GANG REDUCTION & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

GRYD: THEN, NOW, AND INTO THE FUTURE
FINAL REPORT

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Imoyase Community Support Services

Community Based Research Activism and Evaluation

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“LA was the gang capital of the country at the time [2007]. It probably still is. And we were making a proposal to stop being ‘stuck on stupid’ with the sole enforcement strategy [LAPD] and move to a holistic public health strategy. The Gang Reduction and Youth Development platform was created to be one of the vectors of this strategy, which involves multi levels of government, multi levels of community, philanthropy, everybody getting organized in a single strategy to reduce violence, reduce trauma, reduce gang adhesion, increase the assets and lower the risk factors of gang joining, giving exit ramps out of gangs.”

- CONNIE RICE

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This assessment reviews the evolution of the GRYD office from 2007 to 2023 and focuses on four key programmatic approaches:

- The 24/7 Crisis Incident Response (IR)
- The GRYD Prevention Model
- The Family Case Management Intervention Model (FCM)
- The Summer Night Lights (SNL) program

We explore how these programmatic approaches, which are part of the broader GRYD comprehensive strategy, have adapted over time to address violence and support at-risk youth and families in Los Angeles.

This assessment was conducted over a one-year period and included the following:

- Qualitative analysis of 95 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with prevention and intervention practitioners, community advocates, researchers, members of law enforcement, and other stakeholders.
- Quantitative analysis of 14 secondary data sourced from GRYD and LAPD data-collection systems.

This assessment investigates the evolution of GRYD's programmatic approaches through three distinct phases.

- **Phase 1** (June 2007 to December 2013) established the initial models.
- **Phase 2** (January 2014 to December 2022) served as an enhancement of Phase 1 and established a robust infrastructure for data collection.
- **Phase 3** (January 2023 and beyond) will focus on how the continuing evolution of these models can guide future program development.

By examining GRYD through a temporal lens, we can understand how each phase built upon the previous one, and how past and present strategies inform future improvements.

City of Los Angeles

Demographic Context

The City of Los Angeles (LA) is the largest city in LA County (LAC) and one of the most populous and diverse cities in the nation. It is home to approximately 4 million residents. Its diversity is a celebrated and vital component of LA's identity, rich cultural landscape, and dynamic communities.

According to the **2022 American Community Survey** the demographic composition of LA breaks down as follows:

- **Race:** Hispanic: 48%; White: 28%; Asian: 12%; Black: 8%; Two or more races: 3%; American Indian, Pacific Islander, and 'Other Race': Less than 1%
- **Gender:** women/girls: 50%; men/boys: 50%
- **Age:** 22-59 years of age: 56% (22% aged 22-34 and 34% aged 35-59 years); 0-9 years: 10% (5% aged 0-4 and 5% aged 5-9); 10-17 years: 9%; 18-21 years: 5%; 60 years or older: 18%
- Approximately 16% of Los Angeles residents live at or below the poverty line. Communities of color are disproportionately affected by poverty.
- Of the 3.8 million residents living in households, 63% are renters and 37% are homeowners.

LOS ANGELES AND GANGS: A HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Los Angeles is not only diverse in its demographics but also in the challenges it faces, particularly regarding gang activity. The city's gang culture has deep roots, dating back to the early 20th century, with three significant periods of gang growth occurring somewhat contemporaneously (Howell & Moore, 2010).

- The FIRST WAVE, in the 1930s and 1940s, saw the rise of Latinx gangs in East LA, formed by marginalized youth lacking strong cultural ties.
- The SECOND WAVE, from 1940 to 1964, was driven by the migration of about 4 million Mexicans to the U.S. and was marked by events like the Zoot Suit Riots and the Sleepy Lagoon murder, where racism, discrimination, and white racial terror fostered gang culture.
- The THIRD WAVE began in the 1940s, with Black gangs forming for self-protection against racially motivated White youth gangs. This wave led to the rise of the Crips and the Bloods in the 1970s.

The third wave of gang growth in LA occurred during two key periods: post-World War II to 1965, and 1970 to 1972. Black migration from southern states between 1915 and 1950 heightened racial tensions, particularly over housing and education, leading to violent clashes between Black Angelinos and White social clubs. Racial segregation, marginalization, and exclusion were significant factors, as early Black gangs formed for self-defense against White violence. Over time, however, conflicts began to arise between these groups. By the mid-1950s, gangs in South Central LA began to control public space in marginalized communities and influenced the socialization of Black youth in overcrowded and underserved neighborhoods. The late 1960s marked a turning point, as Black identity politics gave way to the rise of gangs such as the Crips and the Bloods, which soon spread to more than 100 cities across California.

The 1980s saw the emergence of prominent Latinx and prison gangs with significant transnational ties. Gangs such as La Eme (the Mexican Mafia), 18th Street, Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13), and Nuestra Familia rose to prominence in the Western and Pacific regions of Los Angeles (Howell & Moore, 2010).

As gang membership and crime surged in Los Angeles during the 1980s and 1990s, the LAPD intensified its war on street gangs, which led to significant problems, including police misconduct and corruption (Greene & Pranis, 2007). The department's CRASH (Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums) unit, designed to combat gangs, was exposed for its problematic operations after a CRASH officer was charged with theft of cocaine. The officer revealed that many CRASH officers had falsely framed individuals they suspected of gang involvement, which had resulted in wrongful deaths, wrongful convictions, wrongful prison sentences, wrongful injunctions, and deportations. Corrupt operations by the LAPD were not only unjust, they were also ineffective, and even counter-productive in that they diminished community trust in police, and gang violence continued to escalate.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GRYD

A Historical Perspective on Gang Reduction Initiatives

To address escalating gang violence in Los Angeles, the city introduced various initiatives, including the LA Bridges Program in 1997, as part of a broader strategy to reduce gang activity among youth. Public, private, and community-based organizations were contracted to collaboratively provide services to vulnerable youth in areas with high crime statistics. LA Bridges had two components:

- LA Bridges 1 aimed to prevent middle school youth from joining gangs through academic tutoring and after-school activities.
- LA Bridges 2 worked with gang-involved youth by assigning them intervention workers (Villaraigosa, 2007).

The program, overseen by the city's Community Development Department (CDD), focused on middle school-aged youth between 10 and 14 years old. Despite its efforts, LA Bridges was eventually discontinued due to perceived ineffectiveness (Miller, 2003). Among the reasons cited were unmet performance standards, inadequate evaluation, insufficient funding, and inadequate coverage of areas in need.

In 2003, two key program demonstrations shaped the GRYD Office's approach. The first was the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Program (GRP) in Boyle Heights, which aimed to reduce gang activity through research-based interventions targeting individuals, families, communities, and schools (Cahill & Hayeslip, 2010). As one of four national pilots funded by OJJDP, the LA GRP linked the city's efforts to federal resources. The second was the lesser-known, community-led Summer of Success (SOS) program, spearheaded by Karen Bass, then executive director of the Community Coalition and then 10th councilmember Martin Ludlow[1]. Funded by the California Endowment Foundation, SOS took a public health approach to violence reduction in Baldwin Village.

In 2005, then-Councilmember Tony Cardenas established the Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Juvenile Justice to review all city gang prevention, intervention, re-entry, and youth development proposals, programs, and legislation (Los Angeles City Council Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development, 2010). Over nearly three years, the committee drew on the expertise of Black and Brown gang-intervention practitioners across Los Angeles. This work led to the 2007 report, A Call to Action: A Case for a Comprehensive Solution to L.A.'s Gang Violence Epidemic (Advancement Project, 2007).

[1]Summer of Success (SOS) was funded by California Endowment Health Foundation CEO and President Robert Ross, MD. The ground-level work of SOS was led by currently GRYD CIW (Shelldog) Chalico Wilson, Radio Personality and Activist Dominique DiPrima, and former CIW T. Rogers (RIP), in coordination with Unity One Director Bo Taylor (RIP), and Amer-I Can football legend Jim Brown (RIP).

A second report, Blueprint for a Comprehensive Citywide Anti-Gang Strategy, was completed by the City Controller's Office in 2008 (Chick, 2009). Both reports recommended establishing a single office within the Mayor's Office to undertake the following:

- Coordinate youth and family services
- Develop regional partnerships with LAUSD, LA County, and local governments.
- Conduct needs assessments.
- Redirect funds toward the gang reduction strategy.
- Comprehensively reinvent youth and family services.
- Implement rigorous performance measures with evaluations of both city and county-contracted programs.

In July 2007, then-Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa established the Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD). In 2011, building on earlier efforts, such as the Comprehensive Citywide Anti-Gang Strategy and the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, GRYD developed its Comprehensive Strategy. The strategy incorporated culturally relevant approaches grounded in a public health, family systems, criminal justice, and a risk-factor framework to enhance community safety (Cespedes & Herz, 2011).

In 2020, GRYD released a second version of the Comprehensive Strategy. It built upon the principles of the 2011 strategy, continuing the four programmatic approaches which are the focus of this assessment, while adding programmatic emphasis on positive development, community engagement, and re-entry services (Tremblay et al., 2020).

Now a nationally and internationally recognized program, GRYD is known as an innovator of family-centered, place-based, and data-informed approaches to gang-violence prevention and intervention. GRYD has been a consistent policy and budget priority across three mayoral administrations - Villaraigosa, Garcetti, and Bass. Today, GRYD is integrated into Mayor Karen Bass' Office of Community Safety (MOCS).

GRYD functions as a hybrid platform that merges community engagement, direct practice, contract oversight, and data-informed policy development while balancing constitutional (i.e., rights-based) and relational community (i.e., collaborative trust building) policing within the framework of city government.

GRYD THEN

Phase 1 (2007-2013): Building the Plane While It's in the Air – Model Development

Phase 1 of GRYD began in the context of a nationwide emphasis on evidence-based practices and data-driven programming in gang violence prevention. Prior to GRYD, gang-prevention services in Los Angeles were managed through LA Bridges, which from 1997 to 2009 faced criticism for failing to meet its objectives, as highlighted by evaluations from USC's Malcolm Klein (2006) and the Advancement Project's Call to Action Report (2007). The report called for a new, centralized oversight entity within the Mayor's Office, led by a deputy mayor (i.e., a gang czar) to streamline city-funded gang-violence prevention efforts. Following the defunding of LA Bridges, GRYD was established in 2007. At the launch of Phase 1, GRYD got off to a quick start, characterized by an intense ramp-up of community engagement and the simultaneous development of operational protocols throughout the program.

Phase 1 began under the leadership of Rev. Jeff Carr, who was appointed as the first Deputy Mayor/Director in July 2007 and served until September 2009. Carr was instrumental in establishing a mission-driven focus for the office, securing resources, and navigating the broader political landscape. He was succeeded by Guillermo Cespedes, who became the second Deputy Mayor/director and led GRYD until December 31, 2013. Cespedes was crucial in the development of GRYD's conceptual framework and programmatic approaches while emphasizing the application of family-systems theory to community-based programs.

Phase 2 (2014-2022): Landing the Plane - Research, Data, Evaluation, and Sustainability

Phase 2 marked a period of significant organizational change and a broader management structure for GRYD. Responsibility for the oversight of GRYD's budget and personnel shifted to the Deputy Mayor of Public Safety, who also oversaw the LAPD and Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD). This transition provided GRYD with enhanced administrative support and increased leverage for advocacy in the budget process. As a result, GRYD evolved from a standalone entity into a component of a larger public safety framework. Although this structural realignment did not immediately affect the development of the four programmatic models under assessment, it set the stage for future advancements. Shortly thereafter, Guillermo Cespedes, then Deputy Mayor/Director, left to oversee the implementation of gang violence prevention programs in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean as a follow-up to a 2012 agreement made with the United States Agency for International Development during the Villaraigosa administration.

In January 2014, on Cespedes' recommendation, the Mayor appointed Assistant City Attorney Anne Tremblay, who had previously worked with GRYD on the complex process of removing community members from gang injunctions. Cal State Professor Denise Herz, Ph.D., was hired in late 2010 as GRYD's first Director of Research and was central in assisting Tremblay in developing an infrastructure to facilitate the following:

- Generate reliable and relevant data to inform GRYD's emerging models.
- Support the development of data-informed policies for the purpose of legislative advocacy.
- Document quantitative and qualitative information to support GRYD's work nationally.
- Manage the volume of researchers involved with the office.

The gap in family-systems expertise left by Cespedes' departure was filled by Dr. Andrae Brown, a consultant from a group of nationally recognized family-systems experts who trained prevention and intervention service providers.

Anne Tremblay, in collaboration with Dr. Herz, spearheaded the development of numerous research briefs and evaluation reports, expanding one of the largest municipal-level bodies of gang-prevention and intervention data in the country. Her departure in February 2020 marked the end of a transformative era for GRYD that established its foundation for long-term sustainability. Tremblay was succeeded by Reginald Zachery, a longstanding GRYD team member with deep institutional knowledge, who recently retired. Subsequently, leadership transitioned to Deputy Mayor Karren Lane, who now leads the Mayor's Office of Community Safety, and Melvyn Hayward, GRYD's Senior Director.

GRYD NOW & INTO THE FUTURE

Phase 3 (2023 and Beyond): Future Flights - The Community Safety Strategy

Mayor Karen Bass' community safety strategy aligns with GRYD's mission by emphasizing evidence-based approaches and comprehensive police reform. Her strategy highlights the importance of integrating officers trained in de-escalation with community-based intervention workers, reflecting GRYD's Phase 1 focus on community engagement and model development. It also addresses historical issues of racial profiling and excessive force, reinforcing GRYD's commitment to using data and community input to guide its practices. This approach complements GRYD's Phase 2 advancements, which emphasized the integration of research and data to build a sustainable and effective framework for gang violence prevention.

As GRYD continues to evolve, it will benefit from Mayor Bass' broader public safety initiatives, which will enhance its efforts to address the root causes of crime, including mental health and behavioral issues. By building on the successes of Phase 1's community engagement and Phase 2's focus on data and evaluation, GRYD is well-positioned to contribute to a cohesive and effective public safety strategy. That strategy reflects and supports Mayor Bass' vision of a comprehensive and integrated approach to reducing violence and improving community trust in city government, one where communities can define their own safety measures, whether through traditional law-enforcement approaches, community-based solutions, or a blend of both.

THE VALUE OF GRYD

City of LA Violence and Prevention Efforts

Over the past 18 years, the City of Los Angeles has made important contributions to the field of violence prevention and early intervention. This stands as a testament to the city and its residents' resilience, adaptability, and unwavering commitment to community well-being. Despite navigating significant changes in leadership across three mayoral administrations, the city has maintained GRYD as a budget and policy priority for the city. Mayor Karen Bass, in the spirit of "**Sankofa**" (from the Akan tradition, which instructs us to learn from the past to provide direction for the future), commissioned this assessment to inform the vision and implementation of GRYD going forward. This commitment to community and data-driven decision-making is a critical step toward ensuring GRYD's ability to support community safety.

The city's investment reflects not only on GRYD's past successes and challenges but also paves the way for future achievements as Mayor Karen Bass aligns the program with her community safety strategy. By revisiting and evaluating GRYD's journey, the city embodies Sankofa, and sets a culturally relevant course toward a safer, more prosperous future.

GRYD has achieved significant impacts and successes in its key components:

- Incident Response (IR)
- Prevention
- Summer Night Lights (SNL)
- Family Case Management (FCM)

We focused on these four GRYD programmatic approaches because they have garnered a high-profile and have received significant financial investments from the city. These programs necessitate coordination between direct prevention and intervention practices, data and evaluation, community engagement, and relational policing. Additionally, they require urgent updates to effectively address ongoing challenges faced by residents and communities. While our report does not provide a comprehensive breakdown of GRYD's community-engagement element, we highlight the community-level efforts made by GRYD staff and CIWs within the contexts of IR and SNL to demonstrate their vital role in fostering community connections and support.

Culture and context are essential factors to consider in order to achieve a deeper and more nuanced understanding of GRYD. Human behavior is best understood through the prism of culture—it defines how we act, how we perceive and interpret our own and other's behavior, including how an intervention is implemented and experienced by participants. Research and evaluation must consider the social and cultural context in which a program operates to reveal its value. Because this report is, in large measure, tied to data collected from previous evaluations that did not necessarily attend to culture and context, we were often limited in our ability to highlight their relevance and significance.

INCIDENT RESPONSE
Established in 2007, the GRYD IR program is a robust and compassionate approach that embraces families during times of crisis when communities have been harmed by violence. The initiative centers on the belief that the 24/7 presence of Mayor's Office staff during times of family loss to violence represents a vital commitment to responsive city government. While there is room for improvement, which will be shared later in the report, the IR's triangle partners (GRYD staff, CIWs, and the LAPD) coordinate timely responses to shootings across the city. This model fosters precision, empathy, and effective collaboration in managing everything from initial notifications to post-incident support.

Over the past decade, the program has demonstrated its role in community safety is crucial. CIWs attend 61% of the 6,418 documented incidents. The nine GRYD Regional Program Coordinators attend between 5% and 15% of all crime scenes across the city annually. Their consistent presence and adaptability, even amid resource limitations, underscore the IR's effectiveness and the essential role of its partners in maintaining community resilience. The IR's success highlights the value of strong, collaborative relationships in enhancing public safety and supporting families during their most challenging times.

PREVENTION
The GRYD Prevention program exemplifies the city's commitment to protecting youth aged 10-15 years old from exposure to group violence. The model emphasizes the use of an assessment tool (the Youth Services and Eligibility Tool - YSET) to identify vulnerable youth, paired with family-focused intervention services and activities. Between 2012 and 2023, GRYD served 17,235 families through 564,947 program activities.

The program's success is evident in its adaption and implementation in regions and communities outside the United States, including Mexico, Central America, the Eastern Caribbean, and North Africa. These adaptions have been tailored to meet diverse cultural needs and effectively reduce violence. The GRYD Prevention Model's adaptability to different settings underscores its effectiveness and points to the need for continued research, evaluation, and investment to build on its strengths.

SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS
The SNL program is violence prevention through community engagement. By connecting with youth and families, GRYD has run programming in 44 parks across Los Angeles and transformed them into safe spaces during the summer months, when violence is most likely to spike. The program's achievements reflect the extraordinary coordination and dedication of the GRYD Office, its partners, and the community.

SNL counters violence by creating fun, family-friendly environments in public spaces that some communities had begun to view as lost to drug dealing and violent crime. This approach fosters a sense of unity, agency, shared purpose, and hope among participants, and transforms the parks into community cornerstones of violence-prevention efforts.

FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT
FCM is designed to serve as an exit ramp for young people who might currently be on a track toward involvement in negative group activities. The program does this, first, by working to strengthen family and community bonds. Through structured interventions and family engagement, FCM addresses underlying issues that contribute to youth involvement in gangs. The program's emphasis on holistic approaches - from providing emotional and psychological support to connecting families with essential resources - is crucial to stabilizing households and promoting positive outcomes for at-risk youth.

INCIDENT RESPONSE (IR)

IR key findings and recommendations are organized into three sub-sections:

- Community Intervention Workers (CIWs),
- IR Activation Protocol, and
- Resource Needs.

COMMUNITY INTERVENTION WORKERS (CIWs) KEY FINDINGS

1 CIWS PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN PREVENTING RETALIATORY SHOOTINGS.

Retaliatory shootings are reduced in instances where CIWs are involved. Past evaluations show a 43.2% reduction in incidents when CIWs are present.

2 THE WORK OF CIWS IS SIGNIFICANT AND EXTENDS BEYOND THE CRIME SCENE.

Over nearly twelve years, CIWs documented 6,638 instances of follow-up with families and communities, demonstrating their significant and ongoing engagement.

3 CIWS IMPACT ON COMMUNITY WELLBEING IS UNDERREPORTED.

The broader impact of CIWs on community wellbeing is not adequately measured and reflected in existing data, suggesting the need for more a comprehensive evaluation of their impact on the communities they serve.

4 PROCESS AND OUTCOME VARIABLES ARE TOO NARROW.

The current focus on retaliation prevention as the primary outcome does not capture the full breadth of CIW activities and their impact, highlighting the need for a more expansive approach to understanding the role and impact of CIWs.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Perform a More Robust CIW Impact Evaluation

Evaluating the broader impact of CIWs beyond reduction of retaliation is critical to understanding their role in mitigating trauma within families and communities affected by violence. Using data from nearly twelve years of CIW activities, our assessment reveals the extensive contributions CIWs make, including their significant role in providing emotional and psychological support to victims, their friends and families, and the broader community.

The impacts of CIWs' work, such as reducing trauma and supporting families, are not adequately captured or shared with the public. A comprehensive impact evaluation should be designed to examine how CIWs influence long-term family and community health. This would provide a more nuanced understanding of the effectiveness of CIWs, underscore their value, and inform future improvements to the program.

> *I can remember a double homicide, broad daylight, one body fell on top of the other…school was going to be getting let out soon and the family was on scene and the mom wanted to see her baby before they got into the coroner's van. And I can remember Homicide, saying sure…No problem…We'll get intervention…One family member can walk up…We'll let her kiss him…10 years ago, we were fighting with homicide investigators. No, you're going to mess up our crime scene…With technology, we managed to do both now…I truly believe showing that respect and dignity to the family by a cop is a culture shift."*
>
> *-LAPD*

INCIDENT RESPONSE

IR ACTIVATION PROTOCOL
KEY FINDINGS

1 Shifts have occurred in notification methods.

Initially, LAPD's Real-Time Analysis and Critical Response (RACR) division notifications were the primary method for alerting GRYD partners (nearly 80% of all notifications in 2012), but their use has decreased over time (63% in 2022). There has been a shift toward other sources, highlighting the need for a more consistent notification method.

2 Varying partner engagement has led to inconsistencies.

Fluctuations were found in GRYD triangle-partner (LAPD + GRYD Office + CIWs) attendance at crime scenes after Phase 1 when all three partners consistently attended crime scenes 15% of the time, suggesting varied involvement and response effectiveness.

3 Inconsistent practices occur across GRYD zones.

Notification practices vary dramatically across GRYD zones, complicating the coordination of responses.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Revisit and Update the IR Activation Protocol

The IR activation protocol is central to the effectiveness of GRYD's intervention strategies, ensuring timely and coordinated responses to violent incidents. While the current protocol has shown success in reducing retaliatory violence, the evolving dynamics of community violence and the diverse needs of affected communities necessitate a reassessment and refinement of the protocol to maintain and enhance its effectiveness.

The city should establish a standardized and reliable method for notifying GRYD partners about incidents. A new approach would address the inconsistency of current practices, ensure standardized partner engagement, and stabilize the response process.

The city should also expand its focus beyond preventing retaliations and broaden its reporting on the efforts of IR and their impact. This approach aligns with Mayor Bass' commitment to community safety through cohesive, multi-agency collaboration, ensuring a more coordinated and effective response to incidents.

> *"I consider it a luxury that if I can get information from a captain or from PD before it goes into a RACR, I can respond quicker because I don't want to rely on the RACR to respond because if the RACR at best is two hours old... I mean, it's an afterthought for a lot of us because we're getting it in and giving us details of what we have already gotten. If it was more fluid and in real-time, then yes, it's helpful, but now at this point, it's not."*
>
> *-CIW*

INCIDENT RESPONSE

RESOURCE NEEDS
KEY FINDINGS

1 Resource constraints diminish CIW reach and impact.

Current resources are insufficient to meet the high volume of CIW efforts, including incident response (n=6,418 incidents between 2012 and 2023), following up with families (n=6,638), maintaining community stability, brokering peace agreements, and carrying out community engagement activities to meet broader community needs (n=424,272). The lack of adequate resources impacts CIWs' ability to provide comprehensive support and manage incidents effectively.

2 Current funding is inadequate.

Increased funding is essential for hiring and supporting current GRYD staff, recruiting and training additional CIWs, enhancing follow-up efforts, and improving CIWs' ability to participate consistently in data-collection processes that capture their extensive responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Provide Additional Resources to CIWs and GRYD Staff

CIWs are essential to managing incidents, providing follow-up support, and contributing to data collection. GRYD Regional Program Coordinators (RPCs) are a key component of the relational triangle and are the point of contact for the Mayor's Office along with LAPD and CIWs. However, CIW and RPC effectiveness is hampered by limited resources. Addressing resource constraints through increased funding and support will bolster the capacity of CIWs and GRYD Staff to perform their roles and enhance their overall impact on community safety and support.

To increase the effectiveness of CIWs in IR follow-up and data collection, additional resources must be pursued. Additional funding and technical support will enable the recruitment and training of dedicated staff, improve follow-up efforts, and enhance data-collection processes. Such investments will bolster the IR protocol and ensure that CIWs continue to provide high-quality services and maintain a vital role in community safety and support.

> ***No young person should die on the streets of Los Angeles without the Mayor's Office being present to offer support, being there, talking to the families of victims, talking to the gang members who gather, and just saying everybody here is human, created in the image of God, and they deserve to be recognized and respected.***

-Rev. Jeff Carr
GRYD Deputy Mayor (2007-2009)

PREVENTION MODEL

Prevention key findings and recommendations are organized into four sub-sections:

1. The Youth Service and Eligibility Tool (YSET),
2. Asset-Based Approach,
3. Program Dosage, and
4. Age Range for Services.

YOUTH SERVICE AND ELIGIBILITY TOOL (YSET) KEY FINDINGS

1 THE YSET IS OUTDATED AND MISALIGNED WITH YOUTH NEEDS:

Across the interviews, GRYD stakeholders described the YSET as outdated, lengthy, and insufficient to capture contemporary factors such as cyber activities and substance abuse, or broader vulnerabilities like trauma, mental health issues, and socioeconomic challenges. Stakeholders also expressed concerns that the YSET's questions are not age-appropriate.

2 YSET MISALIGNMENT CONTRIBUTES TO INAPPROPRIATE SERVICE DELIVERY TO YOUTH:

ETO data show that four times as many youth in primary prevention tested eligible for secondary prevention after 6 months in 2022 compared to 2013. This trend suggests that the YSET may not fully capture the range of risk factors and may be seen by providers as more as a barrier to service than a diagnostic tool.

3 YSET AND PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES VARY BASED ON REFERRAL SOURCE:

The recent increase of LAPD referrals to GRYD prevention was an emerging trend across stakeholder interviews. This prompted us to examine whether youth outcomes varied by referral sources. We found that youth referred by formal systems (LAPD, LA County Department of Probation, or LA County Department of Child and Family Services) are significantly more likely ($p<0.001$) to exhibit four or more risk factors on the YSET at 6 and 12 months, and drop out of the program, than youth referred by other sources (parents, guardians, teachers, GRYD agency outreach efforts, and self-referrals). Conversely, youth referred to GRYD via agency outreach efforts were significantly ($p<0.001$) more likely to complete programming.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Revise the YSET to Better Reflect Current Youth Needs and Issues

1a. Broaden Assessment Domains Including the Addition of Cultural Factors: Consult literature, prevention providers, and other experts to expand the current list of YSET risk factors to include trauma, mental health, homelessness, and socioeconomic challenges, and address protective factors, including cultural and contextual factors that are often overlooked. This will provide a more comprehensive understanding of youth circumstances and align the YSET with current realities, challenges, and opportunities.

1b. Tailor the YSET to Be More Trauma-Informed and Age Appropriate: Simplify complex terminology and ensure that items are age appropriate. This could reduce misclassification and improve the accuracy of assessments.

1c. Establish Guidelines and Best Practices to Triangulate Input on Eligibility Determination: Create multiple versions (i.e., teacher, family, other community stakeholders) of the YSET to assess the level of agreement among stakeholders (i.e., cross-sectional data triangulation). This could reduce possible sources of bias when determining eligibility and classifying youth as prevention or secondary prevention, which has been shown to happen when assessments rely on only one source.

1d. Conduct Periodic Collaborative Reviews of the YSET: Establish a collaborative review process with service providers, researchers, community stakeholders, and the GRYD office to ensure the YSET evolves with emerging needs and remains relevant to gang prevention.

1e. Consider Developing a New, More Flexible, Multi-Tiered Tool to Determine Eligibility and Classification: Explore creating a flexible, multi-tiered assessment tool for use across primary and secondary prevention programs, as well as intervention efforts. This will enable more nuanced classifications and help ensure appropriate intervention levels.

1f. Consider International Examples of YSET Adaptations During Revision Process: The GRYD prevention model has been adapted for use in Central America, North Africa, and the Eastern Caribbean, demonstrating the YSET's flexibility. Similar adaptions could enhance its effectiveness within culturally diverse Los Angeles communities.

1g. Encourage GRYD Partners to Consider Outcomes by Referral-Source Data in their Decision/Policy Making: This will prevent the instances where the intake system is flooded by any one GRYD partner's referrals.

PREVENTION MODEL

ASSET-BASED APPROACH
KEY FINDINGS

1 THE GRYD MODEL IS TOO FOCUSED ON DEFICITS:

Key stakeholders, including multiple prevention providers, shared how the focus of the YSET, and subsequently the GRYD Prevention model, is on gang prevention and not on strengthening family bonds as a means of fostering better outcomes for youth.

> *I would love to see more investment on the parent side of things, the engagement piece of we always talk about. We dig deep with young people because we don't have the resources to bring parents and the young person together. What does that look like? Really supporting that whole unit because we do know that if a parent, foster parent guardian is struggling, once a month is not going to support that family to most definitely support the young people. We make a lot of changes with our students, and we see it and I know parents want to be a part of what we do because we do so much with their child. So, I'm like, yeah, but we can't afford it, you know, I'm like youth development, Yay!*
>
> *-Prevention Agency Executive*

RECOMMENDATION 2

Reframe the GRYD Secondary Prevention Model to Have a Balance Between a Deficit-Based Approach and an Assets-Based Approach

The interview data suggests the following GRYD reforms:

- Expand the GRYD prevention model's focus from merely gang prevention to strengthening families and communities.
- Emphasize assets not just deficits by promoting strong family bonds, positive behaviors, and supportive relationships.
- Integrate an asset-based approach across all aspects of the program, including assessment and service delivery. This reframe should also extend to the YSET so that it incorporates protective factors that inform strength-based, family-centered, culturally grounded values and practices that build capacity across multiple generations of family.

PROGRAM DOSAGE
KEY FINDINGS

1 THE DURATION OF GRYD PREVENTION PHASES IS TOO SHORT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF SOME CLIENTS:

Stakeholders, including prevention providers and GRYD staff, noted that the current program phases may not provide adequate time to support families facing various challenges. Extending the program duration and adding more individual meetings and culturally congruent mental health resources are seen as essential for improving outcomes.

2 AN INFLEXIBLE, REGIMENTED PROGRAM STRUCTURE PREVENTS TAILORING SERVICES TO THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF CLIENTS:

Interview feedback suggests that a flexible, progress-based approach would be more effective than adhering to rigidly structured timelines. This would allow for tailored interventions based on individual readiness and needs and enhance overall program effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Re-evaluate and Extend the Duration of the GRYD Prevention Program

- Adjust the program dosage to better accommodate the diverse needs of families and youth.
- Increase the frequency of individual meetings to strengthen rapport and incorporate additional mental health resources to provide comprehensive support.
- Transition from strict cycle lengths to a flexible, progress-based approach that focuses on readiness and individual needs to ensure that interventions are effectively tailored to each family's unique circumstances.

PREVENTION MODEL

AGE RANGE FOR SERVICES

KEY FINDINGS

1 THE CURRENT ELIGIBLE RANGE OF 10 TO 15 YEARS OLD PROGRAM ACCESS OUT OF REACH FOR SOME WHO NEED IT.

Stakeholder interviews highlighted the need to include younger children (younger than 10) and older youth (up to 17 or 18) in the program. This expansion would disrupt risk factors that emerge in earlier stages of childhood and provide ongoing support during crucial developmental years.

2 THERE IS CURRENTLY A LACK OF AGE-APPROPRIATE PROGRAMMING

Stakeholders, prevention providers, and GRYD staff noted the importance of tailoring interventions to be more age appropriate (e.g., for older youth: focusing on self-esteem and peer influence; offering incentives; extending service durations to allow time to develop trusting relationships with program staff).

RECOMMENDATION 4

Reassess the Age Range for Services

Expanding the age range of the GRYD prevention program to younger and older youth will better address the full spectrum of youth developmental stages and associated risks of those in need of GRYD support. Incorporating age-appropriate language and programming to address early exposure to risks like substance use and gang culture, and by providing continuous support through critical developmental transitions, such as high school graduation and college entry, will strengthen GRYD's impact.

SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS (SNL)

SNL key findings and recommendations are organized into six sub-sections:

- SNL's theory of change
- SNL's demographic population
- The SNL relational triangle,
- SNL governance structure,
- Youth Squad
- SNL budget inflexibility

SNL THEORY OF CHANGE
KEY FINDINGS

1 THE SHIFT FROM VIOLENCE PREVENTION TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HAS CAUSED CONCERN.

Interviewees highlighted that SNL has gradually shifted its focus from violence prevention to broader community engagement. However, a blend of both is necessary to address the program's original goals while also meeting evolving community needs. According to the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) SNL debrief survey, 74% of respondents believed that the primary purpose of SNL was "family, food and fun." In contrast, only 19% noted violence prevention as the primary goal. This discrepancy is especially pronounced in the Metro region, where only 9% of respondents identified violence prevention as SNL's main purpose.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Establish A Work Group to Re-Articulate the Original SNL Theory of Change (TOC).

Establish a shared vision of the purpose of SNL and immediately train partners on the updated ToC.

Implement a mixed-methods evaluation design based on the rearticulated ToC. By rearticulating the ToC and ensuring all partners are trained on it, SNL can realign its activities to balance both violence prevention and community engagement.

A mixed-methods evaluation design, that includes attention to culture and context and is based on the updated ToC, will lead to a robust framework for assessing the program's impact and guide future improvements.

SNL'S DEMOGRAPHIC POPULATION
KEY FINDINGS

1 A MISMATCH EXISTS BETWEEN THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPANTS AND THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF INDIVIDUALS MOST LIKELY TO BE VICTIMS OR PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE.

SNL activities predominantly engage children and youth under 18, while GRYD IR data show that the vast majority of people shot in Los Angeles GRYD zones are boys/men (84%) and over the age of 24 (67%). African Americans account for 40% of shooting victims, despite being only 8.6% of the city's population. In contrast, most SNL participants are girls/women (55%), and African Americans make up only 28% of participants.

2 STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK POINTS TO A NEED TO TAILOR SNL PROGRAMMING TO SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE CURRENT TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC.

SNL stakeholders advocate for additional programming that is more suitable for individuals over the age of 24, who are more likely to be involved in, or affected by, violence. Qualitative interviews highlighted a gap in programming for older male participants, who are often seen as outside the current scope of SNL's activities. The stakeholders emphasized the need for more age-appropriate activities, outreach efforts, and resources that resonate with this demographic, citing examples where community members older than 24 felt disconnected from SNL.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Expand SNL Programming and Target Populations.

Adjust the demographic focus of SNL to align more closely with the profile of those most at risk of engaging in or becoming victims of violence in Los Angeles. Current programming, which primarily engages younger participants and girls/women, may not sufficiently address the needs of older boys/men, who are disproportionately impacted by violence, particularly within the African American/Black community. Expanding programming to include activities tailored to gang-affiliated and adult men could make SNL more inclusive and effective in reaching this vulnerable group, ultimately strengthening its impact on violence prevention.

SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS

THE SNL RELATIONAL TRIANGLE
KEY FINDINGS

1 THE DYNAMICS OF THE TRIANGLE RELATIONSHIPS (GRYD OFFICE, LAPD, AND CIWS) ARE OUT OF BALANCE.

Interviews revealed an imbalance in the interactions and collaboration among the GRYD Office, LAPD, and CIWs. This impacts the effectiveness of the relational triangle and therefore its ability to respond to incidents of violence and ensure community safety. For example, the RAP staff SNL debrief survey data show that only 9% of RAP staff notify and collaborate with all three triangle partners.

YOUTH SQUAD
KEY FINDINGS

1 THERE IS A DEMOGRAPHIC MISMATCH BETWEEN THE FOCUS OF SERVICES AND WHO NEEDS SERVICES

Interviews and evaluation data reveal that the demographic profile of the youth squad does not align with the demographics of violence victims in LA. In 2023, the youth squad consisted mainly of individuals aged 16-24 (98%), with a high percentage of females (65%) and Latinx individuals (87%). This mismatch highlights the need to adjust the squad's composition to better reflect the populations most affected by violence.

2 SOME MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH SQUAD ARE NOT FROM THE LOCAL SNL COMMUNITIES

Community Intervention Workers (CIWs) interviews revealed that not all youth squad workers are from the communities they serve. The CIWs have valuable insights and connections that could help identify and hire youth squad workers who are both interested in SNL, are from the local community, and more likely to be involved in or affected by violence.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Provide RAP Staff With Training Focused On Improving Communication, Coordination, and Collaboration Among The Triangle Partners To Address Gaps.

Provide training to RAP staff to ensure that all SNL partners understand their roles and how to work together effectively. This training will facilitate more cohesive and effective partnerships, crucial for the success of violence reduction.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Align the SNL squad membership with the previously recommended SNL target population.

This alignment will address the disconnect between the youth squad's composition and the community's needs, creating a more inclusive and representative team. By broadening the age range and incorporating CIW recommendations for recruitment, the SNL squad will be better equipped to engage with and support the target population. This approach will enhance the squad's relevance and impact in addressing violence and fostering community safety.

SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS

SNL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE
KEY FINDINGS

1 A LACK OF CLARITY REGARDING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES EXISTS WITHIN THE SNL PROGRAM.

With 44 sites to manage, the current team at city hall is stretched thin. Interviews highlighted that the absence of a central point of accountability means that critical issues may lack decisive oversight and resolution. For example, some stakeholders reported that the lack of a clear leader led to fragmented decision making and delayed responses to emerging challenges.

SITES SERVED BY SNL
KEY FINDINGS

1 SITES IN HIGH NEED ARE BEING SERVED BY SNL:

Analysis of LAPD crime data indicates that the sites with the highest need, as indexed by high crime rates and frequent emergency calls, are hosting SNLs. There are, however, some high needs parks in Westlake and Boyle Heights that do not have SNL.

2 SNL'S REACH IS CURTAILED BY ITS BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS:

Interviews with stakeholders highlighted that while SNL provides valuable services, the dissolvement of the GRYD Foundation has drastically strained SNL's resources. Private funds offered greater flexibility, allowing for targeted interventions and adaptation to specific community needs.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Re-establish the SNL Director Position

This will ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and effectively managed. It will also improve governance and streamline decision-making processes, allowing the program to better address operational challenges and enhance its overall effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Expand SNL to More High-Need Areas While Exploring Opportunities to Secure Private Funding for Enhanced Support and Flexibility:

GRYD successfully implements SNL in 44 high needs sites, but it is a resource strain on the City. Resources for the SNL program have been strained since the loss of the GRYD Foundation, impacting program activities and support. This funding shortfall has led to challenges in staffing, planning, and delivering necessary services. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of addressing these gaps, noting that private funding could offer greater flexibility and enhance the program's effectiveness. SNL could be a very marketable program to philanthropy. In addition, it will be important to engage with communities to assess the scale, scope and type of future of SNL in their sites.

FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT (FCM)

FCM key findings and recommendations are organized into five sub-sections:

1. Social Embeddedness Tool (SET)
2. Individual-Level FCM Services
3. FCM Phases
4. Multigenerational Families
5. FCM Training

SOCIAL EMBEDDEDNESS TOOL (SET) KEY FINDINGS

1 STAKEHOLDERS ARGUE THE SET REQUIRES FURTHER REVISION:

Feedback from case managers and their clients suggest that the current SET items, although less intrusive than earlier versions, need additional refinement to be more user-friendly and useful to participants.

2 STAKEHOLDERS NOTE THAT THE SET NEEDS TO BE MORE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TO BETTER UNDERSTAND PARTICIPANT PROGRESS IN THE PROGRAM:

The current SET, while useful, may not fully capture the nuanced progress of participants, particularly those from diverse backgrounds, highlighting the need for a more culturally and contextually responsive tool.

> *It's a brain teaser, you're asking the same question many ways. And you're asking us to do it in a time where we're building relationship, because the program has to measure whether it's being effective, then you get real specific, when you ask if them to say they were gang affiliated or gang involved, and then go right into, well, how many? What do you call them? you ask the same question about family, about the gang So that's you luring somebody into saying something that supposedly is kept private!*

Intervention Program Director

RECOMMENDATION #1

Recommendation #1: Modify and Adapt the SET

Modifying and adapting the SET will improve its reliability, validity, and cultural legitimacy. Modifications and adaptions should be informed by multiple sources of data, including a robust analysis of the SET data and input from families, community cultural brokers, and CIWs. This will provide a more complete and more accurate picture of the needs and progress of clients.

1a. Conduct a Deeper Analysis of SET Data: A more comprehensive analysis of previously collected SET data is required to evaluate its effectiveness and determine how it can inform future programming/GRYD resource development. This process could uncover valuable insights into participant progress, identify areas of the SET that need adjustment, and strengthen the tool's overall utility.

1b. Make the SET More Friendly to Participants: Continue refining the SET to make it less intrusive and more aligned with participants' needs, while maintaining its effectiveness. Feedback from case managers and clients should guide revisions to ensure the questions are client-friendly and not intimidating.

1c. Consider Developing a New Tool: Modifications to the SET may not be a sufficient solution to the problems raised about it. Consider creating a new assessment tool to better support case managers in their practice and to more accurately measure participant change over time. This tool should be tailored to meet the diverse needs of the population served by GRYD.

FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT

Individual-Level FCM Services

KEY FINDINGS

1 **Current FCM Approaches Do Not Adequately Engage Clients:**

Interviews with case managers and a review of best practices in the field suggest that the current approach with the FCM does not provide enough touchpoints for participants to support their mental health and substance abuse needs.

RECOMMENDATION #2

Make Enhancements to Individual-Level FCM Services

The enhancement of individual-level interventions is critical for addressing the personal challenges that participants face. By incorporating a broader set of treatment options (e.g., culturally grounded cognitive behavioral and motivational interviewing approaches), GRYD can address mental health and substance abuse issues more effectively and promote needed changes in unhealthy mindsets that fuel substance use and problem behaviors. An approach that helps participants define and commit to their own patterns of behavior will empower them to navigate their roles within their families and communities more confidently, ultimately leading to more sustainable outcomes in their personal growth and overall well-being.

2a. Incorporate Life Coaching Best Practices:
Integrate techniques from interventions such as cognitive behavioral treatment into life-coaching practices to promote changes to unhelpful thought patterns and resulting behaviors among participants.

2b. Systematic Self-Differentiation:
Incorporate strategies to promote participants' ability to engage in self-differentiation that can support them to remain a part of their communities without participating in negative group activity.

FCM PHASES

KEY FINDINGS

1 **ALTHOUGH THE FCM IS CLEARLY DEFINED, WE DID NOT HAVE ACCESS TO DATA TO DETERMINE THE FIDELITY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION.**

Interviews with case managers highlighted that the FCM model appears to be the GRYD Prevention Model adapted for use as a treatment model. They also noted that it requires more flexibility in its delivery.

RECOMMENDATION #3

Reevaluate Phases of FCM Delivery

The current phase structure of the FCM model plays a crucial role in organizing the support provided to participants, but it must evolve to remain relevant and effective. Revisiting and refining the phases will help ensure that the model remains responsive to the diverse and complex needs of participants, particularly as the program grows and adapts to new challenges. By aligning the phases with updated policy decisions and programmatic shifts, GRYD can enhance its ability to address vulnerabilities at every level - individual, family, peer, and community.

FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT

MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILIES
KEY FINDINGS

1 CASE MANAGERS EXPERIENCE CHALLENGES IN GENOGRAM APPLICATION:

Interviews highlighted that case managers use asset-based genograms to support program participants and find them to be a powerful tool. But some case managers may not be fully satisfied with the genograms' ability to accurately represent vertical family dynamics. Case managers also noted challenges with consistently applying genograms across clients, especially when some clients feel overwhelmed or uncomfortable with what emerges in the genogram. Case managers want additional training and/or revised guidelines on genogram usage to better support the diverse family structures encountered in the GRYD program.

> ***How much family case management occurs? We really don't know. We know how many family meetings or support system meetings they've had, but the data infrastructure was not built to capture information on the family, and that is a disadvantage for being able to answer the family systems question. Do I think the providers are following the [horizontal and vertical] strategy and all those detailed pieces? No, I don't. But do I think they follow the spirit of it? Yes, I do.***
>
> ***GRYD Researcher***

RECOMMENDATION #4

Place a Greater Emphasis on Multigenerational Family Dynamics and Place these within the Context of Historical and Contemporary Racial Dynamics

- Using a multigenerational family focus is essential to effectively address the complex and interconnected challenges faced by GRYD participants.
- Consider adding a critical race theory analysis to deepen the understanding of family dynamics. Also consider adding elements of racial and cultural socialization to the process to deepen a family's understanding of its dynamics within the context of racism, racial stress, and racial trauma.
- By enhancing the use of genograms, case managers can better understand and leverage family dynamics leading to more targeted and effective interventions.
- The history of effective collaboration between CIWs and case managers is a potential building block for a team approach to recruiting families and conducting multi-generational problem-solving meetings with them.
- Employing strategic family-interviewing techniques will provide deeper insights into family dynamics, ensuring that interventions are both relevant and impactful.

4a. Strengthen the Use of Family Genograms: Utilize genograms more effectively in coaching and interventions to help both individuals and families understand and address their dynamics and to better understand and support family strengths and challenges.

4b. Engage A Cross-section of Family Members in Problem-Solving Meetings: Increase engagement by multiple generations within families in the structured problem-solving meetings. This approach can foster stronger family connections and collaborative solutions to issues that impact multiple generations in a family and increase the likelihood of entrenched cross-generational behavioral patterns in families.

FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT

FCM TRAINING

KEY FINDINGS

1 CASE MANAGERS REQUEST MORE SPECIALIZED TRAINING

Interviews with case managers highlighted the need for specialized training (e.g., in areas such as trauma-informed care and multi-generational family capacity building). A cross section of staff members felt additional training would improve their ability to address complex cases and better support clients.

2 CASE MANAGERS REQUEST CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Stakeholders noted that the rapidly changing landscape of community interventions requires continuous professional development. Training opportunities that keep staff updated on the latest best practices and emerging trends in intervention work were deemed essential.

RECOMMENDATION #5

Build a Learning Community

Develop a robust learning community by providing targeted, practice-relevant training for GRYD staff, prevention and intervention case managers, and partners in research and evaluation. By investing this kind of training, the program can adapt to new challenges and ensure a shared understanding of the models driving the interventions. This can foster a culture of collaboration and shared learning, and an exchange of best practices that strengthens connections between GRYD and service providers.

> *I think personally for me, I would like training for how to how to speak to parents about providing tools for them how to communicate with their youth. I feel like because I lack those trainings time it is hard during family meetings. I feel like training, and in that in family dynamics would be very beneficial.*

Case Manager

FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

In this report, we have presented recommendations from a variety of sources connected to GRYD. Below is a framework to prioritize those recommendations.

Top Priority Across the Four Components of GRYD Programming:
Establish a working group that includes stakeholders to represent each of GRYD's four programmatic components assessed here. This body would serve two main functions:

- Review best practices, data, and community input.
- Encourage broader buy-in and implementation of the proposed changes across GRYD.

Incident Response Recommendation Priorities:

- Develop a scope of work and contract for evaluation services to examine IR processes and impact on family and community trauma.
- Establish an activation-protocol pilot in which all partners are informed of incidents at the same time. Field test the pilot for 6 months, review the data, and if effective, incorporate the new activation protocol into the FY 2025-26 manual.
- Pursue public and private funding to establish a new dedicated IR team within the GRYD office by FY 2025-26.

Prevention Recommendation Priorities:

- Expand the age range of prevention participants immediately to include children and youth aged 8 to 17 years old.
- Extend the cycle of services from 6 months to 1 year and increase the dosage of individual and family contacts as soon as possible.
- Contract with an outside group to develop of a new youth-eligibility assessment while YSET continues in the current FY. Pilot the new tool in FY 2025-26.
- Review the seven phases of service delivery during 2024 and consider implementing revised phases in FY 2025-26.

SNL Recommendation Priorities:

- Confirm SNL site selections for SNL for 2025.
- Re-establish the SNL Director position as soon as possible.
- Establish a private/public partnership to support fundraising for flexible dollars to enhance program activities as soon as possible.
- Continue a systematic review the SNL Theory of Change during FY 2024-25 that includes all partners.

Family Case Management Recommendation Priorities:

- Pause on the use of the SET for FY 2024-25. This will signal to communities that the administration is listening.
- Contract with an outside group as soon as possible to develop an assessment tool that captures multiple sources of input, including data, community wisdom, and subject matter expertise to be piloted in FY 2025-26, adjusted in FY 2026-27, and finalized in FY 2027-28. Analysis of existing SET data should inform development of the new tool.
- Review phases of service delivery and adjust, modify, or eliminate them.
- Extend the service-delivery cycle from 6 months to 1 year for FY 2025-26.

LIMITATIONS

The GRYD Then, Now, and Into the Future assessment was conducted over a one-year period and focused on four key program components within the GRYD comprehensive strategy:

1. The Incident Response Protocol (IR)
2. The GRYD Prevention Model
3. The Family Case Management Model (FCM)
4. The Summer Night Lights Program (SNL)

While our mixed-methods approach provided critical insights and pragmatic recommendations, several limitations emerged, largely due to incomplete access to comprehensive data sources. This gap leaves us with "known unknowns" that, if addressed, could enhance the effectiveness of GRYD's programmatic strategies.

Limitation #1: Cultural and Contextual Data Gaps
Our analysis of the GRYD program was based on pre-existing datasets that did not capture important cultural and contextual factors. These omissions mean that our findings do not fully account for how culture, identity, and community-specific dynamics might influence program outcomes. This is a significant limitation, as it affects our ability to assess the culturally relevant components of GRYD's interventions.

Limitation #2: Domain-Level Data Access
GRYD's comprehensive strategy targets multiple domain levels (individual, family, peer, school, and community). However, our research primarily accessed data at the individual level. Expanding data access across all domains would allow for more well-rounded recommendations.

Limitation #3: Family Participation in GRYD Prevention and FCM
Both the GRYD Prevention and FCM models emphasize family involvement. While we had access to YSET data and participation numbers, we lacked specific insights into how families were engaged and supported. Future assessments would benefit from examining:

- Positive family interaction sequences
- Family leadership structures
- Strategies to enhance problem-solving among family members
- Participation in cultural/racial-specific genogram activities

involvement at crime scenes, we lacked details on:

- Family engagement during crime scenes and follow-up
- Referrals to victim assistance programs
- Exclusions from family services
- Total family members receiving assistance

Limitation #6: Quality Control and Fiscal Oversight
Access to data aligning RPC site-visit reports with GRYD service-provider data was unavailable, limiting our ability to evaluate the congruence between quality control and fiscal oversight.

1. INCIDENT RESPONSE (IR)

BEFORE GRYD

"

We were doing yellow tape work back in the day (long before GRYD) when we were following the helicopters throughout this town to find out what was going on. The police didn't know what the hell we were doing, and there was a lot of skepticism, and a lot of territory assassination going on.

GRYD Intervention & Prevention Provider

GRYD NOW

"

Ten years ago, we were fighting with homicide investigators, 'No, you're going to mess up our crime scene'...With technology, we managed to do both now. [There was] a double homicide, broad daylight, one body fell on top of the other...school was going to be getting let out soon and the family was on scene and the mom wanted to see her baby before they got into the coroner's van. And I can remember Homicide, saying 'Sure. No problem. We'll get intervention.' I truly believe showing that respect and dignity to the family by a cop is a culture shift.

LAPD

1.1 ORIGIN AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE IR MODEL

Established in 2007, the GRYD Incident Response (IR) is a 24/7 protocol coordinating responses to shootings with injuries and homicides. Three entities respond simultaneously: **GRYD** office staff at City Hall, city-contracted **Community Intervention Workers (CIWs)**, and the **Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)**.

1.1.A THE TRIANGLE INCIDENT RESPONSE AND RELATIONAL TRIANGLES

IR's fieldwork was originally referred to as the "triangle incident response," with GRYD, CIWs, and LAPD serving as "triangle partners" that function within various configurations:

- GRYD + CIWs + LAPD,
- Neighborhood + LAPD + GRYD, or
- CIW + GRYD + neighborhood

About the Theory of Relational Triangles

- **Triangulation:** When a two-person relationship becomes unstable, one or both parties may involve a third party to stabilize it.
- **Roles and Stress Distribution:** The third person helps manage stress within the dyad, but this often shifts rather than resolves the problem, creating complex dynamics with shifting roles.
- **Balance and Imbalance:** Triangles can either balance the system, reducing direct conflict, or perpetuate problems by diffusing responsibility and communication (Kerr and Bowen, 1988).

Field observations revealed that the emotional intensity of a crime scene often led to triangulation (see About the Theory of Relational Triangles). Within the context of IR, triangulation among the three partners occurs when each partner's role is affirmed, and the focus remains on the families of victims and the affected community. The process becomes dysfunctional when the roles of two partners are affirmed at the expense of the third partner. The partners possibly lose sight of the needs of the families and community most impacted by an incident or the needs of law enforcement to complete its required due diligence in an investigation or protection of the integrity of a crime scene.

1.1.B IR PROTOCOL ACTIVATION

In late 2009, the GRYD office equipped city-contracted intervention agencies with phones, and newly sworn LAPD Chief Charles Beck instructed the LAPD Real-Time Analysis and Critical Response (RACR) division to send simultaneous notifications to the Mayor, City Councilmembers, and all three triangle partners. This structured RACR notification method ensured that each entity was deployed at the same time and with the same information. In other words, the protocol includes:

1. **Notification**: All three partners (GRYD, CIW, LAPD) receive RACR notifications simultaneously.
2. **Initial Communication**: Within 15 minutes, partners share with each other their status and observations (e.g., heading to the scene, crowd presence, incident commander, potential gang involvement). The Deputy Mayor would brief the Mayor.

1.1.C STAGES AND PARTNER ROLES

In the emotionally charged environment of a crime scene and its immediate (stage 1) and longer-term aftermath (stage 2), the effectiveness of the GRYD IR protocol hinges on a clear delineation of roles among the triangle partners to ensure public safety and maintain the community's trust in the partners. The roles at the crime scene, as outlined in the 2011 GRYD Comprehensive Strategy (Cespedes and Herz, 2011), are well-

defined and balanced. They involve mutual support and effective communication, with partners providing and/or receiving brief updates in person or by phone.

- **Stage 1: Immediate Crisis Management Response** is focused on managing the crisis (trauma) in the moment at the active crime scene.
- **Stage 2: Ongoing Response** occurs once the yellow crime scene tape comes down. It ensures the ongoing safety of and support for the affected families and community. Since the gravity of the situation remains, this response requires careful attention and sensitivity to longer-term emotional impact of the incident on individuals and the community.

See Table 1.1 for a brief overview of the critical roles of each partner at each response stage.

Table 1.1. Critical Roles and Responsibilities for Each Triangle Partner by Response Stage

PARTNER	**Stage 1: Immediate Crisis Management** (active crime scene)	**Stage 2: Safety, Support, Follow-Up*** (post yellow tape)
	ROLE	*ROLE*
LAPD	Manage the investigation and control the crime scene	Maintain a necessary presence, particularly during vigils, to offer additional community safety
CIW	Provide family support, manage crowd control, conduct retaliation assessments, and determine a safe distance from the yellow tape	Conduct safety assessments to gauge potential retaliation threats
GRYD	Provide family support, assist with crowd control	Provide essential support to CIWs, activate and coordinate resources as needed to address emerging community needs
Deputy Mayor	Brief the Mayor in real time	Brief the Mayor in real time

*Stage 2 incident response often requires extensive follow-up over hours, weeks, or months. Retaliation assessments are a critical component.

1.2 PRIOR EVALUATIONS OF IR

The data-collection infrastructure for IR, operationalized in late 2011, was developed with the leadership of researchers at California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA). They designed the system's six key databases, ensuring a comprehensive and organized framework. The CSULA team also managed the significant task of handling, maintaining, and storing the vast amounts of IR data generated. Their work has been an important factor in documenting the successes and accomplishments of IR, showcasing its ongoing contributions to GRYD's broader community-safety efforts. The data infrastructure they developed provided clear evidence of IR's effectiveness compared to more traditional law enforcement methods, highlighting the significant

contributions of the GRYD approach. This comprehensive data presentation was vital in securing continued funding and support for IR.

1.2.A SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS FROM PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS OF IR

Decrease in Retaliations: One important finding from an IR-outcome study led by UCLA in 2017 was its effectiveness in interrupting potential retaliation linked to shootings or homicides involving group conflicts (Brantingham et al., 2017). ***Researchers found that, on average, retaliations decreased by 43.2% when GRYD IR was activated, a statistically significant improvement over LAPD-only responses***. This demonstrated GRYD's effective reduction of retaliation rates. Subsequent evaluations of the GRYD IR supported this finding.

Cost Savings: The reductions in retaliations translated into considerable cost savings for the city. Given the number of retaliatory homicides and aggravated assaults prevented, and the associated cost savings of $8.98 million per life saved and $240,000 per assault prevented (McCollister et al., 2010), ***GRYD IR was estimated to save the city up to $88.8 million annually*** (Brantingham et al., 2017).

Crime Patterns and Non-GRYD and GRYD Zones: A GRYD Zone is an area averaging 3-4 square miles, characterized by significant social challenges, including: (1) a poverty rate of 30% compared to 19% citywide; (2) a 40% higher incidence of gang crime than the rest of the city; (3) 31% of youth involved with LA County Probation; and (4) 55% of elementary and middle school youth in the foster care system. During Phase 1 of GRYD (2007 – 2013), evaluation data played an important role in early strategic decision-making. For example, an early analysis of IR data revealed a pattern where incidents of violence were increasingly reported outside the 12 designated GRYD Zones (Cahill et al., 2015). This finding prompted the expansion of the number of GRYD Zones from the original 12, as defined in 2007, to 23 in 2015. The 2017 UCLA evaluation documented the impact of the expansion, showing that the number of shootings occurring outside of GRYD Zones decreased by approximately 7% from 2014 to 2015 (Brantingham et al., 2017).

CIW/GRYD RPC Scope and Intensity of Effort: The UCLA study (2017) was the first public report to detail the scope and volume of crime-scene activities of CIWs and GRYD RPCs in 2014 and 2015 (see Figure 1.1). During this period, CIWs and RPCs were engaged in several activities related to individual incidents. The top crime scene activities were:

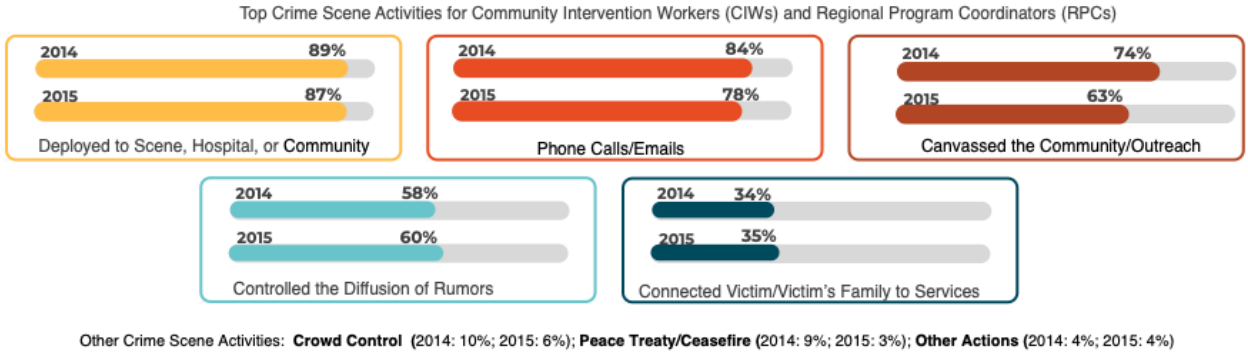
1. deploying either to the crime scene, hospital, or community,
2. making phone calls/emails,
3. canvassing the community and conducting outreach.

Other activities included crowd control as well as peace treaty/ceasefire negotiation.

The most prevalent CIW and RPC follow-up efforts were:

1. controlling and debunking rumors,
2. connecting victims and their families to services.

Figure 1.1. Top Crime-Scene Activities for Community Intervention Workers and GRYD Regional Program Coordinators (RPCs)*



*This figure was developed by Imoyase using data from Table 2, page 11 of Brantingham et al., 2017.

1.3 A LONGITUDINAL EXAMINATION OF IR DATA

While retaliation was an important focus of prior GRYD evaluations, a broader picture emerged when Imoyase examined IR data over time. These included following up with families, connecting community members to services, and contributing to efforts to minimize further community trauma. Below is a summary of Imoyase's examination of IR data covering the period from January 2012 to October 2023. Data sources included:

- evaluation data from all six IR databases (see Table 1.2 above).
- 95 semi-structured interviews with GRYD stakeholders conducted by Imoyase.

Approximately 45% (n=43 out of 95) of the stakeholders interviewed offered opinions and insights about IR.

- **Intervention Providers**: 29 interviews
  - **CIWs:** 11 interviews
  - **Intervention Agency Executives:** 8 interviews
  - **Intervention Program Coordinators/Managers:** 6 interviews
  - **Case Managers:** 4 interviews
- **GRYD RPCs & Program Managers (PMs)**: 9 interviews
- **LAPD Officers**: 5 interviews

For more information about the stakeholder-interview protocol (selection, recruitment, types of stakeholder interviews), please refer to Appendix A.

1.3.A VIOLENCE INCIDENCE PATTERNS

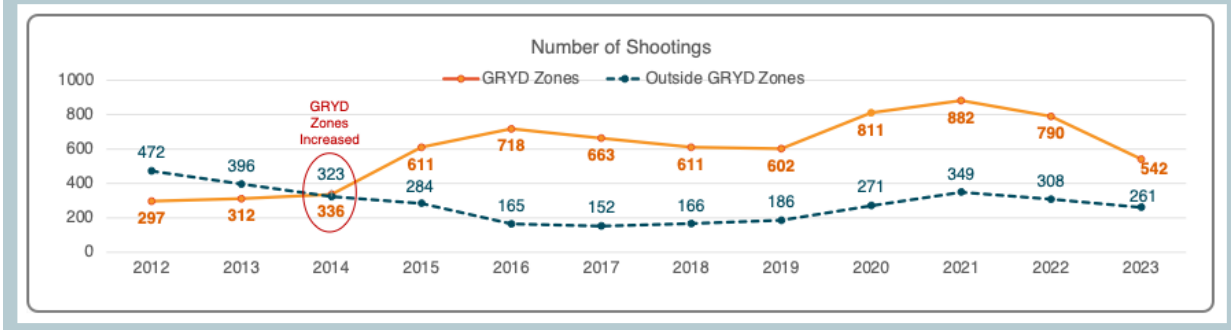
Longitudinal Finding

Violence in GRYD zones, measured as the annual number of shootings, showed an upward trend from 2012 to 2016, followed by a modest decline from 2016 to 2019. Matching national trends (Brennan, 2021), in 2020 (at the start of COVID-19) a significant increase in shootings was observed across GRYD zones, with a peak of 882 in 2021. Another downward trend in shootings started in 2022 and continued in 2023 across GRYD zones. In 2023, GRYD zones reported 542 shootings, the lowest number of shootings observed in nearly a decade. See the orange line in Figure 1.2.

Longitudinal Finding

Imoyase re-examined the number of shootings occurring inside versus outside GRYD Zones for an 11-year IR period (2012-2023). The trend found by UCLA in 2017, which showed more shootings occurring inside GRYD Zones than outside, persists, though the difference is narrowing. For example, in 2023, the number of shootings occurring outside GRYD Zones (n=261) was 53% lower than those occurring inside of GRYD zones (n=541), marking the smallest gap since the GRYD-zone expansion in 2015. This suggests that while GRYD IR continues to serve high-need communities, additional communities could also benefit from IR. Based on this finding and other stakeholder feedback, the city may want to consider reimagining GRYD zones. See Figure 1.2 orange and blue line trends.

Figure 1.2. Number of Shootings in Los Angeles Within and Outside of GRYD Zones (2012-2023)



1.3.B IR ACTIVATION

Number of Notifications: Imoyase conducted a deeper examination of the IR activation process to assess whether GRYD triangle partners are still deploying with the same information simultaneously after a shooting. After nearly 18 years of implementation, the IR activation process has become increasingly relational and personal between the triangle partners. Previously, the Mayor, the legislative branch, the GRYD staff, CIWs, and LAPD units were all informed of an incident at the same time with the same information. Now, the sharing of information is more relationship driven. For example, an LAPD captain may call a GRYD staff member or CIW directly or decide not to involve a CIWs at all. This shift reflects a process shaped more by

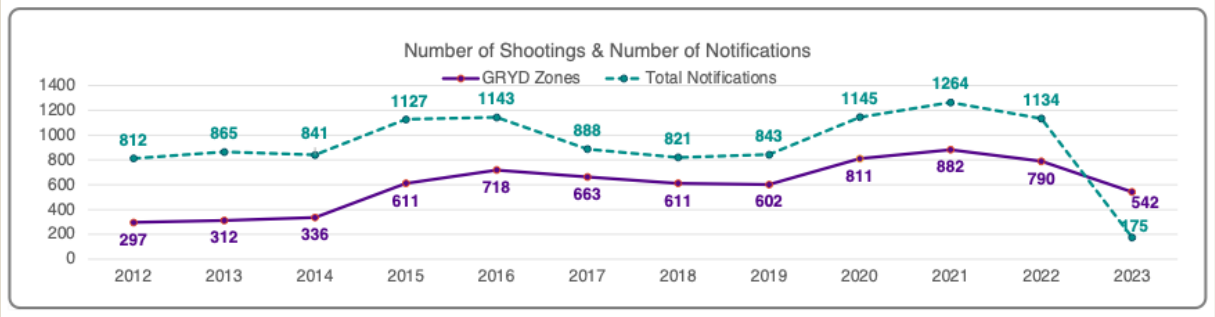
personal relationships than institutional policy, with LAPD controlling the flow of information and reinforcing its hierarchical role in IR. This relationship-based approach emerged sometime after GRYD's geographic expansion in 2015.

Longitudinal Finding
The total number of notifications in the GRYD IR Master List aligned with the number of shootings GRYD IR responded to from 2012 to 2022. In other words, as shootings occurred notifications were also occurring in a similar pattern. It should also be noted that for any single shooting, multiple notifications may occur, contributing to the higher number of notifications in the context of shootings.

- On average, there were 921 IR notifications annually, with a high of 1,264 in 2021 and a low of 175 in 2023.
- Although 2023 saw 175 IR notifications, indicating a sharp drop, this trend is attributed to notable missing data for that year.

See Figure 1.3 for an overview of these data points.

Figure 1.3. Annual Number of IR Notifications from 2012 to 2023



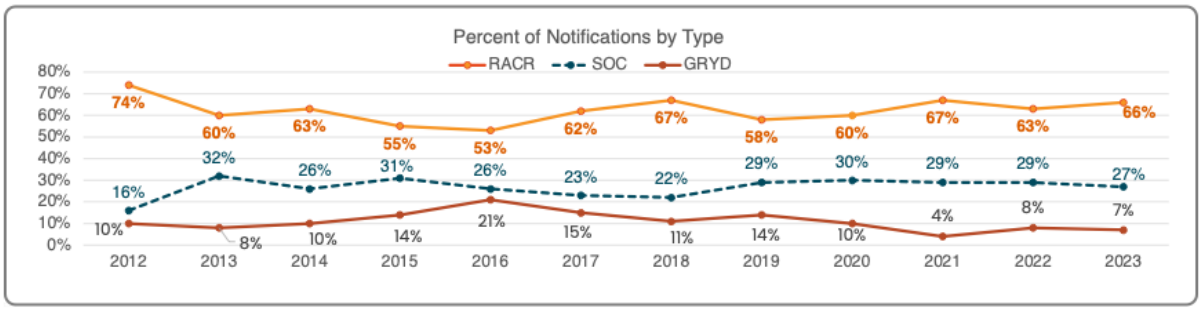
The mode of notification after a violent incident was designed to consist of a predictable, standardized process. This institutional approach to notifications establishes a protocol based on professional agreements rather than individual relationships. A standardized activation protocol not only ensures equity, giving all partners equal access to information, but also allows for more effective coordination, as everyone is informed simultaneously and can respond to a shooting more efficiently.

Longitudinal Finding
While the LAPD Real-Time Analysis and Critical Response (RACR) division was intended to be the primary mode of notification to the triangle partners, the daily State of the City (SOC) emails and direct notifications from the GRYD office (GRYD) became additional modes of formal notification. Documented notification processes were highly variable between 2012 and 2023.

- In 2012, RACR accounted for 74% of notifications. In the years that followed, RACR notifications never accounted for more than 67% (2018). Calendar years 2015, 2016, and 2019 had the lowest RACR notifications (55%, 53%, and 58% respectively).
- The SOC initially accounted for a small number of notifications in 2012 (16%). But this has steadily grown over time to over one-quarter by 2023 (27%).
- GRYD had the lowest number of notifications in 2012, accounting for 10% of overall notifications. Modest increases occurred from 2015 to 2019, but in 2023, dropped to even lower levels than in 2012 (7%).

See Figure 1.4 for a detailed overview of these data points.

Figure 1.4. Annual Number of Incident Response Notifications from 2012 to 2023.



Of the 43 (out of 95) GRYD stakeholders interviewed, all but two (95%; n=41) shared commentary about IR notifications (CIWs: n=11; Intervention Agency Executives: n=6; Intervention Program Manager/Coordinators: n=6; Intervention Case Managers: n=4; GRYD staff: n=9; LAPD: n=5). Interviewees shared a mix of mostly negative (n=17; 41%) and/or neutral (n=12; 29%) views of IR notification. As shown below, IR notification patterns from the quantitative notification data, illustrated in Figures 1.3 and 1.4 above, do not neatly align with qualitative findings about who and how notifications occur in practice. This nuance may reflect the fact that while notifications occur in multiple ways, they may not be as consistent and effective as they could be. The discrepancy between the quantitative and qualitative data is also partly because there are only three notification types in the evaluation metrics, all of which were implemented back in 2012 and have never been updated.

Longitudinal Finding

LAPD's RACR system is outdated and no longer effectively meets the needs of all CIWs. While some GRYD Zones standardize RACR notifications to local CIWs, other CIWs depend more on informal or alternative sources, such as community members, citizen apps, or direct information from GRYD RPCs. While the community now plays a critical role in providing real-time incident information, the number of these notifications is not documented.

"I consider it a luxury that if I can get information from a captain or from [LA]PD before it goes into a RACR, I can respond quicker because I don't want to rely on the RACR to respond because [it is] at best is two hours old, so you know how good is the RACR?...it's an afterthought for a lot of us because we're getting it in and giving us details of what we have already gotten. If it was more fluid and in real-time, then yes, it's helpful, but now at this point, it's not."

—CIW

"The notification from the Sergent at scene would notify the Watch Commander, the Watch Commander would notify one of the Captains, the CO's, and the CO would make that phone call to the interventionist and then they would roll out. Now, there's another step involved now... the interventionist are also getting a call from one of their bosses who is getting the information from the community members as well."

—LAPD

"Now, times have changed a lot where we get notified because we are, we do have a firm foot into our community, our communities will call us and let us know when things happen before even LAPD knows things happen...the Citizens App right now...will notify you when things happen"

—Intervention Agency Executive

"Sometimes the CIWs will notify me first. They are really diligent in being out there in the community. They all have their Citizens app as well, so sometimes I'll get notified first in real time...Or law enforcement will call me a couple hours after the fact, once they responded. So, I'm thankful that the CIWs are really on top of things, where we can get real time notification."

—GRYD RPC

Longitudinal Finding

In the interviews, GRYD stakeholders from GRYD intervention agencies, LAPD, and the GRYD Office emphasized the lack of timely and accurate communication to effectively respond to incidents. CIWs reported receiving few calls or emails from LAPD, typically only when an incident was expected to escalate (see quote below). They noted that protocols determining who at LAPD sends notifications is not standardized (e.g., notifications can be sent by captains, lieutenants, and/or detectives), with RPCs occasionally serving as a "middleman" in the activation process. At times, a lack of communication and coordination hinders a prompt, organized response, as shown in the following quotes.

"I really feel that the process has really got watered down most of the time…we're the ones telling LAPD about an incident like, 'hey, this just happened over here' and they're like, 'oh, OK,' so I just kind of feel like we're the ones letting them know most of the time. Now, it's kind of like the roles are reversed…we're not LAPD and they're not intervention, right. And if they don't communicate with us on things, is just not really giving the caring that we might be able to give. It kind of feels cold and disconnected."
—CIW

"Where before we would wait on that RACR and that's what would deploy us. Now it has to go through the RPC, and the RPC decides if that's something we should be responding to."
—Intervention Agency Executive

"If it's something that they believe is gonna get out of control, I'll get a call [from LAPD]. I try to connect them with direct supervisors [on my team], so they can stay in contact and keep them on their toes with law enforcement and the triangle…I'd like to see more of that happening, and I'll push for law enforcement to pick up the phone and call [my staff], but if you have to call me, definitely call me. Yes, I still get the calls when it's hot"
—Intervention Agency Executive

"Information comes to me first, that way I can reach out to intervention. You know, cause that whole triangle thing, right? So, it's, you know, it's LAPD, it's the GRYD office, and then it's intervention agencies."
—GRYD RPC"

"I've learned to sleep with my phone underneath my pillow, answering those texts in the middle of the night, answering those calls in the middle of the night, when there's a shooting, a homicide, or a stabbing. After I get the information, I get on the phone with my interventionists and say, 'Hey, a shooting happened in this area, so-and-so, who do you have that can deploy to this area right now to, you know, do safe passage, do rumor control, or just get more information on a certain victim or suspect.'"
—GRYD RPC

"The Watch Commander will send out what's called a snap notification… citywide indicating that…a shooting occurred…before we respond, once we get the notification, the Patrol Captain…will actually call GRYD. And say, 'hey, just make you aware that there's a homicide that occurred,' especially if it's gang related."
—LAPD

1.3.C TRIANGLE PARTNERS: CIWs, GRYD, LAPD

While the method of notification has evolved over time, the dedication of the triangle partners—CIWs, LAPD, and the GRYD Office—has remained steadfast. Figure 1.5 presents the proportion of scenes attended by each triangle partner.

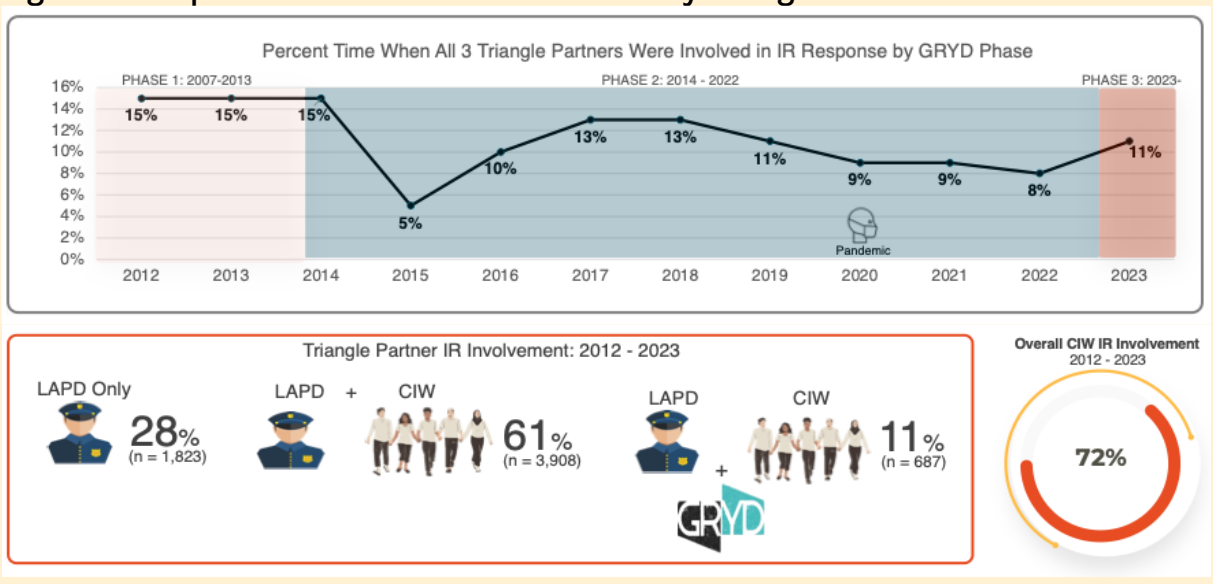
Longitudinal Finding

The percentage of crime scenes attended by all three triangle partners fluctuated over time (Figure 1.5). While Phase 1 of GRYD covered 2007-2013, data is only available for 2012-2013. During these two years, an average of 15% of all crime scenes were attended by all three triangle partners. In 2015, year after the launch of Phase 2 (from 2014 to 2022), this number plummeted to 5%, likely due to factors such as high staff turnover within the GRYD Office. This drop was documented in the 2017 IR Evaluation Report (Brantingham et al., 2017). During Phase 2, rates continued to fluctuate, with a significant decline during the COVID-19 pandemic, dropping to 7% in 2022. Of note, in the first year of Phase 3 (2023), the percentage rebounded to 11%, aligning with Mayor Karen Bass' renewed emphasis on community safety through coordinated, multi-agency collaboration.

In a further examination of this data, which involved 6,418 shootings (326 average crime scenes per year) in GRYD Zones during 2012-2023, we found the following:

- LAPD went unaccompanied by CIWs or GRYD staff to these crime scenes 28% of the time.
- Nearly three-quarters of the time (72%), CIWs worked in partnership with LAPD at active crime scenes (i.e., CIWs were present at most crime scenes).
- LAPD, CIWs, and GRYD all attended crime scenes 11% of the time.

Figure 1.5. Proportion of Crime Scenes Attended by Triangle Partners Over Time.



1.3.D CIW ACTIVITIES AND CAPACITY NEEDS

Nearly twelve years of evaluation data underscore the extensive and perhaps underappreciated work performed by CIWs within the IR. Findings associated with CIW activities are presented below.

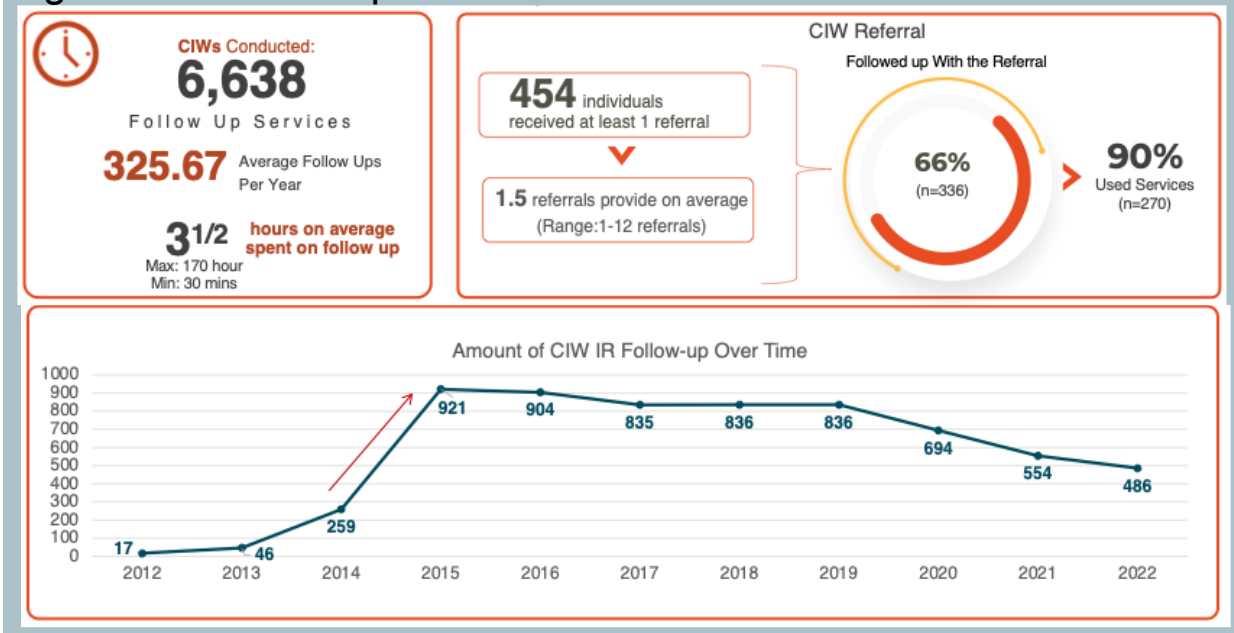
Longitudinal Finding

From 2012 to 2023, CIWs conducted 6,418 follow-up activities post violent incidents (average of 326 per year). The provision of service referrals is a crucial component of this follow-up work, reflecting both CIW credibility with the families they assist and their strong connections with service providers. Figure 1.6 provides a visual representation of the significant effort CIWs dedicate to follow-up activities.

- On average, CIWs spent 3.5 hours conducting post-incident follow-up activities.
- In total, 454 individuals received at least one referral (on average 1.5 referrals per individual).
    - Two-thirds (66%; n=336) of individuals accepted and followed up with the referral(s) (8% were waitlisted or turned away, while 26% refused the referral).
    - Nearly all (90%; n=270) individuals who followed up with referral(s), were able to successfully use services, signaling the reach and effectiveness of CIW efforts.
- Amid the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 saw a significant spike in violence, which in turn strained the capacity of CIWs. As a result, there was a noticeable decline in documented follow-up activities during this period. Although these numbers have remained low in subsequent years, there is a lack of contextual information in the follow-up logs to explain this trend. Interestingly, this issue was not raised during stakeholder interviews, leaving the reasons behind the sustained decrease in follow-up activities unclear.

Figure 1.6 provides a detailed summary of CIW follow-up activities and demonstrates the sustained commitment of CIWs to supporting affected communities after an initial incident.

Figure 1.6. CIW Follow Up Activities from 2012 to 2023.



Longitudinal Finding

CIWs are engaged in a broad spectrum of vital activities that fall outside the purview of their IR activities but nonetheless also promote community safety. These activities are often overshadowed by the focus on retaliatory shootings. Over nearly twelve years, CIWs conducted 424,272 non-IR violence prevention activities (Figure 1.7). These activities include hot-spot monitoring, safe passage, rumor control, conflict de-escalation, service linkages, and building and maintaining relationships with law enforcement, community organizations, service providers, and schools.

Figure 1.7. Number of Documented Follow-Up Efforts by Community Intervention Workers (CIWs) Over Time (2012-2023).

Longitudinal Finding

CIW activities over time aligns directly with instances of community violence between 2012 and 2023. As violence surged during the pandemic, as measured by the annual number of victims in the IR Victim Information Database, CIWs increased their engagement with GRYD communities (i.e., street mediation, street outreach, rumor control, peace maintenance, safe passage, and monitored hot spots) to address and mitigate escalating conflicts and tensions.

- The number of victims increased by 37% from 2018 to 2020 (Figure 1.8). CIWs responded to this increase (Figure 1.9). Notable examples include:
  - Street mediation activities increased by 50% from 2019 (n=1,121) to 2020 (n=1,681).
  - Peace maintenance increased by 75% from 2019 (n=2,352) to 2020 (n=4,126).
  - Rumor control increased by 106% from 2019 (n=1,712) to 2020 (n=3,526).

CIWs played a central role in promoting and supporting community safety during times of heightened crisis.

Figure 1.8. Number of Victims Logged by GRYD

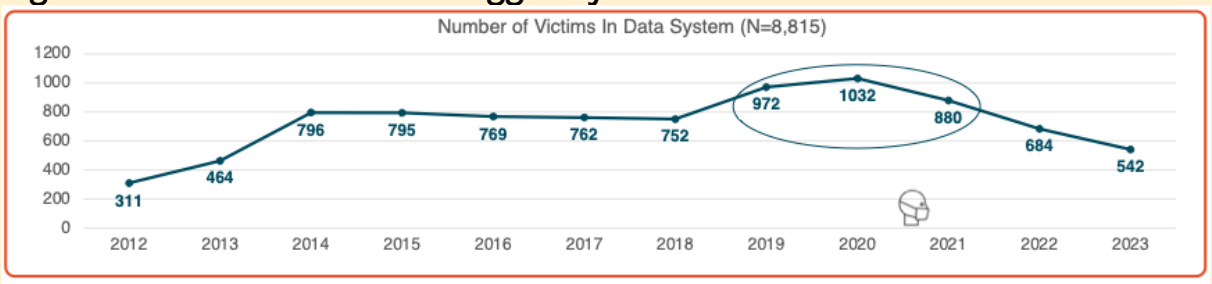
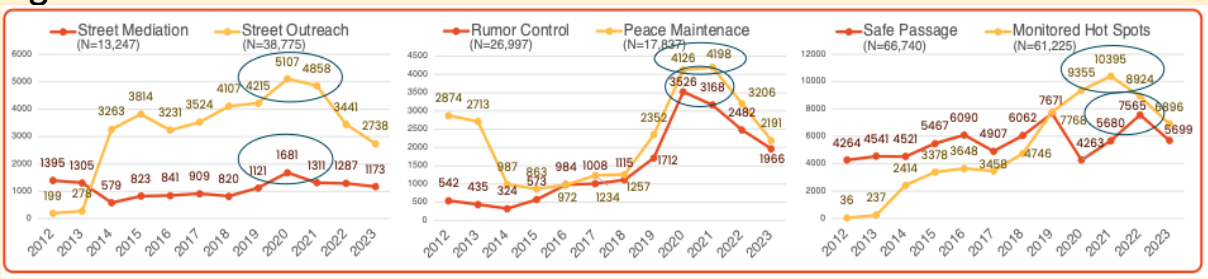


Figure 1.9 CIW Violence-Prevention Activities



Of the 43 (out of 95) GRYD stakeholders interviewed, almost one quarter (21%; n=9 consisting of 2 CIWs, 4 Intervention Agency Executives, 1 Intervention Program Manager/Coordinator, and 2 GRYD staff members) shared a mix of neutral (n=6, 67%) and negative (n=3, 33%) observations about IR intervention resource needs (e.g., more staffing, more presence of GRYD staff, better salaries, etc.). CIWs mostly shared information about challenges with resource deployment, while RPCs discussed challenges related to staff capacity.

Longitudinal Finding

Stakeholders raised significant concerns regarding resource allocation and support for intervention efforts. They reported critical needs for:

- additional contracts and partnerships, especially focusing on CIW funding, to cover gaps not absorbed by GRYD,
- professional training on ethics, conduct, and dress codes for CIWs,
- enhanced resources to support underserved vulnerable populations (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, youth),
- additional services that cover the social determinants of health such as community needs for mental health, substance abuse, parenting, financial literacy, etc.,
- opportunities for dialogue to build trust and communication:
  - between agencies to improve collaboration and effectiveness,
  - with and within the community,
  - between law enforcement and community-based organizations and providers,
- resources to provide long-term support for families affected by violent crime (post initial crisis interventions).

Opportunities for Dialogue with Law Enforcement:
"You still have some (LAPD)...the young ones, some of them just don't get it, you know. Some officers just don't want to be here. I think it should be a real conversation, if they want to be here. That's probably the ones that [we] want to work with."
—Intervention Agency Executive

Need for Additional Contracts and Partnerships:
"Yeah. I am tryna bring other...contracts in and getting other players to the table and getting other areas together on different contracts [so] that GRYD don't have...[to cover] everybody."
—Intervention Agency Executive

Opportunities for Dialogue Between Agencies to Improve Collaboration and Effectiveness:
"Most [providers] ...do a really good job of getting out there, but if they're not doing their work that'll be a problem...if we identify those providers that are not actually engaged...they're not out there in the community doing the work, they have little value for what we're trying to do."
—LAPD

Opportunities for Additional Resources to RPCs:
I think we need more resources...we are kind of like first responders, right? Like, we get there and we are the first like line of defense... I feel like, there needs to be more resources. In the sense that, some of these are homeless individuals. I mean, there's an array, right? Sometimes is you know, substance abuse, road rage, whatever it might be, and sometimes we are there and sometimes I don't feel like we have the proper resources. It's more like 'hey victims of crime and systems' and GRYD services, and that's it.
—GRYD RPC

Stakeholders noted capacity challenges facing GRYD staff during IR. With only nine RPCs serving LA's 23 GRYD zones, staff often feel under-resourced, especially when tasked with handling complex issues like homelessness, substance abuse, and other crises that go beyond the scope of traditional IR. For CIWs, the primary challenge with IR operations is not a lack of resources but rather the deployment of existing staff. Interviewees highlighted issues with CIW-deployment patterns, which impact continuous coverage. To manage team availability and the high cost of keeping staff on standby, some CIWs now work fixed schedules and offer overtime for off-hour deployments. This shift reflects the complexities of maintaining effective CIW operations and underscores the need for a deeper exploration of resource allocation and scheduling.

Comments shared in 1.3E and 1.3F reflect a set of final impressions about IR that would benefit from further examination going forward.

1.3.E EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF THE INCIDENT RESPONSE

The IR is a GRYD initiative that navigates a minefield of emotional triggers for everyone involved. This work occurs at the intersection of violent incidents that disproportionately affect people of color, representing government intervention in historically marginalized neighborhoods, and partnering with group-affiliated professionals at the crime scene—a domain typically dominated by law enforcement. Given these complexities, IR demands a balance between maintaining professional boundaries and establishing authentic rapport in the process of serving families and communities during intensely vulnerable moments.

"This is not going to necessarily ease your heart or mine but one of the things I did learn… from responding to scenes…is that when you walk in to [immediately] connect with the mother at the scene. She may not know who [our agency] is, she may not know your name, she may not care what your name is, but the fact that you're there by itself, that is grief counseling, that is trauma reduction…I haven't seen this level of response when there's a body on the ground, anywhere in the world. You know, LA gets into the mix when in most matters, you know."
—Intervention Program Manager/Coordinator

Crime scenes, especially those involving homicides, are fraught with elements that cause trauma to individuals and communities, and vicarious trauma to those who serve them. The sight of a body under a sheet carries a weight far beyond the individual; it symbolizes the broader losses suffered by the community. The sound of a grieving mother's cries can resonate in a home or a

"They may [not] know that your name…, but what they remember is a person that connected with them at a time of grief, and they may later find out [who] you worked for- or sometimes even what your name is…The timing [of this connection is also important]… the timing of being able to read…when the family is ready to absorb specific content like somebody's phone number or who to follow up [with]. For example, mother is just wailing because her son is under a sheet on the streets, but there may be an uncle that is less volatile and that kind of wagon-training of reading who is most accessible at that time."
—GRYD RPC

community for days, a haunting reminder of the pain inflicted. While protocols cannot erase the tragedy, they serve as essential rituals that help to prevent further victimization of the family and community, offering a structured response to an otherwise chaotic and devastating situation.
While not an official finding, the emotional impact of IR warrants additional exploration to determine best practices for managing high stress/traumatic incidents and to appreciate the delicate balance between the needs of victims, the needs of the community, and protection of the integrity of a crime scene.

1.3.F CIW ROLE AS INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND POLICE

Another impression of IR is the need for continued training to address the differences between the role of a confidential informant and a community intervention worker. A confidential informant provides LAPD with information to resolve a crime under investigation. A CIW receives information from LAPD that can assist the CIW in reducing retaliation (i.e. preventing the next incident). The exchange of information between CIWs and LAPD is unidirectional, from LAPD to CIW. This distinction becomes particularly important when considering the complex relationship between police and community members, which can vary substantially across neighborhoods, especially in a city as racially diverse as Los Angeles. In some communities, historical tensions with law enforcement may shape how the role of a CIW is perceived, adding layers of complexity to their work. The following quote highlights these dynamics and how they manifest across different parts of the city.

> "The officers come over and approach [the CIWs] and try to talk to them, and they're 'hey you can't talk to me now. I don't want to look like a snitch,' and so forth. And so, well then, if you haven't figured out how to correspond with the officers at that point then you're not doing your job."
>
> —LAPD

2. PREVENTION MODEL

> What are you really trying to find out with the YSET? We don't talk about that too much…, because the assumption is just based around number of risk factors. Four or more, you're Model, 3 or less you're primary. What does that really mean? You know, I don't think a lot of folks understand why the difference and how to use the difference.
>
> **Prevention Provider**

> I think the dosage could be tweaked… We work with the youth for 6 months. We have different phases that we work with them for a certain period of time. Within that first cycle, we're barely getting to know the youth and the family, so I would like to see that extended...I want to see long term success for this child's mind. I want them to go on and [contribute] to our community. So, I feel us being more present in the youth's life for a longer period of time besides the 6 months, I think that would be beneficial to the youth and their family.
>
> **Prevention Provider**

2.1 ORIGIN & THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE GRYD PREVENTION MODEL

The GRYD Prevention Model consists of two interrelated components:

- Diagnostic, employing the Youth Services and Eligibility Tool (YSET) (i.e., *the thermometer*) to identify gang-involvement risk factors for youth 10 to 15 years old.
- The seven phases of family-centered programming (i.e., *the medicine*), designed to holistically address identified risks.

GRYD-funded community-based prevention providers are expected to use both components.

2.1.A THE YSET ("*The Thermometer*")

In 2008, GRYD formed an evaluation advisory committee[1] led by USC professor Malcolm Klein, PhD, to guide the development of a gang-prevention strategy based on existing research. This collaboration resulted in the development of the Youth Services and Eligibility Tool (YSET), designed to identify youth aged 10 to 15 who are at high risk of gang involvement. It was developed in line with 2008 trends in violence prevention (i.e., an increased emphasis on evidence-based practices and measurable outcomes) and the subsequent policy mandate to allocate city funds to gang prevention efforts targeting the highest-risk populations.

Initially, the GRYD advisory research committee explored multiple risk factors that were subsequently narrowed down to nine risk factors across individual, peer, and family domains considered most relevant for youth in Los Angeles. These nine risk factors then informed the development of the nine YSET scales, which are comprised of 59 items (i.e., questions).

The nine scales include:

1. Anti-Social Tendencies (6 items)
2. Weak Parental Supervision (3 items)
3. Critical Life Events (7 items)
4. Negative Peer Influence (5 items)
5. Impulsive Risk-Taking (4 items)
6. Neutralization of Guilt (6 items)
7. Peer Delinquency (6 items)
8. Delinquency and Substance Abuse (20 items)
9. Family Gang Influence (2 items)

See Appendix B for a copy of YSET.

The YSET uses a structured interview format, administered to youth by community-based case managers. The results are scored by Harder+Company Community Research, an independent contractor responsible for data collection and evaluation. All youth who meet diagnostic criteria (i.e., three or more risk factors) are referred to one of two service levels — primary or secondary prevention. Each level has a corresponding degree of engagement across six months (i.e., more engagement required with youth and families in secondary prevention vs. primary prevention). See Section 2.1.B *The GRYD Prevention Model (Standardizing the Medicine)* for more information about the two service levels and the differential levels of primary vs. secondary youth engagement.

[1] An Evaluation Advisory Committee was formed in 2008 to advise the GRYD Office on evaluation and research issues related to program implementation. The Committee was comprised of researchers noted for their work in the gang field: Malcolm Klein, University of Southern California; Scott Decker, Arizona State University; Finn-Aage Esbensen, University of Missouri, St. Louis; Karen Hennigan, University of Southern California; David Huizinga, University of Colorado at Boulder; Charles Katz, Arizona State University; and Cheryl Maxson, University of California, Irvine.

In December 2008, all GRYD-contracted prevention providers across the 12 GRYD zones were required to use the YSET as the "thermometer" to identify gang-related risk factors. This temperature reading informed the selection of evidence-based practices (EBPs) recommended by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) as the "medicine" to address identified risks.

The YSET has been a valuable component of the GRYD Prevention model. However, referring to it as a "**thermometer**" has been a helpful analogy in reminding GRYD practitioners and program personnel that as is the case in medicine, *the thermometer by itself does not reduce the fever, that is accomplished by "**the medicine**".*

The cost of evidence-based practices (EBPs) was not the only challenge; there was also uncertainty about which EBPs were most compatible with GRYD's prevention goals, aligned with the new YSET diagnostic criteria, and best suited to the cultural and contextual needs of GRYD's youth. See Section 2.1.B for more information on the family-centered approach developed to address behaviors linked to the YSET-identified risk factors.

YSET Validity, Reliability, and Appropriateness

Since its launch, the YSET has raised significant concerns among some stakeholders (e.g., Council Member Tony Cardenas, Advocates from the Advancement Project, prevention and intervention providers, and UCLA researchers), including:

- The YSET's validity (i.e., whether it measures what it is supposed to measure – youth at high risk of gang involvement).
- The YSET's reliability (i.e., whether it dependably detects youth risk).
- Whether YSET over relies on risk factors to the exclusion of strength-based or protective factors, including cultural protective factors.

In addition, some YSET scales contain questions that youth and families may find sensitive, troubling to answer, or emotionally triggering (e.g., causing embarrassment, fear). In such cases, youth might become nonresponsive or offer socially desirable responses. For example, the YSET's Delinquency & Substance Abuse scale includes items that cover illegal activity, emotionally upsetting topics, and information that might be threatening or incriminating in the wrong hands.

DELINQUENCY & SUBSTANCE ABUSE SCALE

In the last six months, have you?

1. Consumed alcohol or smoked cigarettes?
2. Used marijuana or other illegal drugs?
3. Skipped class?
4. Avoided paying for a movie, taxi, or bus?
5. Broken or destroyed something on purpose that was not yours?
6. Carried a hidden weapon around for protection?
7. Illegally painted a wall or building—done "graffiti"?
8. Stolen something of low value?
9. Stolen something of high value?

10. Entered or tried to enter a building to steal something?
11. Hit someone with the intention of hurting them?
12. Attacked someone with a weapon?
13. Used a weapon or physical force to get money from someone else?
14. Participated in fights with youths from other neighborhoods?
15. Participated in gang fights?
16. Sold marijuana or other drugs/helped others sell drugs?

2.1.B FAMILY-CENTERED PROGRAMMING (*"The Medicine"*)

In 2009, GRYD formed an advisory group[2] of national family-systems experts to review a family-centered approach to addressing behaviors linked to the YSET risk factors. The policy objective was to develop a GRYD violence-prevention model that combined asset-based family principles with the diagnostic insights provided by the YSET. From late 2009 until 2012, prevention contractors and GRYD staff received training by national family-systems experts in structural, multigenerational, and problem-solving approaches.

In 2011, the GRYD violence-prevention model and the data-collection/client-management software (i.e., the city's Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) system) were launched, as well as the Comprehensive Strategy (Cespedes & Herz 2011), which outlined the conceptual and practice frameworks for the model. The Comprehensive Strategy incorporated family-systems theory, the risk-factor framework, and criminal justice principles (Cespedes & Herz, 2011). It defined "family" broadly to encompass multiple generations and diverse family structures, including both biological and chosen family, with two key configurations:

- The "horizontal family" refers to biological or chosen family. It goes beyond the western-centered nuclear unit (Imber-Black, 1992) that lives together and/or has daily contact and manages tasks such as preparing food, providing shelter, and supervising each other (Fisch, 1982). Prevention activities here build the problem-solving capacity of horizontal family members and focus on capacity building rather than therapy[3].
- The "vertical family" draws on strengths (e.g., history of resilience and survival, cultural traditions, ancestral heritage) across three or more familial generations, including deceased members, to foster pride and belonging among the current family. Prevention activities here document asset-based genograms, emphasizing multi-generational history and relationships to support long-term family resilience, engagement, and individual development (Walsh, 2010).

The GRYD Prevention Model (Standardizing the Medicine)

The first intervention cycle for new GRYD Prevention participants, both primary and secondary, includes seven distinct phases (Table 2.1). The seven phases include:

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[2] An advisory group was formed that included researchers and practitioners in the field of family systems, including James Alexander, Ph.D. (Functional Family Therapy Founder), Elaine Bobrow, M.S. (MRI's Strategic Family Therapy Training Center); John Rolland, M.D. and Froma Walsh Ph.D. (Chicago Center for Family Health), Jorge Colapinto M.S. (Salvador Minuchin Academy), Harry Aponte M.S. (Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic), and Tom Todd, Ph.D. (Chicago Center for Family Health).

[3] The horizontal approach is guided by the Structural School of Family Systems theory (Minuchin, 1981) and problem-solving methods developed at the Mental Research Institute (Fisch, 1982, Haley, 1992).

- Referral and Collaboration
- Building Agreements
- Redefining
- Celebrating Changes
- Mainstreaming
- Next-Level Agreements
- Re-Assessment

The seven phases serve as a roadmap for prevention providers to implement activities targeting individual, peer, and family-level domains. During the first cycle, the phases are rolled out monthly, while youth continue on for a second cycle receive phases two through seven across six months.

- Youth referred to primary prevention during Phase 1 are eligible to participate in one six-month cycle (Phases 2 through 7). If during the re-assessment phase a youth shows an increase in risk factors, they become eligible to participate in an additional six-month cycle, but now as part of secondary prevention.
- Youth referred to secondary prevention during Phase 1 are initially eligible to participate in one six-month cycle (Phases 2 through 7). If they continue to show four or more risk factors during the re-assessment phase, they will remain eligible to participate in a second six-month cycle. On average, youth in secondary prevention participate in two intervention cycles (i.e., 12-months of service). In some cases, a third cycle is deemed necessary, but the agency must provide documentation supporting the need and obtain clearance from the GRYD Office.
- Youth in both primary and secondary prevention who show three risk factors or fewer at the re-assessment phase are judged to have completed the program.

Table 2.1. GRYD Prevention Model: Phases 1 through 7

Phase	Description
I. Referral and Collaboration	Service provider accepts referral, obtains youth consent/assent, administers the YSET, which is scored by an independent evaluator with a report confirming the number of criteria met (i.e., risk factors). The youth is referred to primary or secondary prevention.
II. Building Agreements	Case managers meet with families of youth to discuss YSET results, agree on a service plan, including individual and group work, and introduce the asset-based genogram concept.
III. Redefining	The case manager highlights progress and shifts the focus to a new problem and/or to collective family efforts.
IV. Celebrating Changes	Families are encouraged to celebrate their progress, including members from the multi-generational (vertical) family.
V. Mainstreaming	Families are advised to connect with additional community resources to enhance their capacity.
VI. Next-Level Agreements	Address higher-risk behaviors and/or strengthen the family leadership team's problem-solving capacity.
VII. Re-Assessment	The case manager conducts a YSET retest assessment to evaluate progress and determine whether additional services are needed.

Table 2.2 illustrates the varying levels of youth engagement (i.e., meetings and activities) by service level (primary, secondary). Of note, the monthly youth-development activities were increased in 2020 from one per month (6 per cycle) to 10 per cycle to enhance engagement and outcomes.

Table 2.2. GYRD prevention participant engagement by service level.

Service Level	Description	# Family Mtgs/Month	# Individual Mtgs/Month	# Youth Development Activities/Cycle
Primary (i.e., diagnostic criteria of three or fewer risk factors)	Youth with lower risk profiles receive priority referrals to other services, activities, agencies, etc.	1	1	N/A
Secondary (i.e., diagnostic criteria of four or more risk factors)	Youth with higher risk profiles receive full complement of GRYD prevention services.	2	1	10

2.1.C EXPORTATION OF THE GRYD PREVENTION MODEL

The Los Angeles GRYD Prevention Model has been adapted internationally to provide services to at-risk youth by focusing on positive family, multi-generational, cultural, and ancestral traditions to build family capacity, regardless of biological or chosen configuration.

In 2012, the city of Los Angeles partnered with the U.S. Agency for International Development to adapt and implement GRYD "thermometer" and "medicine" components in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, Nevis, and Guyana. (Appendix C). In 2017, the U.S. State Department adapted and implemented the model in Tunisia to counter extremist-group involvement.

Cultural Adaptation of the GRYD Prevention Model in Honduras

A modified, culturally relevant version of the GRYD prevention model was implemented by *Proponte Más,* a USAID funded program, in five municipalities in Honduras. These municipalities had the highest homicide rates per 100,000 residents: La Ceiba, Tela, San Pedro Sula, Choloma, and Tegucigalpa. Annual rates ranged from 48.7 to 193.4 (Katz et al., 2019). For context, the highest homicide rate in Los Angeles occurred in 1992, with a peak rate of about 28.1 per 100,000 residents. In Chicago, the highest rate occurred in 1974, reaching approximately 30.4 per 100,000 residents.

Proponte Más aimed to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors among youth aged 8 to 17 in neighborhoods with a scarcity of prevention and/or youth-development services. A wrap-around service approach was not needed as in Los Angeles because the family was the "medicine" wrapped around the young person. *Proponte Más* was implemented by 50 community-based counselors trained in diagnostic assessment and the seven phases of intervention. Counselors administered a six-month cycle, which included two family meetings, one individual meeting, and one strategy-team meeting per month.

Proponte Más administered the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scale (FACES) to family members to measure level of change in family functioning, and the YSET to youth to measure protective factors and risk factors. Originally developed for clinical practice, the FACES self-report tool assesses family function, cohesion, and adaptability. Families scoring in the middle indicated more family balance. Extreme scores indicated family dysfunction (Moriarity & Hamid, 2023; Olson et al., 2019).

At the end of six months, youth in *Proponte Más* showed increased protective factors (i.e., family communication, family satisfaction, family attachment, family opportunities for prosocial involvement, family rewards for prosocial involvement, interaction with prosocial peers) and decreased risk factors (i.e., poor family management, family conflict, weak parental supervision, rebelliousness, antisocial tendencies, impulsive risk taking, negative peer influence) (Katz et al., 2019). *Proponte Más* also reported dropout rates below 20%.

2.1.D ASSET BASED APPROACHES TO GROUP VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Protective factors or asset-based approaches to violence-intervention efforts are important in prevention (Howell, 2010; Lenzi et al., 2015; Mallion & Wood, 2020). They are particularly crucial in areas with high gang presence, where over 75% of youth equipped with protective factors avoid joining gangs (Mallion & Wood, 2020). Protective factors, such as empathy, parental support, and positive community involvement, can significantly reduce behaviors associated with gang involvement by promoting regulation of emotions, prosocial relationships, and a sense of safety and support. Mallion and Wood (2020) categorize these factors into five general domains (See Table 2.3).

Table 2.3. Mallion and Wood (2020) Protective Factors Mitigating Gang Involvement

Domain	Protective Factors	
Individual	- Effective coping strategies - High emotional competence - Emotional regulation skills - Resilient temperament - Future orientation	- Impulse control - Low ADHD symptomology - High self-esteem - Intolerance toward antisocial behavior - Belief in the moral order
Peer	- Interaction with prosocial peer groups - Strong social skills	- Low peer delinquency - Prosocial bonding
Family	- Strong parental supervision - Parental warmth - Family cohesiveness	- Positive parental attachment - Stable family structure - Low levels of parent-child conflict
School	- Positive child-teacher relationships - Clear familial expectations regarding schooling - Personal commitment to education - Positive role models - Fair treatment from teachers	- Safe environment - Connectedness - Regular school participation - Academic achievement
Community	- Opportunities for prosocial involvement - Positive community role models	- Perceived neighborhood safety - Low economic deprivation

Other community violence-intervention programs in the U.S. have adopted more asset-based approaches that uplift protective factors. Examples include the Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) program (Esbensen et al., 2013) and the Functional Family Therapy Gangs (FFT-G) program (Alexander et al., 1998). Both have demonstrated improved relationships between youth and police, reduced likelihood of gang membership, and increased attitudes aligned with avoiding criminal behavior. Wallace et al. (2018) found that cultural factors serve as an important buffer in reducing rates of violent behavior among adolescent and young adult men/boys, especially for African American men. Cultural, socialization, in particular, has been cited as an important protective factor to mitigate violence among youth of color (Wallace et al., 2023).

2.2 PRIOR EVALUATIONS OF SECONDARY PREVENTION

Launched in 2011, the city's ETO system has tracked and stored individual youth-client data for its prevention program, including retrospective data from 2009 and 2010, on the following:

- Youth and family referral sources.
- YSET risk-level scores at baseline and 6-month, 12-month, and 18-month follow-up.
- Referral into primary or secondary prevention services.
- Amount of time spent in the program.
- Program completion status (e.g., completed, case closed as primary prevention - transfer to secondary prevention, formally dropped out/refused service, etc.).

- The number of individual and family activities or meetings held.
- Youth demographic information, including GRYD Zone.
- Other contextual factors (e.g., family status, involvement with DCFS or the justice system, and school disciplinary history).

Findings from an evaluation conducted in 2017 led by the GRYD from California State University at Los Angeles (CSULA) evaluation team detailed how youth were referred into the program, how many were served, their demographic background, and the most frequent youth-engagement activities (Kraus et al. 2017).

Between September 2011 and March 2016:

- A majority (88%) of referral sources came from parent walk-ins (33%), school counselors (29%), and youth walk-ins (26%).
    - At 8 of 15 school-sites, referrals were delayed because of challenges establishing memorandums of understanding (MOUs).
- 9,098 youth[4] and their families were referred to GRYD and completed a YSET.
- More than half of youth referred were men/boys (59%) and under the age of 13 (56%). The majority (75%) were Latinx. Fewer than one in four were Black/African American (20.1%).
- 4,945 (54%) were eligible to receive secondary prevention services per the YSET. Of those, 3,781 (77%) youth and their families enrolled in services.
- 4,153 (46%) were found ineligible according to the YSET. Of those, 1,938 (47%) enrolled in GRYD primary prevention.
- Enrollees participated in 164,254 meetings and activities (See Table 2.4 below for a breakdown of activity/meeting type).
- 37% (n=927) of the 2,499 youth with exit data completed the program.

Table 2.4. Type and Frequency of GRYD Prevention Activities from 2011 through 2016.

Activity Type (N=164,254)	Frequency - n (%)
Family Meeting	40,682 (25%)
Group Activity	36,131 (22%)
Individual Meeting	27,512 (16%)
Other Youth-Development Activity	22,512 (14%)
Team Meeting	20,570 (12%)
Other Family Activity	13,682 (9%)
Collateral Contact	3,374 (2%)
Uncategorized	7 (<1%)

Data from Kraus et al., 2017.

[4] The number of youth served by the program does not capture its full impact, as each youth is part of a family. Even if only one parent or caretaker attends meetings, the actual number of individuals reached is at least double the number of youth enrolled.

In a 2020 evaluation report (Vera & Diep, 2020) that spanned January 2017 to December 2019, the following was noted:

- Referrals increased to 13,280 youth and their families.
- 36,000 prevention activities (e.g., sports, arts, community service projects, theme park trips) were provided to more than 3,000 youth (70,000 hours of engagement).
- Youth demographics continued to be largely Latinx (77%) and men/boys (61%).
- Program completion rates increased substantially, from 37% to 52%.
- Programming was expanded to include the Achieving Intentional Youth Development Approach (AIYDA). The AIYDA includes activities designed to foster social emotional learning across multiple domains, such as emotion management, empathy, initiative, problem solving, responsibility, and teamwork.

2.3 AN EXAMINATION OF GRYD PREVENTION

Imoyase conducted a longitudinal mixed-methods analysis of GRYD's prevention process and outcome data from its launch in 2009 to 2022. Data for this analysis included both secondary and primary data sources. (See Table 2.5.)

- In April 2024, Imoyase received access to the Mayor's Office's ETO data system, which tracks and stores data on eight GRYD prevention program measures. Following our review of the ETO system for content and completeness, we identified the Participant Overview database—which consolidates the most relevant information from six of the other prevention databases in ETO, including YSET scores, participant status, and demographics—as the most appropriate source for inclusion in this report.
- Primary data collected by Imoyase included 95 semi-structured stakeholder interviews. Of those, 42 GRYD stakeholders shared detailed insights about GRYD's prevention model from its inception to the present day (n=19 prevention providers; n= 10 prevention agency executives; 11 GRYD staff, including Regional Program Coordinators (RPCs) and Program Managers (PMs); 2 LAPD Officers).

Table 2.5. GRYD Prevention Data by Source and Type.

Data Collected by	Time Period	Data Source	Overview
Mayor's Office & CSULA	2009-2022	ETO (GRYD Prevention) Participant Overview Database	Data tracks the journey of each individual youth referred to GRYD Prevention through the system. Includes information on referral source, YSET eligibility, date entered/exited the system, number of activities and meetings attended, YSET retest eligibility, program completion, etc.
Imoyase	Retrospective (2009-2023)	Stakeholder Interviews	Stakeholder insights into the GRYD Prevention model. Contributors include: • Prevention providers and executives: 29 interviews • GRYD RPCs & PMs: 11 interviews • LAPD Officers: 2 interviews

2.3.A NUMBER & DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF YOUTH AND FAMILIES SERVED

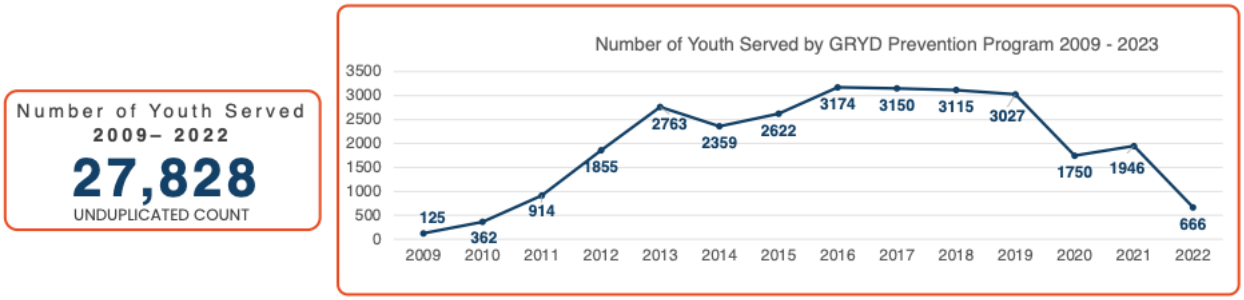
Number of Individuals Served

From 2009 to 2022 the program served 28,828 unduplicated youth (range = 125 to 3,174 youth served annually). See Figure 2.1. Note, ETO does not contain data on how many family members were served.

Since the pandemic in 2020, the program has not been able to return to its highest number of youth served in the four years prior (2016 to 2019).

- At its launch in 2009, the program served 125 youth.
- The number of youth served steadily increased until the program reached its peak from 2016 through 2019, during which more than 3,000 youth were served annually.
- During the pandemic in 2020, the number of youth served unsurprisingly decreased by 42%.
- Another sharp decline (66%) was observed in 2022.

Figure 2.1. Number of Youth Entered into the Efforts to Outcomes System, 2009–2022.

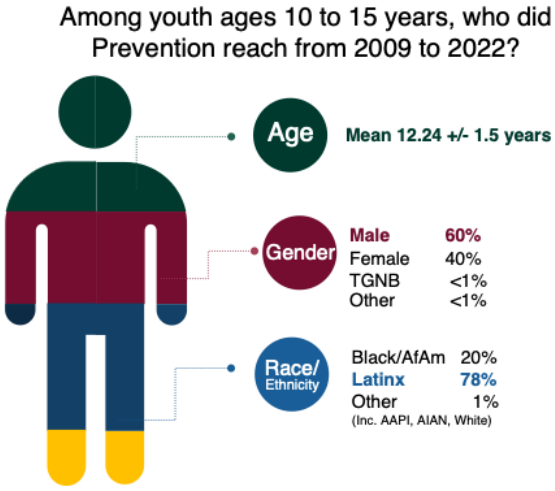


Note: 2023 ETO data were excluded because they included only 3 youths.

Demographic Profile of Youth Aged 10 to 15 served

From 2009 to 2022, the demographic profile of youth participants was primarily Latinx men/boys of an average age of 12 years old (+/- 1.5 years). Like Summer Night Lights (SNL), Black/African American youth appear to be underrepresented in the prevention program. Only 20% of youth served were Black/African American (despite 40% of Black/African Americans being victims of violence in GRYD zones).

Figure 2.2. Demographic Profile of Youth Served in the GRYD Prevention Program, 2009–2023



2.3.B STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS OF THE YSET

Stakeholder interviews yielded useful insights about the YSET's application and effectiveness within the GRYD Prevention Model. Key stakeholder themes centered around challenges with the YSET's format and implementation, the need for more tailored youth assessments, and recommendations for future revisions or replacements.

Stakeholders (i.e., prevention providers (n=16, 84%), prevention agency executives (n=7, 70%), and GRYD staff (n=10, 91%) expressed varied perceptions of the YSET, ranging from positive to more negative.

Finding

Fifteen stakeholders (n=7 GRYD staff, n=6 prevention providers, and n=2 prevention agency executives) discussed the purpose of the YSET. Nine respondents shared either neutral (n=5) or positive (n=4) views, stating that the *YSET adds value* to the prevention program as a diagnostic tool that informs services and identifies and tracks participant risk levels over time. In contrast, other respondents raised concerns about the YSET (n=6 expressed negative perspectives) and underscored the need to increase its effectiveness to improve youth outcomes. They noted:

> "The YSET does allow us to measure…how we're gonna best work with the student. So, once we get the results and we look at it, we look at those risk factors, and I can see what comes out of those, but I also see what needs to be done right now because the student is not attending class or because the student is chronically late and why. So, in a sense, it's helpful, but we first need to address the more urgent needs of the student and not the needs of the…outcomes of the YSET."
> —Prevention Provider

> "The YSET gives valuable…information in regard to what's taking place at the youth and bond dynamics…The provider [then] creates a comprehensive strategy aspect with the buy-in of the youth and the family of how to address those concerns."
> —GRYD RPC

- A lack of knowledge or working understanding about the YSET itself and its overall purpose and role.
- A need to train providers on YSET implementation to: (1) improve efficient and effective use; and (2) optimize respondent motivation and interpretation. They also encouraged the use of YSET report scores to monitor progress and engage youth.

> "There's a lack of knowledge... [some of the RPCs] are more on the newer side…there [are] a lot of things that [they don't] know about the YSET, and what I know is what has been passed down. I haven't seen any actual literature or anything [or] this is where it came from. I just know that it's based on the Family's system theory, gang literature, and that's just as much as we have. And we've seen it with our providers. For example, for prevention, they do the YSET. It's a part of the eligibility criteria, but I do not think that they are actually using the feedback report to build that case and neither is intervention. So, we have it, and they're doing it, but I don't think they're using it as they should be."
> —GRYD RPC

> "[We are] trained…to build rapport with the youth and make them feel comfortable and letting them know this is more of a questionnaire just to get to know them and to see how we are going to be of support to them."
> —Prevention Provider

Finding

Twenty-seven stakeholders (n=14 prevention providers, n=5 prevention agency executives, n=8 GRYD staff) raised significant concerns related to:

- The YSET's overall validity and reliability.
- Keeping the YSET updated (a few stakeholders suggesting that it is already outdated).
- How the current YSET administration process, and the items themselves, undermine data quality.

Stakeholder perspectives were predominantly negative (n=15, 56%) or neutral (n=10, 37%). The key points they raised included the following:

- There is a lack of confidence that the YSET's risk classification accurately detects the two discrete groups of primary and secondary prevention. Risk classification is assigned to any one youth dependent on too many variables, including who administered the form, when it was completed, the age of the youth participant, etc.
- The YSET is outdated and does not include constructs (i.e., risk factors) that reflect current trends and issues. In other words, the assessed risk behaviors for gang involvement have substantially changed over time but are not yet included in the tool. This contributes to diagnostic inaccuracy and subsequently renders intervention goals for youth ineffectual.
- While the YSET does contain a series of items inquiring about critical events that have occurred in a youth's life (e.g., failing school, getting suspended/expelled, romantic relationships, new friendships, death of someone close, etc.), it is not comprehensive nor reflective of the current lifestyle diversity and life experiences of youth.
- The quality of youth responses was a prominent concern related to both the self-report interview process, length of the tool, and the language used in the items that could negatively impact youth cooperation, interest, and accuracy. Stakeholders even raised the ethics of some of the questions asked which are often sensitive, very personal, and/or may cause unintended harm to youth, especially younger participants (e.g., triggering trauma or fear-based reactions). Ultimately, youth may be nonresponses or offer invalid responses.

"One of the questions was like 'using glue,' right, to get high, and my teams told me 'this is so outdated that the kids are like 'what?,' They're so confused,' and I'm like 'Oh my God, we're over here giving them ideas now,' you know what I mean? And in that sense, I feel like it's definitely outdated…and…needs to be improved. But I love the idea of having a tool, because I do think that it's beneficial to…see what are some of the trends and prompts so that we can build an effective case plan."

—GRYD RPC

"Yeah, so we feel like it doesn't measure many of like the critical life events that go on in the youth's lives… When we're asking them the questions, they're like 'what?'"

—Prevention Provider

"…it is helpful, but I definitely do think that the YSET is a little outdated just because it can get a little long, and I feel that the attention span of our kids these days is just getting shorter and shorter and shorter… We kind of lose them half the time, [and] it can be kind of confusing for them."

—Prevention Provider

"I think as an eligibility tool it's difficult, especially with such a young population. A lot of these youths don't feel so comfortable sharing what really is going on, what truly has happened to them, [with] adults that they're barely getting to know… With the agencies that I work with, I have had conversations with them where they have to sometimes tweak the way they're asking these questions to make the youth feel more comfortable. But then that also goes against…the model fidelity, or the YSET fidelity, because now these questions are being asked differently than how they're supposed to be. But if we're reading something very technical and very script[ed], youth are not gonna wanna give the correct answer because it feels like they're being, they're being questioned by law enforcement and they're very intimate questions."

—GRYD RPC

More than 80% of the stakeholders who questioned the validity of the YSET (n=22) also recommended solutions. To improve the YSET they suggested the city undertake the following:

- Refine the tool to be shorter and more user-friendly for children/youth ages 10 to 15 years (i.e., simplify the language so that it is both age-appropriate and culturally appropriate) to help increase its utility.
    - This is particularly important for younger children (i.e., 10 to 12 years old).
- Drop risk-factor items that are no longer relevant or are repetitive and add new risk-factor items that reflect current trends and issues not currently included in the tool, such as involvement in cyber activities (e.g., cyberbullying, risky social media behavior, screen addiction) and use of substances, such as vaping.
- Incorporate asset-based items (i.e., protective factors/strengths, cultural and spiritual protective factors) to ensure a more holistic understanding of the youth.

- Provide adequate training to equip providers with sufficient skills to develop rapport with youth and allow the administration process to have flexible interactions instead of a rigid, standardized approach to the interviews.
- Include trauma-informed methods to minimize the potential of inadvertently re-traumatizing youth. This includes training providers to recognize trauma responses and how to engage youth when a trauma response is elicited during the assessment (e.g., adding trigger warnings and breaks *before* and *after* sensitive questions, re-assessing the question order, putting more sensitive questions at the middle or end, giving youth more control over the flow, etc.).
- Add open ended questions to capture critical life events that may not fit neatly into YSET's predefined categories.
- Involve adult figures, such as parents or guardians, in the assessment process to provide additional context and support for youth.

"I always felt that it could possibly be reworded…for 10, 11, 12 [year olds]. …When you're talking to kids there should be more of a kid lingo. We sometimes forget the kids are kids, and we end up talking to them like they're adults… They see a lot, you know, there's no doubt about that, [but] I feel like we still can't forget that they're kids, you know, they're little, they're so little."

—Prevention Provider

"Something that I'd love to add to the YSET would be, is there any trauma that the youth has experienced? I think a lot of the time what keeps a youth from wanting to get support or get any sort of resources is what habits they are having right there at that moment. A lot of these youth, maybe they don't have positive male or female figures in their lives."

—Prevention Provider

"I think just expanding the questions…to include a little bit more of that family component. Because a lot of times, even though we are very intentional and we are doing what we can to make sure young people get what they need, if they don't have the anchor at home to reinforce, or to reiterate, or to partner with us, it's a little bit more difficult. So, understanding the dynamic of home, I think [is] essential as well."

—Prevention Agency Executive

"I think what the YSET should really measure are the behaviors and the habits of the youth. …I want to know what the child is doing currently that can possibly lead them into being influenced by the members in their community, whether it's in a positive way or in a negative way, that can maybe influence them into joining a gang. I want to know what it is in their behavior, what do they do after school? Who are their influences?"

—Prevention Provider

I have mixed feelings about …the YSET. We need a tool. We definitely need a tool. I do feel like…the YSET…[is] a little more risk approach (i.e., deficit based), like trying to find out what are the problems, like what's wrong with you, and we are not really trying to look at what are the positives… So, I feel like that needs to be improved."

—GRYD RPC

Finding

Prevention providers (n=8) and executives (n=2) shared that while the YSET is critical for estimating youth risk and service level (i.e., primary vs. secondary), providers are still challenged with how to use the data in the following ways:

- To inform and guide the development of appropriate service plans tailored to each individual youth.
- To engage and guide families through the various phases of prevention services. In other words, for some providers there is a notable gap between the information the YSET yields and its application due to numerous factors providers encounter in their day-to-day work. The changeover from the "thermometer" (YSET) to the "medicine" (family-centered programming) remains a challenge for prevention providers.

High-client caseloads and the lack of time available to build and establish rapport with clients remained a barrier in their ability to create and implement tailored interventions. For example, one prevention-provider group developed a YSET toolkit to help their case managers translate risk factors into tailored interventions.

Stakeholders stressed the importance of having more regular engagement (i.e., more time) with youth and their families to allow for the following:

- Build rapport and trust.
- Share and explain YSET results using simple, empathic, and strengths-based communication. This would not only improve youth and family buy-in for services, but also lead to better outcomes. Stakeholders shared that they sometimes struggle to connect with parents who tend to focus on their child's behaviors and not "abstract risk factors." Focusing solely on deficits to the exclusion of assets or protective factors deepens the disconnect between the client and program staff.

- Hold space for the youth and the family to process the YSET information and ask questions.
- Collaborate with schools and other community organizations to offer comprehensive "wrap around" support for the youth and their families. This would ease parental concerns and involve them in the assessment process, ensuring prevention services are perceived as supportive rather than accusatory.

"The YSET is used…to figure out the services that we're going to provide. The dosage that we're going to provide to the client.... It is an important tool for us to use identify where the best we can provide services, not just the youth, but how we can also help the family be involved in the youth life. Making sure that the youth will obtain the tools and the skills necessary to avoid negative peer influence in the community while they're with us during the period of six months to a year. …It also is a tool that when we do the first intake, is important for us to make sure that we build that good rapport with the student. The trust with the person who's doing it, so that youth is… [answering] very truthfully about those questions."

—Prevention Agency Executive

"Once we get [the YSET results], we contact the family, make our first appointment. …[We] then know this is what we're gonna be doing, the minimum requirements. [Though] in most cases, we do go above and beyond our minimum, because let's say we're in a school, and [the parents are] there, we're gonna see them, we're gonna talk to them, get all our documentation signed, and if we can, start that genogram. I've been lucky to be able to do the whole genogram…in my first two visits, and basically start building that trust and rapport with the youth and the family."

—Prevention Provider

These recommendations align with the broader literature, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses on family-based interventions (Leidy et al., 2010; Anderson et al., 2021). Most contemporary programs focus on identifying and building family strengths to address youth misbehavior, developing coping strategies, providing skill-building for both parents and children, setting goals to improve family dynamics, and motivating families to reframe problems with positivity (Development Services Group, 2014).

2.3.C GRYD YSET DATA COMPARED TO AN INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLE

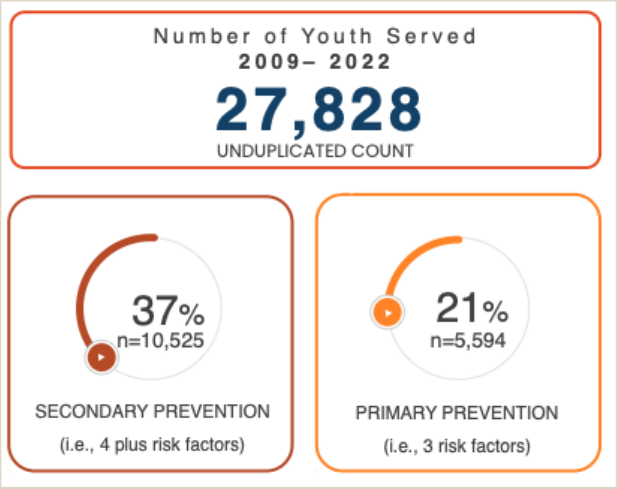
Finding

The YSET may be over-diagnosing (i.e., risk for gang involvement) and over-treating (i.e., referred to primary and secondary prevention services) youth. Potentially at play is inherent measurement bias, contributing to youth incorrectly being classified into a higher risk level based on their race/ethnicity, gender, age, or other characteristics. In addition, the YSET may conflate risk with ongoing biases in the juvenile justice system (Cancio et al., 2019). Youths who live in GRYD zones are more likely to come into contact with the justice system than those outside of GRYD zones, and behaviors classified as risks may instead be indicative of the justice system's biased response to youth of color due to patterns of selective law enforcement, racial profiling, etc.

Of youth served from 2009 through 2022 (N= 27,828), more than one in three (37%; n=10,525) scored at the highest-risk level for gang involvement (i.e., secondary prevention) (Figure 2.3).

In contrast to youth in the *Proponte Más* program, set in one of the most violent municipalities in Honduras, fewer than one in four (21%; n=944 of 4,495) scored at the highest-risk level for gang involvement (i.e., secondary prevention) (Katz et al., 2019). This rate for secondary prevention is identical to the rate of primary prevention in Los Angeles (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3. Number and percentage of youth referred to secondary and primary prevention (2009-2022). *Note: Only youth participants are counted; the impact doubles (at the very least) when accounting for family members engaged by GRYD Prevention.*

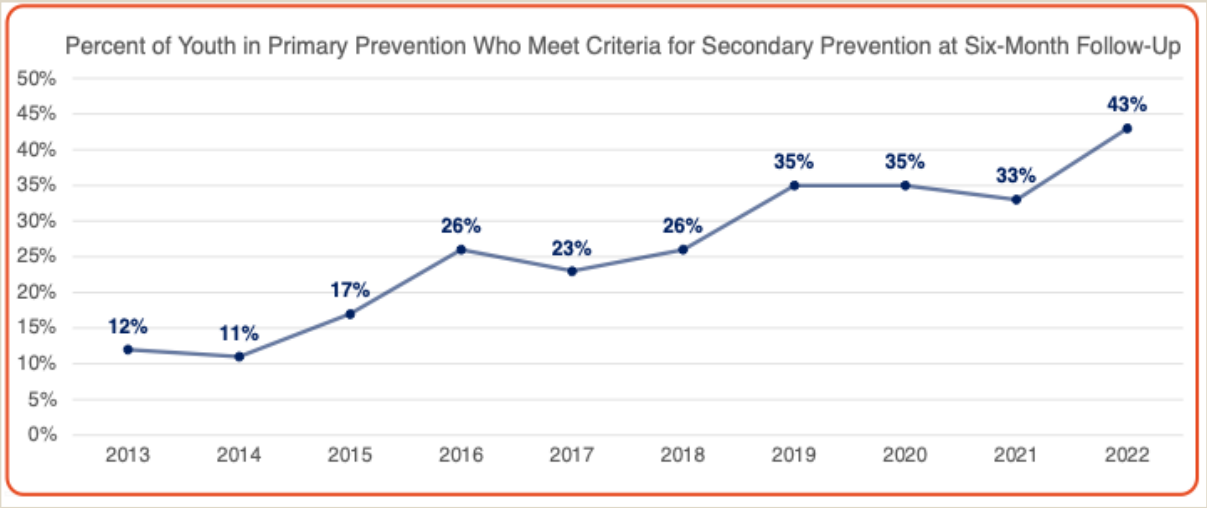


Retest Reliability for Youth in Primary Prevention at six-Month Follow-Up.

As described in Table 2.1, case managers conduct a YSET retest assessment at six-months to evaluate youth progress and determine if additional services are needed. When primary prevention services began across 2013-2014, about 10% of youth were referred to secondary prevention at six-month follow-up. By 2022, this figure had risen to nearly 50%. Essentially,

from 2013 to 2022, the number of youths in primary prevention (i.e., three risk factors) who went on to meet the criteria for secondary prevention (i.e., four or more risk factors) at the six-month follow up steadily increased. (See Figure 2.4) By 2022, the percentage of youth in primary prevention who met criteria for secondary prevention had increased by almost four times since 2013 (a 258% percent increase).

Figure 2.4. Percentage of Youth in Primary Prevention Who Meet Criteria for Secondary Prevention (2013-2022).



It is important not to overinterpret this data as a sign that some youths are not improving, or are getting worse (i.e., more likely to join a gang) after six months. Other factors could be at play, including the YSET's overall reliability and validity.

- Youth may have underreported risky behaviors at the pre-test, which could lead to inaccurate results and referrals into the primary vs. secondary prevention. Once rapport and trust are established, however, youth may share more valid responses at the post-test.
- There may be a lack of consistency in the administration of the YSET (i.e., variations related to how, when, and in what manner it is administered. Such inconsistencies could influence and bias outcomes at post-test).
- Some case managers may, intentionally or unintentionally, influence answers at the post-test. Youth might also attempt to please the case manager or share more negative information about themselves to extend services.

"I just feel like a lot of the clients…already … show signs that they…need to be in this program. They do not need to have four risk factors. It should just be an automatic. …Give some more leeway with the YSET. …I see the questions on the interview, some of them being very similar to ones prior. And I can see in conversation the youth gets a little confused sometimes. And then they're kind of like, hey, can you change my answer for the other one too?"

—Prevention Provider

Finally, scoring by the external evaluation partner involves a judgment about youth responses. Differences in training, experience, and frame of reference among scorers could produce different youth test scores.

2.3.D OUTCOMES TRAJECTORY BY REFERRAL SOURCE

An emerging issue discussed by 11 stakeholders (n=4 GRYD staff, n=2 LAPD, n=6 prevention providers/executives), was the recent LAPD referrals of youth to GRYD. Prevention and GRYD staff discussed what was, in their view, an overwhelming quantity of poor-quality referrals by LAPD that included duplicates and non-local referrals. Having designated GRYD liaisons at each LAPD division to help improve the referral process is one way to improve the accuracy and tracking of referrals.

> "I would say for the referral process, it's a lot easier now that it's an online… It's readily available, anybody can do it, and we get the statistics every month that the GRYD office compiles. Over 90% of the referrals…are from LAPD."
>
> —LAPD

> "There's been a push by our department to increase referrals by 3% citywide. It's one of the strategic goals from Chief Moore to increase referrals … [But] when we get the numbers, they don't exactly add up … [GRYD] throws some numbers off and then our guys, our captains, are getting asked in CompStat when they go every month, 'how many referrals did you guys make,' and it's something that they discuss …and we have no control over it. That would be an improvement that maybe we could suggest that would help our department out."
>
> —LAPD

> "We do get a lot of [LAPD referrals] in my zones, but a lot of them are youth that don't qualify, don't live in the area, duplicates. They're not good referrals. So, I feel like sometimes LAPD just likes to refer just so that they can see the large number that they're referring. But how many of those referrals have actually become clients? And I know I feel like that it's something that can really be improved as well, because I know it also overwhelms our agencies. Because [the prevention providers] have to make contact [with the referred youth], and they have to [enter] the data for all of those clients or potential clients… I try to go around how I can support them, but it's just very difficult if all these referrals are coming in."
>
> —GRYD RPC

> "What hasn't been working is the referrals that LAPD sets.. I'm going to give you an example, yesterday they refer a young lady twice. Twice. She's not from my GRYD zone, so I have to send it over to the person [where they're from]. A lot of the referrals they send, it's they're all over the place. They could be Lancaster, Norwalk, San Diego. I had one from Vegas. [LAPD's] not really looking."
>
> —Prevention Provider

Formal System Referrals Linked to Worse Outcomes

To further investigate whether youth outcomes varied based on referral source, we ran a series of logistic regression models to examine whether referral sources predicted the likelihood that a youth in secondary prevention would do the following:

- Outcome 1: Continue to exhibit four or more risk factors after six months.
- Outcome 2: Continue to exhibit four or more risk factors after a year.
- Outcome 3: Complete the program.

We collapsed the secondary prevention referral source data from ETO into a variable with four groups, including:

- Referred by formal systems (LAPD, Department of Probation, and DCFS) and potentially perceived as mandated by punitive, untrusted, and/or feared sources.
- Referred by a parent, guardian, or teacher and potentially perceived as mandated by trusted but authoritative sources.
- Referred by GRYD's community outreach (e.g., SNL) and potentially perceived as mandated by a trusted source.
- Self-referred (e.g., youth participant approaches an agency directly or indirectly and says they want to be part of the program).

We used the new referral variable to predict our three outcomes.

Finding

In all models, youth referred by formal systems showed significantly worse outcomes than youth referred by a parent, guardian, teacher, GRYD community outreach efforts, or those who referred themselves. (See Table 2.6). The analyses yielded statistically significant findings. Youth referred by LAPD, County Probation, and DCFS were more likely to exhibit four or more risk factors after six months ($p<0.001$) and one year ($p<0.001$) of GRYD prevention services, and they were less likely to complete services ($p=0.01$).

Table 2.6: Differences in Outcomes of Youth Referred to GRYD Secondary Prevention Services by Referral Source. (Bolded percentages indicate outcomes that are significantly different from other referral sources, based on the results of a logistic regression analysis.)

Referral Source	Youth exhibited four or more risk factors after:		Youth formally completed program
	6 months	1 year	
Formal system	***64%	***25%	*43%
Parent/guardian or school/teacher	48%	24%	56%
GRYD community outreach	47%	16%	***65%
Self-referred	56%	23%	54%

*Note: *p<0.05, ***p<0.001*

Conversely, youth referred to GRYD secondary prevention through agency-based community outreach events were far more likely to complete the program (p<0.001). Agencies establishing a relationship with youth before they enter the program could deepen their engagement and commitment to the intervention and their ultimate outcomes. Youth who are compelled to participate, particularly those referred by formal systems such as LAPD are less likely to complete the program. These factors should be considered by both GRYD agencies and city departments prior to implementing referral strategies.

2.3.E PREVENTION DOSAGE

Understanding and accurately measuring dosage are important steps that help a program deliver the optimal amount of intervention and provide evidence that it has had a positive impact on youth. Evaluations of GRYD prevention program dosage have been limited across all dimensions of dosage discussed in the research literature. Kraus et al., 2017, reported on the number of activities and meetings provided to youth between 2011 and 2016 (see Table 2.4), noting that youth who spend more time in the program (i.e., participate in more activities) are more likely to successfully complete the program. The lack of a systematic dosage study is a missed evaluation opportunity. Dosage data are important for the replication of a prevention/intervention model and its ability to scale-up and scale-out.

Having access only to raw data from the city's ETO limited the analysis Imoyase could conduct on dosage. ETO data included activity and meeting counts (by phase and overall) and time in program (months) for each individual youth. As a result, we were only able to conduct a high-

Dimensions of Dosage At-A-Glance

Dosage.
Intended: How much and how often an intervention is intended to be offered.
Offered. How much of the required intervention a provider delivers.
Received. How much of the intervention participants get.

Frequency. How often the intervention is delivered (e.g., one one-hour mtg vs. two thirty-minute visits).

Duration. The length the program overall and for each phase.

Activity Duration. The length of each activity.

Threshold. The specific dosage level at which an intervention affects outcomes (e.g., how much time in the program is sufficient to change youth outcomes)

Fidelity vs Flexibility. This refers to the extent to which a program is implanted as intended (or adapted to enhance an intervention) to achieve the desired outcomes

See Table 2.1 and 2.2 for more information about GRYD's prevention dosage intended and duration.

Definitions informed by Wasik et al. (2013), Bailey et al. (2016), and the Psychology Applied Research Center at Loyola Marymount University (2022).

level examination of the extent to which youth in primary and secondary prevention received the intended dosage. We were not able to examine the extent to which providers delivered the intended dosage, nor other domains, such as frequency, activity duration, threshold, and implementation fidelity vs flexibility.

To calculate high level examination of dosage for prevention, we excluded data from 2009-2010 because it predated the comprehensive strategy which outlined the dosage requirements (i.e., how many and how often activities need to be offered). Using data from 2011 through 2022, we divided the total number of activities, family, and individual meetings by the number of months each youth participant spent in the program. For activities, we multiplied by six to estimate the number of activities per cycle. For primary prevention, we included only youth who received programming for six months or less to exclude any who transitioned to secondary prevention in the second cycle.

Finding
From 2011 to 2023, youth in both primary and secondary prevention programs did not receive all aspects of the intended program dosage. (See Table 2.7.)

- There was stronger engagement in youth development activities than in individual or family meetings. Youth in both programs received fewer individual or family meetings than the model intended but received more youth development activities than called for in the model.
- For youth in primary prevention, the median number of family meetings was 0.2, with the interquartile range (IQR) between 0 and 0.5 years, while the median number of individual meetings was 0.6 (IQR = 0 to 1).
- For youth in secondary prevention, the median number of family meetings was 1.1 (IQR = 0.6 to 1.5), and the median number of individual meetings was 0.7 (IQR = 0.4 to 0.8).
- The median number of youth development activities was 14 (IQR = 9 to 18) for primary prevention and 23 (IQR = 15 to 29) for secondary prevention.

This imbalance may signal that a more consistent approach to meeting dosage is needed so that services are better aligned with the program's intended model. Overall, a more in-depth and systematic examination of program dosage is needed before any firm conclusions or recommendations can be made, especially since there may be valid reasons (i.e., challenges and barriers) as to why the level of engagement diverges from what is indicated by the model.

Table 2.7: Comparison of prevention model recommended vs. actual number of meetings and activities for youth in primary and secondary prevention programs from 2011 to 2023.

	Family Meetings per Month		Individual Meetings per Month		Activities per 6-Month Cycle	
	Model	Median	Model	Median	Model	Median
Primary	1	0.2	1	0.6	N/A	14
Secondary	2	1.1	2	0.7	10	23

Note: Median and IQR were used because the data had clear outliers that skewed the findings, making the means disproportionately larger. These outliers may stem from data entry errors or other data quality issues that can occur with raw data from an uncleaned dataset.

Finding

Interviews with Prevention Providers (n=8) and Prevention Agency Executives (n=4)) further illustrated the need for a formal examination of dosage for GRYD's prevention program. Their comments shed light on what type of dosage needs to be measured and explored in greater depth (i.e., program duration, activity duration, dosage offered, frequency, threshold, and fidelity vs. flexibility).

Duration and Activity Duration

Some providers want to extend the program's duration beyond six months so that there is more time to implement each of the seven phases beyond the current one-month timeframe per phase. They stressed that this is especially important in the beginning phases (e.g., Phase 1 - Referral and Collaboration, and Phase 2 - Building Agreements) to allow more time to build rapport and trust with youth. Some providers also recommended that youth readiness and progress (i.e., outcome) is a more critical metric for a successful transition between phases rather than the current fixed timeframe of one month per phase, regardless of youth readiness and progress. A systematic examination of program duration is needed to determine the extent to which overall program length (i.e., currently six months) and the current one-month length per phase should be extended. In addition, development and evaluation of a brief and user-friendly measure of youth progress that providers can use to gauge youth-participant readiness to transition to another phase may be warranted.

Dosage Offered

Some providers shared that the dosage offered by any one provider agency needs to be re-examined, especially for youth who have experienced complex trauma that may require a greater intervention dosage. An in-depth and systematic examination of the dosage offered by providers to youth with specific needs, such as support related to trauma, would need to be conducted to determine how much intervention should be provided to them.

Frequency

Some providers want to maintain the current frequency of individual and family meetings, while solely extending the duration of program phases. Other providers want the number of individual meetings to be increased to allow more time for consistent check-ins to gain a deeper understanding of their clients and to provide more targeted (i.e., tailored) support. An in-depth and systematic examination of frequency is needed given that there are mixed opinions from providers about whether to change the number of individual meetings.

Threshold

Some providers shared that the current amount of time youth spent in the program is insufficient to change outcomes for youth with high needs. An in-depth and systematic examination of threshold is needed to identify the minimum intervention dose necessary to produce positive outcomes. Considerations of both statistical significance (i.e., measuring the likelihood that results are due to a real effect) and clinical significance (i.e., the extent of change and whether the change made a real difference in the lives of youth) is needed. This

would improve understanding of which program activities have the biggest effects on outcomes (i.e., individual meetings, family meetings, youth-development activities).

Implementation Fidelity vs Flexibility

Some providers feel that continuity and consistency (i.e., fidelity to the intervention) is crucial for fostering outcomes, such as improvements in youth communication, trust, sense of community, and relational ties with peers. Other providers stressed the importance of flexibility in the intervention. In other words, tailoring each intervention to the cultural and contextual reality of each individual youth and their family, who often face complex challenges, is key. Providers want increased flexibility in these areas to better foster trust and connection with youth and their families, and to allow providers to offer more comprehensive support. An in-depth and systematic examination of fidelity vs. flexibility is needed to determine the minimum dose of intervention necessary to produce positive outcomes.

Imoyase's approach to program fidelity encompasses two dimensions:

- **Mission Fidelity**: The alignment of prevention processes with the mission and goals of prevention in relation to the communities served.
- **Implementation Fidelity**: Changes to the structure or internal workings of the prevention model's phases and related activities to better meet the needs of participants.

Our analysis of both mission and implementation fidelity in another prevention program revealed that a provider's ability to demonstrate flexibility in how they delivered their interventions ultimately enabled them to maintain fidelity and demonstrate responsiveness to their larger intervention mission and goals (Psychology Applied Research Center at Loyola Marymount University, 2022). What was also critical was careful attention to, and delivery of, culturally designed and nuanced interventions that recognized the healing capacity of cultural beliefs, norms, values, and practices.

> "Six months is just not enough; they go by super-fast. And then a year, you're like okay, you're barely getting there. Cause sometimes these kids, they're teenagers, so it takes a while to build that rapport with them. There's some kids that I've had for like 5, 6 months, or a year and a half, and I'm barely…figuring [them] out… They [may] have mental health issues."
>
> —Prevention Provider

> "The minimum [dosage] is two family meetings, one individual, and I believe it's one or two groups a month. For me, it really hasn't been like that because, if I'm at, let's say, one of my schools…and I see my youth who I already saw once this month. I'm not going to not go check in with them… Of course, I'm going to go talk to them and see how they're at... And then there's those kids that it's more than once a week because they're fighting, because they're ditching, because whatever the case might be. But the minimum is two parents, one individual, and one to two groups per month, as long as they do, I think it's 10 groups within six months."
>
> —Prevention Provider

2.3.F AGE LIMITS AND AGE APPROPRIATENESS

Prevention Providers (n=11) and Prevention Agency Executives (n=6) shared mostly negative perceptions (n=14, 82%) of the current age limits and the age, or developmental appropriateness of the intervention activities.

Providers suggested the following:

- Consider lowering the program's minimum age from 10 years old to 8 or 9 years old and raising the maximum age from 15 years old to 17 or 18 years old. Providers noted that younger children are exposed to risks, such as vaping and gang culture, at an earlier age than the current minimum, while older teens need continued support and guidance through high school graduation and the transition to the next phase of their life (e.g., college or employment).
- Intervention activities (i.e., methods and tools) need to be developmentally tailored for younger children. Activities for older youth might focus on strengthening their self-esteem and understanding/resisting peer pressure, as well as providing mental health support above and beyond what is already provided.
- Increase incentives for youth participation as a strategy to enhance engagement and improve overall outcomes.

Some providers highlighted the need for additional time to connect with older youth, suggesting that a broader age range would also require extending the program beyond one year to better meet their needs.

> "I think we should raise our age… I'm writing a letter right now,… an inmate support letter. This young man,…I knew him before he was almost born. He's been gone for 32 years. Another young lady's been gone for 32 years, but I want them to come [into the program]… So I think, okay, put that down. I think 30, I think we should raise it… [older than] 25, you know the brain is not fully developed at 25."
>
> —Prevention Provider

> "After the 15 years… there isn't anything. And they, I feel like [16-18 year olds] are the ones that need it. It's like, there has to be a follow-up program for these GRYD prevention students… I feel like [the age range] should go all the way up…[until] 18 years old."
>
> —Prevention Provider

> "I think we should raise our age… I'm writing a letter right now,… an inmate support letter. This young man,…I knew him before he was almost born. He's been gone for 32 years. Another young lady's been gone for 32 years, but I want them to come [into the program]… So I think, okay, put that down. I think 30, I think we should raise it… [older than] 25, you know the brain is not fully developed at 25."
>
> —Prevention Provider

> "I would expand it in both directions. Lower the age minimum and increase the age for additional services. And I say that because there are some elements now that weren't considered ten years ago, like the population with the internet, young people have access to what they call cyber banging. And so the younger generation is being exposed to more of that or being indoctrinated to gang culture, you know, outside of familial connections outside of community, all they have to do go to TikTok or find some page on YouTube."
>
> —Prevention Agency Executive

2.3.G PROVIDER TRAINING

Prevention Providers (n=13) and Prevention Executives (n=7) shared diverse opinions about provider training ranging from negative (n=6) to positive (n=7) perceptions. Seven respondents shared neutral perceptions. Many providers encouraged having intentional and ongoing training to enhance the support provided to youth and their families.

> "I would like to get certified, or experienced, or trained [to work with] anger management youth. I think a lot of our kids have a lot of anger and have anger issues…and that's very well displayed with their peers, with their teachers, with authority, [and] with their parents… [Also] more culture sensitivity training. A lot of our youth are coming out as being, you know, gay, lesbians, bisexual. There's a lot of that in our youth, and for us—for me to be more aware and more knowledgeable about how to identify, …how to sensitively talk about it and talk to parents about it, that's been one of my biggest challenges, you know, especially…within my Latino community."
>
> —Prevention Provider

> "I think [it would be good for GRYD to] train staff [to be] trauma informed… In other models, you don't necessarily start seeing clients till you've gone through a certain number of trainings and workshops. I think some trainings and workshops that would focus on kind of really what is happening on the streets in your community, what are the trends… Trauma-informed care [is] about protective factors, about engagement, how you engage family members, how you engage parents. I think it would be great if we had a great team that consisted of a mental health professional and a parent educator."
>
> —Prevention Agency Executive

Providers suggested there be more substantive training in several key areas, including:

- Specialized training in mental health, substance abuse, anger management, and strengths-based approaches to providing services.
- Scenario-based training to foster effective communication and relationship-building with participants and their families.
- Continuous training in cultural responsiveness and trauma-informed care. For example, new methods and tools to address sensitive topics like LGBTQ+ issues, particularly when engaging with parents.
- Training providers to onboard new staff, including a case management toolkit to assist with managing workloads and engaging with youth and their families.

3. SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS (SNL)

SNL AT THE START

"

...SNL was created to prevent violent crime in the summer, and to provide a safe space for community members to come and engage in activities, meet their neighbors, and feel safe. When SNL first began there was tension between law enforcement because officers felt like it was going to be a pass for gang members to drink and smoke in the park, and it was hands off. Cops felt like they were losing power. They didn't understand the culture shift that was taking place, it was very forward thinking, and I don't think we had caught up to that.

LAPD

SNL NOW

"

Overall, Summer Night Lights has been a tremendous asset to the community because the community at large has responded, and it's been successful. The summer is always the time of the year where things get a little crazy, and I believe that's had something to do with quelling those storms.

GRYD Intervention & Prevention Provider

3.1 ORIGIN AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF SNL

Seasonal trends in gun violence across major U.S. cities, including Los Angeles (LA), show increased rates of shootings and homicides during the summer months (McDowall & Curtis, 2015; Ruderman & Cohn, 2021; Brantingham et al., 2022). In response, the City of LA Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) launched the Summer Night Lights (SNL) program in 2008. The program typically operates from July 4 through Labor Day weekend to mitigate this surge in violence.

3.1.A THE SUMMER OF SUCCESS (SOS)

In the summers of 2003 and 2004, Karen Bass, then executive director of the Community Coalition, partnered with 10th District Councilmember Martin Ludlow to launch the Summer of Success (SOS) violence-prevention and intervention pilot program at Jim Gilliam Park in Baldwin Village. The area around the park accounted for nearly 50% of the violence in the 10th council district, with incidents peaking between July and Labor Day weekend, and from Wednesday

through Sunday, 7 p.m. to 2 a.m. Bass and Ludlow collaborated with the City of LA Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP), City of LA Department of Public Works, LA Urban League, LA Police Department (LAPD), LA Conservation Corps, Lula Washington Dance Company, KKBT Radio (the Beat), and grassroots gang intervention groups, including Amer-I-Can, Unity One, Sidewalk University, and Big Homies United. Funding for the SOS pilot came from The California Endowment, who, under the leadership of Dr. Robert Ross, CEO and President, viewed SOS as an innovative public health approach to violence prevention.

SOS created job opportunities for young people, often offering their first work experience through "youth squad" roles. These positions helped participants develop essential workplace skills while serving their community. The original SOS squad, made up of young people from Jim Gilliam Park and the Baldwin Village neighborhood, was well-known by local residents, park staff, gang members, community elders, and even LAPD officers. Some squad members were at various levels of risk for violence. Some had gang affiliations and others did not, but most shared a common identity by attending Dorsey High School and growing up in the same neighborhood. This deep community connection gave them credibility and local support, as they were seen as children of the village with a vested interest in its success.

During SOS's two years of operation, there were zero homicides, 20% less aggravated assaults, and an overall 18% drop in violent crime in the LAPD reporting district around Jim Gilliam Park (Advancement Project, 2007). Community members, including those actively involved in gangs, had de facto ownership of the event, and played key roles in its planning and execution. They were empowered by their involvement and successfully ensured the safety of everyone attending, demonstrating the effectiveness of community-driven solutions to violence prevention. The SOS pilot subsequently received strong support from local press and law enforcement, with both LAPD Chief William Bratton and LA County Sheriff Lee Baca calling for its expansion (Advancement Project, 2007).

1.B SNL'S LAUNCH (2008)

In July 2008, the GRYD program adopted the Summer of Success (SOS) pilot as the model for Summer Night Lights (SNL). At the core of SNL is its 2008 theory of change (ToC), which embraces a community-centered approach that engages a full spectrum of community members, including those who are vulnerable to violence or were previously involved in gang activity. The program empowers individuals with lived experience as gang/group members and places them at the forefront of promoting peace during SNL events to foster community cohesion and increase public safety.

Grounded by its ToC, and in partnership with the LAPD, the City of LA RAP, the City of LA Office of Cultural Affairs, the LA Unified School District (LAUSD), and the LA Conservation Corps, GRYD launched SNL in eight parks/recreation centers (see Table 3.1) across the city, one per GRYD zone (i.e., neighborhoods with crime rates 40% higher than the rest of the city, and where 30% of families lived below the poverty line).

Table 3.1 Current List of Sites Hosting Summer Night Lights

Name of SNL Site	Neighborhood (Geographic Location)	Year Established as an SNL Site
Cypress Park and Recreational Ctr	Cypress Park (Northeast LA)	2008
Glassell Park and Recreational Ctr	Glassell Park (Northeast LA)	2008
Hubert Humphrey Recreational Ctr	Pacoima (San Fernando Valley)	2008
Jim Gillam Recreational Center	Baldwin Village (South LA)	2008
Mount Carmel Recreational Center	Florence-Graham (South LA)	2008
Ramon Garcia Recreational Center	Boyle Heights (East LA)	2008
Ross Snyder Recreational Center	Central-Alameda (South LA)	2008
Denker Recreational Center	Exposition Park/Leimert Park (South LA)	2009
Harvard Park Recreational Center	Harvard Park (South LA)	2009
Imperial Courts Recreational Center	Watts (South LA)	2009
Jordan Downs Recreational Center	Watts (South LA)	2009
Lemon Grove Recreational Center	East Hollywood (Metro LA)	2009
Nickerson Gardens Recreational Ctr	Watts (South LA)	2009
Sepulveda Recreational Center	Panorama City (San Fernando Valley)	2009
Costello Recreational Center	Boyle Heights (East LA)	2010
Delano Recreational Center	Van Nuys (San Fernando Valley)	2010
Highland Park Recreational Center	Highland Park (Northeast LA)	2010
MLK Therapeutic Recreational Ctr	Exposition Park (South LA)	2010
Normandale Recreational Center	Harbor Gateway (Harbor)	2010
Slauson Recreational Center	South Central (South LA)	2010
South Park Recreational Center	South Park (South LA)	2010
Valley Plaza Recreational Center	North Hollywood (San Fernando Valley)	2010
Van Ness Recreational Center	Hyde Park (South LA)	2010
Algin Sutton Recreational Center	Vermont Vista (South LA)	2011
El Sereno Recreational Center	El Sereno (Northeast LA)	2011
Green Meadows Recreational Center	Green Meadows (South LA)	2011
Lafayette Recreational Center	Westlake (Metro LA)	2011
Lanark Recreational Center	Canoga Park (San Fernando Valley)	2011
Montecito Recreational Center	Montecito Heights (Northeast LA)	2011
Sun Valley Recreational Center	Sun Valley (San Fernando Valley)	2011
Toberman Recreational Center	Pico-Union (Metro LA)	2011
Wilmington Recreational Center	Wilmington (Harbor)	2011
Hazard Recreational Center	Boyle Heights (East LA)	2018
109th St Recreational Center	Watts (South LA)	2022
David M Gonzales Recreational Ctr	Pacoima (San Fernando Valley)	2022
Evergreen Recreational Center	Boyle Heights (East LA)	2022
Gilbert Lindsay Recreational Center	South Central (South LA)	2022
Harbor City Recreational Center	Harbor City (Harbor)	2022
Normandie Recreational Center	Westlake (Metro LA)	2022
Rancho Cienega Recreational Center	Crenshaw (South LA)	2022
Rosecrans Recreational Center	Gardena	2022
St. Andrews Recreational Center	Gramercy Park (South LA)	2022
Trinity Recreational Center	South Central (South LA)	2022
Wabash Recreational Center	Boyle Heights (East LA)	2022

Note: Ramona Gardens Rec Center, one of the original eight sites in 2008, is no longer part of SNL.

SNL programming engaged its host communities in activities such as basketball, soccer, dominoes, storytelling, music, and mentoring. Activities took place between 7:00 PM and midnight, when, historically, violence was most likely to occur. At the time, the launch of SNL was driven as much by mounting political pressure on the GRYD office to demonstrate programmatic action as it was by the urgent need to address counter crime and violence.

In 2008, when SOS scaled up to eight sites and was rebranded as Summer Night Lights (SNL), the youth hiring process became more formal and competitive, leading to debates over whether SNL was designed to hire "good kids" or "bad kids." Unlike in Baldwin Village, where there was broad support for hiring youth at various levels of risk, the scaled-up version of the program struggled to replicate that dynamic. Sometimes, SNL hired youth from surrounding areas, who were unfamiliar with local gang dynamics and the community's nuances, which made it harder to foster the optimal levels of trust and connection within the program.

Historically, SNL operated under a vertical governance structure that included a Director of SNL, who reported directly to the Deputy Mayor of GRYD. The SNL Director had a year-round staff, budget control (including the philanthropic budget, i.e., the GRYD Foundation), and oversaw youth squad hiring. This centralized model provided a clear point of contact for partners, ensuring effective coordination, accountability, and alignment with the program's ToC. Over time, however, SNL transitioned to a horizontal governance structure with LAPD, Community Intervention Workers (CIWs), RAP, and GRYD all operating on an equal footing in decision-making and implementation.

3.2 PRIOR EVALUATIONS OF SNL

In its first year (2008), SNL attracted more than 50,000 visits from community members (Office of the Mayor, 2009), a significant success. The neighborhoods surrounding parks hosting SNL saw a 17% drop in violent gang crime compared to 2007. According to LAPD crime data, there was also a 23% reduction in aggravated assaults, a 45% reduction in victims shot, and an 86% decrease in homicides.

That success led SNL to expand from eight sites in 2008 to 16 sites in 2009, and 24 sites by 2010 (see Table 3.1). In 2010, a 39% reduction in serious gang crime was observed across the neighborhoods surrounding the 24 sites (Gold, 2010). By 2011, the program operated in 32 sites, saw a 35% reduction in gang-related Part 1 crimes, a 35% decrease in gang-related homicides, a 43% reduction in aggravated assaults, a 55% drop in shots fired, and a 49% decrease in shooting victims, per LAPD crime data. By 2024, SNL has expanded to 44 sites.

Since 2010, GRYD research partners, The Mayor's Office in coordination with LAPD, California State University LA (CSULA), and Harder+Company Community Research (H+C), have routinely collected SNL process data and process-outcome data that included indicators such as:

- the number of activities (collected by The Mayor's Office and H+C),

- youth squad engagement and satisfaction (collected by CSULA and H+C),
- the number of SNL activity participants (collected by collected by The Mayor's Office and H+C),
- crime reduction (collected by The Mayor's Office in coordination with LAPD),
- perceptions of safety at events (collected by CSULA and H+C),
- perceptions of interactions with stakeholders such as LAPD and RAP (collected by CSULA and H+C).

3.3 AN EXAMINATION OF SNL

Imoyase conducted a mixed-methods analysis of process and outcome data from its launch until the present time. Some data points are longitudinal, and others reflect a recent point in time (See Table 3.2). As a result, the data used for this analysis limit a full longitudinal analysis.

- We were given limited access to SNL data routinely collected from prior evaluations led by H+C. Three datasets were shared for SNL 2023 only (Youth Squad Survey, SNL Site Log, SNL Community Survey).
    - One of the three datasets (i.e., SNL Community Survey) was used parsimoniously in this analysis due to the high bias in the data (i.e., 65% of the 921 surveys were collected from a single SNL site, while the remaining 43 sites averaged only 9 surveys each).
    - The Youth Squad Survey, used to calculate demographics, had a sample size of N=78.
- Full access to CSULA's dataset (i.e., GRYD Incident Response (IR) Victim Information Log) was obtained and covered the period from 2012 (when the data infrastructure for SNL was launched) through 2023.
- Full access to the City of LA Mayor's Office of Community Safety (MOCS) RAP Staff Debrief Survey 2023 was obtained (n=57).
- Access to LAPD's crime statistics for each of the 44 SNL sites was obtained for 2023 from LA RAP.
- Primary data collected by Imoyase that included 95 stakeholder structured interviews was obtained. Of the 95 interviews, 57 (60%) shared detailed insights about SNL from its inception to the present day:
    - 26 Interviews with GRYD Intervention (11 CIWs, 6 Intervention Program Managers/Coordinators, 5 Intervention Agency Executives, 4 Case Managers)
    - 10 Interviews with LAPD Officers.
    - 9 Interviews with GRYD Staff (8 RPC & Program Manager (PMs) interviews, 1 focus group interview with the GRYD Community Engagement Team (CET).
    - 9 Interviews with GRYD Prevention (6 prevention providers, 3 prevention agency executives).
    - 2 Interviews with CSULA Evaluation Team members.
    - 1 Interview with a stakeholder from Urban Peace Institute.

Table 3.2. SNL Data by Source and Type

Data Collected by	Time Period	Data Source	Overview
H+C	2023 only	**Youth Squad Survey**	Outreach roles, skill development and demographics.
		SNL Site Log	Attendance, food and drink provisions, activity details (including GRYD partner involvement), participant demographics, and staff successes and challenges.
		SNL Community Survey	Attendee feedback on participation, inclusivity, safety perceptions, and demographics.
CSULA	2012-2023	**GRYD Incident Response (IR) Victim Information Log**	Victim demographics from incidents reported to GRYD. IR data were used in this section as a comparison to attendee and youth squad demographic data.
City of LA MOCS	2023	**RAP Staff SNL Debrief Survey**	N=57 RAP coordinators, directors, and district regional supervisors representing 41 SNL sites (93%) weighed in on SNL benefit, partner communication, challenges, programming quality, RAPs role in preventing gang violence, and recommendations.
LA RAP	2023	**LAPD Crime Statistics**	Rate of crime in the park, crime within 1,000 ft. of the park, and crime within 2 miles of park; number of reported shootings, encampments, and emergency calls for each SNL site.
Imoyase	Retrospective (2008-2023)	**Stakeholder Interviews**	Stakeholder comments on SNL's role within the broader GRYD ecosystem, demographics, youth squad, hours of operation, and resource allocation.

3.3.A SNL THEORY OF CHANGE (ToC)

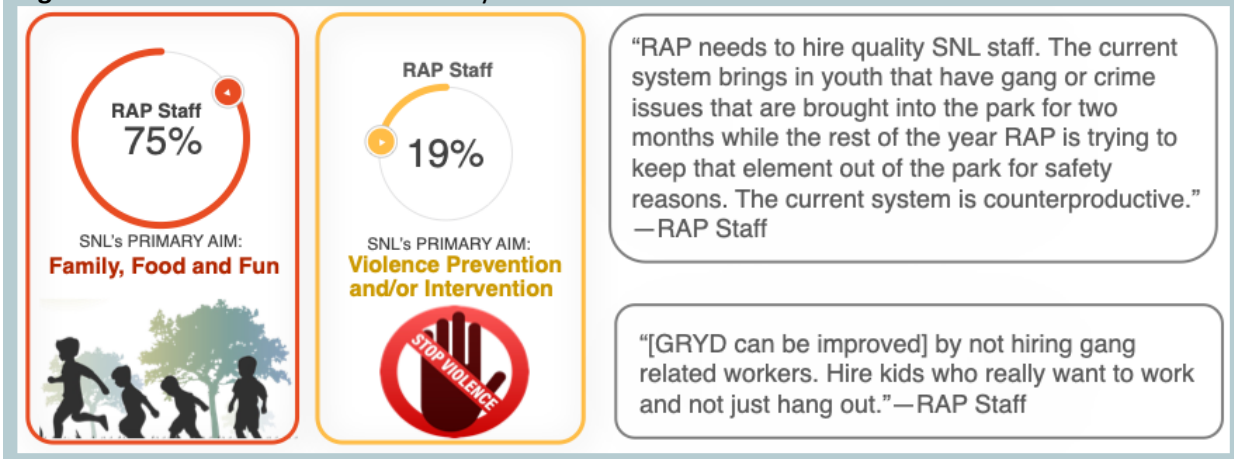
Finding:
While SNL's ToC embraces a community-centered approach in which all manner of community members are engaged, including those vulnerable to violence or previously involved in gang activity, the evaluation findings indicate that in 2023 one key SNL stakeholder, RAP, was not fully aware of, and/or didn't actively support, the program's overall purpose and goal of engaging those most vulnerable to violence, which most likely impacted their daily planning, programming and decision-making.

- Almost three quarters (74%)[1] of RAP staff members surveyed (n=42) identified "family, food, and fun" as the primary aim of SNL. Conversely, less than one fifth of RAP staff members (19%, n=11) identified "violence prevention and/or intervention" as the primary aim (Figure 3.1). This misalignment with the SNL ToC was particularly pronounced in the Metro region (East, Northeast, and Westlake), where only 9% of RAP staff members identified violence prevention as a key purpose of SNL.

[1] LA Rec and Parks staff surveyed could list more than one SNL aim. Therefore, summed percentages are over 100%.

- More than half of RAP staff members (n=32, 56%) identified SNL staffing as the biggest challenge to day-to-day operations. They shared negative attitudes about hiring youth and/or young adult community members who had previous or active gang involvement. Stereotypical associations about such young people (e.g., that they do not want to work) were also noted. Such stereotypes are not aligned with the SNL ToC, which aims to decrease stigma and experiences of discrimination for community members with histories of gang involvement. While SNL was intended to be an avenue toward social reintegration and adjustment for former gang members, it may have become yet another path toward marginalization.

Figure 3.1. RAP Staff SNL Debrief Survey Results 2023



GRYD stakeholders (n=16; 4 CIWs, 4 Intervention Program Managers/Coordinators, 2 Case Managers, 1 Intervention Agency Executive, 3 LAPD Officers, 2 GRYD RPCs) confirmed the absence of a shared understanding of SNL's purpose and goals as a violence prevention and community engagement initiative, especially related to its ability to reach people most connected to violence.

> "One significant change that I've seen [now] is that SNL [programming] is targeted and geared towards the younger population. When we started SNL, it targeted the active individuals [gang involved] that you did not want to be out there creating chaos. So, there was specific programming for them."
>
> —Intervention/Prevention Agency Executive Director

> "We need to focus on certain activities that will keep community more engaged in activities...It's about keeping them there and it's fine that the younger kids come out and they're able to enjoy the park and do some things, but we need to target the guys that [are gang involved]."
>
> —Case Manager

3.3.B EVALUATION OF SNL

LAPD (n=1), GRYD, RPC, and PM staff (n=2), and CSULA (n=2) shared mixed views (ranging from positive to negative) about the previous evaluation of SNL.

Finding:
The SNL cross-site evaluation of 44 sites/parks/recreation centers showed strengths and successes. Still, stakeholders reported that over time SNL became increasingly challenging to evaluate, especially as agreement related to the goals of the ToC diminished.

> "SNL has to decide what SNL is…then we could probably come up with an evaluation. But nobody really knows what it is, and I think it's gotten diluted. I think this…issue of going from, you know, 11 sites to 20 to 42... People need to decide what SNL is and what its purpose is, and once that is done, then SNL can be built and we can certainly figure out how it can be evaluated."
>
> —GRYD Researcher

Over the past 10 years, SNL collected data related to:

- nightly attendance, activities, food provided during SNL summer programming across all 44 sites,
- participant surveys from attendees and youth squad members.

SNL stakeholders shared several areas for improvement, including:

- Create a stronger alignment between the evaluation objectives and the SNL ToC. Evaluation objectives and overall design must follow a program's objectives and overall design. When SNL shifted away from engaging the entire community (including gang or group-involved individuals) and providing tailored, age-appropriate activities to a more amorphous community approach, so did the evaluation. For example:
    - Recent evaluations of SNL (Harder+Company, 2023; Ananth & Hernandez, 2016) focused on the extent to which SNL, 1) increased broader community engagement as measured through participation rates in SNL activities and community feedback surveys; and 2) fostered positive youth development (PYD) among SNL Youth Squad members, measured by skills acquisition and level of satisfaction.
    - The extent to which SNL reduces violent incidents by engaging the community with age-appropriate services has not been included in prior evaluations. Such engagement includes the roles/responsibilities of all GRYD partners in the safety process and depends on how each site designs and implements culturally responsive programming.
- Return to using SNL evaluation data for formative purposes (e.g., informing site selection, strengthening community engagement and collaboration).

3.3.C SNL ACTIVITY TYPE BY AGE

Finding:

The 2023 SNL Site Log recorded 6,447 activities (mean = 4 per night; range = 1 to 15). Activities were primarily comprised of arts and crafts, sports, games, and wellness programs. The activities in 2023 predominantly appealed to children and youth under 18 years old. See Table 3.3.

- Children ages 6 to 12 years old participated in 85% of the 6,447 SNL activities, followed by youth 13 to 17 years old, who participated in 70% of those activities. Transition aged youth (18 to 24 years old) participated in 41% of activities and adults 25 years and older participated in 29% of activities.
- Workshops that could appeal to an older demographic, such as cooking, dancing, fitness, and yoga, accounted for about one third of the SNL activities (n=473).

Table 3.3. Participation in SNL Activities by Age Group (N= 6,447 2023 SNL Activities)

Age Range	n	%
0-5 years	3927	61%
6-12 years	5505	85%
13-17 years	4486	70%
18-24 years	2639	41%
25+ years	1886	29%

These data demonstrate the weakened alignment between SNL activities and the ToC, which aims to involve a diversity of community members in age-appropriate activities for extended periods of time. For example, in 2008, SNL programming included wide-ranging activities that would appeal to participants across the age spectrum (i.e., children, youth, young adult, adults, older adults), such as basketball, soccer, dominoes, storytelling, cooking, music, dance, boxing, Xbox, face painting, and impromptu adult-youth mentoring, to name a few.

3.3.D LONGITDUINAL TRENDS IN SHOOTINGS & HOMICIDES

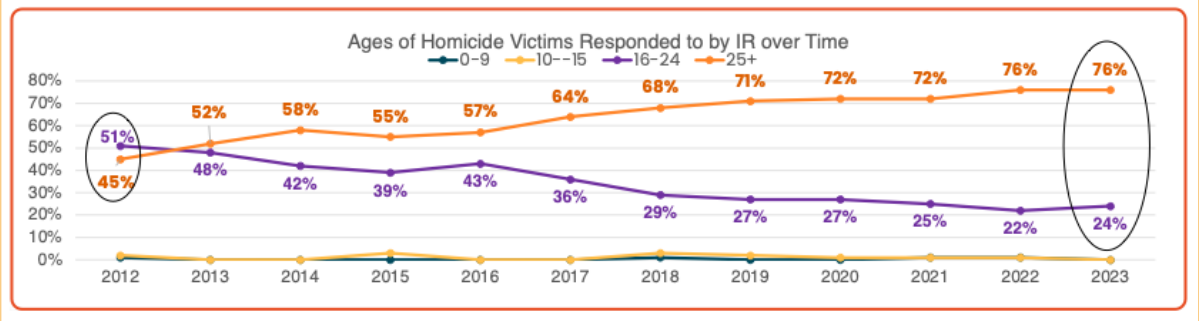
Finding:
From 2012 to 2023, the ages of victims of violence in GRYD Zones, measured as the annual number of shootings and homicides by age, increased dramatically for adults aged 25 and older and decreased sharply for youth aged 16 to 24 years old. See Figures 3.2 and 3.3.

Homicide Victims in GRYD Zones

- In 2012, the number of homicide victims aged 16 to 24 years (n=51) was 6 percentage points higher than for those aged 25 and older (n=45). By 2023 homicides for adults aged 25 and older (n=133) were 52 percentage points higher than youth aged 16 to 24 years (n=42).
- Homicides for youth aged 16 to 24 decreased slightly from 2012 (n=51) to 2023 (n=42), a 20% decrease.
- Conversely, homicides for adults aged 25 and older almost tripled from 2012 (n=45) to 2023 (n=133).

- Homicide rates for youth aged 10 to 15 years were consistently low (between 0-3%).

Figure 3.2: Homicide Trends in GRYD Zones (2012-2023).

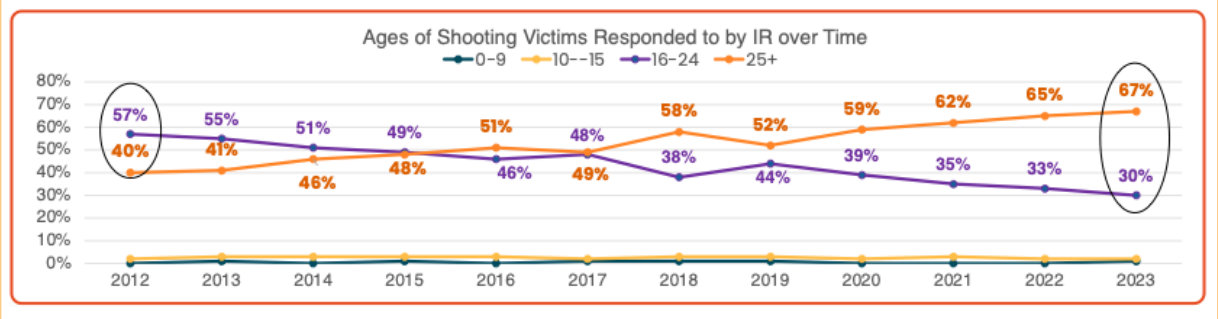


Shooting Victims in GRYD Zones

A similar trend occurred for shooting victims.

- In 2012, the number of shooting victims 16 to 24 years old (n=268) was 17% higher than for those aged 25 and older (n=188). By 2023 the number of shooting victims aged 25 years and older (n=315) was 37% higher than for those aged 16 to 24 (n=141).
- Shootings of 16 to 24-year-olds decreased by nearly half (47%) from 2012 (n=268) to 2023 (n=141).
- Shootings of victims aged 25 years and older increased by 68% between 2012 (n=188) to 2023 (n=315).

Figure 3.3: Trends in Shootings (2012-2023).



3.3.E 24-HOUR PERIOD PEAKS IN SNL VIOLENCE

Finding:

From 2012 to 2023, the time of day when violence peaked in GRYD Zones was 11:00 p.m. for both homicide victims and single-victim shootings, and at 10 p.m. for multiple-victim shootings. (See Figure 3.4). SNL programming, which typically began at 6 p.m. and ended at 11 p.m., was aligned with peak times for violent incidents.

Homicide Victims 2012 – 2023

- The number of homicide victims increased on an hourly basis, starting at 11 a.m. and peaking at 11 p.m. Deadly shootings then decreased hourly to a low point at 7 a.m.
- Close to one half (46%) of all deadly shootings occured during a 4-hour period between 8 p.m. and 12 a.m.

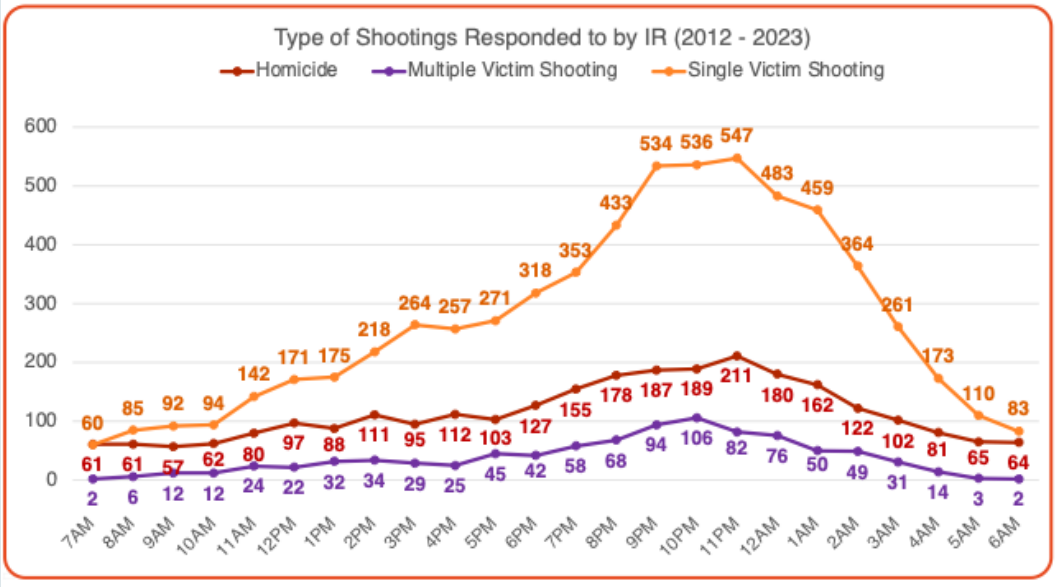
Single-Victim Shootings 2012 – 2023

- The number of single-victim shootings increased on an hourly basis starting at 11 a.m., through the afternoon and evening hours, before peaking at 11p.m. Single-victim shootings then decreased hourly to a low point at 7 a.m.
- Close to one-half (46%) of all single-victim shootings occurred during a 5-hour period between 8 p.m. and 1 a.m.

Multiple-Victim Shootings 2012 - 2023

- The number of multiple-victim shootings increased on an hourly basis starting at 11 a.m. and peaking at 10 p.m. Multiple-victim shootings then decreased hourly to a low point at 6 a.m.
- More than one third (40%) of all multiple-victim shootings occurred during a 5-hour period between 8 p.m. and 1 a.m.

Figure 3.4. Types of Shootings GRYD Incident Response Responded to (2012-2023)



Stakeholders were mixed about whether SNL hours should be extended at either the front or back end of the program. Some emphasized the need to align SNL hours with data on peak violence. Others advocated for SNL programing to start earlier to engage more families, provide more alternatives to violence, deter more violence, and build more social connections. They also stressed the importance of a visible SNL presence that is year-round to provide youth with more consistent support and mentorship. Additional data and analyses are needed before data-driven recommendations related to SNL hours can be offered.

"I consider it a luxury that if I can get information from a captain or from [LA]PD before it goes into a RACR, I can respond quicker because I don't want to rely on the RACR to respond because [it is] at best is two hours old, so you know how good is the RACR?...it's an afterthought for a lot of us because we're getting it in and giving us details of what we have already gotten. If it was more fluid and in real-time, then yes, it's helpful, but now at this point, it's not."
—CIW

"I believe, personally, that the program needs to be throughout the year. Summer [Night] Lights– I mean it's a good way to connect with the youth but what about the days where the kids are back to school, and their parents are working from 7-8, 9 o'clock at night. They still need an overseer, they need a mentor out there on the streets, they need someone, and a lot of the youth end up at parks they end up at beaches [and] the mom and the father don't know…I believe that were cheating ourselves for just having it those only for a couple of months, because we're working…24 hours a day, 365 days, so we need to give them that same amount of time."
—CIW

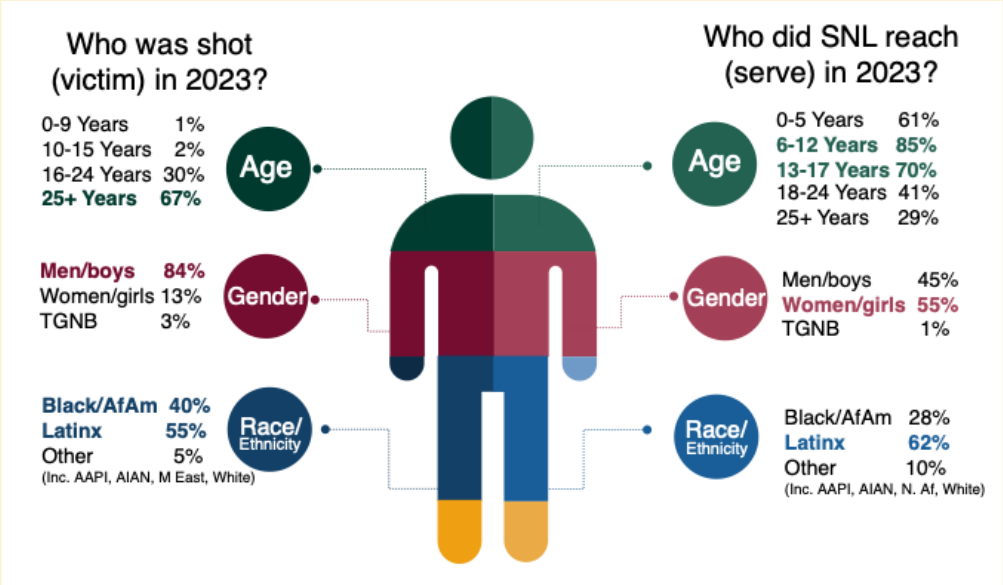
"I don't see no one being there after 10:00 PM. Only... yeah, not a lot of families are at the park at that time. So, I think... that would be one area they could improve. Especially if the children are on summer break. Changing the time to an earlier time. Because yes, they're, you're safe at the park. But what happens when you're walking home, or driving home, or walking to your car? You're a target at late night. So, if they were to change the hours to an earlier time, I don't know, starting at 12, you know, kids are out of school, they could come to the park early and be home before you get started. You get out by 8-9, you're safe to walk home, rather than 10-11." —Case Manager
—CIW

3.3.F SNL PROGRAM COMMUNITY REACH

Finding:
In 2023, the demographic profile (age, gender, race/ethnicity) of individuals participating in SNL activities did not align with SNL's ToC (i.e., community members of all demographics engaged, including those vulnerable to violence or previously involved in gang activity) or those the data suggested were high-need community members (Figure 3.5). In 2023:

- While 67% of gun violence victims in GRYD zones were over the age of 25, SNL activities primarily engaged younger participants, with 85% involving children aged 6 to 12 and 70% involving teens aged 13 to 17.
- While most victims of violence in GRYD Zones were men (84%), most SNL participants were women/girls (55%).
- More than one third (40%) of victims of violence in GRYD Zones were Black/African Americans. Yet, only 28% of the SNL participants were Black/African Americans. In contrast, 62% of SNL participants were Latinx while 55% of Latinx individuals were victims of violence.

Figure 3.5. Shooting Victims in GRYD Zones vs GRYD Zone SNL Participants



Finding:

Stakeholder attitudes about SNL's reach were mixed (n=25). Some GRYD intervention providers, including CIWs, wanted to return to the ToC approach that engages all community members and includes those most vulnerable to violence. Other GRYD stakeholders, including LAPD, either prefered that SNL remain geared toward families, children, and younger youth, or felt that gentrification and reduced gang presence in the target neighborhoods were appropriately driving who SNL is now serving. Specifically:

- Twelve intervention providers shared negative opinions about SNL's current preference for engaging families, children, and younger youth over higher-risk individuals (n=4 CIWs, n=3 case managers, n=3 Intervention Program Managers/Coordinators, n=2 Intervention Agency Executives). They stressed the need to return to SNL's foundational goals of creating an inclusive, safe, and welcoming environment for those at higher risk, and providing positive social activities that are fun, attractive, and can help prevent or interrupt gang activity.

> "[SNL] should go back to basics. It was created for the hardcore gang members…They're learned that [tagging] could be art. [I'm] not saying that we don't need LAPD, you know, especially in the communities that we work in. But we need to be the ones, coming in [teaching LAPD to not] mess with them. [They] talk to us, let us know [that] they are on parole…they want to come in and just have a good time.."
>
> —CIW

- LAPD (n=8) opinions were split (n=3 positive, n=3 negative, n=1 neutral, n=1 both positive and negative). They emphasized that SNL should expand its focus beyond youth to include more activities for adults, noting that while adults are not excluded, the program currently lacks engagement for them. Officers pointed out challenges with maintaining a family-friendly atmosphere, particularly when individuals engage in inappropriate behaviors like drinking or smoking, and highlighted the need for stronger community outreach to tailor programs to local needs.

> "What we usually see…is [that] the kids go. They're dropped off. The parents go to a meet up location, usually in the development, and then they do their thing… The kids are there and there's no real direction for programs and…it's not because people aren't trying. I don't think we've built capacity enough as a city family to be able to say to have a menu of options for folks."
> —LAPD

- GRYD Intervention Providers cited resistance from law enforcement or the broader community as a barrier to engaging high-risk individuals. While some Interventionists welcomed the presence of law enforcement at SNL, others expressed concern, specifically that law enforcement would harrass gang or group-involved individuals participating in SNL.

> "[You] make sure that while you're at the park [to] invite the…active community members, but then you encounter LAPD and say they don't want those community members. When I believe that's what SNL was created for, to get those community members involved."
> —Case Manager

- Stakeholders noted that over the 15-year history of SNL, changes, such as decreased gang presence and increased gentrification, have occurred, hence the growing focus on children and families. Although there are sites where active gang members still regularly attend SNL. While actions by law enforcement may continue to affect community trust, strong turnout for family-oriented activities like Zumba and movie nights have strengthened community positivity and unity.

> "Well, one significant change that I've seen is that SNL…has become more of a prevention program where all of the programming is tar… po… SN… di… So… No…
> Agency Executive Director

> "Families, senior citizens, they come and do Zumba…dancing…movie nights. It's family. Even all of the LAPD, [they're] just like 'wow, this is the best park, this is good, a good thing,' you know. [It's all] cuz we are family oriented."
> —CIW

> "I feel like there's more active members going … and as one. And I think that's been beautiful."
> —Case Manager

> "[SNL needs] more family activities, more interaction with police officers to build that trust with the community."
> —LAPD

3.3.G SNL YOUTH SQUAD

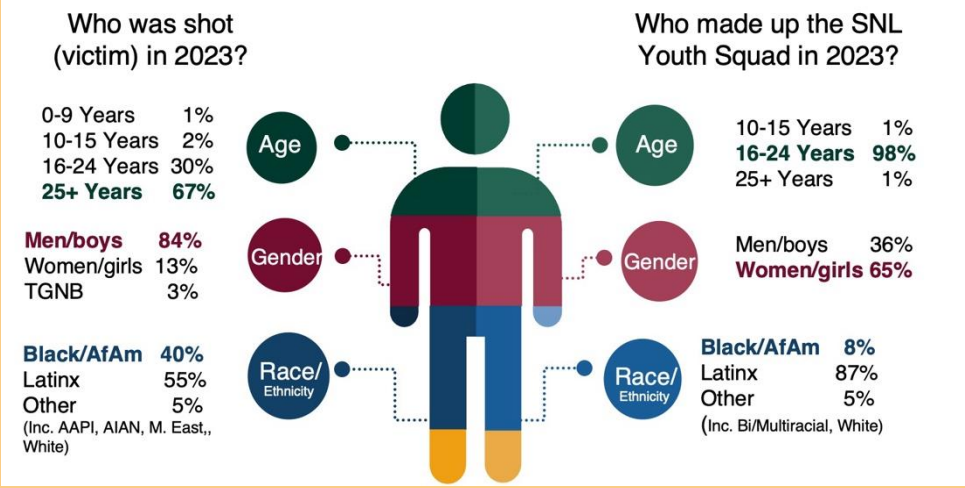
Finding:
In 2023, the demographic profile (age, gender, race/ethnicity) of SNL Youth Squad members did not align with SNL's original intent (i.e., a way to help and reconnect with their community and a career pathway for vulnerable youth, particularly those the center of violence). See Figure 3.6.

Data from 2023 revealed a gap between who is a shooting victim versus who is a member of the Youth Squad, suggesting the need for better alignment between Youth Squad members and the populations most in need of SNL.

In 2023 GRYD zones:

- Victims of gunshots tended to be over the age of 25 (67%), while Youth Squad members were nearly all (98%) aged 16 to 24.
- Most shooting victims were men (84%), while SNL participants were predominantly women/girls (65%).
- Black/African Americans comprised more than one third (40%) of all victims of violence. Yet, only 8% of Youth Squad members were Black/African Americans. In contrast, 55% of violence victims were Latinx individuals, with Latinx comprising 87% of Youth Squad members.

Figure 3.6. Shooting Victims in GRYD Zones vs Composition of SNL Youth Squad.



While one GRYD intervention provider responded neutrally (n=1) and one responded positively (n=1), the majority (n=8) expressed mostly negative sentiments about the Youth Squad. Half of those with negative views also mentioned the rewards of working with vulnerable young people. Specifically, they noted:

- Youth squad members are required to live within a two-mile radius of the SNL site. But in a city as diverse and segmented as LA, and where neighborhoods can change drastically from one block to the next, this proximity requirement does not always guarantee that Youth Squad members are from the neighborhoods SNL is meant to serve.
- Some Youth Squad members work in neighborhoods where they have little to no personal connection or history, which may potentially affect their ability to relate to or effectively engage with community members, including those at the center of violence. They stressed the importance of hiring Youth Squad members who are familiar with the neighborhood and its residents to ensure SNL's success and safety.

> "I think it's going well, with the exception of the placement of youth squad's site coordinators and cluster coordinators who are unfamiliar with the community. So, SNL said 'we hire within a two-mile radius' and that that's not necessarily relevant to where you place someone because you can be in a two-block radius and have six different gangs, you know?"
>
> —CIW

Hiring and Training of SNL Youth Squad

Finding:

More than half (56%) of RAP staff (n=32) said the hiring and training process for the Youth Squad in 2023 was challenging due to the compressed timeline to recruit, onboard, and train Youth Squad members. This placed a strain on both the youth and staff and affected both SNL and the Youth Squad's overall readiness to meet community needs. This finding was confirmed in our interview with the GRYD Community Engagement Team.

> "We were hoping all our youth squad who went to hiring orientation in …March, April, and May, would've already been cleared before June 28th, which was the first day of our Summer Night Light program starting. Unfortunately, it trickled into the summer, and we were constantly in communication with HR to have them clear. 'Hey, can you clear these people? We still need these many people cleared.'"
>
> —GRYD Community Engagement Team

Stakeholders said other challenges with hiring and training youth squad members included:

- delays with background clearance,
- lack of thorough background checks,
- lack of required, standard vaccinations,
- law enforcement interference (i.e., pressure to prioritize LAPD candidates),
- hiring people who were unfamiliar with community/violence intervention strategies,
- lack of communication between stakeholders (i.e., RAP, MOCS, GRYD agencies, and LAPD),
- poor screening by agencies (e.g., Youth Squad candidates are not actually interested in work experience),
- lack of input from stakeholders, including LAPD and schools, in the selection of Youth Squad members.

GRYD stakeholders suggested extending the hiring age to include adult community residents, which is in line with the primary ages of shooting and homicide victims.

> "Raise the age for SNL staff. No more youth squad, just SNL squad. Many community adults would love the opportunity to make additional income or work within the community in the summer to provide programming needs. Expand the age range. Use LA Kids to deliver classes and activities to Recreation Centers during the SNL hours. So, the youth and teens of the community are engaged."
>
> —RAP Staff

Other stakeholder suggestions to support the Youth Squad included:

- creating more time to support and develop Youth Squad members (e.g., building resumes, mock interviews, leadership/supervisory skills, etc.) as, for many, the Youth Squad is a first job,
- having adults oversee the Youth Squad program to ensure continued mentoring, development, and support beyond SNL in the summer,
- strengthening training protocols and including LAPD in the training.

Finally, high school aged Youth Squad members must return to school at a time when SNL programming may not have fully concluded. This could interrupt SNL activities that run later into the summer. Having a broader age range of Youth Squad members that includes people in their early 20s could address this and the earlier points related to aligning the age of Youth Squad members with those most in need of park services.

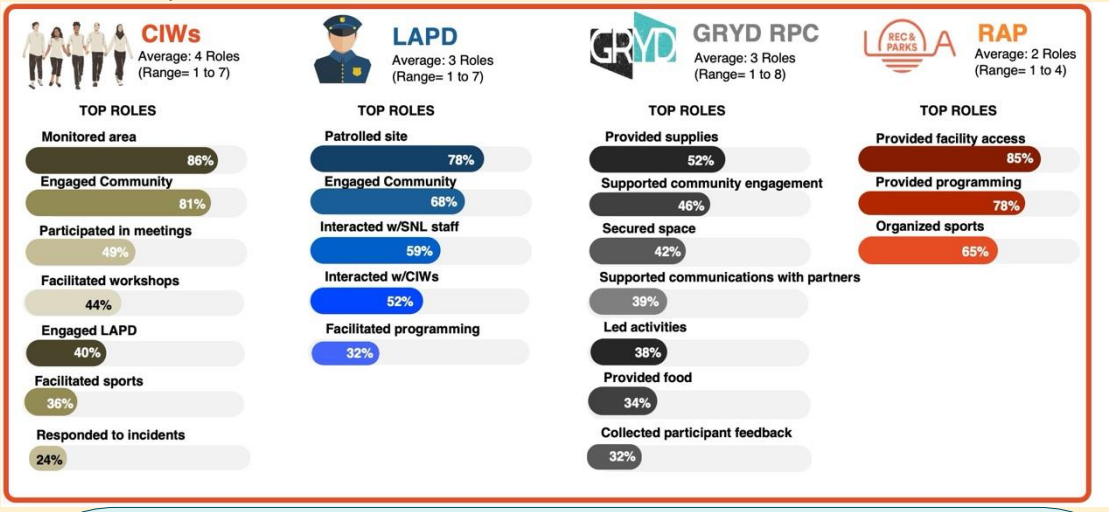
3.3.H SNL PARTNER ROLES & COLLABORATION

SNL relies heavily on collaboration between the GRYD office, LAPD, and CIWs, (also referred to as the triangle partners). They each play a crucial, yet distinct, role to ensure SNL safety and effectiveness. The partners also collaborate closely with RAP staff, who manage the facilities that host SNL events and coordinate some of the sports and other activities. Below are findings associated with collaboration among key SNL stakeholders.

Finding:
On average, each SNL stakeholder assumed three roles (i.e., responsibilities, duties, and expectations) in SNL (range = 1 to 8 roles). See Figure 3.7. On average, CIWs took on the most roles (mean=4), followed by LAPD (mean=3), GRYD RPCs (n=3), and RAP staff (mean=2). In 2023 the top SNL roles for each stakeholder included:

- CIWs monitoring the area and engaging with the community,
- LAPD patrolling the site for safety and engaging with the community,
- GRYD RPCs providing supplies and communicating/coordinating with the other SNL partners,
- RAP staff managing access to site facilities and leading programming and sports.

Figure 3.7. Average Number of SNL Roles and Top Roles by Partner (i.e., scope of responsibilities, duties, and expectations)



"[With] everything geared towards the young population [CIWs] are expected to be more hands on with the workshops and programming that happens at the park. As opposed to before where [CIWs] were that safe passage, and they were there ensuring that those that were participating in programs were safe to be there, and that nothing happened at the parks. And I think that's also why we're seeing that spike in violence at the parks because the attention has been moved from general safety to now having to [oversee] workshops and programming."

—GRYD Intervention/Prevention Agency Executive Director

"I'll attend the planning meetings every Tuesday, just coordinating with law enforcement, all the staff that's been hired for SNL, planning activities with them, making sure things are running smoothly. If we want to do a 5K race at the SNL parks, they ask for additional law enforcement support, I was able to…contact LAPD, make sure they have additional folks out there just for safety concerns. But on a day to day when I'm visiting the sites, I'm contacting folks. I'm touching base with CIWs, any concerns, what's going on at the parks. Touching base with law enforcement if there's any issues. Touching base with the staff that's there, if they need any help."

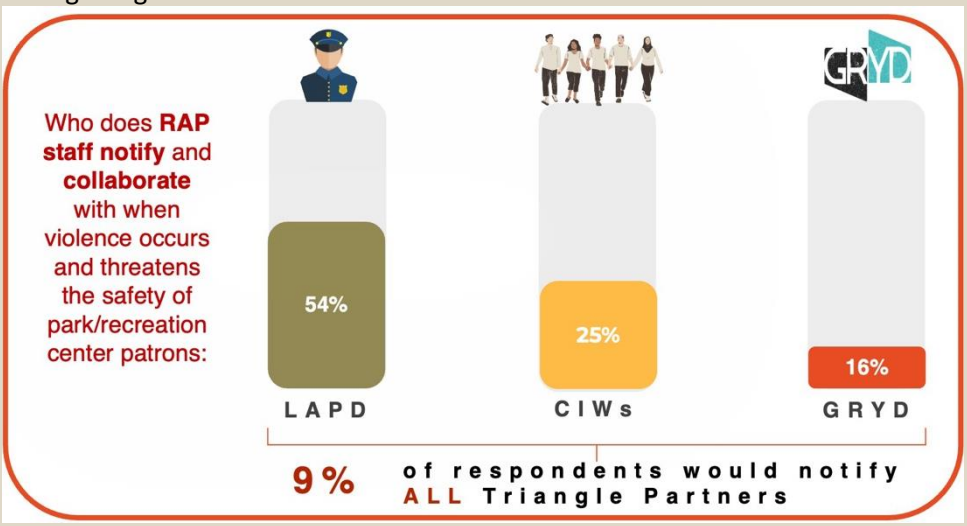
—GRYD RPC

"One of the things that I always like to do is engage. It is important and key, and when you're engaging, I also believe that you're almost preventing any type of enforcement action from even needing to take place. The likelihood of somebody partaking in any type of criminal activity…at a [SNL] is greatly going to be reduced…by just your presence and engaging. Engage in the activities that are there... Have conversations with folks. The likelihood of somebody…shooting or committing any type of crime while you're standing right there talking to them is…greatly reduced. So, engage. That's what we're there for, right? We're there at Summer Night Lights events not only for…our public safety component but as well as engagement."

—LAPD

Finding:
When violence occurs and/or SNL site safety is threatened, more than half (54%) of the RAP staff members surveyed (n=31) said they would notify and collaborate with LAPD. RAP notification and collaboration would occur to a lesser extent with CIWs (25%) and the GRYD office (16%). Only 9% of RAP staff members said they would notify and collaborate with all three triangle partners.

Figure 3.8 RAP Staff Notification and Collaboration with GRYD Relational Triangle Partners during Gang-Violence Incidents in 2023.



Collaboration among SNL partners (GRYD, LAPD, CIWs, RAP) varies by SNL site. While they discussed some of the challenges they faced, GYRD Intervention workers (n=9, 35%) felt mostly positive about collaboration between the SNL partners. GRYD RPCs (n=8, 89%) and LAPD (n=5, 50%) expressed mostly neutral opinions about collaboration. In a few instances, intervention workers (n=2, 8%) shared that the collaboration is marked by misaligned values, presence, communication styles, or decision-making processes among the SNL partners.

"…I have a good relationship with the CSP officers, and you know, I was so emotional, and during [SNL]…they would talk to me, and I would get emotional too [LAPD officers] would hug me, and they would tell me, man, that says something, so much about you."
—CIW

"…over here in my community, we make it great. Amongst each other…No killers, no shooting, no argument. Everybody ate. Everybody had some fun. Everybody won some prizes and me and [my intervention agency] and Rec and Parks. We came together and we made it happen and, in my eyes, my SNL was beautiful."
—CIW

"I've had really positive interactions. I've been blessed. Other than one time, and because I guess, something happened in another park, so they showed up. The gang cops showed up. That was the only time I could honestly say they came with a questionable attitude. I won't say negative, but a questionable attitude. But usually, the ones who are there that are volunteering, two or three of 'em, grew up in that community, played little league there, so they're really positive, and I sell 'em on that."
—CIW

LAPD come, yeah. But I'm so glad that when they come there, they don't get out and harass these guys out here. They let them at least enjoy SNL with their kids. So, I high five LAPD for that. And [I] high five my community for not having no issues for LAPD… It was really peaceful. Now I know they got a lot of good things to say because this is one of the only parks I know for sure didn't have no shootings and no problems. They didn't mind having LAPD there."
—Case Manager

LAPD involvement in SNL is varied, according to some stakeholders. Some sites have a large police presence and others a small one. Other challenges include inconsistent commitment and concern from LAPD about harassment by officers. To ensure SNL's continued success, stakeholders want clearer guidelines and more effective training related to the role of police at SNL, an increased police visibility at SNL, a shared vision about SNL across partners, and open communication among the partners (CIWs, LAPD, RAP, GRYD).

"...but this is SNL you know we thought we had an agreement that of course there's going to be gang members here, because [CIWs] invited them here. But [LAPD] were looking for [the gang-involved person]…and oblivious to what SNL was. And again, we reached out to [LAPD] and they said: 'Well SNL doesn't start till 7:00 PM' and my response was 'Does that mean it's open season on the community or gangs or whatever until 7:00 PM, or folks shouldn't be in the park or we can expect [LAPD] to drive on the grass and look for gang members?' And nobody really has an answer for us, so I would think though it's best that we have conversations now sooner than later. So next year we won't be talking about how bad SNL turned out, or you know what we could have done better. So we have the opportunity to fix those now and we're making the adjustments."

—Intervention Program Manager/Coordinator

Finally, stakeholders consider CIWs to be essential agents for maintaining peace, addressing issues, and preventing conflicts at SNL events. They serve as a crucial link between RAP, LAPD, and the community, including the promotion of a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment.

"I've dealt with amazing LAPD that shows up to the park and not only do they not mess with people, but they engage… There are some that will even come some basketball shorts, shoot hoops… If we bring in an officer who's gonna be there and he's not gonna be there to try and intimidate, but he's just gonna be there to make sure his presence is there, he engages with the community, and the night went smooth, I don't see what the problem [is]."

—Intervention Program Manager/Coordinator

"Know who your CIW's are, have a specific plan… I want to make sure that we have a clear understanding if there is someone that is committing a crime, however it has not risen to the level of huge public safety concern, would you (the CIW) mind just going and tapping that person on the shoulder and saying. 'Hey this is a community event we want to make sure that we keep this thing flowing and running the way it is supposed to do me a favor, let's not do that here.'"

—LAPD

"…I got to give them (CIWs) credit because certain resources that lack, they come together and they make things happen. You know I can't tell you how many times that they come together, created their own food potluck component during SNL or navigated certain activities." —GRYD RPC

3.3.I GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Finding:

SNL stakeholders (i.e., intervention providers (n=2) and GRYD staff (n=7)) expressed a diversity of views about SNL's governance structure that ranged from positive to neutral to negative. Negative views primarily centered around SNL's horizontal governance structure (i.e., LAPD, RAP, and GRYD operating on an equal footing in decision-making and implementation). The diffusion of partner responsibility has contributed to a lack of clarity about roles and accountability, and partners struggle to understand each other's roles. This has contributed to confusion, mistrust, frustration, and a desire for clearer partner communication and stronger leadership.

"Everybody still doesn't understand their role in Summer Night Lights…, and that's from law enforcement, that's from the community, and that's from the Mayor's Office as well. You know, what tends to happen is, it's almost like a crossover. I got to do this, or I got to do that, but it's really my not my responsibility, so it doesn't get done sometimes, and that's what I've kind of seen, you know? Listen, I mean that's what they supposed to look for. Well, that's true, but if it's not getting done, then who's going to do it?" —GRYD RPC

"I believe the right person has to be in position…that can make the purpose [of SNL] come to life… A person of influence on both sides, law enforcement and community, that can see with the third eye. Because [SNL's] not something that is just by chance and we just freestyle it every day and see how it's going to go. It has to be written down and executed. It has to be planned out… So, I believe that's the key, man, having that individual that knows the vision and has the influence, has the voice…to be able to speak the purpose, and once we import that into everybody, we're on board, we got it from there."

—CIW

"I love SNL. It was a headache just dealing with the politics that come with [it]…as far as [all the agencies that] want to be involved in SNL, whose park is whose..., and who runs the park."

—GRYD RPC

3.3.I SNL ACTIVITIES & RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

Finding:

In 2023, 1,400 individual events were offered. On average, 196 people attended SNL each night per site. SNL events served 231,566 meals (i.e., main, side, and drink options) with a mean of 159 meals per night per site.

Attendance varied by SNL region. The Eastside, Metro LA, and San Fernando Valley sites had higher attendance numbers compared to the south and northeast sites. Data were not available to explain these differences (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4. 2023 SNL Average Nightly Attendance by Region.

ALL Sites	Eastside	Northeast	Central	South	Harbor	Valley
196	240	155	242	172	190	231

Implementing SNL at a citywide level requires considerable resources, which are often limited in their availability from year to year, per 26 stakeholders (n=12 intervention providers, n=7 LAPD, n=5 GRYD staff, n=2 prevention providers). They called for the following:

- Increase resource allocation for staffing, planning, and programming to ensure SNL effectiveness and greater community impact.
- Obtain more community input and feedback (i.e., create SNL committees) so that SNL can be better tailored to each site based on its specific needs, interests, and available resources.
- Establish a community hardship fund that will provide mini grants to address immediate needs of community members, such as clothing, rent, food, utilities, transportation, school supplies, and supplies and fees for afterschool programs, etc. (Stakeholders offered this suggestion after noting that many of their community members faced significant financial strain due to the high cost of living in LA).

One seasoned interventionist shared that the dissolution of the GRYD Foundation is a major contributing factor behind current SNL funding challenges. Private funding options were discussed in three other interviews (n=2 intervention providers, n=1 GRYD Community Engagement Team). Stakeholders wanted to pursue public-private partnerships that offer greater flexibility in meeting the immediate needs of each community and suggested that the city diversify SNL funding streams.

3.3.J THE INTERCONNECTION OF SNL AND GRYD

Finding:
Stakeholders argued that, because GRYD's programmatic elements are all interconnected, SNL serves as an important opportunity (pathway) for individuals/families to:

- meet and build relationships with GRYD prevention staff,
- participate in GRYD-led workshops,
- receive information, food, and resources,
- obtain referrals to other GRYD programs, especially for prevention services for youth 10 to15 years of age.

Eight stakeholders from GRYD prevention agencies discussed the complexity of managing GRYD services alongside SNL. While SNL provides valuable outreach opportunities, it increases the workload, especially with non-local referrals. Staff rely on established relationships with schools and the community for most referrals. Despite the heavy workload, GRYD teams continue to engage families and collaborate with other SNL partners to bring in new participants.

"SNL is a big, big burnout. GRYD and SNL, they work hand in hand during the summer. I feel that really takes us away from our GRYD services. I feel that every year where we had to do certain YSETs from SNL they were not good. They were from people from out of town visiting. They were people from out of the GRYD completely out of our area and it was just like you want us at the parks doing outreach and conducting certain things, but it's a lot for a caseload of 25 and still having to work til 9:00 PM at the park."

—Prevention Agency Executive

"The Summer Night Lights program, …it's such a great asset to our community. We go there every single Thursday, to build that report with our families, bring them into the community, build relationships with the Parks and Recreation Department, build relationships with other resources that are coming to that park."

—Prevention Provider

4. FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT (FCM)

> A lot of my activities (with participants) are multi-generational, that's something that they can all kind of relate to together, I want them is to know their family roots, they may not be exactly how we would hope or want them to be, but there's always a support system a cousin, or an uncle, or an aunt, a grandmother. That matters right?
>
> **Intervention Case Worker**

> There is a part in the SET area where they ask if you see your group get hurt by someone, would you retaliate, would you fight back? They say, 'if I answer it is this going to get me in trouble?' I let them know, 'no, you're just being real with it, like if you see someone in your family get hurt or someone in your group get hurt,' because a lot of our clients do consider their group their family.
>
> **Intervention Case Worker**

4.1 ORIGIN & THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE FCM MODEL

The GRYD Family Case Management (FCM) model was developed to support participants aged 16 to 24 who self-identified as active in a group or gang (in some cases not actively involved but part of a family with a multi-generational history of group or gang involvement). This family-centered model emphasizes collaboration between Community Intervention Workers (CIWs) and Intervention Case Managers.

Prior Evaluations of GRYD FCM

- In 2017, CIWs accounted for 45% of the 5,351 service referrals documented (Kraus et al., 2017)
- In 2020, CIWs accounted for 40% of the 9,728 referrals (Diep & Vera, 2022)
- Collaboration between CIWs and Case Managers has proven effective, as over 50% of the 15,076 referrals resulted in enrolment in FCM services (Diep & Vera, 2022).

In 2006 and 2007, guided by the Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence, a "two-pronged approach" framework was developed, informed by the work of Los Angeles gang intervention practitioners (Los Angeles City Council Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development, 2010). The approach included "Hardcore, Specialized, Street and Detention/Prison-Based Services" (Prong 1) and "Gang-Responsive/Specific Individual & Family Services" (Prong 2).

The GRYD Strategy addresses both prongs by focusing on:

- Prong 1: Interrupting gang violence and providing case management for gang-involved youth primarily led by CIWs.
- Prong 2: Using the Relationship-Based Community-Intervention Approach led by case managers and involving CIWs, with efforts closely linked to GRYD prevention efforts.

Within FCM, a youth's functional and/or dysfunctional behavior is viewed within the context of that individual's living situation, which includes his/her family, peer, and community environment (Cespedes & Herz 2011). FCM is situated within the family-centered structure of the GRYD vision which states the following:

- All families, all individuals, and all communities have the inherent capacity to transform themselves and change the narrative of their lives.
- The concept of family is defined through a broad multi-generational lens, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, great grandparents, etc.
- When biological family members are not present, the concept of family extends to caretakers, adults, and any other networks viewed by the youth as significant to their life.
- It is as important to identify and affirm the strengths of a youth and their family as it is to identify their deficits.
- It is as important to identify and affirm the strengths of a particular neighborhood as it is to identify areas that create vulnerability to counterproductive behavior.

4.1.A GENOGRAMS AND SELF DIFFERENTIATION

The GRYD strategy emphasizes multi-generational family history and relationships to bolster long-term family resilience, engagement, and individual development (Walsh, 2006). It defines family through a broad multi-generational lens, encompassing at least three generations—including grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and chosen family members—and reflecting the diverse family structures in Los Angeles. Genograms are used by GRYD to visually map these multi-generational connections, and case managers encourage participants to gather family information, visit relatives, and share family traditions. These practices are informed by Multi-Generational

> "Interviewing people in the trailers, the basketball court in Nickerson learning how the community felt, what was going on with intervention. But the genogram is where people would go...it's not just that my son is a gangster, this is my family... or it's not just that I am a gangster this is my family... it's not just that I'm a gang interventionist... It enabled individuals to see their identity and then to participate in the change out of that identity. Not because the social worker was telling them you need to change or you're going to go to jail, it was a deeper and a more profound shift. The research was then feeding into the GRYD office, which led to Watts becoming a GRYD zone."
>
> —GRYD Researcher

Family-Systems Coaching (Bowen, 1993), which posits that understanding one's family of origin enhances self-differentiation, strengthening personal boundaries and identity amid group pressures.

In the GRYD approach to partnering with families, the emphasis is on the use of asset-based genograms as a tool to lift and celebrate the multi-generational transmission of positive characteristics.

The concept of self-differentiation was first introduced to GRYD-contracted CIWs in 2011 through genogram training at the Los Angeles Violence Intervention Training Academy (LAVITA). It also featured prominently in the prevention and intervention practitioner training component of the Watts Regional Strategy. Today, self-differentiation remains a key module in the LAVITA curriculum, championed by Melvyn Hayward II, GRYD Senior Director. Hayward has integrated this concept into his trainings for community violence intervention (CVI) programs nationwide, emphasizing its importance in the broader context of violence prevention and intervention.

4.1.B FCM OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK: INTAKE

Potential FCM participants begin with an **intake** process conducted by both a CIW and a Case Manager. This process assesses their immediate needs and readiness for full program engagement. Those not yet prepared to meet the comprehensive requirements of FCM—such as providing detailed documentation of group involvement—are placed on Temporary Client Services (TCS) status. During the TCS period, which can last up to 90 days, participants receive assistance with basic needs like obtaining identification cards or driver's licenses, and creating resumes, supported by a CIW. This preparatory phase is designed to help participants transition smoothly into the full FCM program.

> "The CIW takes the lead on the transitional (TCS) supporting with documents, identification cards, driver's license, resume job searching, housing program, basic needs to get back on their feet, once the client is ready or the CIW believes that he's ready to move on then he'll be referred to the FCM."
>
> —Intervention Case Manager

4.1.C FCM OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK: PHASES

Once a participant formally enters FCM services, they are guided through the following seven phases of the model:

1. Referral and Assessment
2. Building Agreements
3. Work-Ready Documentation
4. Strategic Referral
5. Celebrating Changes
6. Next Level Agreements
7. Reassessment

4.1.D FCM DOSAGE AND ASSESSMENT

FCM programming includes two individual meetings, one family meeting, and one strategy team meeting per phase. Each phase lasts one month.

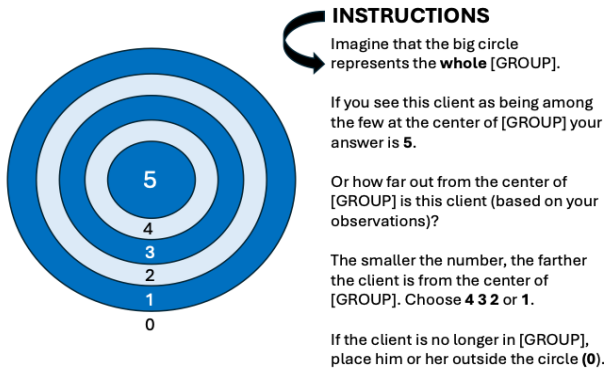
Assessment is managed through the Social Embeddedness Tool (SET). The most recent version of the SET includes questions designed to assess both the participant's connection to the gang/group and the gang/group's characteristics (Table 4.1.).

TABLE 4.1. SET Questions

Participant Connection	Group Characteristics
• I live in an area where the group is active. • My friends are part of the group. • My family members are part of the group. • I was part of the group in the past. • I am currently part of the group.	• Meets together regularly. • Has rules for members to follow. • Has identifiable symbols such as colors, signs, or clothes. • Imposes punishments for rule violations. • Members have specific responsibilities. • Members contribute money to the group. • Group members share money among each other. • The group has a leader or a head. • The group claims or defends a specific area or place.

The concentric-circles diagram below is used as an observation and rating tool to evaluate the participants' level of involvement (Figure 4.1). The circles are designed to represent different levels of engagement, with Level 5 indicating the deepest level of gang/group involvement.

Figure 4.1. Concentric Circles Diagram for Evaluating Participant Involvement Levels. Figure directly from the 2020 version of the Social Embeddedness Tool.



The SET was developed by USC researcher Karen Hennigan (Hennigan et al., 2013) in response to the need for a formal assessment to help individuals maintain their neighborhood identity while avoiding negative group activities. CIWs noted that even when group members retire or become less active, their identities often remain tied neighborhood. This narrative correlates with the concept of self-differentiation (Kerr & Bowen, 1988; Bowen 1993) and ideas in social identity theory (Hague, 2007; Leach et al., 2008). Although the SET continues to face criticism from CIWs for its approach to measuring group identity through indicators of negative gang activity, the concept and behaviors associated with self-differentiation may still have value.

4.1.E JOB READINESS AND EMPLOYMENT RETENTION: KEY OUTCOMES OF FCM PARTICIPATION

Cities such as Boston and Baltimore have incorporated Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) principles (Sullivan, 2024) into their case management/anti-violence protocols. These programs work with teens and young adults who are survivors of shootings or are formerly incarcerated. They are designed to improve unhealthy mindsets and decision-making processes through structured activities. Research on community- and home-based programs using trained paraprofessionals and volunteers (Farahmand et al., 2012; Hess et al., 2012; Marques et al., 2020; Valentine et al., 2019) suggest that modular CBT curricula, designed for flexibility and adaptability to formal or informal settings, can reduce program dropout rates and increase employment rates. Data are less compelling for CBT's effectiveness across different racial and ethnic groups. Nonsignificant trends in studies of effectiveness suggest that CBT effects may be somewhat weaker for people of color compared to Whites (Huey et al., 2023).

4.2 FCM EVALUATION FINDINGS: PRIOR EVALUATIONS AND CURRENT QUALITATIVE DATA

Unlike findings for other GRYD components (i.e., Incident Response, Prevention, and Summer Night Lights), data analysis and findings associated with FCM relied primarily on qualitative data from 21 semi-structured interviews with GRYD case managers. This is due to the limited availability of FCM evaluation data compared to other GRYD components. These interviews, conducted by Imoyase, provided valuable insights into the program's implementation and challenges. The qualitative evidence

from these interviews has been crucial in shaping our understanding and recommendations for FCM services.

4.2.A DEMOGRAPHICS OF FAMILY CASE MANAGEMENT PARTICIPANTS

Based on data obtained from past evaluation reports, the GRYD FCM program typically serves youth aged 16 to 24 who are either gang-involved and/or from families with multi-generational gang affiliation.

- From February 1, 2012, to May 16, 2016, FCM services enrolled 2,854 young people and emerging adults. (Kraus et al., 2017).
    - Of these participants, 66% were men, 67% were Latinx, and approximately 30% identifying as Black.
- Between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2020, the program enrolled an additional 4,874 young people and emerging adults (Diep & Vera, 2022).
    - Participants continued to be predominantly men, Latinx, and aged 14 to 25.

Across both reports, most participants lived with one or both biological parents, had significant housing needs, and a large portion had been under the supervision of Probation or the Department of Corrections within six months prior to enrollment. This highlights the complex family dynamics case managers often navigate. Family involvement during a member's justice system involvement can positively impact post-release transitions, especially during parole. Folk et al. (2019) found that maintaining family contact during incarceration promotes connectedness, improves mental health outcomes, and lowers rates of recidivism and substance abuse post release.

> "If they're not in the gang, most likely its family/multigenerational meaning they have their dad, mom, their sister, their brothers, their uncles, their grandparents, that considers them/their family."
> —Intervention Case Manager

Past evaluations of GRYD FCM agencies included descriptive analyses of the youth population served (i.e., demographic information), as well as crosstabulations to identify which demographic groups had the highest success rates in completing FCM programming (Kraus et al., 2017; Diep & Vera, 2022). While most referrals to FCM were men/boys, the 2017 evaluation report showed higher completion rates among women/girls (n=258 or 43%). Program completion varies by home living situation. Foster youth had the highest completion rates (59%), albeit only a few were in the overall sample (n=17). Youth who live at home with both parents had the next highest completion rate (42%, n=430), while youth living in group homes had the lowest (8%, n=13).

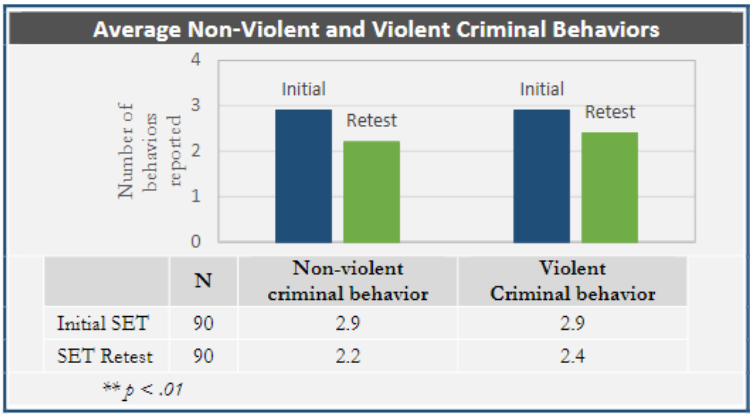
4.2.B OUTCOMES: CHANGES DETECTED IN THE SET ASSESSMENT

Changes in SET scores is an important metric to determine FCM effectiveness. Case managers initially administer the SET in Cycle 1, phase 2 (month 2 overall). The SET is then reapplied at the end of month 6, and if enough factors are identified, a client will go through an additional cycle of FCM (another 6 months). Pre-post analyses of SET

data collected by CSULA showed that **FCM participants experienced reductions in both non-violent and violent criminal behaviors** (Kraus et al., 2017).

- The number of violent behaviors, as indexed by the SET, significantly decreased from an average of 2.9 to 2.4 ($p<0.01$) (Figure 4.2). Overall, reductions were observed in criminal behaviors, gang ties, and gang positioning from the initial SET pre-test to the FCM implementation post-test (Kraus et al., 2017).

Figure 4.2. Reduction in Criminal Behaviors and Gang Ties as Measured by the Social Embeddedness Tool (SET) Post-Family Case Management (FCM) Implementation. Figure from Kraus et al., 2017.



	N	Non-violent criminal behavior	Violent Criminal behavior
Initial SET	90	2.9	2.9
SET Retest	90	2.2	2.4

** $p < .01$

4.3 QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

4.3A QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS ON THE SOCIAL EMBEDDEDNESS TOOL (SET)

Imoyase conducted semi-structured interviews about the SET with 12 intervention agency providers (11 Case Managers/Supervisorial Staff and 1 CIW), 5 GRYD RPCs/PMs, 1 GRYD stakeholder from Urban Peace Institute (UPI), and 1 GRYD researcher from California State University at Los Angeles (CSULA). Initially introduced city-wide in November 2013, the SET's questions regarding criminal activity and individual and family group ties were met with concerns from CIWs (e.g., the intrusiveness of the questions and the established trust with clients that those questions erode). In response, GRYD leadership released three revised versions in October 2014, February 2016, and February 2020 to address some of the CIW of concerns. During our conversations, Case Managers stated that these revisions made the questions less intrusive and gave them more flexibility around when the SET is administered. For example, the SET is supposed to be applied during phase 2, of cycle 1 (month 2 overall), but was extended in some cases when Case Managers had not established a relationship with the client. In these instances, they could request an extension to phase 4 or 5 (month 4 or 5). Note, we only had a copy of the 2020 version of the SET, so we could not provide more detailed discussion about the evolution of the SET.

Below, we present several emergent themes related to the SET's purpose, validity, relevance to practice, and recommended revisions.

Finding: SET Purpose

- Three of the five (60%) GRYD staff who discussed the SET, shared predominantly negative opinions about the purpose of the SET, while four of the case managers interviewed had neutral or negative opinions about it (36%).

Theme:

(1) Stakeholders shared that the SET is designed to assess individuals' social environments and their potential for change, aiding in the customizing of support, evaluating of mindset, and tracking of progress. weverits implementation and impact remain contentious among those who discussed the SET's purpose.

Finding: SET Validity

- Nine of the eleven case managers/supervisorial staff interviewed (82%) held a predominantly negative opinion about the validity of the SET, while two GRYD staff members expressed a predominantly neutral view.

Themes:

(1) Because the SET addresses sensitive topics, such as drug use, gang affiliation, and violence, it can create discomfort among clients, especially youth and former gang members, with some questions perceived as intrusive, leading to less accurate responses.

(2) The need for trust and rapport between the case manager and the client is crucial in the SET process. Revising the SET to be more client-friendly and sensitive to individual experiences could enhance its effectiveness and support while maintaining data integrity.

(3) Confidentiality and potential repercussions of disclosing certain information contribute to hesitation toward, or avoidance of, select SET questions among clients (e.g., criminal activities, substance abuse, or family history). Further, the SET's length and complexity further complicate its use.

Finding: The SET's Relevance to Practice

- Three case managers (27%) who discussed this issue held a predominantly negative opinion about the relevance of the SET to actual FCM practice.

Themes:

(1) The SET, while informative, often does not effectively enhance their practice or guide them in working with clients. They perceived the tool more as a measurement requirement rather than a practical aid, particularly given the varied age and comprehension levels of their clients.

(2) Although the SET provides some insight into the client's status, the personal interaction (individual meetings) during case management sessions is considered more valuable for relationship-building and establishing trust and understanding with clients. How personal interactions can be used to improve the SET's utility to practice is yet to be explored.

(3) Detailed case notes and a focus on both addressing problems and leveraging client strengths are crucial for effective case management, more so than the SET.

Finding: Suggested SET Revisions

- Almost two thirds (64%) of case managers and two GRYD staff expressed a predominantly negative opinion about SET items and offered suggestions for revision. Stakeholders from CSULA and UPI also suggested revisions to the SET.

Themes:

(1) Criticism of the SET came from different stakeholders, though some see it as a necessary component of verifying that services are going to the right population.

(2) Interviewees advocated for updating the SET to better align with family systems theory and to enhance its cultural relevance. They recommended revising questions to be more engaging and respectful, particularly focusing on building client trust before addressing sensitive issues. Suggestions also included simplifying and streamlining the tool to make it more concise and involving various stakeholders in the revision process to improve its effectiveness.

"The SET questionnaire, some of those questions are really like straightforward, how long you been involved with the gang, If the client comes from multi generation gangs, does your family steal. a lot of the youth when I ask these questions, they feel like, why are you asking me these questions? They feel like entrapment. I know this is all important for them to collect the data and see if they (the client) made any improvement, I get it... If I haven't built that relationship with them. I try to build it throughout the phases and with the SET one could go as far as phase four. So sometimes I go all the way to phase four before I could even ask those questions."

—Intervention Case Manager

"The history of that (SET) is you wanted something to measure self-differentiation and some of the family stuff and Karen Hennigan pulled those scales together and this is a problem is because intervention has never embraced the SET."
—GRYD Researcher

"The SET has always been a very interesting-because our intervention teams have had a hard time understanding why we do it. And it's like why do you guys need to know? But then at the same time, one of the questions for the SET has always been "are you part of the group" and one of the options was like no group. So, if you're not grouped, it means you're not affiliated. You're not a gang member. So, are we serving the correct population?"
—GRYD Staff

4.3.B TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN FCM: TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Effective training is essential for case managers to competently address the unique challenges of working with gang-involved youth and their families. This includes not only understanding the complexities of the population they serve but also gaining the skills necessary to navigate and support the intricate family dynamics that often accompany these cases. Qualitative findings are summarized below.

Finding: FCM Training

- Four case managers (25%) and one CIW had a predominantly positive view of FCM training.

Themes:

(1) Interviewees highlighted the crucial role of continuous training and personal development to support their effectiveness as case managers. The importance of equipping them with the knowledge and skills to handle complex issues such as substance abuse, mental health challenges, and parenting concerns was emphasized.

(2) Time for self-care and the value of training in enhancing the quality of their services was identified as a priority. Both new and seasoned workers found that ongoing training helped them refine their skills, stay current, and better support the youth and families with whom they work. Personal growth, a mindset of openness, and a commitment to meeting individuals where they are were seen as vital components to success as well.

4.3.C GENOGRAMS

Used by both prevention and intervention providers, genograms are used in FCM to map out a client's family structure, dynamics, and history, providing insights into issues potentially impacting the client. The focus of FCM genograms is to identify both positive and negative aspects within a family unit to guide interventions and support. The genogram is a dynamic tool that evolves as family relationships and dynamics change, with updates made throughout the program. The goal is to use the genogram, alongside family meetings, to strengthen bonds and facilitate positive

change within the family unit. Below, we provide an overview of genogram findings, including the perspective of prevention providers (n=30).

Finding: The Use of Genograms

- Over one third (38%, n=6) of case managers and eleven prevention providers (58%) interviewed expressed a predominantly neutral view of genograms. One GRYD staff member and one stakeholder from UPI shared negative opinions about the use of genograms.

Themes:

(1) Some respondents had concerns about the emotional triggers that might arise during genogram development, particularly when dealing with sensitive topics like parental abandonment. They discussed the need for comprehensive training to help case managers understand the genogram's purpose and navigate its usage effectively (e.g., learn new tools and skills to manage emotional triggers to ensure that the genogram process is supportive rather than distressing).

(2) Several suggestions were offered about how to enhance the genogram process, such as incorporating it into creative family projects like a cookbook or quilt to further engage and connect families.

(3) Interviewees shared that while genograms can be a valuable tool for understanding and fostering communication within families, there is a need for ongoing refinement and better alignment with current assessment tools.

"I have an art project that we like to do for Summer Night Lights. Everybody gets a piece, and they decorate it how they want, you know, whatever kinds of materials. And then once it's all done, we put it together and make like a quilt, or some kind of blanket, to either be passed down or held by the matriarch or patriarch of the family, or whatever their tradition is. Whoever is the gatekeeper of the [family] history."

— GRYD Prevention Agency Executive

"The SET questionnaire, some of those questions are really like straightforward, how long you been involved with the gang, If the client comes from multi generation gangs, does your family steal. a lot of the youth when I ask these questions, they feel like, why are you asking me these questions? They feel like entrapment. I know this is all important for them to collect the data and see if they (the client) made any improvement, I get it... If I haven't built that relationship with them. I try to build it throughout the phases and with the SET one could go as far as phase four. So sometimes I go all the way to phase four before I could even ask those questions."

—Intervention Case Manager

4.3.D FCM DOSAGE

While FCM programming currently includes two individual meetings, one family meeting, and one strategy team meeting per phase, each lasting one month, more participant engagement may be needed. This may entail more individual, family, and strategy team meetings.

"It makes sense to meet more frequent to build more relationship. I'm sure these agencies these teams are already doing that and they're just inputting what needs to be input but they're already meeting with them without having to input all that data again. This is just me speaking on how things used to go when I was in intervention, and I think that's what a lot of I know what needs to be done grid model wise and how to implement it."

—GRYD RPC

"I meet with my clients every week. I have 2 meetings with the family. I have 2 individual meetings with my client, I have a team meeting with the client and my CIWs, I got Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS), probation and parole. They come in 2 times a week, I do substance abuse, parenting, anger management and domestic violence. I can count only 4 clients (on caseload) that are not court ordered by probation or parole."

—Intervention Case Manager

4.3.E AGE APPROPRIATENESS OF FCM SERVICES

The need for age-appropriate services within the FCM was noted by several respondents.

Finding: Age-Appropriateness of FCM Services

- Three quarters (75%) of case managers expressed a predominantly negative view of FCM's age-appropriateness across different age groups.

Themes:

(1) While FCM is designed to focus on gang-violence interruption for young people aged 14 to 25 (though exceptions can be made), the stakeholders recommended extending the age limit up to as old as 30. They emphasize the importance of stability, support systems, and opportunities for participants to transition successfully into adulthood beyond the age of 25. Success stories include guiding older participants toward employment and reentry into society and working with individuals outside the usual age range if they are impacted by gang activity.

(2) Interviewees also suggested a 2-year cycle for participants (as opposed to 6 months) and providing wrap-around services for families.

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Appendix A: GRYD: Then, Now, and Into the Future – Assessment Methods

Qualitative Data Collection

Using a purposeful sampling approach, we conducted 95 semi-structured interviews, including three focus groups. Participants included a variety of GRYD stakeholders, e.g., case managers, community intervention workers (CIWs), program coordinators and managers, researchers, non-profit leaders, police officers, and executives (Table 1).

Table A1.1. Interview Sample Description

Stakeholder Type	**Number of Participants**
Intervention Agency Staff	39
Prevention Agency Staff	25
GRYD Staff	13
LAPD	11
Researchers/Evaluators	5
Other Stakeholders	2
Stakeholder Role	**Number of Participants**
Community Intervention Worker (CIW)	14
Intervention Case Manager	7
Intervention Agency Executive	8
Intervention Agency Program Manager/Coordinator	10
Prevention Provider	15
Prevention Agency Executive	10
GRYD Regional Program Coordinator (RPC)	8
GRYD Program Manager	2
GRYD Community Engagement Team	1
GRYD Former Deputy Mayor	1
GRYD LA Violence Intervention Training Academy Staff	1
LAPD Officer	11
Cal State LA Researcher/Evaluator	4
UCLA Researcher/Evaluator	1
Urban Peach Institute Staff	2

Interview items were tailored to stakeholder role—e.g., specific questions were asked to CIWs about the GRYD incident response. This flexible approach allowed us to capture insights unique to each stakeholder's experience and relationship with GRYD.

Qualitative Data Analysis Approach

The qualitative data analysis aimed to provide a clear understanding of GRYD's efforts, challenges, and achievements across four programmatic areas: incident response (IR), prevention, Summer Night Lights (SNL), and family case management (FCM). For each programmatic area, key terms developed through conversation with subject matter experts

were used to derive qualitative themes. E.g., the term 'youth squad' was used derive the Youth Squad Demographics and Hiring and Training of SNL Youth Squad themes.

Using ATLAS.ti qualitative analysis software (2023), each interview was reviewed for key terms and the relevant sections flagged. We then applied our qualitative themes to the flagged sections and performed a sentiment analysis.

Commented [PR1]: ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development GmbH. (2023). *ATLAS.ti: The Qualitative Data Analysis & Research Software* (Version 23) [Computer software]. https://atlasti.com

We assigned each interviewee to groups based on (1) programmatic area, (2) stakeholder type, and (3) stakeholder role, which allowed us quantify the number of responses by group as well as group sentiments.

Evaluation Data Analysis

Incident Response (IR)
IR data were provided by California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA). Data covered the period from January 2012 to October 2023. A longitudinal framework was employed to examine shifts in IR data over time, focusing on the impact of Community Intervention Workers (CIWs) on family and community trauma, as well as age trends among shooting and homicide victims among others.

Using R statistical software (2024), we ran descriptive and time series analyses on the six different IR databases shared by CSULA: Master List, GRYD RPC Log, CIW Report, CIW Follow-Up Report, Victim Information, and Activity Log.

Prevention
Our analysis of GRYD prevention services utilized Participant Overview database from the City's Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) system. These data track individual participants' progress through the GRYD prevention program, including demographics, referral sources, YSET (Youth Services Eligibility Tool) scores at intake and follow-up, program completion rates, time spent in the program, and other contextual factors like family status, justice involvement, and school history. We downloaded and cleaned the raw data directly from ETO.

We used R to conduct both descriptive and inferential analyses. For the latter, we performed multiple logistic regressions to analyze the relationship between predictors—such as demographics, geography, referral source, and other contextual factors—and YSET risk factors and program completion.

Summer Night Lights (SNL)
SNL evaluation data were generously provided by Harder+Company Community Reseaarch (H+C), facilitated by CSULA, and included H+C's 2023 SNL Participant Survey, Activity Log, and Youth Squad Survey. We used R to perform descriptive analysis of these databases, some of the results from which we compared to our descriptive analysis of the IR Victim

Information log (e.g., SNL participant vs. IR victim demographics). We also used the IR victim information data to analyze patterns of gun violence across Los Angeles, focusing on the timing of shootings and homicides.

In addition to the evaluation data, the Mayor's Office of Community Safety (MOCS) shared the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) 2023 SNL staff survey results with us. We ran a quantitative descriptive analysis of the numeric/categorical items from this survey using R and thematically coded the narrative items using an Excel spreadsheet. Two Imoyase team members performed the qualitative analysis and conducted interrater reliability checks to ensure accuracy.

MOCS also shared RAP crime statistics derived from publicly available LAPD crime data. I.e., data on crime and safety metrics were gathered for both SNL and non-SNL parks across Los Angeles. This included information on encampments, emergency calls, and criminal activity within specific distances from the parks.

Family Case Management (FCM)
We did not have access to any FCM evaluation data.

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Identifying high-risk youth for secondary gang prevention

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Efforts to reduce gang violence by deterring youth from joining street gangs are of major interest in cities across the United States. Current thinking supports a comprehensive gang reduction approach that includes concurrent efforts that prevent joining, encourage leaving, and interrupt gang violence. This paper focuses on a method of strengthening the prevention component by improving the identification of youth at high risk for gang joining. The authors advocate a secondary prevention approach supported by an empirically based assessment of risk factors consistently associated with gang joining in rigorous studies across multiple locations in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

The process of developing a Gang Risk of Entry Factors (GREF) assessment tool to identify youth at high risk for gang involvement is described in the context of the authors' collaboration with ongoing comprehensive gang reduction efforts undertaken by the City of Los Angeles. The rationale for the approach as well as the framework used to create and implement the assessment in a collaborative context is detailed.

Process-level data is reported on the usefulness of the assessment for identifying high-risk clients for secondary gang prevention. Analyses suggest that boys referred to the gang reduction program had risk levels that were no higher than risk levels observed in general school populations on three of the four risk factors compared (though the girls referred were higher risk on these factors). Using the assessment to screen youth allowed programs to identify and enroll only the subset of youth with risk levels similar to youth from the same neighborhoods who self-reported gang involvement on six of the eight risk factors.

Identifying youth with high risks provides the opportunity to implement secondary gang prevention programs that are more intensive than programs typically provided for primary prevention. The assessment supports more intensive efforts that can be focused on a common set of risks the clients are experiencing, as well as challenges unique to each individual.

Keywords: secondary gang prevention; gang risk; gang risk assessment; comprehensive gang programs; GRYD; GREF; YSET

Introduction

Gang activity and violence remain a pressing issue for US policymakers. Recent analyses of 15-year trends in the prevalence of gangs in middle to large US cities reveal that the presence of gang activity remains unchanged in over two-thirds of those jurisdictions

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(Howell *et al.* 2011). These scholars note that in 70% of cities with populations of 100,000 or more, the proportion of homicides related to gangs ranges between 20% and 40%.

A comprehensive report commissioned by the City of Los Angeles (Advancement Project 2007) documents that Los Angeles has had a violence crisis for more than 20 years driven by a long-term epidemic of youth gang homicide and gang violence. In 2009, more than one-half of all homicides in Los Angeles were gang-related (Howell *et al.* 2011) and gang-related mortality estimates place Los Angeles firmly ahead of the 32 other large cities (McDaniel *et al.* 2012). The Vera Foundation (cited in Advancement Project 2007) estimated the criminal justice system costs of gang violence in the City of Los Angeles at approximately $1.145 billion per year.

Given a long line of studies that provide consistent and clear evidence of dramatic increases in crime and violence with gang participation, there is much to gain from the reduction of youth participation in gangs (for reviews, see Klein and Maxson 2006, Krohn and Thornberry 2008). However, success in achieving this goal has eluded us. Despite massive efforts on the federal, state and local levels, only a few programs, in a few places, have been evaluated to be effective, and none of these has yet attained the status of a 'model' program based on scientific standards of evidence (Klein and Maxson 2006, Thornberry 2008). A recent review of 38 evaluation studies published in the past three decades found that 'findings in regard to effectiveness were not encouraging, especially for studies evaluating general prevention, and gang membership prevention programs.' The authors noted, 'None of the evaluations of comprehensive and holistic programs produced any strong evidence in terms of effectiveness' (Wong *et al.* 2011, p. 4). Gang suppression programs had the most consistent positive outcomes to date, especially where gang problems were chronic.

Comprehensive models are favored over pure suppression approaches due to concerns that strictly law enforcement efforts are unsustainable since they do not constrict the influx of youth entering gangs or reduce the size of gangs by discouraging gang participation. Thus, whether suppression efforts, alone, can have a lasting impact on the prevalence of gangs and gang members is questionable (Decker 2003). A consensus is growing that effective programs will need to take a comprehensive approach combining prevention, intervention and suppression to achieve a lasting impact on three important outcomes: reductions in gang joining, reductions in gang violence, and ultimately, reductions in the number and size of gangs.

However, comprehensive models clearly are difficult to implement, as reflected in the descriptions of the early tests of the Spergel Model demonstration projects (Klein and Maxson 2006). Decker and Curry (2002) document a litany of impediments to the faithful implementation of the SafeFutures program in St. Louis. Reflecting back on earlier descriptions of the interpersonal or interagency rivalries and turf issues that emerge in projects where diverse agencies must work together, Decker and Curry (2002, p. 214) note that 'resolving turf issues may be more difficult for rational organizations than it is for loosely structured gangs.' They also described the difficulty of achieving a good match between clients and services. In the case of SafeFutures, agencies needed to reconfigure their methods to providing program services to be appropriate for gang offenders. In the case of the gang secondary prevention efforts described here, agencies were required to suspend their typical methods of identifying suitable clients and accept a rigorous approach that permitted only the documented high-risk youth to be served in their programs. Challenges involved in shifting the paradigm in Los Angeles from the usual *primary* gang prevention efforts (i.e., serving all interested youth) to a new *secondary* gang prevention approach (i.e., serving only those youth documented to be at high risk of

joining a gang) are detailed below. This transition did not come without considerable collaborative effort.

In the toolbox of comprehensive gang control efforts at this time, secondary gang prevention and gang intervention strategies appear to be the weakest links. A recent systematic review (Wong *et al.* 2011) as well as a recent meta-analysis of youth violence reduction strategies (Lipsey 2009), reinforces the value of targeting high-risk youth for secondary prevention efforts. However, to paraphrase a recent study on risk assessment for gang prevention, the success of secondary prevention hinges on our ability to identify those youth most at risk for joining gangs (Melde *et al.* 2011) and our ability to do so at this time is questionable.

The focus on secondary prevention is a deliberate shift from broad community-level approaches that are prevalent for primary prevention efforts. Social scientists have accumulated a long inclusive list of risk factors that predict a range of problem behaviors beginning in early adolescence – such as truancy, dropping out of school, substance use, precocious sexual behavior, delinquency, and violence – based on the observation that a variety of problem behaviors tend to co-occur due to common origins (Jessor and Jessor 1977). Wide ranging community efforts have been undertaken to support positive youth development and discourage a wide array of problem behaviors (see Hawkins *et al.* 2002, Brown *et al.* 2011), while other researchers of the causes of violent and delinquent behaviors have taken a broad systems view for community violence prevention (see Herrenkohl *et al.* 2007).

These broad community-level approaches have been important and useful for supporting positive youth development in general, but not for preventing gang joining. Despite an array of general gang prevention efforts – including community-based efforts such as Boys and Girls Club programs and a variety of after-school programs – relatively little progress has been made over recent decades in preventing gang affiliation (Advancement Project 2007, Howell *et al.* 2011).

How can communities that want to focus on preventing gang affiliation achieve a more targeted approach? We argue here that shifting from a focus on primary prevention to an emphasis on secondary prevention is required. Studies have documented that even in communities with considerable gang activity; the vast majority of youth do not join a gang (Klein and Maxson 2006). This article describes the development of an assessment used by practitioners to identify and target a smaller number of youth at high risk for joining street gangs and to enroll these youth in a secondary gang prevention program in Los Angeles.

Very few documented attempts have been made to develop gang-related assessments to support secondary gang prevention. Gebo and Tobin (2012) report on an effort in Springfield, Massachusetts where responsibility for the development of an assessment was vested with multiple agency partners and community stakeholders with only advisory input from the research partners. Gebo and Tobin document challenges in reaching a consensus on the nature and content of the assessment, lack of follow through in using it, and the impact the effort to reach consensus had in the evolution of the program itself. Their experiences underscore the critical importance of local 'buy-in' and training as well as evidence-based knowledge.

In this study, researchers in collaboration with program managers and program providers developed an assessment to support secondary gang prevention for the Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) Program. This paper describes steps taken by the researchers to identify an empirically defensible set of risk factors, develop a strategy to determine reasonable cutpoints to define high risk on each factor, and provide program providers with the feedback needed to selectively enroll high-risk youth

in the GRYD Secondary Prevention Program. We document details of the collaboration with program providers and GRYD managers undertaken to improve the implementation and use of the assessment. Process-level data that assess progress toward the goal of selecting youth at high risk for gang joining for secondary prevention services are detailed.

Collaboration with the Los Angeles GRYD Program

In early 2008, following two scathing critiques of previous gang prevention and intervention efforts in Los Angeles (Advancement Project 2007), the mayor's office resolved to try a new approach, leading to the creation of a comprehensive program in 12 GRYD zones with a high rates of gang affiliation and rates of violent gang-related crime at least 40% higher than elsewhere in Los Angeles.[1] After seeking input from local researchers and other gang experts,[2] the city issued a solicitation to local agencies for the provision of secondary gang prevention services in these zones. The solicitation stated that a lead service agency in each zone would be contracted to target a narrowly defined client pool selected on the basis of scores on a new assessment tool. Our group was engaged to develop this instrument.[3]

Throughout the development period, our research group met frequently with the GRYD program staff and with the agencies contracted to provide secondary prevention services. We developed a beta version of the assessment and began training the staffs at the participating agencies to administer the beta version of the assessment to youth recruited or referred to the GRYD program from local school and community settings. Key aspects of the training included a standardized method of conducting the assessment interview and a heated but healthy debate on the logic behind using the assessment for program intake. The city mandated agencies' use of the assessment in program recruitment, which was a departure from the usual practice of accepting most if not all of the recruited or referred youth on the basis of recommendations from parents, local school personnel, other local agencies or probation. Service providers expressed the opinion that youth who were experiencing difficulties, or were exhibiting risky or rebellious behavior, were the very youth who were being recruited or referred to the program anyway. They had the expectation that this group of youth was exactly the kind of youth the programs wanted to target insofar as they were riskier than the general population. Veterans of prior gang prevention efforts expressed strong reservations about using the new assessment in lieu of relying on the familiar referral systems and the judgment of their own program staff, who were concerned that youth who needed the services were being turned away. This type of resistance to different approaches is of course not unusual in gang programming (Decker and Curry 2002). The GRYD program director, staff, and the researchers were called upon to defend the new approach in multiple meetings with the service providers, city council members, media, and the general public.

Lack of confidence in the empirically based assessment tool was only one challenge. Frustration grew over administering the lengthy interview, especially over the first months when only one out of every three interviews resulted in an eligible client.[4] The focus on secondary prevention was new to the contracted providers, most of whom had previously been involved in city-funded primary prevention programs. Some referral networks felt discouraged and even resentful when many referred youth were not accepted into the new programs. In an effort to turn this around, GRYD program staff became proactive in defining and explaining the identified risk factors to school and community groups in the program areas. To their credit, most program agencies also worked to change their previous recruitment and referral patterns by adopting more proactive approaches,

including sending out personnel to meet one-on-one with school staff and community leaders to convey the concept of multiple risks and explain the kinds of risks the programs were targeting.

Recruitment and referrals

Over the first three years, 40% of the referrals to the free GRYD program came from school-related sources, including counselors, teachers, administrators, and other school professionals. Family-related referrals were the next largest group overall at 39%. These included parent and child walk-ins who heard about the program from a variety of neighborhood, community, and school events, as well as from neighbors and other youth who were enrolled in the program. Fewer, but still a significant number of referrals, came from other service providers (8%), or from law enforcement or probation-related programs (6%). The remaining 7% were from miscellaneous or unspecified sources.

Revisions and adaptations

During this tumultuous period, program providers and researchers worked together to improve the assessment process. Most of the scales adopted for the GREF had been used successfully with middle school-aged youth, while the GRYD program targeted youth of this age and younger (ages 10–15). Those interviewing the referred youth provided valuable feedback on difficulties in comprehension, especially among younger clients. During the initial interviews, interviewers noted and passed along to the researchers, alternative language used when a youth did not understand the question as read. Working together in this way, a list of acceptable synonyms was developed and distributed.[5]

Other adaptations were made to improve comprehension issues reported by the program staff. The response set used for some of the risk factors was changed to frequency-based options (*never*, *rarely*, *half the time*, *often*, and *always*) to accommodate younger respondents who found it difficult to respond in terms of degrees of agreement about behaviors that vary across time. Likert scales anchored from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* were retained for measures of attitudes or beliefs and concrete response options (*yes* or *no*/*none* to *all*) were used for questions about behaviors and friend's behaviors.

Missing data also became a significant challenge. Over the first several months, one in three assessment interviews was submitted with missing or uninterpretable answers. While a client's refusal to answer a question was accepted (but very rare), omissions or blanks were not. The assessment was considered incomplete until missing data were resolved. Coordinators at each program site were designated as contacts to assist in retrieving the necessary information quickly. Interviewers who consistently missed questions were identified and re-trained. The format of the interview was changed to make it easier for interviewers to read and follow-up as needed on each question. As a result, the number of submitted interviews with missing data dropped dramatically. Once this system was in place, an individual feedback report was provided to each agency, typically within a week, on each client's risk-specific factor levels and eligibility for program enrollment.

Another important collaborative accommodation was the implementation of a procedure to challenge an ineligible finding. Agency staff challenged an ineligible finding if they believed that the youth was grossly misleading in his or her responses. In these cases (2.1% of cases submitted over the first 3 years), alternative information, from school records and occasionally probation, parent or other service provider records, could be

assembled to document the target risk factors with archival evidence. Care was taken to restrict the challenge review criteria to the same risk factors included in the assessment. A committee of a clinical psychologist and a program director with support from the research team reviewed the challenge, and in 39% of cases admitted the youth into the program.

Development of the GREF assessment

Our goal was to identify the subset of youth who are at high risk for joining a gang from the larger pool of youth who were not likely to join a gang despite some involvement in delinquency and other risky behaviors in general. In the criminal justice field, a myriad of assessments have been developed to identify youth at high risk for delinquency and recidivism. As one of the lessons learned in a review of these assessments, Baird (2009) cautions that the widespread practice of including a long list of risk factors, even those with weak or indirect empirical relationship to recidivism (despite face value), greatly weakens the assessments' predictive value. Acknowledging this caution, we aimed to identify a subset of factors that have consistently been empirically related to *gang affiliation in particular*, favoring evidence from studies with rigorous research designs. Fortunately, a rich empirical literature on gang risk factors has accumulated. We also considered the possibility that some context-specific factors may be important (e.g., areas with multigenerational gangs vs. areas where gangs are a relatively new phenomenon; cultural, racial, or ethnic differences).

Step 1: Identifying risk factors consistently related to gang joining

White (2008) argues that relying broadly on static risks – such as age, ethnicity, and structural poverty in the neighborhood of residence – for the purpose of selecting youth for gang intervention is akin to social profiling because it ignores the behaviors, circumstances, and decisions made by the individuals who meet these broad criteria. While the GRYD programs are located in areas of the city where these static risks are high, it is not assumed that most of the youth in these areas will join a gang simply because they live there. Our focus has been to identify dynamic factors empirically associated with gang involvement during early adolescence because youth are most likely to join a gang during this time (OJJDP 1998, Esbensen and Osgood 1999, Thornberry *et al.* 2003). The primary purpose of the GREF assessment is not to predict gang joining in an actuarial sense (e.g., based primarily on static risks such as poverty or neighborhood of residence), but rather to identify youth who have an accumulation of dynamic characteristics, attitudes, circumstances, and behaviors that are empirically associated with gang joining. These identified youth can be enrolled in intensive programs designed to reduce these risks by addressing the youths' needs. Gottfredson and Moriarty (2006, pp. 190–193) discuss the implications of focusing on static or dynamic risks.

We relied on two recent reviews of the vast literature on gang risk factors that focus on multiple and consistent empirical findings that link risks to gang affiliation as a measured outcome. Klein and Maxson (2006) reviewed longitudinal and cross sectional studies from the United States, Canada, and Europe; Krohn and Thornberry (2008) focused specifically on the accumulated longitudinal evidence on risk factors for gang joining.

In their review, Klein and Maxson (2006) conclude that six areas of risk have strong consistent empirical associations with gang membership across multiple studies in multiple locations. These factors included: (1) cumulative exposure to stressful life events; (2) nondelinquent problem behaviors (broadly defined to include impulsivity and risk

taking, as well as oppositional, aggressive or externalizing behavior); (3) delinquent beliefs (neutralizing guilt for delinquent acts); (4) parental supervision, (5) affective dimensions of peer networks (such as negative peer influence); and (6) characteristics of peer networks (typically measured as friends involvement in delinquency). Reviews in Thornberry *et al.* (2003) and Krohn and Thornberry (2008) confirm these risk factors and add early delinquency, because they found that a rise in delinquent activities often *precedes* gang joining as well as escalates after joining.

Given the strength of the empirical data reviewed, we chose to focus the assessment on factors within the areas highlighted in both reviews as well as early delinquent behavior, confirmed in the Krohn and Thornberry review (2008). Both reviews and others make the case that no single risk factor alone is predictive of gang joining, rather it is the accumulation of multiple risks that most strongly predicts gang joining (see also Thornberry *et al.* 2003 as well as Esbensen *et al.* 2009). Key risk factors were derived from studies conducted in various locations across Northern America and Europe, including a few studies in Los Angeles County (Maxson *et al.* 1997, Maxson and Whitlock 2002; and one of the sites included in Esbensen 2003), lending some confidence that these risk factors would be appropriate for the intended GRYD service population.

Some factors, surprisingly, do not appear to consistently predict gang joining. Both of the systematic reviews concluded that the preponderance of evidence from multiple studies in multiple locations failed to support a direct causal relationship between self-esteem, family poverty, family structure, affective bonds with parents (as measured in these studies), and gang membership. Several other factors have to date had weak or inconsistent support for a causal relationship with gang membership, including family deviance, internalizing behaviors (e.g., anxiety, withdrawal), lack of involvement in conventional activities, attitudes toward the future, parenting style (e.g., hostile family environment), commitment to education/educational aspirations, low academic achievement, unsafe school environment, attachment to school, criminogenic neighborhood indicators, and neighborhood crime. Many factors shown to predict illegal behavior have not specifically predicted gang joining. We concluded that without consistent empirical support, these factors would likely weaken the assessment.

Step 2: Select a measurement approach for each risk factor

We identified appropriate measures for the chosen risk factors using scales developed in past research. All the risk factor measures with modifications made after the pilot period are provided in the Appendix.

Accumulated strain due to stressful life events. Researchers using Agnew's (1992, 2001) general strain theory have documented a strong relationship between a wide array of chronic stressors, or accumulated negative life events, with delinquency. More recent research has documented a strong relationship between accumulated stressful life events – such as school failure, school disciplinary sanctions, difficulties or changes in relationships with friends, and illness or death of loved ones with gang joining.[6] A checklist method has been used to measure an accumulation of powerful life events over a relatively short period of time that contributes to an adolescent's stress or strain. The scale used in the Rochester study (Thornberry *et al.* 2003) was adopted for the GREF assessment.

Nondelinquent problem behaviors including antisocial tendencies and weak self control. Two types of measures have been used by researchers under the general rubric labeled nondelinquent problem behaviors by Klein and Maxson (2006). We split this broad category into two factors: antisocial tendencies and weak self-control.

Antisocial tendencies. The relationship between gang joining and broadly defined conduct disorder or externalizing behavior (e.g., lying, stealing, getting angry) was tested prospectively in several longitudinal studies around the United States. A significant relationship has been consistently confirmed[7] using various scales including the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach 2009) and the Social Behavior Questionnaire (Tremblay *et al.* 1991). Given our goal to create an assessment readily available to a myriad of prevention providers, we chose to work with a similar scale that is in the public domain, the Goodman Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman and Scott 1999, Goodman and Goodman 2009). This scale is appropriate for 11–16-year-olds and correlates well with the Child Behavior Checklist used in past studies (Bourdon *et al.* 2005, Achenbach *et al.* 2008).

Self-control: impulsivity and risk-taking. Grasmick *et al.* (1993) developed a general measure of self-control of impulses based on Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) complex definition that combined six correlated concepts strongly related to criminal activity. Two of these, the impulsivity and risk-taking subscales, were included in the beta version of the assessment because their relationship with gang joining has been tested and consistently confirmed in cross sectional and longitudinal studies in several locations.[8]

Delinquent beliefs that neutralize guilt for offending. Agnew (1994) observed that a relatively small number of people approve of violence while a larger number come to accept neutralizing justifications for it. Moral justifications for crime have been consistently linked to involvement in criminal activities, and have been found to predict or explain gang involvement in most of the studies that have tested it.[9] We chose the scale used by Esbensen and Osgood (1999) in their work with G.R.E.A.T., a primary gang prevention program implemented in middle schools across the United States.

Weak parental monitoring. Many aspects of parenting might contribute to youth becoming involved in a gang; however, parental monitoring has emerged as the one aspect with consistent evidence.[10] The strength of this factor derives from its implicit incorporation of both honest disclosure on the part of the youth as well as parents' interest and skills in setting boundaries for their youth (see Kiesner *et al.* 2009, Lac and Crano 2009). For the beta version of the assessment, we adopted questions used in the G.R.E.A.T. evaluation (Esbensen and Osgood 1999) to measure monitoring.

Negative peer influence. Friends are very influential in the lives of adolescents. Youth who are susceptible to negative peer influence (sometimes referred to as peer pressure) are more likely to go along with trouble. Joining a gang is a social act that is very much tied to peers. Longitudinal and cross sectional studies found that youth who are committed to peers, despite their negative influence, are more likely to join a gang.[11] The questions used

to measure this construct in the G.R.E.A.T. evaluation (Esbensen and Osgood 1999) were adopted for this assessment.

Peer delinquency. The hypothesis that associating with delinquent peers causes delinquent behavior is derived from social learning theory, especially the work of Akers *et al.* (1979). Association with friends who are involved in a variety of delinquent activities – from school truancy to stealing, drug sales, robbery, and other activities – precedes, coincides with and continues after joining a street gang. This risk factor predicts gang joining in each of the major longitudinal and cross sectional studies that have tested it. The evidence is consistent and clear.[12] The scale used to measure this construct for the G.R.E.A.T. program evaluation (Esbensen and Osgood 1999) was adopted for this assessment.

Early delinquent activities and substance use. Similarly, a youth's own involvement in a variety of delinquent activities including substance use precedes, coincides with, and continues after joining a street gang (Krohn and Thornberry 2008). The scale used in the beta version of the assessment was derived from the G.R.E.A.T. evaluation (Esbensen and Osgood 1999). The measure used here combines delinquent activities and substance use into a single indicator by counting the number of types of delinquent activities (including substance use) that the youth reported to create a variety score (see Thornberry and Krohn (2000) for a discussion of the validity of this approach).

Step 3: Review of scale measurement properties

After eight months, agency staff had interviewed over 1200 youth using the beta instrument. We reviewed the measurement properties of each scale in the beta version. The measurement reliability of each ordinal scale was strong with Cronbach alphas ranging from .77 to .88 with the exception of impulsivity. The impulsivity subscale had low measurement reliability in this population (alpha = .43). Feedback provided by the program staff indicated that younger clients struggled with this scale. We sought to improve it by making the questions more concrete. For example, the question: 'I often act without stopping to think' became 'I often do things without stopping to think if I will get in trouble for it.' Further, since the impulsivity scale and the risk-taking scale were originally written as two components of self-control (see Grasmick *et al.* 1993) and these two scales were correlated in our sample, we created a single hybrid scale to represent the concept of self-control. The hybrid scale, called impulsive risk taking, contained two strong items from each subscale (alpha = .80).

We took steps to reduce the assessment's length, a frequently voiced concern, without compromising measurement. For each scale (not including the self-report delinquency protocol or the strain checklist), we dropped weaker items so long as the alpha remained above .70 (alphas for the shortened scales ranged from .72 to .85). A total of 15 items were dropped from the original factors included in the beta version.[13] The revised scales used for the GREF assessment are given in the Appendix.

Step 4: Determine cutpoints to define high risk for each factor

Cutpoints for the beta version. Given that the programs were immediately beginning to recruit youth, we sought existing data that could be used to establish preliminary risk factor cutpoints for the beta version of the assessment. All but two of the risk-factor scales

we had chosen to include in the beta version were used in the G.R.E.A.T. program evaluation (Esbensen and Deschenes 1998) and data from this project were publically available. This dataset includes baseline risk-factor data from middle school-aged youth living in 11 American cities (Esbensen 2003). We examined the risk scores for the subset of African-American and Latino youth between the ages of 13 and 15 ($n = 2497$). We compared the distribution of risk scores for youth who indicated that they were past or current gang members (17%) to the scores from the rest of the sample. We observed that the pattern of differences was fairly consistent: the median score for the gang-involved youth was generally close to the 75th percentile of the distribution of scores for the nongang participants. Based on this information, we set the initial cutpoints for each risk factor on the beta version of the GREF close to the score at 75th percentile among the nongang youth in the G.R.E.A.T. evaluation. Different cutpoints were determined for males and females as needed.[14] For the two factors that were not included in the G.R.E.A.T. study, the antisocial tendencies subscale and the accumulated stressful life events checklist, cutpoints for the beta version were set using a similar approach based on data available from two local datasets involving youth of the same age (some of whom were gang affiliated while most were not) from neighborhoods in the Los Angeles area that experience gang issues (Maxson *et al.* 2000, Hennigan *et al.* 2005).

By placing the cutpoint used for each factor at roughly the median of the score for the gang-involved youth, we reasoned that if gang-prone youth approach similar levels of risk as the gang-involved youth, then about half of the gang-prone youth would receive a risk point on any given factor. Alternatively, only about a quarter of other youth would receive a risk point. Thus, the gang-prone youth would accumulate a greater number of risk points. Researchers in this area agree that high risk is not related to the presence of one risk or another, rather it is the accumulation of multiple risks, across multiple domains, that is most clearly associated with gang joining (Thornberry *et al.* 2003, Esbensen *et al.* 2009).

Over the first several months, staff from each GRYD program site faxed the completed assessments to the research team. The team then scored (independent of the program providers) each assessment using the beta version cutpoints. A feedback report was sent back to the agency and program staff then invited youth with four or more elevated risk factors to enroll in the program. Youth with fewer risk factors were not eligible for the GRYD program and were referred to other local agencies or programs whenever possible.

Recalibration of the cutpoints using local data. After eight months of program intake, we examined the performance of the initial cutpoints used for the beta version. At this point, with over 1200 GRYD accumulated assessments; we could use the GRYD data to recalibrate the cutpoints. During this time 39 interviews were submitted for youth who reported that they were already gang members. We used the responses of the gang-involved youth who were interviewed across the GRYD zones to recalibrate the cutpoints used to define high risk. For each factor, we were able to identify a value (within sex and age groups) that came as close as possible to the 50th percentile of the referral population and 75th percentile of the gang-involved youth assessed. Applying the new cutpoints, we observed that the percentage of nongang youth who scored above the cutpoint varied from 42% to 59% across the factors and in the gang-involved sample from 69% to 85% with a minimum difference of 20% for each factor. The new GRYD cutpoints were implemented beginning in November of the first year.

Applying the locally calibrated cutpoints. For purposes of this paper, we applied the recalibrated cutpoints to the entire GRYD dataset. Over the first three years, 3339 (56.5%) youth were found eligible for the program and 2276 (38.5%) youth were found ineligible due to low risk. The remaining 5% of referred youth had indicated current gang membership and/or substantial involvement in street gang activities during the interview. These youth were referred to the GRYD program intervention partner in the same zone.

Step 5: Consider context-specific factors

On an experimental basis (not weighed in the eligibility decisions during the pilot period), we included several factors in the beta version that were advocated by the Los Angeles-based providers (e.g., commitment to school, neighborhood characteristics, and family gang influence). Based on the data accumulated over the pilot period, we chose to add one context-specific factor to the assessment. Family gang influence was added and defined as having two or more family members that either were themselves currently involved in a gang or had communicated that they expect the youth will join the gang (because out of several questions included in the beta version, only these two questions enhanced discrimination of nongang youth with risk levels that matched gang-involved youth). This dichotomous factor, not included in the tables below, was added to the eligibility decision after the pilot test.

Another issue that arose was the importance of diverting gang-involved youth away from prevention and toward intervention. Over the first three years of the program, more than 350 youth indicated that they were already gang-involved (beyond just hanging out) when they were interviewed for the GRYD prevention program. The assessment included direct questions about gang membership as well as a set of indirect questions developed by the Eurogang research network (Weerman *et al.* 2009).[15] Based on early feedback from the GRYD program providers, we also added questions about the nature of the groups youths said they had joined. The questions used to flag gang-involved youth are provided in the Appendix.

Screening for current gang involvement became a critical part of the assessment process because studies have shown that programs that facilitate interaction among naive youth and sophisticated youth will more likely influence the naive youth to become more sophisticated rather than the reverse (see Klein 1995, Dodge *et al.* 2006, Hennigan and Maxson 2012). Youth who indicated gang involvement on the assessment were flagged for additional screening to determine suitability for enrollment in prevention or in the GRYD gang intervention program in the same zone. GRYD prevention and intervention providers in the same zone developed procedures to collaboratively determine the appropriate placement for these youth. The placement choice was communicated back to the research group.

Results

Evidence of a shift from primary-to-secondary gang prevention

Figure 1 plots the percentage of youth found eligible, ineligible or gang-involved each month over the first three years. The percentage of eligible referrals increased over time. Changes in approaches to recruiting potential clients nearly doubled efficiency in reaching youth with gang risk factors over time, rising from a 37% average eligibility rate over the first three months to a 70% rate during the last three months.[16] Spikes with lower percentages of eligible youth occurred during the summer months when the GRYD

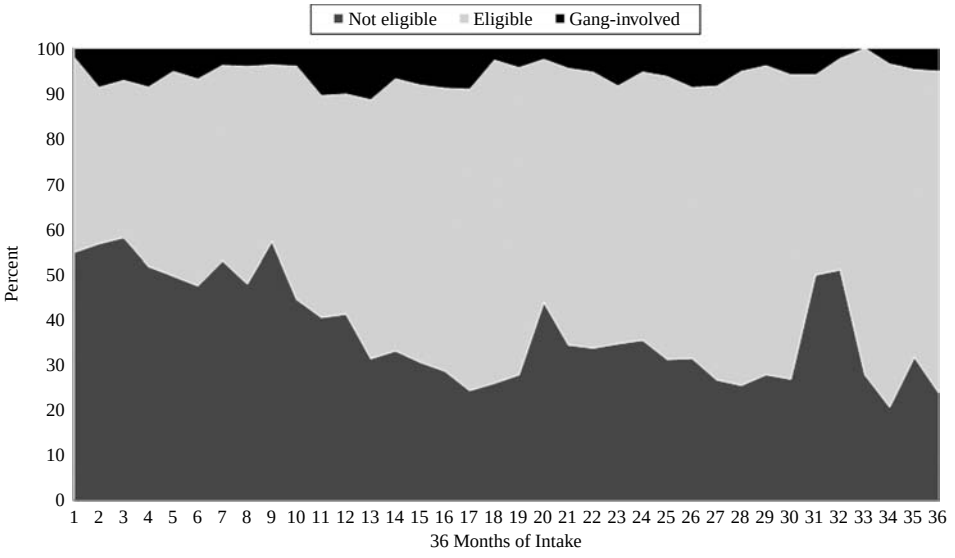

Figure 1. Eligibility status of youth referrals to the GRYD program (Jan 2009–Dec 2011).

program staffs were heavily engaged with the GRYD Summer Night Lights (SNL) program and had less time to focus on client recruitment.[17]

A large part of the resistance to using an assessment to select clients derived from a belief that an assessment was not necessary to recruit high-risk youth. Given the findings reported by Melde *et al.* (2011) that clients engaged in gang programs may not necessarily be at higher risk as a group than their local school populations, we looked for a way to compare the riskiness of youth assessed for the GRYD program with general school populations. The overall risk levels of the youth assessed could be compared to the school populations that participated in the G.R.E.A.T. evaluation study baseline (Esbensen and Osgood 1999). Youth assessed for GRYD and G.R.E.A.T. answered the same questions on measures and scales for four risk factors including guilt neutralization, negative peer influence, peer delinquency, and delinquent and violent activities. The comparison was restricted to youth between 13 and 15 years old to match the G.R.E.A.T. sample and to African-American and Latino youth to match the GRYD sample.

The results of these tests are best understood within sex. Relative to the boys in the G.R.E.A.T. program, boys referred to the GRYD program have lower risk scores on guilt neutralization ($F = 42.99$; df = 1,3087; $p = .000$) and peer delinquency ($F = 21.91$; df = 1,3087; $p < .000$), and do not differ on the variety of self-reported delinquent activities ($F = 0.03$; df = 1,3087; ns). The GRYD program boys are higher only on one of the four factors, negative peer influence ($F = 85.90$; df = 1,3087; $p < .000$). There is little evidence that the boys referred to the GRYD program were at higher risk than the general school populations that participated in the G.R.E.A.T. program (controlling for age and race-ethnicity). The means for boys are given in Table 1a.

The results are starkly different for the girls. Relative to girls in the G.R.E.A.T. program, girls referred to the GRYD program have higher risk scores on all four of the common risk factors: guilt neutralization ($F = 7.78$; df = 1,2516; $p < .005$), negative peer influence ($F = 229.10$; df = 1,2516; $p < .000$), peer delinquency ($F = 46.34$; df = 1,2516; $p < .000$), and self-reported delinquent activities ($F = 64.27$; df = 1,2516; $p < .000$), controlling for age and race-ethnicity. The means tested are given in Table 1b.

Table 1a. Boys referred to GRYD Program relative to the boys in G.R.E.A.T. Program.

		Mean	SD	*N*	test[c]
Guilt neutralization	GREAT[a]	20.25	4.80	1199	$F(1,3087) = 42.99$, $p = .000$
	GRYD[b]	19.14	4.44	1890	
Negative peer influence	GREAT	7.33	3.38	1199	$F(1,3087) = 85.90$, $p < .000$
	GRYD	8.55	3.69	1890	
Friends involved in delinquency	GREAT	12.69	5.43	1199	$F(1,3087) = 21.91$, $p < .000$
	GRYD	11.86	4.42	1890	
Self-reported delinquent activities	GREAT	5.41	4.01	1199	$F(1,3087) = 0.03$, ns
	GRYD	5.44	3.61	1890	

[a] GREAT sample here only includes African American and Latino youth age 13–15.
[b] GRYD sample here only includes youth age 13–15. Ninety-eight percent are African American and Latino.
[c] Criteria, $p < .01$.

Does the assessment identify youth appropriate for secondary gang prevention?

Given that an increase in average risk levels of the youth referred to the GRYD program was observed over time, was the assessment still necessary and appropriate to support secondary prevention? For each risk factor (controlling for sex and age), we tested the mean for the subset selected as eligible: (a) to the mean of the entire referral population and (b) to the mean for the subset of youth who were already gang-involved. If the eligible group is significantly higher-risk than the population referred and it is similar to the subset of youth already gang-involved (controlling for sex and age), then the assessment is useful and successful in this context.

Table 2 shows the results of these comparisons. Without exception, across older and younger, boys and girls, the eligible group had significantly higher risk scores than the overall referral population on each of the eight scaled risk factors. See comparison (a) for each risk factor in Table 2. These results are not surprising, as the assessment was calibrated to identify high-risk youth, but it does confirm that the using the assessment was necessary to identify this subset of high-risk youth.

The next question is how similar are the risks observed for youth who were identified as eligible to the risks observed among gang-involved youth from the same neighborhoods. See comparison (b) in Table 2. The analyses here show that youth identified as GRYD-eligible by the assessment had risk levels very similar to gang-involved youth of the same age and sex on five of the eight risk factors. On two factors – self-report delinquency and peer delinquency – the gang-involved youth scored higher than the youth identified by the assessment. This finding is reasonable and expected, given that past research has documented that levels of involvement in crime and violence increase when one joins a gang and decrease when one leaves (see Krohn and Thornberry (2008) for a review). Unexpectedly, the older eligible boys and girls scored higher than the gang-involved youth on the antisocial tendencies factor.

Spheres of influence

The bottom line for most researchers studying gang joining is a concern about the accumulation of risks rather than the presence of any particular risk factors. Past findings (Thornberry *et al.* 2003, Krohn and Thornberry 2008, Esbensen *et al.* 2009) suggest that gang membership rises significantly among youth with risks accumulated across four or more domains.

Table 1b. Girls referred to GRYD Program relative to the girls in G.R.E.A.T. Program.

		Mean	SD	N	Test[c]
Guilt neutralization	GREAT[a]	18.56	4.46	1298	$F(1,2516) = 7.78$, $p = .005$
	GRYD[b]	19.07	4.57	1220	
Negative peer influence	GREAT	6.82	3.33	1298	$F(1,2516) = 229.10$, $p < .000$
	GRYD	8.95	3.74	1220	
Friends involved in delinquency	GREAT	11.01	4.72	1298	$F(1,2516) = 46.34$, $p < .000$
	GRYD	12.26	4.53	1220	
Self-reported delinquent activities	GREAT	4.05	3.42	1298	$F(1,2516) = 64.27$, $p < .000$
	GRYD	5.15	3.50	1220	

[a] GREAT sample here only includes African American and Latino youth age 13–15.
[b] GRYD sample here only includes youth age 13–15. Ninety-eight percent are African American and Latino.
[c] Criteria, $p < .01$.

Here we examine *spheres of influence* rather than *domains* because of conceptual and operational differences in the available data. We use the term spheres of influence to avoid confusion with the way domains have been defined in prior research. In past research, a broad range of risk factors have been included to represent each domain, regardless of the strength of the bivariate relationship between each factor and gang involvement. For this assessment, we include only factors with a strong and consistent relationship to gang involvement in past empirical work and organized them into spheres of influence. Our purpose here is not to test the relationship between broad domains and gang involvement, rather our purpose is to examine the number of spheres of influence in which an eligible youth has significant risks. We expect that that gang-prone youth will have risks across multiple spheres.

The risk factors measured on the GREF assessment do not include two important domains identified by Thornberry *et al.* (2003): area characteristics and family socio-demographics. In the context of the Los Angeles GRYD program, area characteristics (i.e., a context of high crime and high poverty throughout the area) and family socio-demographics (i.e., family economic disadvantage and race or ethnic minority status) are likely included through the selection of the zones where the GRYD program is implemented. The 12 zones selected because of high gang crime levels are also areas with high structural poverty and high proportions of low-income minority residents. Given this context one may assume that most of the youth who live in the identified GRYD zones – including those who are referred to the GRYD gang prevention programs – have these challenges, but not all of these youth are at high risk for gang joining (see Gottfredson and Moriarty 2006, White 2008).

The GREF assessment includes dynamic risk factors in five spheres of influence. The first three were defined as individual characteristics (antisocial tendencies, impulsive risk taking, and guilt neutralization), peer associations (peer delinquency and negative peer influence), and early delinquent behavior. A family sphere of influence was defined with two factors (parental monitoring and family gang influence) beginning November 2009 after family gang influence was added to the beta version. The data used to examine spheres of influence were limited to this time range in order to include this factor. The school domain, which has been included in some past empirical studies, was not specifically included in the GREF assessment because reviews of the strongest empirical studies have not found consistent findings for any particular school factor and tests of the beta version of this assessment did not support adding it for the GRYD context (see

Table 2. Comparison of risk scores for eligible youth to the entire referral population and the subset of and gang-involved youth assessed from 2009 to 2011.

			Antisocial tendencies		Parental monitoring		Self control		Strain		Guilt neutrali zation		Negative peer influence[a]		Peer delinquency		Delinquent activities	
	n	%	Mean sig[d]	SD	Mean sig[d]	SD	Mean sig[d]	SD	Mean sig[d]	SD	Mean sig[d]	SD	Mean sig[d]	SD	Mean sig[d]	SD	Mean sig[d]	SD
Males, ages 13–15																		
Referral population	1865	100	15.89	4.10	7.70	3.35	13.80	3.37	4.26	1.67	19.14	4.44	13.56	4.76	11.86	4.40	5.41	3.59
(a) Eligible mean[b]	1037	56	17.68***	3.41	8.95***	2.99	15.36***	2.20	4.85***	1.33	21.06***	3.25	15.04***	4.15	13.11***	3.83	6.57***	3.00
(b) Gang-involved[c]	195	10	16.98*	4.03	8.70 ns	3.52	15.08 ns	2.97	4.78 ns	1.48	20.98 ns	3.98	14.68 ns	4.40	15.02***	4.79	8.38***	3.84
Females, ages 13–15																		
Referral population	1204	100	16.11	4.22	7.72	3.43	14.17	3.43	4.44	1.65	19.06	4.54	13.51	4.96	12.23	4.50	5.11	3.46
(a) Eligible mean[b]	758	63	17.83***	3.43	8.83***	3.04	15.56***	2.22	5.00***	1.36	20.88***	3.34	15.18***	4.43	13.43***	4.03	6.14***	2.93
(b) Gang-involved[c]	93	8	16.73**	3.99	8.74 ns	3.72	16.01 ns	2.8	4.95 ns	1.44	21.01 ns	3.92	14.54 ns	4.77	15.84**	4.52	8.54***	3.76
Males, ages 10–12																		
Referral population	1798	100	16.06	4.38	7.14	3.28	13.38	3.61	3.81	1.73	18.12	4.88	12.74	4.47	9.37	3.51	3.73	3.06
(a) Eligible mean[b]	995	55	18.44***	3.44	8.71***	2.97	15.45***	2.16	4.56***	1.48	21.06***	3.07	14.35***	4.24	10.87***	3.24	5.28***	2.70
(b) Gang-involved[c]	58	3	17.66 ns	4.03	8.64 ns	3.36	15.43 ns	2.36	4.69 ns	1.38	21.02 ns	3.80	13.89 ns	4.90	12.91**	5.14	7.69***	3.70
Females, ages 10–12																		
Referral population	1005	100	15.42	4.53	6.58	3.34	12.83	3.92	3.52	1.78	17.53	5.10	12.90	5.03	9.17	3.63	3.15	2.81
(a) Eligible mean[b]	497	49	18.18***	3.30	8.47***	3.07	15.40***	2.02	4.54***	1.45	21.00***	3.19	14.85***	4.45	11.00***	3.55	4.91***	2.43
(b) Gang-involved[c]	31	<1	18.32 ns	4.87	8.00 ns	4.02	15.13 ns	3.19	4.58 ns	1.61	19.74 ns	4.77	16.22 ns	5.46	13.19***	4.36	5.94*	3.51

[a] The scale used for this factor was changed from 3 items to 5 items at the end of the first year. The *n*'s for these tests are as follows: for males 10–12 $n = 1006$; males 13–15 $n = 1076$; female 10–12 $n = 622$; and females 13–15 $n = 778$.

[b] The statistical test in row (a) compares the mean for eligible youth to the mean in the referral population.

[c] The statistical test in row (b) compares the mean for gang-involved youth to the mean of eligible youth.

[d] $t = <.10$; $* = p < .05$; $** = p < .01$; $*** = p < .001$.

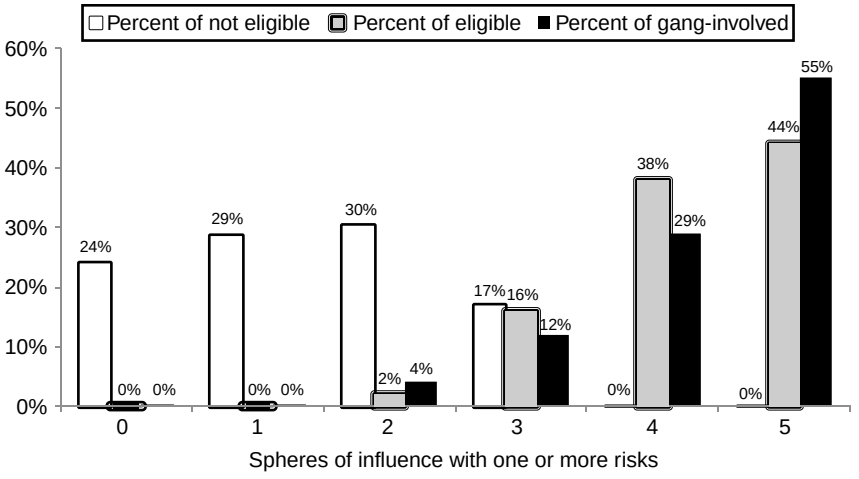

Figure 2. Percentage of youth classified as not eligible, eligible, or gang-involved by the number of spheres of influence (0–5).

chapter four in Klein and Maxson 2006). However, school failure and disciplinary actions (including suspensions, expulsions, or opportunity transfers) were part of the accumulated stressful life events checklist used. Because the checklist spans multiple areas (including stressful events at school as well as in individual, family and peer contexts) and has been one of the strongest factors in rigorous empirical tests (see Krohn and Thornberry 2008), we counted accumulated strain as a fifth sphere of influence in our analysis.

In Figure 2, we compare the number of spheres of influence involved for the youth classified as eligible, ineligible, or gang-involved. The primary goal of the assessment is to identify and enroll those youth with risks in similar ratios as observed among gang-involved youth from the same areas. As Figure 2 shows, these two groups (eligible and gang-involved) demonstrated very similar trends. The assessment also identifies youth with fewer spheres of influence so that they may be directed toward appropriate primary prevention options.

Discussion

Gang involvement remains a critical public safety concern, both for the individual youth who join the gang and the society that is affected adversely by that decision. While suppressing gangs is one response to the persistent presence of gangs within our cities, trying to develop methods of limiting the population that join a gang is another method. This paper presents one such effort. The available social science research was used to develop an approach to better identify which youth are at greatest risk for joining gangs. This shift from primary prevention (e.g., activity programs open to all who are interested) to secondary prevention (i.e., focusing highly structured interventions on youth identified as the ones most likely to join a gang) is not easily nor quickly achieved.

In Los Angeles, the process played out on many levels over three years. It required a high level of collaboration among the program sponsors (city staff, including GRYD program leadership and managers), university-based researchers, and multiple program providers (service agencies contracted by the city to do the prevention work). It required a firm commitment by the city leadership to stick with the proposed innovation long enough

(despite considerable criticism and substantial challenges) to develop the assessment described here and to develop an intensive program model to adequately address the greater needs of the high-risk youth selected for the secondary prevention programs. Over time, the assessment used for program recruitment matured through adaptations needed for the Los Angeles population and the accumulation of data needed to confirm cutpoints for the assessed risk factors. The familiar recruitment and referral networks shifted to more efficient identification of high-risk youth (as the percentage of eligible youth assessed doubled over 3 years), but the data reviewed here confirm that the assessment was still needed to select high-risk youth for secondary gang prevention.

This article is focused on developing the capacity to support secondary prevention by identifying high-risk youth for program enrollment. Others have found that youth referred to special gang programs without the use of a selection tool such as the GREF were not as high-risk as expected. Without using an assessment to gauge risk levels, and despite sincere efforts, the youth recruited will likely be assumed to be at much higher risk than they are (see Melde *et al.* 2011). Similarly in Los Angeles, we found that the overall population of boys recruited or referred for possible GRYD program enrollment was not at higher risk that a school-based national sample of boys of the same age and ethnicity. This underscores the importance of using a statistical rather than a clinical approach to identifying high-risk youth for secondary prevention. In 1996, William Grove and Paul Meehl concluded that a statistical approach was 'almost invariably equal to or superior' to a clinical method in terms of *identifying or diagnosing problems* (Grove and Meehl 1996, p. 293; see also a meta analysis by Grove *et al.* 2000). We argue here that the GREF provides a more reliable mechanism to identify youth in need of more intensive gang prevention than is possible (or desirable) at a primary prevention level.

It is interesting to note that the girls recruited or referred for GRYD programs were at higher risk on all four of the factors tested relative to the same school-based national sample. Since many gang studies include only males, females' risk for gang participation is less well understood. Some criminal justice studies have found that gender differences on risk assessments are not severe (Schwalbe 2008, Smith *et al.* 2009), perhaps because the girls included in the assessments tend to be at higher risk overall. Other research (Miller 2001, Maxson and Whitlock 2002) suggests that girls have to be more symptomatic to be referred for services; perhaps due to the misperception that girls are unlikely to join gangs. Our work suggests that referral agents may be inclined to refer higher-risk girls for secondary gang prevention services. It remains to be seen whether or not this implies that services should be customized for girls.

While the data presented here suggest that the assessment was useful and necessary for identifying youth with an array of risks matching the risk levels manifested by youth in the same population who had recently become gang-involved, a demonstration of the prospective validity of the assessment is needed.[18] Furthermore, while the assessment to date has been scored using equal weighting for the nine risks measured, more sophisticated weighting schemes may be developed given the appropriate data. Consistent with past research (see Thornberry *et al.* 2003, Klein and Maxson 2006, Krohn and Thornberry 2008, Esbensen *et al.* 2009), the analyses here imply that risk across domains or spheres of influence is important and should be considered in the scoring of gang risk assessments.

Once youth at high risk for gang joining are identified, the challenge of successfully engaging these youth in appropriate intensive ameliorative programs is the foundation of the work needed for secondary gang prevention. Mark Lipsey (2009) highlights the importance of pairing high-risk clients with intensive or 'therapeutic' programming. A sophisticated family-based program has been developed to address the high-risk/high-

need youth brought into the GRYD programs (Cespedes and Herz 2012). This program is focused on addressing the specific risks identified by the assessment in the broad context of a multigenerational view of one's family as well as current social contexts. The family-based program is more intense than typical gang prevention work, as is appropriate for its high-risk clients. These approaches to working effectively with the high-risk youth are being evaluated.[19]

In summary, our findings affirm the need to use a rigorous approach to targeting youth for secondary gang prevention programs. We believe that our experience in developing and implementing the GREF provides encouragement for other locations responding to chronic and emerging gang issues. We have shown that a systematic and rigorous risk assessment – built from a large body of empirical research – can be employed by service agencies to target appropriate clients. Strong program leadership and careful monitoring are critical elements. The improvement in risk targeting among client referrals is testament to the effort on the part of GYRD administrators to remain faithful to the idea of matching services to the appropriate youth clients. With this effort, the GYRD program appears to have more effectively responded to implementation challenges than has been in the case in several other attempts, such as the St. Louis attempt at SafeFutures (Decker and Curry 2002). The clarity and acceptance of the assessment and program model at each site will, in the end, determine the level of success achieved by this new approach. While many challenges remain, paths to success are coming more clearly into focus.

In closing, as James Short reminds us, controversies concerning the realities of measuring various aspects of criminality, including gang involvement, are always subject to distortion of the phenomena they are meant to represent (Short 2009). No risk assessment, especially one intended to portend gang involvement (such as the one described here) will be flawless. Nonetheless, we believe that the assessment reviewed here is promising, and we hope that others will choose to develop and test assessments in the interest of strengthening approaches to gang prevention and intervention.

Acknowledgements

The assessment discussed here, called the Gang Risk of Entry Factors (GREF) assessment is the generic version of an assessment tailored to the Los Angeles context called the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET). The YSET is a customized tool, developed for Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development program. The authors would like to acknowledge support from the GRYD program for our work developing the assessment and sustaining its implementation by the GRYD program service providers.

The questions included on the GREF assessment are provided in the Appendix without the adaptations made specifically for the Los Angeles context, i.e., clarifying synonyms.

While the current report describes the development of the GREF assessment, we also acknowledge support for an ongoing prospective test of the assessment by AWARD No. 2008-IJ-CX-0016 from the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice or those of Los Angeles GRYD program.

Notes

1. Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development Program (GRYD), see http://mayor.lacity.org/Issues/GangReduction/index.htm.
2. Constance Rice, co-director of the Advancement Project, convened a panel of local experts on gang research and programs in the aftermath of their report (Advancement Project 2007). The group included some of the authors of this paper.

3. In the Los Angeles GRYD program, the assessment developed is known as the YSET, Youth Services Eligibility Tool, which was drafted by the first three authors of this paper and Malcolm Klein.
4. A couple of agencies resisted to the point of working to circumvent the mandated GRYD program requirements. These challenges required intervention on the part of the GRYD program director's staff and precipitated some turnover in the agencies that staffed the program.
5. For example, 'illegal' was defined as 'against the law'; 'skipped school without an excuse' was defined as 'ditched without permission'; 'selling drugs' as 'slanging'; 'dangerous' as 'risky, not safe.'
6. This concept has been tested in at least three studies and was strongly related to gang involvement in all three studies conducted in Miami (Eitle *et al.* 2004), Los Angeles (Maxson *et al.* 1997), and Rochester (Thornberry *et al.* 2003).
7. This factor was found to be predictive of gang joining in Montreal (Craig *et al.* 2002, Gatti *et al.* 2005); Seattle (Hill *et al.* 1999); Pittsburgh (Lahey *et al.* 1999); and Rochester (Thornberry *et al.* 2003).
8. Low self-control and gang involvement as been confirmed across the sample of large and medium US cities involved in the G.R.E.A.T. Program including Las Cruces, NM; Omaha, NE; Phoenix, AZ; Philadelphia, PA; Kansas City, MO; Milwaukee, WI; Orlando, FL; Will County, IL; Providence, RI; Pocatello, ID; and Torrance, CA (Esbensen and Deschenes 1998); The Hague, Netherlands (Esbensen and Weerman 2005); Denver, CO (Huizinga *et al.* 1998); and Los Angeles, CA (Maxson *et al.* 1997, 1998).
9. Neutralizing justifications for involvement in crime has been associated with gang involvement across the sample of large and medium US cities involved in the G.R.E.A.T. program evaluation (Esbensen and Deschenes 1998, Esbensen *et al.* 2001) and in Denver (Huizinga *et al.* 1998); The Hague, Netherlands (Esbensen and Weerman 2005); Seattle (Hill *et al.* 1999) and in Rochester (Thornberry *et al.* 2003).
10. Studies documenting a relationship between parental monitoring and gang joining include studies in Montreal (Craig *et al.* 2002, Gatti *et al.* 2005); Seattle (Hill *et al.* 1999); Rochester (Thornberry *et al.* 2003); Denver (Huizinga *et al.* 1998); Los Angeles (Maxson *et al.* 1998); The Hague, Netherlands (Esbensen and Weerman 2005); and the sample of large and medium US cities involved in the G.R.E.A.T. program (Esbensen and Deschenes 1998).
11. Negative peer influence was related to gang involvement in the sample of large and medium US cities involved in the G.R.E.A.T. program (Esbensen and Deschenes 1998, Esbensen *et al.* 2001), Seattle (Hill *et al.* 1999); and Los Angeles (Maxson *et al.* 1998).
12. Studies confirming the relationship between peer delinquency and gang joining were conducted in Edinburgh, Scotland (Bradshaw 2005); Montreal (Craig *et al.* 2002); Oklahoma (Eitle *et al.* 2004); Seattle (Hill *et al.* 1999); Pittsburgh (Lahey *et al.* 1999); Rochester (Thornberry *et al.* 2003); Denver (Huizinga *et al.* 1998); Los Angeles (Maxson *et al.* 1997, 1998); The Hague, Netherlands (Esbensen and Weerman 2005); and the sample of large and medium US cities involved in the G.R.E.A.T. program (Esbensen and Deschenes 1998).
13. In the process of tailoring the assessment for the Los Angeles context, we added a brief measure of family gang influence as a context-specific factor for the Los Angeles GRYD program based on data gathered in the pilot test. This factor is not included in the analyses here.
14. The risk literature on female gang joining is less robust than that on males. Fewer risk factors for girls emerge in these analyses and these typically are also risk factors for boys (Klein and Maxson 2006). Given the paucity of studies on girls' risk factors, we decided include the same factors for both sexes but to use the available data to calibrate different cutpoints where appropriate. We could not take age into consideration at this point because the G.R.E.A.T. sample and GRYD program overlapped for a narrow age span. Later, after several months of assessments accumulated, cutpoints that varied by age were adopted.
15. See http://www.umsl.edu/ccj/Eurogang/instruments.html
16. There is always a possibility when changes like this are observed that they are the result of finding a way to circumvent the system. In fact one zone clearly had issues of this nature; the GRYD program director took strong and immediate steps to stop it. We have no way to be certain but there is ample anecdotal evidence of changes in recruitment approaches that are consistent with recruiting higher risk referrals.

17. GRYD Summer Night Lights is an anti-gang initiative that keeps parks open after dark with free food and expanded programming.
18. A prospective test of the predictive validity of the Gang Risk of Entry Factors (GREF) assessment funded by the National Institute of Justice (AWARD No. 2008-IJ-CX-0016) is underway.
19. A locally funded evaluation of the GRYD family systems-based program is also underway.

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Appendix

GREF ASSESSMENT: Los Angeles GRYD program version, the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET)

Antisocial/prosocial tendencies total (Mn on 5-point scale= 15.91, SE = .056, range = 6–30)

- I try to be nice to other people because I care about their feelings.
- I get very angry and lose my temper.
- I do as I am told.
- I try to scare people to get what I want.
- I am accused of not telling the truth or cheating.
- I take things that are not mine from home, school, or elsewhere.

Weak parental supervision total (Mn on 5-point scale = 7.34, SE = .044, range = 3–15)

- When I go out, I tell my parents or guardians where I am going or leave them a note (or text or phone them).
- My parents or guardians know where I am when I am not at home or at school.
- My parents or guardians know who I am with, when I am not at home or at school.

Critical life events total (Mn count = 4.03, SE = .023, range = 0–7)

- Did you fail to go on to the next grade in school or fail a class in school?
- Did you get suspended, expelled or transferred to another school for disciplinary reasons?
- Did you go out on a date with a boyfriend or girlfriend for the very first time?
- Did you break up with a boyfriend or girlfriend or did he or she break up with you?
- Did you have a big fight or problem with a friend?
- Did you start hanging out with a new group of friends?
- Did anyone you were close to die or get seriously injured?

Impulsive risk taking total (Mn on 5-point scale = 13.58, SE = .047, range = 4–20)

- Sometimes I like to do something dangerous just for the fun of it.
- I sometimes find it exciting to do things that might get me in trouble.
- I often do things without stopping to think if I will get in trouble for it.
- I like to have fun when I can, even if I will get into trouble for it later.

Neutralization total (Mn on 5-point scale = 18.51, SE = .062, range = 6–30)

- It is okay for me to lie (or not tell the truth) if it will keep my friends from getting in trouble with parents, teachers, or police.
- It is okay for me to lie (or not tell the truth) to someone if it will keep me from getting into trouble with him or her.
- It is okay to steal something from someone who is rich and can easily replace it.
- It is okay to take little things from a store without paying for them because stores make so

much money that it won't hurt them.
- It is okay to beat people up if they hit me first.
- It is okay to beat people up if I do it to stand up for myself.

Negative peer influence total (Mn on 5-point scale = 13.18, SE = .082, range = 5–25)

- If your friends were getting you into trouble at home, would you still hang out with them?
- If your friends were getting you into trouble at school, would you still hang out with them?
- If your friends were getting you into trouble with the police, would you still hang out with them?
- If your friends told you not to do something because it is wrong, would you listen to them?
- If your friends told you not to do something because it is against the law, would you listen to them?

Family gang influence (35% two or more think you will; 34% two or more family gang members)

- Including everyone you think of as being in your family, how many people in your family think that you probably will join a gang someday?
- How many people in your family are gang members now?

Peer delinquency total (Mn on 5-point scale = 10.69. SE = .055, range = 5–25)

- How many of your friends have skipped school without an excuse?
- How many of your friends have stolen something?
- How many of your friends have attacked someone with a weapon?
- How many of your friends have sold marijuana or other illegal drugs?
- How many of your friends have used any of these: cigarettes, tobacco, alcohol, marijuana or other illegal drugs?
- How many of your friends have belonged to a gang?

Self-report delinquency total (6 months time frame) Mn count = 4.43, SE = .044, range = 0–17)

- Used alcohol or cigarettes?
- Used marijuana or other illegal drugs?
- Used paint or glue or other things you inhale to get high?
- Skipped classes without an excuse?
- Lied about your age to get into some place or to buy something?
- Avoided paying for things such as movies, bus, or subway rides?
- Purposely damaged or destroyed property not belonging to you?
- Carried a hidden weapon for protection?
- Illegally spray painted a wall or a building – doing graffiti?
- Stolen or tried to steal something worth $50 or less?
- Stolen or tried to steal something worth more than $50?
- Gone into or tried to go into a building to steal something?
- Hit someone with the idea of hurting him/her?
- Attacked someone with a weapon?
- Used a weapon or force to get money or things from people?
- Been involved in gang fights?
- Sold marijuana or other illegal drugs?
- Hung out with gang members in your neighborhood?
- Participated in gang activities or actions?
- Been a member of a gang?

Used to screen for gang involvement:
Based on provider feedback (asked only if the youth indicated he or she is in a gang)

- Did you have to do anything to join the gang? Explain . . .
- Which of the things in the list above have you done with another member of your gang in the last 6 months?

From: Eurogang Youth Survey (http://www.umsl.edu/ccj/eurogang/euroganghome.html)
Some people have a group of friends that they spend time with, doing things together, just hanging out or kicking it. Do you have a group of friends like that?

- How old are the people in your group of friends?
- Does your group of friends spend a lot of time together in public places like the park, the street, shopping areas, or out in the neighborhood?
- How long has this group existed?
- Is doing illegal things accepted or okay for your group?
- Do people in your group actually do illegal things together?
- What kind of illegal things do people in your group do together?

Auxiliary questions

- Is your group of friends: a gang, a crew, clique, crowd, or posse that is not a gang?
- Right now, are you a gang member, a member of a crew, clique, crowd, or posse that is not a gang?
- Does your group have a name?
- Tell me three things that you and others in your group do together

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

United States Agency for International Development

and

City of Los Angeles

I. Purpose

The United States Agency for International Development (hereinafter referred to as "USAID") and the City of Los Angeles have a common interest in improving citizen security in Latin America and the Caribbean ("LAC"). USAID seeks to expand and strengthen its relationships with cities around the world that are committed to collaborating on programs that prevent crime and violence in LAC.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is to establish an alliance (the "Alliance") between USAID and the City of L.A. (each referred to as a "Participant" and collectively as "Participants") to further the goals set forth below, and to outline the understandings and intentions with regard to these shared goals.

The Participants share the following citizen security goals:

- Improve citizen security in the LAC region;
- Reduce risk factors that lead youth into criminal activity; and,
- Provide new opportunities for youth at risk.

The Participants seek to share their respective strengths, experiences, technologies, methodologies, and other available resources in order to achieve these goals.

Pursuant to this MOU, the Participants intend to work together on projects that reflect shared values and to focus on identifying target sub-regions and/or countries. This MOU provides the framework and scope within which specific projects may be jointly developed and implemented as outlined in subsequent Project Memoranda of Agreement or Activity-Level Memoranda of Agreement ("Project MOAs").

The Participants enter into this MOU while wishing to maintain their own separate and unique missions and mandates and their own accountabilities. Unless specifically provided otherwise, the cooperation among the Participants as outlined in this MOU shall not be construed as a partnership or other type of legal entity or personality. Each Participant shall accept full and sole responsibility for any and all expenses it incurs related to this MOU. Nothing in this MOU shall be construed as superseding or interfering in any way with any agreements or contracts entered into among the Participants, either prior to or subsequent to the signing of this MOU. Nothing in this MOU shall be construed as an exclusive working relationship. The Participants specifically acknowledge that this MOU is not an obligation of funds, nor does it constitute a legally binding commitment by any Participant or create any rights in any third Participant.

Either Participant shall have the right to pursue their own interest and may also enter into similar agreement(s) with any other Participants. The Participants also acknowledge that they are not under any legal obligation to enter into a definitive agreement with respect to the Alliance or any other discussions held under this Memorandum.

II. Objective

The USAID and the City of L.A. seek to collaborate on programs that aim to reduce youth crime and violence in LAC. This MOU will formalize the Participants' commitment to share best practices, including technical assistance and training, on crime and violence prevention programming.

III. Partner Roles, Responsibilities, and Notices

1. USAID

USAID Background

USAID is an independent federal government agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the Secretary of State. USAID supports international development and advances U.S. foreign policy objectives by supporting economic growth, food security, environmental and global climate change programs, global health, democracy and governance, and humanitarian assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Near East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe and Eurasia.

To achieve citizen security in LAC, USAID works with developing countries, civil society, the private sector, and other development organizations to support community-based approaches to crime and violence prevention.

USAID Role

Under the Alliance, USAID intends to:

- Identify USAID Missions where cooperation would be beneficial to both Participants;
- Facilitate and support communication between the City of L.A. and USAID Mission staff;
- Collaborate with the City of L.A. to define project scope and activities that will further the citizen security goals outlined in Section I above;
- Provide technical input, advice, and assistance to project activities; and
- Contribute technical know-how and funding to support Alliance activities.

All notices to USAID shall be sent to the following USAID Point of Contact:

Enrique Roig
Coordinator, CARSI
USAID
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Phone Number: (202) 712 – 4011
Email Address: eroig@usaid.gov

2. City of L.A.

City of L.A. Background

As Mayor of Los Angeles, Antonio Villaraigosa has pursued an agenda of making Los Angeles the safest big city in America, building a 21st century transportation system, achieving fundamental and far-reaching education reform, spurring economic development by eliminating government red tape and streamlining the City bureaucracy, and making Los Angeles a national model of sustainability and green growth.

Under Villaraigosa's leadership, Los Angeles has reached a number of historic milestones. More police officers are on the streets than at any point in City history. Crime has dropped to levels not seen since the 1950s. The Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) has developed the City's first comprehensive anti-gang strategy and has contributed to a dramatic citywide decline in gang violence.

City of L.A. Role

Under the Alliance, the Mayor's Office on Gang Reduction and Youth Development of City of L.A. (hereinafter referred to as "GRYD") intends to:

1. Provide support on best practices and lessons learned to USAID citizen security LAC programs as part of fora and technical working meetings to exchange information on prevention programs;

2. Provide technical support and training to USAID citizen security LAC programs on tools and techniques related to crime and violence prevention programming;

3. Assist in the establishment of a Community of Practice between Los Angeles and USAID citizen security LAC USAID; and,

4. Support City to City Exchanges with corresponding cities in Central America and Mexico to highlight certain programmatic approaches as part of USAID citizen security LAC programs.

All notices to City of L.A. shall be sent to the following City of L.A. Point of Contact:

Guillermo Cespedes
Deputy Mayor
Gang Reduction and Youth Development

Email Address: Guillermo.cespedes@lacity.org

Either Participant hereto may, by notice in writing to the other Participant, designate additional representatives or substitute other representatives for those designated in this Memorandum.

IV. Implementation

The City of L.A. and USAID intend to establish an Alliance managed by the LAC Bureau's CARSI Coordinator and City of L.A.'s Deputy Mayor Guillermo Cespedes. It is expected that the Alliance will undertake following activities:

1.1. Quarterly update calls between the Participants to review ongoing and potential projects;

1.2. Bilateral meetings between the Participants' relevant technical teams for the areas of collaboration identified above, to be held as soon as reasonably possible and as frequently as necessary for the respective technical teams; and

1.3. Efforts to facilitate joint meetings between Senior Management of the Participants to emphasize themes and provide momentum to on-going initiatives.

1.4. Where specific projects of mutual interest are contemplated, the Participants may seek to enter into one or more project MOAs, consistent with the terms of this MOU, it being understood that (i) such Project MOAs may describe specific resource commitments of the Participants, and (ii) other entities may be invited to engage in specific initiatives;

1.5. The City of L.A. and USAID may consult on matters arising out of this MOU and on other matters of common interest. Any exchange of information between the Participants shall be subject to their respective policies and procedures on the disclosure of information as may be agreed in writing by the Participants for each individual project or area of collaboration or on a more general basis.

The Participants acknowledge that this MOU is not an obligation of funds. However, the Participants intend to align resources to implement and scale existing and planned programs in the aforementioned focus areas, with a goal of mutual investment and mutual benefit.

V. Publicity and Communications

Where relevant, branding will be accomplished in accordance with the Participants' respective legal, policy, and procedural requirements.

The Participants intend to respect each other's confidentiality policies, with the mutual understanding that the Participants intend to publicize their Alliance and its objectives without disclosing any confidential or proprietary information of the other Participant. The

Participants may make this MOU publicly available in accordance with their policies or procedures regarding the public disclosure of information. Any press release, public commentary, or other disclosure regarding the content of this MOU shall be subject to the prior written consent of the other Participant.

VI. Effective Date, Duration, Amendments, and Termination

This MOU becomes effective on the date of the last signature of all the Participants and is expected to continue for three (3) years from such effective date. However, the Participants may decide, in writing, to extend this period. In addition, this MOU may be modified or amended if all Participants agree in writing. Either Participant may terminate this MOU at any time but shall endeavor to provide a written notice to the other Participant at least 30 days in advance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Participants, each acting through their duly authorized representatives, have caused this MOU to be signed in their names and delivered as of October 11, 2012.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By: _____
(Signature)

Name: Rajiv Shah
Title: Administrator

Date: _____

City of Los Angeles

By: _____
(Signature)

Name: Antonio Villaraigosa
Title: Mayor

Date: _____