, GED and continuing education and housing programs should be bolstered in economically at risk communities.

RECOMMENDATION: Removal of legal and social barriers to reintegration and limiting of collateral sanctions.

Rationale: Collateral sanctions to criminal conviction such as loss of drivers’ licenses, voting disenfranchisement, bars to certain types of employment, and loss of TANF benefits for some offenses have been shown to provide little or no reduction of crime or recidivism often making reintegration into society an unnecessarily daunting task for individuals released from prison.

RECOMMENDATION: Implementation of alternatives to incarceration for low-risk offenders.

Rationale: Incarceration itself may provide a fertile ground for gang recruitment. Inmates with no prior gang affiliation may be pressured to join gangs in prison. While it is not clear how lasting such affiliations are after release from prison, preventing such affiliations where possible would have clear benefits.

1[i] The Urban Institute, Justice Policy Center: A Portrait of Prisoner Reentry in New Jersey. 2003. New Jersey Institute for Social Justice. Coming Home for Good: Meeting the Challenge of Prisoner Reentry in New Jersey. 2003. The members of the Reintegration Subcommittee wish to thank the cited organizations for providing the subcommittee with presentations and information on their work on the New Jersey Reentry Roundtable and allowing the subcommittee to cite this work at length.

SUMMARY

Because gang violence is first and foremost a criminal matter, the Attorney General's Office, as the law enforcement agency responsible for public safety in New Jersey, has the authority to mandate police training and to monitor local compliance with the interdiction, incarceration and re-entry components of this initiative. Accordingly, the Attorney General's Office should serve as the lead governmental agency in this initiative.

The Violence Prevention Institute has already developed a successful relationship with the Attorney General's Office over the past two years and is in a unique position to participate in and coordinate all five components of the State of New Jersey's gang prevention initiative. VPI staff and consultants include medical doctors, social workers, federal, state and local law enforcement advisors, and university-based researchers. Research indicates that VPI's prevention and intervention programs have been successful in Essex County, whether services are provided to young people in public schools, assigned to probation and/or confined in Juvenile Justice Commission facilities.

All five components of a statewide anti-gang initiative can be coordinated effectively through the collaborative efforts of the Attorney General's Office and the Violence Prevention Institute. All of the necessary expertise and authority rests in these two entities, and research supports the assertion that they have and can continue to work well in partnership with one another, and can achieve even more success, if given the opportunity to coordinate the efforts of agencies throughout the State of New Jersey.

The first step in building this environment is to institute initiatives including but not limited to the following.

1. **Bullying/Teasing Education.** An acceptance of the gang culture begins at an early age. Therefore bullying/teasing education should be mandatory for all students

beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through 4th grade. The state already has a model program in place. Gang awareness/violence prevention should be mandatory for all students beginning in the 5th grade and continuing through 12th grade. All classes would be part of the Health curriculum. Accordingly, it would be appropriate for all students to participate in the Violence Prevention Institute's violence prevention program, "Cops & Docs" in the fifth grade in addition to other established programs. The Violence Prevention Institute has developed a video and corresponding curriculum which brings the medical, legal and crime victim communities together. These programs should be reinforced through high school. The Violence Prevention Institute can train school nurses and/or other health instructors on the curriculum. Students identified as with anti-social behavior should immediately receive intensive interventions which include programs such as the Violence Prevention Institute's Intensive Intervention Program.

2. **The establishment of "safe zones" in and around schools** is necessary so that prevention programs have a reasonable chance of success. Children must be safe before, during and after school hours. This is a law enforcement issue that must be coordinated with the schools. The State needs to develop guidelines for these safe zones and the county and state level law enforcement might consider developing task forces to assist municipal police with hot spots (See Attachment C).

Teachers need to be trained in gang recognition and teachers/School Resource Officers need to be involved in encouraging students to notify them of problem areas, bullying, gang intimidation, etc. in the safe zone. In addition, teachers need to teach and constantly reinforce standards of acceptable behavior both inside the school building and while traveling to and from school.

VPI can serve in an advisory capacity to assist schools in developing strategies to combat this issue.

3. **Gang Recognition Training** should be conducted by county or state level law enforcement or private organizations (i.e. Violence Prevention Institute). We are recommending this for the following reasons:

- Political considerations on the municipal level (denial, influence on information shared with community, etc.) often lead to minimization of the severity of the problem.
- Most municipal police departments are currently not adequately trained.

Gang recognition training should be mandatory for all teachers and school personnel. The New Jersey Governor could mandate this through the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education can approve this training for continuing education credits and the New Jersey Education Association could facilitate the training.

VPI has a training infrastructure that can serve as the centralized location for caretakers, law enforcement, education and social service personnel on gang recognition education.

4. After school programs are safe havens that have the capacity to ensure the safety of our children.

- The state should provide subsidy to provide programs that appeal to a wide range of students (athletics, art, music, etc.), such as the Trenton Recreation Department's SCOOP Enrichment Program, on a statewide level. Enrichment activities for youth aged 7-18 are available weekdays from 3:00pm until 9:00pm and Saturdays from 9:00am until 2:00pm. Young people are invited to just drop in at any time at any site. Youth between the ages of 12 and 17 can use the SCOOP bus system for greater access.
- These programs can be located in schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, community centers and churches. School principals should be encouraged to allow these organizations to use school facilities for this purpose.
- The State should provide funding for each community to develop, maintain and distribute municipal resource manuals. The Recreation Department in each municipality should provide this service.
- The State should provide funding for each county to develop, maintain and distribute county resource manuals. The Recreation Department in each county could provide this service.

5. Regarding the task force recommendation to establish partnerships, VPI has already taken a leadership role in Newark, Paterson, and East Orange in establishing partnerships with community stakeholders (e.g., board of education, hospitals, law enforcement, churches, and social service agencies). Continuing along these lines, VPI is ideally positioned to coordinate a statewide initiative tackling this issue.

6. It has been demonstrated that youth violence and adolescent substance abuse are inextricably linked (Reid, Peterson, Hughey, & Garcia-Reid, 2006). Key elements from both violence and substance abuse prevention protocols need to be identified, and incorporated into a more comprehensive strategy.

- Programs that are broader in scope could open up more federal funding and thus alleviate some of the state's economic burden.
- The state should mandate that a percentage of state and federal asset forfeiture money be spent on prevention programs.

7. Needs Assessment. Through its research and evaluation infrastructure, VPI has assembled a team of academics, researchers, social scientists, and statisticians who have structured a comprehensive needs assessment tool that has been administered in the following school districts: Newark, East Orange, and Paterson. Through the experience and expertise gained in the aforementioned initiative, VPI is well positioned to guide a

statewide needs assessment. Additionally, VPI research and evaluation consultants have the skills to conduct program evaluations and to monitor and assess the efficacy of violence prevention programs that are currently being implemented throughout the state.

8. **Information** about gangs, guns and drugs should be distributed throughout hospitals, doctors' offices, schools, churches, stores. There should be a statewide ad campaign that includes public service announcements, billboards (including on buses), gang recognition programs on local cable stations (such as NJN) and possibly network television.

Brochures/flyers should be designed and distributed in an ongoing campaign to provide education on gang prevention and to raise public awareness. These brochures/flyers should be distributed in churches, community centers, government buildings, parks, etc. Particular effort should go into distributing this information to places where individuals who do not usually attend school or church functions, such as supermarkets, pharmacies, doctor and dentist offices, post offices, nail and hair salons, and shopping malls. This could be facilitated by state, county and municipal Public Relations Departments. The information should also be mailed to each residence.

A statewide gang recognition program should be developed, videotaped and simulcast to schools and periodically aired on cable television, if possible. Participants could include VPI, Attorney General's Office, State Police, Mothers of Murdered Children, GAPP, and other effective speakers and programs.

9. VPI is primarily comprised of emergency room physicians with extensive experience in recognizing and treating trauma and gang related injuries. Because of their affiliations with both VPI and local area hospitals they can serve a leadership capacity by **providing training to other physicians and trauma centers**. Hospital based social workers could also benefit from training opportunities available through VPI which can provide them with information and education on gang recognition.

10. Juvenile detention facilities should provide **violence education for victims of violence and perpetrators**, with an emphasis on educating young people that today's perpetrator of violence could be tomorrow's victim. VPI's Intensive Intervention Program has already been implemented with youth probation in Essex County with promising results.

11. **Mental health evaluations must be conducted for all residents of juvenile detention facilities and appropriate treatment available and provided**, with intensive mandated follow-up. It is recommended that VPI expand our scope of service delivery to include additional social workers with training and expertise to conduct mental health evaluations for residents of juvenile detention facilities.

12. **The State should consider following the OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model**. This would accomplish two goals: (1) we will not waste time "reinventing the wheel" and (2) since this is a Justice Department model, the State will be set up to request

Federal funding and personnel and the information they can share for its implementation statewide (See Attachment D).

13. The State should study the cost-benefit of violence prevention programs.

The Violence Prevention Institute, along with the other services being recommended are necessary to minimize the increase of violence in New Jersey. The program outlined in the Washington State's Experience with Research-Based Juvenile Justice Programs presented at the Los Angeles County Juvenile Justice Conference May 19, 2005 (see <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=05-19-2005>) thoroughly researched more than 400 programs were over a 25 year period, identifying clear dollar values. These findings speak directly to taxpayer savings, let alone the quality of life for citizens (See Attachment E).

14. VPI has the training infrastructure that can serve as the centralized location for gang interdiction training for law enforcement. This training is provided by a VPI consultant who is a former head of two training divisions of the FBI/DEA Academy. VPI proposes a six point aggressive strategy designed to destroy the infrastructure of gang influence in New Jersey. The objective is to arrest and successfully prosecute gang leaders and gang members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Public safety is the number one issue. A coordinated and well trained law enforcement strategy must be implemented on a statewide level as well as in cooperation with our neighboring states.

RECOMMENDATION: Any effective approach to the issue of public safety as it relates to violence or specifically "gangs" will include interdiction strategies. These interdiction strategies must include mandatory reviewable policing policies and education for police departments along with a written plan for surveillance, intelligence gathering and coordination with local county prosecutors.

Rationale: Interdiction strategies largely depend on law enforcement and must be an ongoing aggressive and well coordinated effort. Suppression of gangs and violent individuals, along with strong prosecution are essential components. This must include an assessment of municipal policing practices and effectiveness that relate to interdiction strategies and ongoing intelligence gathering techniques. This may be directed from the Attorney General's Office to municipalities through local prosecutors. Communities must understand that their police forces must have the training and the mandate from the Police Director to effectively provide surveillance and interdiction.

In terms of prevention, programs must address the issues of both violence and related topics such as substance abuse and weapons (gangs, guns and drugs), and should strengthen every aspect of the family. Counseling, social services, mental health

services, and other comprehensive programs should be implemented across the State of New Jersey.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend that the state should immediately **fund a highly aggressive clinical model that utilizes state of the art methodology, theory and conceptualization of adult and youth violence as it applies to addressing the known risk factors for violence behavior.**

Rationale: Risk factors that must be addressed include: education, unemployment, parenting skills, treatment and support of children of incarcerated parents. Vocational training, communication skills, alcohol and drug treatment, goal setting, organizational and problem solving skills, health education, parenting skills, society re-entry, gang recognition, prevention and exit strategies must also be provided. While this may seem like an unmanageable task it can be implemented fairly and quickly in targeted communities with the mandated cooperation of the Board of Education, Municipal Government and Police Departments all working together. This mandate can come from the Governors Office, the Attorney Generals Office and the Commissioner of Education.

RECOMMENDATION: The State should immediately fund **a public awareness campaign that presents violence as a public health crisis.** And emphasize the economic impact violence has on the taxpayers of the State of New Jersey.

Rationale: The economic impact of gun violence is staggering. The annual cost for treating gunshot victims in the United States is estimated to be \$100-\$126 billion annually. (Miller & Cohen) (Linda Gunderson,; “The Financial Coat of Gun Violence” Annals of Internal Medicine 1999). Even when broken down to cost per victim, the taxpayer burden a disconcerting at \$2.8 Million per firearm fatality. This cost includes \$249,000 per hospitalization for gunshot victims, and \$73,000 per emergency room visit for released gunshot victims. (Phillip J. Cook, Gun Violence, “The Real Cost” Oxford University Press 2000). Additional indirect costs such as lost productivity, mental healthcare, emergency transport, and insurance administration must also be considered.

RECOMMENDATION: Any effective approach to the issue of public safety as it relates to violence or specifically “gangs” will include **prevention programs that need to be initiated in the public school system for students, teachers and professional staff as a mandatory requirement.**

Rationale: Prevention programs are essential. Education in the school systems must include a comprehensive risk assessment tool for all school age children. Gang recognition and intervention programs should address all well documented risk factors for violence included in the NIH report. Age appropriate information should be disseminated to all students and training should be mandatory for professional teachers and administrative personal in all school districts. Significant educational opportunities should also be provided for the community (parents and caregivers) and municipal government workers. Police departments must review their own education components

and policies toward gang recognition and intervention programs. Stakeholders must be included in this process such as corporations and businesses as they provide employment for youth and adults. Agencies must share information and make effective reporting/intelligence widely accessible. Educational, health and law enforcement agencies must work in concert to address these issues. Recommendations of programs with a successful track record with proven or ongoing research models are essential.

RECOMMENDATION: Any effective approach to the issue of public safety as it relates to violence or specifically “gangs” will include interventional strategies. These *intervention strategies must have a coordinated effort between municipal governments, boards of education, police departments and community groups as a joint task force.*

Rationale: Interventional strategies that are effective need to be included in the recommendation. Once a problem or potential problem has been identified (such as evidence of gang presence in the community or a school system) effective, aggressive and comprehensive intervention strategies must be immediately implemented beyond the basic prevention programs which are considered to be maintenance. Examples of these strategies can include curfews, innovative policing programs, school resource officers and safe haven programs. Mandatory programs that provide interventions for students identified at high risk for gang involvement, mental illness, etc. are recommended.

Steps can be taken to help juveniles who are incarcerated learn techniques that encourage them to avoid violent behavior in the future.

RECOMMENDATION: Any effective approach to the issue of public safety as it relates to violence or specifically “gangs” will require individuals to participate in *mandatory education, job training, drug treatment programs while incarcerated.* They will undergo an extensive intake assessment for risk, mid-sentence reports and pre-release reports and progress. This is the responsibility of the DOC and JJC for direct reporting on progress and estimates of additional resources necessary.

Rationale: Once an individual enters the Department of Corrections or Juvenile Corrections, planning for their release should start from the first day of incarceration. This is an opportunity to address and define physical and psychosocial behaviors such as addictions, mental illness, general health issues, poor education, and lack of job training skills that are most surely present in the inmate. These programs should be mandatory, since 70% of inmates will return to the community within 5 years. If they receive the necessary treatment and training during their incarceration, they will return home less a threat to society in general. This is the opportunity to provide the necessary services that they probably did not receive prior to their incarceration.

Ongoing support for juveniles re-entering the community after a period of incarceration is essential to break the pattern of violent behavior many have demonstrated in the past.

RECOMMENDATION: Any effective approach to the issue of public safety as it relates to violence or specifically “gangs” will include reintegration programs. These **reintegration programs start at the day of incarceration and will address the need for continued education, drug treatment, mental and medical health needs continuation, community integration and employment.** Multiple treatment sites might be necessary to provide all services.

Rationale: As stated above, 70% of the inmates will return to the community and unless they are given adequate resources both in and out of the corrections department, they will most likely return to a life of violence, crime and negative behavior. We must address this and continue to provide support for these individuals once they are released from incarceration. The transition from a structured environment of constant supervision to one that provides no supervision is as dramatic as the initial incarceration. Reentry must address the process of reintegration into society. This may include such basics as supplying documents that will allow for employment (driver license and Social Security card) to halfway houses and community support. The reentry process must continue with access to the medical, mental and treatment services necessary for continued positive reintegration. The Parole and Probation Departments must be aggressive and active in supporting this function.

RECOMMENDATION: The Governor should **appoint one lead agency to coordinate the recommendations.** The lead agency should have nonprofit, tax-exempt status and personnel with the expertise necessary to implement these recommendations. This agency would report directly to the Governor office on a monthly basis and should be free of any political influence.

Rationale: Violence has become a crisis in many New Jersey communities and as a result this initiative must be implemented in an expedient manner. Because inefficiency and waste are inherent in government and large academic institutions, these agencies should not be considered as the lead agency for this initiative. “Grass roots” organizations typically have no ongoing research for best practices or the infrastructure to manage projects effectively and should also not be considered however must be incorporated in the overall strategy. Small to mid-size nonprofit organizations are best suited to coordinate the work of many agencies because they are unencumbered by layers of bureaucracy.



ATTACHMENT A

Intensive Violence Intervention Program Supervised Youth

The Violence Prevention Intensive Intervention Program was developed to address youth identified by schools, communities, and law enforcement as being at greater risk for certain patterns of violence behaviors. These include, but are not limited to:

- Poor Conflict Resolution Skills
- Bullying and Teasing
- A History of Domestic Violence in the Home
- A History of Family Dysfunction
- Dating or Acquaintance Violence
- The Inability to Communicate Feelings of Anger, Stress, Anxiety, or Depression Effectively With Respect to Peers and/or Adults
- Poor Academic Achievement
- Drug and/or Alcohol Use
- Gang Influence or Involvement

The Violence Prevention Intensive Intervention Program team consists of:

- One or More Emergency Medicine Physicians
- Motivational Speaker/Victim of Violence
- Program Director (MSW Level Social Worker/Participant Observer)
- Researcher

Additional guest speakers from all realms of professional service may also be included as part of the holistic approach of educating and informing youth about alternatives to negative behaviors.

The Violence Prevention Intensive Intervention Program is conducted during a maximum 90 minute group session, at once per week intervals, over the course of 8 weeks. VPI rules and codes of conduct are discussed after initial staff introductions during the first session. An initial Post-Needs Assessment Survey is completed by each consenting

participant prior to exposure to the program. The program is facilitated by an Emergency Medicine Physician, a Motivational Speaker/Victim of Violence, and/or a guest speaker.

The goal of VPI is to deter young people from violence behaviors, and to expose them to available opportunities for education, and community resources that help support positive alternatives to current life decisions, and to help them build personal self-esteem.

Each of the eight 90 minute group sessions are specifically arranged to cover one or a cluster of topic areas indicated above in detail. The premise is to help the youth participants gain a basic knowledge of the medical and legal consequences surrounding violence behaviors with the use of selected illustrations of program presentation materials being viewed and discussed. Some of the illustrations are at times graphic in nature.

The program presenters incorporate visualization techniques incorporating power-point case scenarios, media clips, newspaper articles, medical tools, exercises, and personal presenter life-stories. Time is set aside during and after presentations for group participant feed-back, and for the presenters to respond to participant questions. These time periods allow the VPI presenters and Program Director (as Social Worker Observer) the opportunity to determine how the program is perceived by the participants, whether or not new or additional knowledge and insight has been gained, and if the ability for participants to re-frame what has been discussed has been achieved. In addition, the participants must be able to demonstrate a willingness to consider alternatives to previous delinquent behaviors; especially in relation to violence at least once during the 8 week period.

Upon completion of the 8 week program, each consenting participant completes a Post-Needs Assessment Survey, and Participant Satisfaction Survey. A VPI Certificate of Completion is presented to the participant; and if available, an incentive as determined by the VPI Executive Director and staff. Referrals to employment, mentoring, assistance with GED/School Re-entry or college, volunteerism, and on-going support from VPI medical and professional staff is offered during the eighth and final session; on an as needed basis, or by personal participant request.

Session I: Program Presenter and Program Over-view: Medical Part I.

- A. Pre-Needs Assessment Survey (20 minutes)
- B. Introduction of Emergency Medicine Physician and Motivational Speaker/Victim of Violence Personal Histories and Current Professional Back-grounds (10 minutes)
- C. Introduction of Participants and Disposition (5 minutes)
- D. “Gangs, Guns, and Drugs” PSA Video from the Office of the NJ Attorney General (10 minutes)
- E. Medical Part I: VPI Power-Point Presentation
 - Juvenile Statistics
 - Homicide Defined: Three Main Causes of Homicide
 - 1. Arguments

2. Drugs and/or Alcohol
3. Weapons
- F. Case Illustrations of Medical and Legal Consequences of Violence Through the Use of Case Scenarios, Articles, Media Clips
 1. Injuries Sustained as a Direct Result of Legal or Illegal Handling of Weapons
 2. Medical Procedures and Terminology: The Real ER
 3. Victim Outcomes
 4. Legal Consequences (30 minutes)
- G. Group Discussion and Meals (15 minutes)

Session II: Medical Part II: Continuation of Medical Part I.

- A. Power-Point Presentation, Videos, Articles, and Media Clips (60 minutes)
- B. Group Discussion and Meals (30 minutes)

Session III: Acquaintance Violence: #1 Cause of Murders/Homicides in the U.S.

- A. Dating Violence (20 minutes)
- B. Peer Violence (20 minutes)
- C. Domestic Violence (20 minutes)
- D. Group Discussion and Meals (30 minutes)

Session IV: Risk Factors for Victimization

The people you associate with can put you at risk for harm.

Be careful how you choose your friends.

The company you keep is a reflection of you.

Recognize a friend from an enemy.

- A. The Role of Drugs and Alcohol (30 minutes)
- B. Gang Activity, Peer Associates, “Wanna-be’s and Gonna-be’s” (30 minutes)
- C. Group Discussion and Meals (30 minutes)

Session V: Developing Positive and Effective Communication Skills

“The things you say out of your mouth can escalate an already negative situation.”

“The tongue is the smallest muscle of the body, but can cause the greatest damage.”

“God gave you two ears and one mouth, so that you listen more and speak less.”

- A. Responding to Confrontation (20 minutes)
 1. Speak in a lowered and calm tone of voice.
 2. Walk away today, to live tomorrow.
 3. No one likes to argue alone
 4. Agree to disagree. I’m wrong, and you’re right.
- B. Bullying and Teasing (20 minutes)
 1. Yesterday’s bullying victim is tomorrow’s bully.
 2. Turn a bully into a friend.
 3. Ignore the bully, and the bully will eventually ignore you.
 4. Talk to an adult or someone you trust about being bullied.
- C. Character Education and Model Concepts (20 minutes)
 1. Know who you are.
 2. No one is perfect, everyone has flaws.

3. Build your self-esteem by thinking good thoughts, and doing good deeds.
4. Never let anyone convince you that you are a failure.
5. Practice to be the best that you can be.
- D. Vertical vs Horizontal Thinking
- E. Group Discussion and Meals (30 minutes)

Session VI: Emotional Intelligence and Social Skills: Looking Toward the Future and the Role of Education

- A. Future Options: Dreams, Goals, Tools for Success (60 minutes)
HS Diploma/GED
Trade/Technical/Vocational School
College
- B. Group Discussion and Meals (30 minutes)

Session VII: Program Review

- A. Sessions I-VI (60 minutes)
- B. Group Discussion and Meals (30 minutes)

Session VIII: Program Conclusion

- A. Post-Needs Assessment Survey and Participant Satisfaction Survey (20 minutes)
- B. Awarding of VPI Participant Certificate of Completion (10 minutes)
- C. Option #1 Guest Speaker or Option #2 Open Floor: Participants, Presenters, Visitors Option #2 (30 minutes)
- D. Final Group Discussion and Meals (30 minutes)

ATTACHMENT B

Key Findings VPI Intensive Intervention Program Research Relative to Essex Vicinage Youth Probation 2005

Introduction

This research and evaluation report assesses the effectiveness of the Intensive Intervention Program facilitated by the Violence Prevention Institute Inc. (VPI) to reduce the incidence of violence and related behaviors among at-risk urban minority youth. Data were collected over the course of three intervals: 1) July 2005 to August 2005 (8 weeks); 2) September 2005 to October 2005 (6 weeks); and 3) November 2005 to December 2005 (6 weeks). Results illustrate the percent change from pretest to posttest regarding the adolescents' attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors toward violence and gang involvement, drug and alcohol use, and sexual health.

The key findings are divided into the following sections: I) Demographics; II) Attitudes Toward Gangs and Violence; III) Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency; IV) Violent Behavior; V) Drug and Alcohol Involvement; and VI) Sexual Behavior. Overall, the Intensive Intervention Program demonstrated positive findings in all targeted areas, and participating youth appeared to have benefited greatly from their involvement in the 6-8 week program.

Key Findings

I. Demographics

Age:

Age	N (%)
<9	3 (4.0)
10	3 (4.0)
11	5 (6.6)
12	7 (9.2)
13	5 (6.6)
14	5 (6.6)
15	4 (5.3)
16	14 (18.4)
17 or >	30 (39.5)

Gender:

Gender	N (%)
Male	64 (84.2)
Female	12 (15.8)

Race/Ethnicity:

Race/Ethnicity	N (%)
White	5 (7.0)
African American	46 (60.5)
Hispanic/Latino	31 (40.8)
Asian	1 (1.1)
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	3 (4.0)
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2 (2.6)

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

# Brothers and Sisters	N (%)
0	8 (10.8)
1	17 (23.0)
2	16 (21.6)
3	11 (14.9)
4	4 (5.41)
5	15 (20.3)

Living Situation:

Living Situation	N (%)
Mother	60 (83.3)
Stepmother	2 (2.8)
Grandmother	17 (23.6)
Aunt	11 (15.3)
Sister	32 (44.4)
Stepsister	2 (2.8)
Other Children	11 (15.3)
Father	18 (25.0)
Stepfather	11 (15.3)
Grandfather	4 (5.6)
Uncle	9 (12.5)
Brother	35 (48.6)
Stepbrother	4 (5.6)
Other Adults	2 (2.8)

Do you receive a free or reduced priced lunch?

Yes	No
44 (60.3)	29 (39.7)

II. Attitudes Towards Gangs and Violence

Posttest results revealed the following:

- Participants were 19% more likely to disagree with the statement, “If I walk away from a fight, I’d be a coward (“chicken”).”
- Participants were 27% more likely to agree that they don’t need to fight because there are other ways to deal with being mad.
- Participants were 20% more likely to disagree with the statement, “It’s o.k. to hit someone who hit you first.”
- Participants were 8% more likely to agree with the statement, “If I really want to, I can usually talk someone out of trying to fight with me.”
- Participants were 9% more likely to strongly disagree with the statement, “I think you are safer and have protection, if you join a gang.”
- Participants were 12% less likely to join a gang.
- Participants were 14% more likely to strongly disagree with the statement, “I think it’s cool to be in a gang.”
- Participants were 22% more likely to believe that it is dangerous to join a gang and that one would end up hurt or killed if he or she belonged to a gang.
- Participants were 31% more likely to think that being in a gang makes it more likely that someone will get into trouble.
- The majority of respondents disagreed that some people in their families belong to a gang, or used to belong to a gang.
- Participants were 11% more likely to strongly disagree that they belonged to a gang.

III. Likelihood of Violence and Delinquency

The following questions asked the following - within the next month, how likely is it that you will...

- Participants were 4.5% less likely to get into a physical fight.
- Participants were 10.8% less likely to carry a gun.
- Participants were 6% less likely to injure someone else in a fight.
- Participants were 9% less likely to drink an alcoholic beverage.
- Participants were 9% less likely to get drunk.
- Participants were 23% less likely to have sex.

IV. Violent Behavior

The following questions asked the following - during the past 30 days, on how many days did you...

- Participants were 33% less likely to carry a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club.
- Participants were 23% less likely to carry a gun.
- Participants were 14% less likely to carry a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property.
- During the past 12 months, approximately 25% of the respondents reported that they were threatened or injured with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property between one to three times.

The following questions asked the following - during the past 12 months, how many times were you...

- Approximately 30% of the respondents reported that someone has deliberately damaged their property – i.e., car, clothing, or books – on school property.
- Approximately 70% of the respondents reported being in a physical fight.
- Approximately 20% of the respondents reported that they were in a physical fight that required medical attention by either a doctor or nurse.
- Approximately 8% of the respondents reported that either their boyfriend or girlfriend hit, slapped, or physically hurt them on purpose.
- Approximately 5% of the respondents reported that they have ever been forced to have sexual intercourse.

V. Drug and Alcohol Involvement

The following questions asked the following - during the past 30 days, on how many days did you...

- Approximately 17% of the respondents reported that they smoked cigarettes. It is important to note that participants reported a 29% decrease in this smoking behavior from pretest to posttest.
- Participants also reported a 30% reduction in the number of cigarettes they smoked per day.
- Participants reported were 7% less likely to chew tobacco, snuff, or dip, such as Redman, Levi, Garrett, Beechnut, Skoal, Skoal Bandits, or Copenhagen.
- Approximately 30% of the respondents reported that they had at least one drink of alcohol. It is important to note that participants reported a 22% reduction in this drinking behavior from pretest to posttest.
- Approximately 20% of the respondents indicated that they used marijuana, with an 11% reduction in this behavior from pretest to posttest.
- Approximately 7% of the participants reported that they used cocaine (i.e., powder, crack, or freebase), with an 8% reduction in this behavior from pretest to posttest.
- Approximately 7% of the participants reported that they used ecstasy (i.e., MDMA), with a 7% reduction in this behavior from pretest to posttest.

VI. Sexual Behavior

- More than 50% of the participants reported being sexually active, with a 28% reduction in sexual behavior from pretest to posttest.
- Approximately one third of the sample ever used alcohol or drugs before they had sexual intercourse, but were 8% less likely to engage in this type of risky behavior from pretest to posttest.
- Approximately 25% of the sample has engaged in unprotected sex.

ATTACHMENT C

School Climate and Adolescent Drug Use: Mediating Effects of Violence Victimization in the Urban High School Context¹

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This study tested the mediating effects of violence victimization in the relationship between school climate and adolescent drug use. The hypothesized path model fit data collected from a probability sample of urban high school students (N =586) participating in an evaluation of a violence prevention program funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Findings indicated that the lack of enforcement of school rules and the presence of unsafe places in and around the school influenced adolescent drug use directly and indirectly through their effects on violence victimization.

Editors' Strategic Implications: This research confirms the importance of the environment as a contributor to violence victimization. Violence victimization is obviously of concern in its own right, but in addition, these data indicate that it also contributes to adolescent drug use. School administrators should be aware that unsafe places in schools and the failure to enforce school rules may affect such victimization and drug use.

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School-related exposure to violence is a common occurrence for children and adolescents growing up in many U.S. urban areas. A recent survey of high school students, *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance* (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2004), suggests that more than one-third of respondents reported being in a physical fight at school in the past 12 months, with 4% of these resulting in serious injuries requiring medical attention. The magnitude of this problem stimulated Federal legislation, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSC), which specified that by the year 2000 “every school in the United States will be free of violence and unauthorized presence of firearms, drugs, and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning” (National Education Goals Panel, 1999, p. 4). A concomitant problem plaguing at least 9.5 million students across the U.S. (60%) is the availability and prevalence of illicit substances on high school campuses. Recent findings from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2003) highlight a link between youth violence and substance use by showing that youths aged 12–17 who reported violent behaviors in the past-year also reported higher rates of past-year illicit drug use compared with youths who did not report violent behaviors.

Key to addressing successfully these twin scourges will be evidence-based programs and policies

aimed to develop school capacity to implement and sustain effective programs (Mihalic, Abigail, Irwin, Ballard, & Elliot, 2004). To meet this objective, SAMHSA has initiated the National Registry of Effective Prevention Programs project as a systematic way to identify, promote, and implement model violence and substance abuse prevention programs. Model program status requires that protocols are carefully implemented, thoroughly evaluated, and produce consistent, positive, and replicable results, which are readily disseminated to the broader prevention community. Consistent with the mandates stipulated by the Blueprints for SDFSC, the U.S. Department of Education has emphasized the importance of adopting prevention protocols with proven effectiveness (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). However, a 1998 Department of Education study found that only 58% of school districts considered research on the effectiveness of prevention-related activities, and only 35% of districts defined research-based prevention in a way that is as rigorous as the Department's guidelines.

Research examining possible links between violence and drug use has consistently found a strong relationship among adolescents and young adults (Ellickson & McGuigan, 2000; Elliott, Huizinga, & Menard, 1989; Kingery, Mirzaee, Pruitt, & Hurley, 1991; Valois, McKeown, Garrison, & Vincent, 1995). Elliott et al. (1989) presented national baseline epidemiological and etiological data showing the joint occurrence of delinquent behavior and alcohol and drug use. Their seminal work further revealed that not only was there a relationship between delinquent behavior and drug use, but that there was an escalation from minor delinquency and "gateway" drug use to more serious offenses and increased use of illicit substances. Kingery et al. (1991) surveyed 1,004 eighth and tenth grade students in 23 rural communities and found that youths who took drugs also took more risks, carried weapons more often, engaged in more fights, and were more likely to be victimized. In a representative sample of U.S. 8th and 10th graders, Kingery, Pruitt, and Hurley (1992) examined the relationship between violence, drug use, and victimization. They found that adolescent drug users were more inclined to engage in physical altercations with their peers, take more risks that made them susceptible to assault, and were also more likely to be assaulted at school and victimized outside of school supervision. Similarly, Valois et al. (1995) analyzed the prevalence and correlates of violent behavior in a sample of high school students who completed the Youth Risk Behavior Survey administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Among a sample of 4,147 White and Black adolescents in 9th through 12th grade, the strongest predictors of fighting and carrying a weapon were binge drinking and alcohol use respectively. These findings were replicated in another study that examined data from the 1995 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Lowry et al., 1999). Additionally, Furlong, Caas, Corral, Chung, and Bates (1997) reported findings from the California Drug Use Survey and the California School Climate Survey that indicated both self-reported substance use and perception of frequency of substance use on school property were significantly associated with school violence.

Although prior research and logic suggest a relationship between drug use and school violence, the SDFSC was established without direct evidence of this relationship and without an understanding of possible and important nuances involved in such a relationship (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University, 2001; Furlong et al., 1997). Although interpersonal violence has been extensively studied in some community settings, fewer studies have addressed how this relationship manifests in school settings (Lowry et al., 1999), particularly in urban high schools. It should also be noted that a majority of these prior studies measured perceptions of how frequently school violence occurred and on students' involvement as perpetrators of violence at school, not personal experiences of violence victimization and school climate. Our study attempts to enhance understanding of this critical public health issue by exploring the experiences of violence victimization and school climate among a racially and ethnically diverse sample of urban high school students.

Our study adopts a conceptual framework that was originally proposed by Pentz and colleagues (1989) to guide the development of a multi-community trial for the primary prevention of adolescent drug use. Findings from this comprehensive community-based program, that included media/publicity campaigns, education services for youth and parents, prevention-related skills development, community organizing, and advocacy of substance abuse policy changes, were an early suggestion that preventive interventions aimed at the individual should also consider the counteracting social and physical environment influences that may contribute to violence.

Pentz (1995, 1999) described this integrated theoretical perspective as the interaction of person (P), situation (S), and environment factors (E) that are bounded by a community. Although Pentz's P, S, E

framework was originally developed for the context of a substance abuse prevention program, it provides a conceptual lens to examine school violence by suggesting both risk factors and protective factors, termed “intervention mediators” (Pentz, 1995). As shown in a recent study conducted by CASA (2001), one person-related risk factor was perceptions of minimal consequences associated with drug use. In this study, students were more likely to smoke, drink, or use drugs when they believed the harm associated with use was low. Possible person-related intervention mediators relevant for violence prevention might include participation in extracurricular activities, such as school clubs, organizations, and volunteer activities (Peterson & Reid, 2003). Importantly, from a primary prevention perspective, situation-related risk factors include variables such as verbal bullying while on the school premise (e.g., name calling, laughing at you), or being the victim of a violent act (e.g., pushed, slapped on purpose). Situation-related intervention mediators could include curricula on social skills development, efforts to change social norms about bullying, development of clear and specific rules and consequences, and increased supervision and presence from parents (Nansel et al., 2001; Spivak & Prothrow-Stith, 2001). Pentz’s model also suggests that the physical environment may serve as a risk factor for both school violence and adolescent drug use through unsafe or “unowned” places in schools, such as hallways, dining areas, and parking lots, where school personnel are not typically present (Astor, Meyer, & Behre, 1999). Conversely, environment-related intervention mediators might include teacher-generated and implemented interventions that increase the role of students and other school community members in reclaiming “unowned” school territories (Astor et al., 1999).

To inform prevention programs about how to implement robust programs that promote safe school climates, there is a need to understand the subtle interplay of individual, situational, and environmental factors involved in violence and substance abuse within school contexts. In the present study, we employed a path model to examine suggested P, S, and E relationships among a sample largely comprised of Hispanic and African American students. Person-related (i.e., participation in extracurricular activities), situation-related (i.e., verbal bullying, violence victimization, and social norms against drug use), and environment-related (i.e., unsafe places in and around the school and lack of enforcement of school rules) variables were used as predictors of adolescent drug use with violence victimization and verbal bullying as mediators. We assessed whether violence victimization and verbal bullying were critical mechanisms through which the school environment affected adolescent drug use.

METHOD

Sample

Data were collected in 2002 as part of a larger study evaluating the effects of a Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) violence prevention program targeting a northeastern high school in an at-risk urban community. The sample setting was chosen because it is considered to be one of the top thirty poorest districts in this northeastern locale. These districts have been legally mandated to implement specific educational measures and programs for students residing in the State’s most economically disenfranchised communities. A total of 586 high school students (approximately 25% of the school’s population) participated in the survey (response rate =74%). The sample was 63% female and 68% Hispanic or Latino. Thirteen percent were Black or African American, 9% were Asian, 4% were bi-racial or multi-racial, and 2% were White. Ninth graders comprised 20% of the sample, 27% were 10th graders, 29% were 11th graders, and 24% were 12th graders.

Measures and Procedures

Seven variables were assessed, and adolescent drug use served as the criterion. The six predictors were: participation in extracurricular activities, verbal bullying, violence victimization, social norms

against drug use, unsafe places in and around the school, and lack of enforcement of school rules. Measures were adapted from existing surveys in collaboration with students, staff, and parents. Scores represented the mean of items for each scale. Students responded using a four-point, Likert-type scale (1 =strongly agree, 4 =strongly disagree). The measure of adolescent drug use ($M = 1.28$, $SD = 1.07$) was adapted from items contained in the Monitoring the Future Questionnaire (Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 2001) and included nine items (Cronbach's alpha =.83) that asked students to indicate the frequency of their drug use (e.g., cigarettes, alcohol, etc.) over the previous 30-day period. Participation in school-year extracurricular activities ($M = 1.35$; $SD = 1.60$) was assessed using five items (Cronbach's alpha =.93) that asked students their involvement in clubs, organizations, after-school programs, and volunteer activities. The measure of verbal bullying ($M = 1.18$; $SD = 1.19$) included four items (Cronbach's alpha =.72) that asked students to indicate how often they had been a victim of verbal bullying (e.g., name calling, laughing at you) while at school during the previous 30-day period. Violence victimization ($M = .31$; $SD = .60$) was assessed using five items (Cronbach's alpha =.78) that asked students how often they had been a victim of violence (e.g., pushed, slapped on purpose) while at school during the previous 30-day period. The measure of social norms against drug use ($M = 1.46$; $SD = .35$) included six items (Cronbach's alpha =.80) that asked students to indicate the extent to which social factors (e.g., disapproval from friends, family) might prevent them from using drugs. Lack of enforcement of school rules ($M = 2.58$; $SD = .89$) was assessed using four items (Cronbach's alpha =.75) that asked students to indicate the extent to which school rules were enforced by school staff during the school year. The measure of unsafe places in and around the school ($M = 1.87$; $SD = .22$) consisted of six items (Cronbach's alpha =.70) that asked students to indicate how safe they believed places were in the school building (e.g., cafeteria, restroom, hallways) and on school grounds (e.g., entrance to the school, street corner of the school). The survey was self-administered in English and Spanish to students in randomly selected health education classes at the school.

RESULTS

We performed a structural equation modeling (SEM) procedure with observed variables using AMOS 4.0 (Arbuckle, 1997). We analyzed the variance-covariance matrix using maximum likelihood estimation. The over-identified path model, shown in Fig. 1, includes only significant paths. The path coefficients shown are statistically significant standardized beta weights. The model was found to fit the data from the sample, $\chi^2(10) = 14.82$, $p = .14$; NFI =.99; RFI =.99, and accounted for 20% of the variance in adolescent drug use.

As can be seen in Fig. 1, lack of enforcement of school rules was found to predict adolescent drug use directly, as well as indirectly through its relationships with social norms against drug use and violence victimization. Students reporting weaker enforcement of school rules tended to experience violence more frequently, perceive weaker social norms against drug use, and use drugs more often than students who reported stronger enforcement of school rules. Participation in extracurricular activities also predicted adolescent drug use directly and indirectly through its relationship with violence victimization. Students with higher levels of participation in extracurricular activities tended to experience violence less frequently and used drugs less often than students with lower levels of participation in extracurricular activities. In addition, the presence of unsafe places in and around school directly predicted adolescent drug use and verbal bullying victimization. Students who reported more unsafe places in and around the school tended to experience verbal bullying more frequently and used drugs more often than students who reported fewer unsafe places in and around the school. Verbal bullying victimization also predicted violence victimization. Students who experienced verbal bullying more frequently tended to be victims of violence more often than students who experienced verbal bullying less frequently.

DISCUSSION

The principal objective of this study was to examine the role of violence victimization in the

relationships between school climate and adolescent drug use in an urban high school context. Findings showed that violence victimization mediated the effects of three variables on adolescent drug use: lack of enforcement of school rules, social norms against use, and participation in extracurricular activities. Specifically, students who perceived greater lack of enforcement of school rules tended to experience greater violence victimization, which was then associated with increased drug use. Similarly, students who perceived weaker social norms against use experienced greater violence victimization, which again was associated with greater drug use. Moreover, students who reported greater participation in extracurricular activities experienced less violence victimization, which was then associated with less drug use. Finally, unsafe places in and, importantly, around the school affected both adolescent drug use and verbal bullying victimization, while verbal bullying victimization affected adolescent drug use indirectly through its relationship with violence victimization. In sum, an ecologically oriented model that included person, situation, and environmental influences

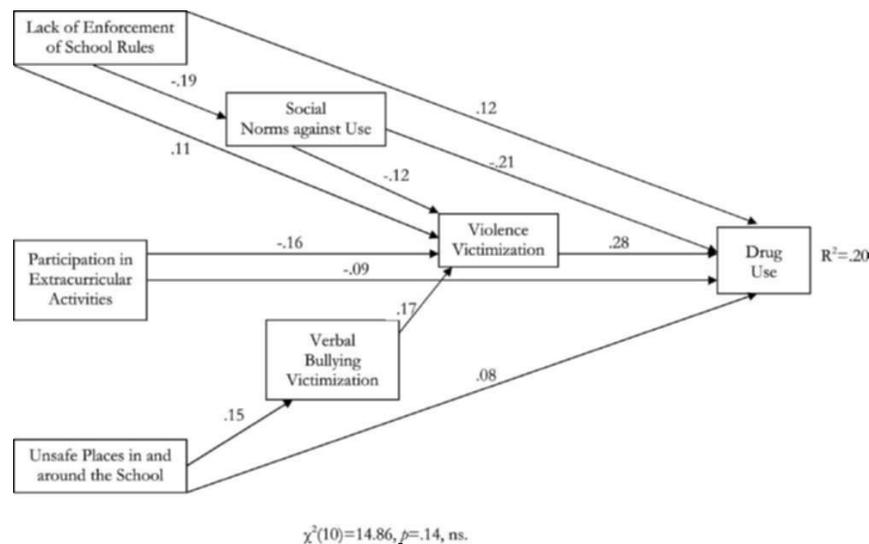


Fig. 1. Path Model Predicting Adolescent Drug Use.

on violence and substance abuse was supported. Our findings recommend that schools develop the capacity to ensure that violence and substance abuse prevention programs are chosen on the basis of research-based evidence, integrated into the multiple facets of school environments and instructional programs, and evaluated for their efficacy in reducing violence and related behaviors among their students.

From an ecological standpoint, viewing school violence and substance abuse as part and parcel of school life in general has much to recommend it. Our findings suggest that violence and drug abuse are co-occurring elements in a standing pattern of behavior, sustained by the physical milieu of unsafe places and reinforced by extra-individual patterns of relationships that promote bullying. Viewing schools as a cluster of behavior settings might allow prevention scientists to leverage a fuller range of intervention options that capture the natural rhythms of student life and provide more robust preventive interventions. Behavior setting theory is explicitly environment oriented in a way that integrates both physical and social aspects of environments. As suggested by this study, manipulation of the “setting programs” in schools that sustain violence and substance abuse (Barker, 1968, 1987) could take the form of alterations in the physical environment, development of a broader range of extracurricular options, and intentional development of role structures and norms keyed to the customary phases of the school day (Maton, 1988). Given the synomorphic nature of the environment-behavior relations, one intervention strategy could focus on identification and transformation of places in and around schools that serve as niches for violence and substance abuse. Key to this strategy will be a simultaneous focus on place and behavior. In our opinion it will not be sufficient to simply identify or alter places that have the potential to act as niches. Rather, space that regularly contains violence and substance abuse should be targeted for multi-level intervention. A potentially powerful point of intervention suggested by our findings is development of alternative settings

e.g., extracurricular settings. The ecological value of these is obvious, and their most important value would be that they capitalize on natural control over direct and indirect forms of victimization. These may at once eliminate both bullying and actual physical violence. However, mere encouragement without making these settings a regular and sustained feature of student life with overt physical boundaries will dilute their effect.

Overlaying the elimination or establishment of settings are institutional practices as reflected in norms and enforcement of school rules. One finding in our study suggests that norms against violence or drug use might be strengthened by stronger enforcement of school rules. These may be more directly under the control of schools; but as we indicated above, established regularities in the use of research based prevention protocols may make changing these a particularly challenging prospect. Nevertheless, the literature on empowerment may provide some indications about how to promote anti-drug/violence norms and stiffen enforcement of school rules. Recent work on organizational empowerment (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004) describes possible organizational empowerment features that could be manipulated. For instance, establishing and sustaining formal positions or roles in schools could influence the extent to which students, teachers, administrators, and parents assume control of tasks and achieve positive outcomes (Gummer, 1998; Speer, Hughey, Gensheimer, & Adams-Leavitt, 1995). Extending these ideas to the current context, schools seeking to enhance enforcement of school rules and strengthen anti-violence norms might be encouraged to form diverse groups of students, teachers, and administrators for examination of rule making, enforcement issues, and norms. These groups might research existing policies and practices in schools and jointly devise, implement, and participate in the evaluation of innovations.

The empowerment literature indicates that how these groups go about their work will be an important element in their success. Fashioning social regularities (Seidman, 1988) in these groups that transcend the strict role boundaries of student, teacher, administrator could be achieved by creating opportunity role structures characterized by rotation of roles with e.g., students rotating through the role of, say, rules committee chair and later assuming leadership of an environmental design options group. Such a group might work to enact modest physical design/re-design changes and couple these to norms enforcement with respect to mutually identified violence “hot spots.” The same dynamic could be applied to other roles customarily occupied by teachers or administrators. Changes made as a result could then be evaluated, but it is important to assert that carefully organized, prospective, and experimental studies of interventions be conducted. Given the constellation of variables related to violence victimization and substance abuse, it is also recommended that interventions simultaneously target not only norms and rule enforcement but, as previously mentioned, extracurricular settings and physical environment.

These recommendations ought to, of route, be tempered by limitations of our study. Its cross-sectional design precluded a causal interpretation of these data and allowed for the possibility of other plausible interpretations. Previous research has proposed several causal mechanisms between violence and substance abuse (Goldstein, 1985; National Research Council, 1993). One alternative model recently proposed by Kodjo, Auinger, and Ryan (2003) included a violence-related indicator (i.e., weapon carrying at school) as the criterion variable in their analysis. Using cross-sectional data from the 1994–1995 National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Kodjo et al., 2003), these researchers showed that substance use served as a significant predictor of weapon carrying for adolescents. To infer causal relationships and control for rival explanations, future studies should employ designs that allow for stronger causal inferences. Other methodological trade-offs we faced concerned the instrument adapted for the study and the generalizability of our findings. In consideration of the study population, we developed instrumentation in collaboration with a school-based violence prevention task force comprised of school administrators and community representatives. As noted by Kumpfer et al. (1993), few instruments had been created for use specifically with racial and ethnic minority populations, and few had been developed by racial and ethnic minority investigators. It is conceivable that our attempt to use culturally appropriate measures may have come at the cost of generalizability to other populations. The path model may have accounted for additional variance in adolescent drug use if more validated measures of these variables had been incorporated into our instrumentation. Additionally, there was the difficulty introduced with self-report survey data in which students may have over reported or under reported certain individual behaviors (i.e., degree of drug use). However, researchers have argued that adolescents are often the best informants of their own situations, behavior, and feelings (Garbarino, Stott, & The Faculty of the Erikson Institute, 1989).

Although prior research has suggested that school-related violence and drug use among adolescents

are problems that are endemic to many U.S. urban high schools (CDC, 2001; SAMHSA, 2003), there remains a shortage of rigorous empirical evidence that has examined the specific link between violence victimization and adolescent drug use within the environments of urban high schools (Furlong et al., 1997). Our study was able to clarify some relationships among factors related to violence and substance abuse by showing that lack of enforcement of school rules and the presence of unsafe places in and around schools influenced adolescent drug use directly and indirectly through their effects on violence victimization. These findings are potentially important for prospective prevention and intervention programming efforts. Traditionally, conflict resolution and violence prevention programs that are implemented in many U.S. high schools do not include substance abuse components in their curricula, nor do they routinely account for the physical environment. Current prevention protocols rarely draw this connection, and there is a pressing need to design and implement effective prevention protocols that cast a more ecologically expansive and valid net. Taken together, these recommendations will require a combined effort from students, teachers, parents, school officials, and community organizations to mitigate the complex problems experienced by vulnerable populations of youth.

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ATTACHMENT D

The OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model provides a guide to assessing a community's youth gang problem as well as an implementation plan. It is important to note that gang activity has increased nationwide since September 11, 2001. This is due in part to the subsequent sense of instability and in part to the fact that local police have less time to monitor gang activity. Although the OJJDP Model focuses on violent gang crime, it has components that can be effective in every community, specifically the gang prevention programming that responds to specific risk factors and a lack of protective factors.

The Model focuses primarily on youth gang members less than 22 years of age and excludes motorcycle gangs, prison gangs, ideological gangs and hate groups comprised primarily of adults.

The Model asserts that the lack of social opportunities available to this population and the degree of social disorganization present in a community largely account for its youth gang problem. Other contributing factors include poverty, institutional racism, deficiencies in social policies and a lack of or misdirected social controls. The Model is based on five strategies that address key concerns raised by this theory.

- **Community Mobilization** (Involvement of local citizens, including former gang youth, community groups/agencies and coordination of programs)
- **Opportunities Provision** (education, training and employment targeted at gang-involved youth)
- **Social Intervention** (reaching out and acting as links among gang-involved youth, their families and the conventional world and needed services)
- **Suppression** (formal and informal social control procedures)
- **Organizational Change and Development** (policies and procedures that result in the most effective use of available and potential resources).

The program development process that facilitates the implementation of the core strategies is:

1. **Acknowledgment of the problem** – if denial is present, it must be confronted.
2. **Assessment of the problem** – enables targeting gangs, involved youth and locations of criminal activity.
3. **Setting goals and objectives** – should emphasize changes desired in the target area.
4. **Relevant services and activities** – ensures that the work of collaborating agencies is complementary.
5. **Evaluation** – shows that a combination of intervention, suppression and prevention strategies are coordinated and effective on reducing gang crime.

The 8 critical elements of the program are:

- Initial and continuous problem assessment
- Targeting the area and populations most closely associated with the problem
- Mix of the 5 key strategies identified above
- A steering committee
- A team that includes police, probation, outreach staff and others
- A plan for coordinating efforts sharing appropriate information
- Community capacity building
- Ongoing data collection and analysis.

Since the OJJDP specified that the coordinator should not be a law enforcement officer, the Violence Prevention Institute could coordinate the effort.

ATTACHMENT E

Summary: Findings from the Washington State Institute on Public Policy 2001

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August 2006

If the average American taxpayer or survivor of a crime were to become involved in the process of determining a means to reduce taxes, and reduce the risk of experiencing future victimization, I would think that they would be most inclined to examine and accept an alternative to the present policies in place; forcing politicians to make drastic changes, or suffer the loss of being in a position of power they have come to value.

It is also quite logical then, to review and evaluate a ‘Best Practices’ approach to solutions of current critical issues in our communities, which may be the answer to resolving many of the problems, putting to rest this same debate in our own state of New Jersey. Within the past fifteen or more years, New Jersey has been faced with the steadily increasing rate of a dangerous youth gang culture, suicide, gun-related and sexual assaults and homicide, youth unemployment, rising housing costs, and poverty due to poor education and limited resources for the most under-served groups. Inner-city dwellers fear for their children’s safety in public schools, and their lives traveling to and from school. The inability to be freely mobile in their physical realm has drastically impacted the mobility of the individual minds of an entire generation of young people. We have now created a “slavery of the mind” where young people regularly explode out of anger at the drop of a hat. Adding to this the proliferation of illegal drugs and weapons in many of their neighborhoods, this anger is now compounded and expended with deadly force. Bred out of a familial and societal life of frustration, there is no tangible means to identify from whence it stems. So, we continue to see on a daily basis in our streets, on the news, in the papers; more and more violence.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy brought together a group of innovative financial analysts, data analysts, educators, and social scientists with the support of state officials to conduct an extensive researched-based evaluation. In 2001 upon completion of their joint research, prepared and published a detailed report to share their findings with other concerned academic, political, and concerned citizens of Washington State, and the U.S. The data substantiating the report looked at approaching the social issue of crime from a totally different perspective; “Cost-Benefit Analysis”. This approach is based upon the premise of say, how the Stock Market works. An example to use would be: an investment advisor studying rates of return on mutual bonds, real estate, commodities, or other investment options. As such, the investor uses what is called-a “Bottom-line Metric”; the rate of return on the initial investment.

The primary personnel who worked on this research project were Steve Aos, Polly Phipps, Robert Barnoski, and Roxanne Lieb. This group systematically analyzed twenty-five (25) years of previous prevention and intervention programs for youth versus

incarceration, as a solution to criminal behavior. In essence, looking back from 2001 to 1986; and thoroughly evaluating what programs seemed to be successful, and those that were not. Their mission was to carry out practical research in concert with legislative direction, on issues of importance to Washington State; which included Welfare Reform, Criminal Justice, Education, Youth Violence, and Social Issues. In brief, to “describe the bottom-line economics of programs that try to reduce crime from prevention programs designed for young children, to correctional interventions for juvenile and adult offenders. Using direct “apples to apples” comparisons as measured by the value to taxpayers and crime victims from a program’s expected effect on crime to likely outweigh costs; and designed to account for economics of different types of programs for widely varying age groups”. It should be mentioned here, that cultural diversity is alluded to as a major component of how this information was assessed before the final report was submitted.

The procedure used in this study involved searching for research-based evidence as to what works and what does not work to reduce crime rates (as previously mentioned); then estimating the comparative economics that these programs could have for taxpayers and crime victims. Over four hundred (400) research studies were conducted in the U.S., and Canada; reviewing those published within the previous twenty-five year period that had sound research methodology. Reduction of criminality for comparison and control groups, were measured. Most of the programs that were evaluated were designed for youth or adults who were already involved in the same level of justice system, and the most effective at reducing recidivism. Other programs focused on prevention, seeking to lower the risk that a young person would ever commit crimes in the first place. It may be important to note, that this study is limited to measure outcomes of criminality.

The research was divided into four (4) major components or program areas:

- **Early Childhood**
- **Middle Childhood and Adolescent (Non-Juvenile Offender)**
- **Juvenile Offender**
- **Adult Offender**

This literature review was also developed in a manner that allowed for future expansion of subsequent versions of the research and accompanying report. A quantitative evaluation on what works, followed by an evaluation of program economics is drawn from two thesis statements:

First: Taxpayers. For every dollar of taxpayer dollars spent on prevention programs, can rates of future criminal activity be reduced to avoid at least that amount in future criminal justice costs?

Second: If a program can potentially reduce rates of future criminal offending, not only will taxpayers receive benefits, but there will be few victims of crime. Here, the economic benefit is for both taxpayers and victims of crime

Once all of this data was gathered and systematically analyzed, the researchers conducted the following:

- **Calculated standard economic outcome measures, or net present values.**
- **Benefit-to-cost ratios.**
- **Rates of return on investment for a range of program options.**

For the purpose of the study and resulting report, the average taxpayer dollar value in Washington State was used as a general reference point. It must be emphasized here, that the evaluation of programs however, covered North America and Canada. Therefore, a dollar value may vary from state to state, city to city, and neighborhood to neighborhood. Yet, this is still relevant in comparison to varying justice system costs and sentencing practices respectively.

Since the primary function of the report is to show that programs **save** more money than they cost, several factors were taken into account in hopes of substantiating continued study, and the general practice of “Violence Prevention”. These factors included, but were not limited to:

- **Early Childhood Education Programs**
- **Drug Courts**
- **Cognitive Behavioral Programs (C.B.T.) for Juvenile Sex Offenders**
- **Other Programmatic Approaches to Prevention**

There were five (5) general findings as a result:

1. From a cost-benefit point of view, it was shown that some of the programs improved the effectiveness of Washington’s taxpayer-financed criminal justice system (**see tables**) with the largest and most consistent economic return for those designed for juvenile offenders. The benefit-to-cost ratios exceeded +/- \$20.00 in future savings for every taxpayer dollar spent.
2. Some programs produced a negative benefit-to-cost ratio. The resources expended could have been redirected to those programs that yielded positive returns. In addition, though some other programs demonstrated success at reducing criminal activity among participants, the cost to utilize those programs far exceeded any realized returns. This led to the conclusion that some prevention and intervention programs were more cost-beneficial with certain groups of people in certain settings; whereas some were not. This complicates the issue in particular, as it influences the willingness of our decision makers to designate resources towards successful investments for the **“right”** (or wrong) populations. This continues to challenge policymakers, program developers, and administrators.
3. Though the best programs were found to produce a 20% to 30% reduction in recidivism, it was more typical that any relatively “good” program effected a 5% to 10% reduction. Yet, even with these more frequent instances in general, it was shown that the cost-benefit resulted in a 45% reduction in criminal recidivism.
4. If all programs worked, the need to evaluate them would not be a critical necessity. WSIPP used the analogy that “when the stock market is up, the most important thing for

an investor to do, is be in it. Not spend time being concerned about one stock versus another. In the U. S., many programs intended to reduce crime-good or bad, are not rigorously evaluated. Some may be effective and should be allowed to expand, while others completely eliminated; as they only absorb scarce tax dollars that could be returned to taxpayers. Evaluation should be foremost, as it is the key to an overall program strategy.

5. “Sometimes bad things happen” to good programs. It is advised that a “portfolio approach” be a standard component and practice of any prevention/intervention program. No one program, no matter how good should be the focus for supplanting all sources of available funding. Consideration for short-term and long-term resources, research proven strategies, and non-researched yet promising programs, all need assistance for development if they impact crime reduction.

The following is a sample of the findings by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy:

Early Childhood Programs

1. Nurse Home Visitation:

Up-front costs-\$7,733.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-\$3.06 per \$1.00

2. Early Childhood Education for Disadvantaged Youth

Up-front costs-\$8,936.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-\$1.78 per \$1.00

3. Perry Pre-School

Up-front costs-N/A

Future net taxpayer savings-\$5.70

Middle Childhood & Adolescent Non-Juvenile Offender Programs (Grade 1 through 6)

1. Seattle Social Development Project (SSDP)

Up-front costs-\$4,355.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-\$4.25 per \$1.00

*Additional benefits included reductions in alcohol use, sexual activity, and poor school performance.

2. Quantum Opportunities Programs (Q.O.P.) Adolescents

Up-front costs-\$18,964.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-\$1.87 per \$1.00

3. Mentoring

Up-front costs-\$4,524.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-\$5.29 per \$1.00

4. National Job Corps

Up-front costs-\$6,123.00 per participant
Future net taxpayer savings-\$1.28 per \$1.00

5. Job Training partnership (JTPA) Youth/Un-skilled Adults

Up-front costs-\$1,431.00 per participant
Future net taxpayer savings-(-) \$12,082.00
Note: This program proved highly unsuccessful

Juvenile Offender Programs

1. Multi-Systemic Therapy (M.S.T.)

Up-front costs-\$4,743.00 per participant
Future net taxpayer savings-\$28.33 per \$1.00
Note: This program proved highly successful

2. Agression Replacement Training (A.R.T.)

Up-front costs-\$738.00 per participant
Future net taxpayer savings-\$45.91 per \$1.00

3. Multi-Dimensional Foster Care (MTFC) 6-12 Months

Up-front costs-\$2,052.00 per participant
Future net taxpayer savings-\$43.70 per \$1.00

4. Adolescent Diversion Project

Up-front costs-\$1,138.00 per participant
Future net taxpayer savings-\$24.91 per \$1.00

5. Diversion with Services (vs Regular Juvenile Court Processing)

Up-front costs-(-) \$127.00 per participant
Future net taxpayer savings-\$5,679.00 per \$1.00

6. Intensive Supervision Program

A. Intensive Probation vs Regular Probation Caseloads

B. Intensive Parole Supervision vs Regular Parole Caseloads

C. Intensive Probation as Alternatives to Incarceration

Up-front costs-\$2,500.00 per offender
Future net taxpayer savings-\$19,000.00 per \$1.00

7. Coordinated Services

Up-front costs-\$603.00 per participant
Future net taxpayer savings-\$25.59 per \$1.00

8. Juvenile Boot Camps (OJJDP)

Up-front costs-\$3,587.00 per participant
Future net taxpayer savings-(-) \$15,424.00
Note: This program proved highly unsuccessful

9. Scared Straight Programs

Up-front costs-\$50.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-(-) \$24,531.00

Note: This program proved highly unsuccessful

10. Family-Based Therapy

Up-front costs-\$1,537.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-\$21.13 per \$1.00

11. Juvenile Sex Offender Treatment

Up-front costs-\$3,119.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-\$3.38 per \$1.00

12. Drug Treatment Programs

Up-front costs-\$2,500.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-\$3.00 per \$1.00

13. Drug Court

Up-front costs-\$2,562.00 per participant

Future net taxpayer savings-\$2.83 per \$1.00

Looking at the cost comparisons of this sample of expenditures vs savings provides us with reason for concern over where our tax dollars ought to be utilized. We have an opportunity to ensure the safety and well-being of our citizens; more importantly, the promise of a productive future for our youth. The study conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy provides a template for policymakers, agencies, institutions, and every one of us to conclude that the decisions that need to be made are clear; upon fully examining the real costs to society is clearly in front of our eyes, and we can no longer continue to make excuses.
