

Evaluation of the Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development Program: Final Y1 Report

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Executive Summary

Introduction

This Executive Summary presents the main findings from the year 1¹ report of the Urban Institute/Harder+Company evaluation of the Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development Program (GRYD). The report describes in some detail the considerable progress and challenges associated with implementing the GRYD program and the difficult but successful creation of a strong research design, data collection systems and initial data sets for an ongoing evaluation of the program’s impact over the next year.

GRYD Program Structure and Organization

GRYD is a multiyear initiative managed by the Los Angeles Mayor’s Office through its GRYD office (established in 2007). Program objectives are to reduce crime and violence associated with street gangs through the implementation of three core program components:

(1) Prevention

Inhibiting gang-joining through the provision of prevention services to youth ages 10–15 who are not already gang members

(2) Intervention

Providing services to gang members ages 14–25 to assist leaving the gang life

(3) Crisis Management

Engaging in immediate reaction to gang conflicts and other street level incidents as they arise and conducting ongoing peacekeeping activities in gang communities to help keep retaliations and flare-ups under control.

In 2008, the GRYD office issued competitive solicitations for service providers in each of these three components; 18 organizations were awarded contracts to provide services in 12 locations (designated “zones”) throughout the city: 77th II, Baldwin Village, Boyle Heights, Cypress Park, Florence-Graham, Newton, Panorama City/Mission, Pacoima/Foothill, Rampart,

¹ Throughout this report, Y1 designates the first 15 months of the evaluation.

Ramona Gardens, Southwest II, and Watts. A map depicting the location of each zone is provided in Appendix A. All 12 GRYD zones are included in the evaluation.

Evaluation Objectives and Procedures during Y1

The evaluation, per the April 2009 contract with Los Angeles, has two primary objectives: first, to conduct an implementation evaluation of the GRYD program and provide the GRYD office with feedback so that it can adjust its program approach if warranted; second, to conduct an outcome evaluation that assesses changes over time in at-risk levels for prevention youth, document the extent to which youth in the intervention program exit the gang life, and review the community-level changes in violence and criminality that can be attributed to the GRYD program.

Implementation process data have been collected throughout Y1 through direct observations of GRYD planning activities, collection and review of relevant documents from service providers in each zone, cross-zone provider and GRYD office meetings and forums, interviews with GRYD office staff, on-site interviews with provider organizations, interviews with local gang detectives and other gang officers, and on-site observations. During the year, the evaluation team has provided GRYD management with regular feedback on its activities and on those of the providers. The team has contributed to the development of information gathering practices and systems that are a prerequisite for the GRYD program to avoid the same end result as LA Bridges—failure to be able to demonstrate what has been done and what effect it had.

The intent at the outset of the evaluation was to begin compiling outcome data as quickly as possible and report on initial results in this report. Even under the best of circumstances, the scope of any outcome evaluation would, of necessity, have been very limited, and comprehensive outcome findings were not anticipated by the GRYD office until at least the second year. When the evaluation began in April 2009, the GRYD program was operating at a very modest level, with very few clients and virtually no systematic information gathering. Over time, the number of clients increased, though not to GRYD's target levels, but developing information systems turned out to be very challenging. The consequence was that the evaluation was significantly handicapped during Y1 with respect to the outcome component. This will change in year 2, due to the progress made by the GRYD office on critical support factors.

Program Complexity, Program Model Deficiency, and Diversity of Service Provision

The GRYD program is considerably more complex and varied than portrayed in either the program or evaluation request for proposals (RFPs). This is perhaps the biggest reason why the comprehensive implementation evaluation conducted in Y1 was so time intensive, as well as a factor in why design decisions and data systems for outcome evaluation have taken so long in developing. In many ways, there has been no single GRYD program, but rather 36 different contexts (12 zones, 3 program components in each zone). In addition, for much of the time since GRYD began up to June 2010, GRYD service providers operated without a well-specified program design or model beyond the statements of general principles and recommended activities outlined in the original GRYD RFPs. This independent operation has resulted in the implementation of a wide array of services across the GRYD zones, some of which were similar to other zones, and some of which were different. Several providers continued the same kind of service provision they had offered under LA Bridges, or which they had normally engaged in previously. This inter-zone variability is summarized further in the main body of the report and reported in detail in individual zone profiles.² This had a profound impact on what the evaluation has been able to accomplish with respect to outcomes, since there has been no unified strategy.

By the end of Y1, the GRYD program had reached a more developed statement for the prevention program focusing on three components: the individual, the family, and peer groups. A formal statement of this revision was produced with the intent of integrating it into Y2 prevention provider activities. For intervention, the Los Angeles Violence Intervention Training Academy (LAVITA) was established and provided standardized training to the first cohort of GRYD intervention staff in March 2010. The advantage of this for the evaluation is that it will permit a more thorough assessment of provider services and their effects.

Recruitment and Enrollment

The pace of program development, and the ability to fully evaluate, is mirrored in the pace of GRYD client recruitment. Recruitment of youth into both prevention and intervention case services programs proceeded more slowly than initially anticipated. By the end of Y1, for example, most prevention providers had not yet reached the 200 client target levels. Intervention

² Available separately from the GRYD office.

providers were mostly at or close to their 50 client target. The zones and the number of youth they have enrolled in the GRYD program are displayed below.

Zone	Enrollment by March, 2010	
	Prevention	Intervention
77 th II	200	39
Baldwin Village	158	55
Boyle Heights	147	58
Cypress Park	79	74
Florence-Graham	23	50
Newton	134	48
Panorama City/Mission	118	51
Pacoima/Foothill	128	40
Rampart	145	43
Ramona Gardens	113	44
Southwest II	131	75
Watts	42	40
Total	1418	617

By the end of the year, the pace of recruitment has been increasing, and it appears that original target levels will be reached early in the next contract year.

GRYDIS Challenges

The Gang Reduction and Youth Development Information System (GRYDIS), which was designed to be the foundation for program activity monitoring by the GRYD office and for dosage measurement for both the providers and the evaluation, did not become operational in Y1. This resulted in a lack of standardized activity data for both the GRYD office and the evaluators for the start-up year. While GRYDIS has been rolled out and training will be provided to prevention providers for full implementation during the early stages of next year, it is still unclear whether this or another automated activity tracking system will be implemented for intervention providers. It is critical both for GRYD management and for the evaluation that GRYDIS be fully implemented.

Because of the provider training required to implement GRYDIS, the GRYD office and the evaluation team jointly determined that no parallel and duplicative information collection system should be imposed on providers while GRYDIS was being developed. It was considered that the burden would be unreasonable and could well impede program activities. Assuming that

providers will find GRYDIS sufficiently useful to their operations and client management and that data input to GRYDIS will be comprehensive, the system should provide, in Y2, the information on prevention provider clients and services that the evaluation needs. It is not yet certain that GRYDIS can or will be adapted to intervention provider needs.

The Impact of Summer Night Lights

During the summer of 2009, a substantial investment was made by the GRYD office in Summer Night Lights (SNL), a program of community activities in parks serving zone residents that includes gang prevention and outreach. SNL has been substantially expanded for the summer of 2010 and the level of effort for Program Managers and provider staff will expand accordingly. This made it difficult for GRYD Program Managers to meet both zone and SNL demands on their time. SNL was not originally conceived as the major component of GRYD that it has become. In fact, it was not even mentioned in initial program materials or solicitations and was not built into the evaluation solicitation. However, because of its growing importance and the resources committed to it by both GRYD office staff and zone prevention and intervention providers, the ongoing evaluation will need to incorporate an assessment of SNL and its community-level outcomes. The GRYD office and the evaluation team have agreed that beginning in Y2, SNL will become a formal component of the evaluation work plan.

Weak Provisions in Y1 Provider Contracts

Service providers' first priority is of course service. Adequate attention to the added demands of evaluation typically requires a clear and enforced contractual obligation. The first provider contracts lacked effective language that spelled out provider responsibilities with respect to the evaluation. This made it difficult for either the GRYD office or the evaluation team to insist on provider compliance with evaluation requirements. It also contributed to GRYD office decisions to cancel scheduled group meetings for prevention and intervention providers and to disband a working group of intervention practitioners organized by the evaluation team to provide input to evaluation requirements. Provider resistance, particularly from intervention providers, was considered too strong to overcome.

Though providers (informally in discussions with the evaluation team), and the GRYD office (contractually in the award and in subsequent meetings) agreed that a strong evaluation is necessary to avoid the LA Bridges I and II lack of accountability, and to clearly identify which

provider services have the most beneficial effects, the contract structure for accomplishing this was not in place during Y1. The contract language in the Y2 awards is expected to correct this problem.

Slow Processing of the UI-Los Angeles Police Department MOU

The slow processing of the UI-Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) memorandum of understanding (MOU) at the LA City level, and subsequent technical difficulties in obtaining geo-coded data from LAPD after the MOU was signed, impeded the evaluation's ability to process gang and crime data at the zone level. It has taken 15 months to get to the point where geocoded LAPD data are being provided. Nevertheless, after all the legal difficulties were overcome, the cooperation level from LAPD has been excellent and, going forward into Y2, we anticipate being able to fully document law enforcement activities in the GRYD zones and in comparison areas in other locations in the city. With the support of a designated point of contact for the evaluation, LAPD's Compstat section is producing crime, arrest, and call-for-service data going back to 2004/2005. Ongoing data provision will be conducted at six month intervals through the end of the evaluation.

Youth Services Eligibility Tool and Retest Results

The outcome evaluation and its piloting of change measures are intimately tied to the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET). YSET is an interview protocol developed by gang researchers for the GRYD office to measure levels of risk across a number of domains among youth referred for prevention services. Levels of risk are calculated by researchers at the University of Southern California (USC) to decide whether referred youth are eligible for services.

From the commencement of GRYD through mid-June 2010, the City of Los Angeles and USC were unable to agree to a contract for the performance of YSET eligibility tests. Though this did not prevent the USC team from conducting the YSET eligibility screening reviews or from returning the eligibility decisions to the prevention providers, it did complicate the provision of individual client YSET information to the evaluation team. This delayed the commencement of the YSET retest process, which at intervals of six months after date of enrollment the evaluation plans to administer to all prevention clients. This key evaluation component permits an analysis of the changes, if any, in risk factor scores, delinquent and criminal behaviors, and gang involvement of each client, and provides individual client

information to service agencies so they can adapt their service approach to particular youth. However, with the cooperation of the USC team in providing initial client responses to the YSET interview in the Spring of 2010, the evaluation team was able to successfully conduct a pilot implementation of 150 client retests in five GRYD zones and two non-GRYD zones in April and May of 2010. Though not representative of the entire GRYD program (because of the small number of participants and the fact that seven GRYD zones were not engaged), the results for the 150 clients were encouraging. On average there was statistically significant improvement in risk levels and some behaviors. The YSET retest process will be implemented in all zones for all clients beginning in September 2010.

Conclusion

The evaluation and the GRYD program have made great progress during Y1 despite being confronted by many challenges. In this report, we have identified these and delineated the responses to them by both the GRYD office and the evaluation team. The situation at the end of Y1 is encouraging in a number of critical areas.

First, the service provider contracts are expected to be much more explicit with respect to formal program and evaluation requirements. This will enhance programmatic monitoring and management, as well as the interface between the evaluation and providers.

Second, the GRYD office has made major forward movement in both the prevention and intervention areas. Program definition has occurred, and training is being provided. This will increase the strength and consistency of service provision and should result in superior client experiences.

Third, a necessary information system, GRYDIS for prevention agencies, is now on-line for data entry, and should assist providers in day-to-day management of clients and activities. To the extent that it does, the evaluation will benefit by being able to electronically derive client and service details in a simple and ongoing process.

Fourth, LAPD data provision problems are now solved and citywide, geocoded data sets will shortly be available. These will support in-depth analysis of crime and gang activity both in GRYD zones and elsewhere.

Fifth, the pilot of the YSET retest process has demonstrated that providers are able to effectively conduct retests of their clients. This will enable the evaluation team to set up and implement the retest process across all zones and for all clients in Y2. The feedback to providers

about individual client progress will permit adjustment and adaptation of service provision on a case-by-case basis. The process will also permit, by the end of Y2, outcome assessment of the GRYD program with respect to client changes in risk scores and delinquent or criminal behavior.

Finally, at a Los Angeles meeting on June 23–24, between the GRYD office, the Evaluation Advisory Committee and the Evaluation team, the following important design decisions were reached:

- It was agreed that a randomized experimental design has a low probability of being successfully implemented for the prevention component, and that a failed experimental design would be worse than a successful, though somewhat less rigorous, alternative. Consequently, it was decided that the prevention evaluation would employ a “regression discontinuity” design, coupled with other analytic techniques (for factors not suited to regression discontinuity—e.g., self-reported delinquency/criminality). This approach does not risk the “denial of service” ethical dilemma that would be a consequence of randomly assigning at-risk youth to a non-service control group. For that reason and others, it is thus not likely to stimulate provider resistance.
- Intervention effects will be assessed during Y2 at the community level, rather than at the individual level. This decision was based on two factors. First, informed consent from intervention clients to share confidential information with the evaluators is not obtained by providers, as it is for prevention. This means that the evaluation team is barred by federal regulations from reviewing or analyzing individual intervention client data. Second, intervention agency staff members have expressed concern that their ability to effectively work with gang-involved clients would be compromised if those clients learned that they were being individually assessed by an external organization. During Y2, this issue will be revisited to explore alternate possibilities for individual level analysis.
- The evaluation team will enhance its working relationship with LAVITA staff and will develop procedures and techniques for assessing the impact of LAVITA on intervention activities in the GRYD zones.
- An evaluation of Summer Night Lights will be incorporated into the evaluation scope of work. During the 2010 SNL period (July through September), the evaluation team will cooperate and coordinate with SNL information gathering being conducted by the GRYD

office (through surveys), and will subsequently develop an approach to measuring community response to SNL. In addition, the evaluation will analyze LAPD data to make an assessment of the effects of SNL on crime and delinquency.

- The YSET retest process will be initiated across all zones early in Y2 and will be conducted by prevention providers. All GRYD prevention clients will be retested at six month intervals after program entry. UI/Harder will randomly identify a sample of retested youth for one-on-one interviews with evaluation team staff. The purpose will be to check the retest responses for the interviewed youth and clarify/elaborate those responses as needed.
- The GRYD cabinet and the GRYD multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) will not be included in the evaluation's Y2 scope of work. However, during Y2, Harder/UI will obtain information concerning cabinet and MDT activities from the GRYD office in preparation for possible Y3 evaluation of those activities.

All of this bodes well for the GRYD program and its evaluation during Y2. There is more clarity of purpose and foundation for progress. Program implementation is much stronger than a year ago and there have been breakthroughs in design decisions and data systems serving both programming and evaluation. Some challenges with implementing new ideas remain but the prospect of reporting more solid program implementation and rigorous outcome results in the Y2 annual evaluation report appears to be quite strong.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AADAP	Asian American Drug Abuse Program (77th Division II)
AFS	Alma Family Services (Boyle Heights)
Bridge	Building Resources for the Intervention and Deterrence of Gang Engagement
CB	Community Build, Inc. (Baldwin Village)
CBCL	Child Behavior Checklist
CHLA	Children’s Hospital of LA (Cypress Park)
CIS	Communities in Schools (Pacoima Foothill)
CLEAR	Community Law Enforcement and Recovery
EAC	Evaluation Advisory Committee
FFT	Functional Family Therapy
LACC	LA Conservation Corps (Watts Southeast)
LAM	LA Metropolitan Churches (Florence-Graham)
LAPD	Los Angeles Police Department
LAVITA	Los Angeles Violence Intervention Training Academy
LARRC	Los Angeles Risk and Resiliency Check-Up Assessment Tool
LAUSD	Los Angeles Unified School District
GRP	Gang Reduction Program
GRYD	Gang Reduction and Youth Development
GRYDIS	Gang Reduction and Youth Development Information System
Harder	Harder+Company Community Research
MDT	Multidisciplinary team
NDY	New Directions for Youth (Panorama City)
NGC	National Gang Center
OJJDP	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (US Department of Justice)
RFP	Request for Proposals
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SEA	Soledad Enrichment Action (multiple intervention sites)
SNL	Summer Night Lights
UCI	University of California-Irvine
UI	Urban Institute
USC	University of Southern California
VIP	Violence Intervention Program (Ramona Gardens)
WLCAC	Watts Labor Community Action Committee (Watts)
Y1	Year 1 (represents the first 15 months of the evaluation)
YSET	Youth Services Eligibility Tool

Introduction

This report presents first year findings of the multi-year implementation and outcome evaluation by the Urban Institute (UI) and Harder+Company (Harder) of the Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development Program (GRYD). GRYD is a \$20 million per year initiative managed by the Mayor's Office in the City of Los Angeles to prevent at-risk youth from joining street gangs, intervene with individual gang members to help them leave gangs, and to respond to crisis situations associated with gang activities. Twelve geographic "zones" are targeted across the city for enhanced prevention and intervention services. The evaluation covers all 12 zones.

The report begins with an overview of the context of gang activity and crime in Los Angeles under which the GRYD program was conceptualized in 2007. The organization of the GRYD program is described and the process of implementation of a wide variety of prevention and intervention programs across all zones is documented from the origin of the GRYD office in 2008 through Y1.³ Key implementation challenges and successes are highlighted. In addition, the results of a pilot assessment of changes in risk factors and delinquent behaviors are presented for a sample of youth that received GRYD prevention services early in Y1. The report also discusses the methodological challenges to the evaluation encountered during Y1, describes how these challenges have been overcome, and plans for an enhanced implementation process evaluation and the measurement of intermediate and longer term individual and community level outcomes that may be associated with GRYD.

³ Throughout this report, Y1 designates the first 15 months of the evaluation.

Chapter I

Gangs and Crime: A Review of the Literature

1.1. Overview of Street Gangs in the United States

1.1.1. Introduction

According to Howell and Moore (2010), street gangs⁴ emerged in the United States about 1783, shortly after the end of the American Revolution. However, they question how serious a problem these early groups actually were and suggest that serious gang involvement in street crime did not actually develop until the early 1800s. These early gangs grew first on the East Coast and later in the Midwest consistent with population growth and migration patterns of the time. Gang growth was reportedly stimulated by European immigration to the United States where many groups settled urban areas and suffered from both poverty and discrimination by native-born residents (Howell and Moore, 2010, p. 1). The internal migration of poor and unskilled blacks to Northern cities from the South in the 1930s and after World War II led to the emergence of black gangs first in the Eastern and Midwestern areas of the country. Mexican immigration to these cities over the same period similarly led to the formation of large, violent Latino street gangs, such as the Latin Disciples and Latin Kings (Howell and Moore, 2010).

Organized street gangs did not appear in the Western part of the United States until the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Redfield, 1941; Rubel, 1965; Howell and Moore, 2010). These early gangs were largely comprised of young men of Mexican heritage (Latino and Chicano). Latino street gang growth was fueled by large waves of immigration from Mexico to the Southwest and California in the early 1900s. Poverty and discrimination were also important factors associated with gang growth in the West but physical and cultural “marginalization” also were major forces helping to shape the growth and characteristics of these groups (Howell and Moore, 2010, p. 9). Black migration following World War II also led to the emergence of black street gangs throughout the West beginning in the late 1940s (Howell and Moore, 2010).

For most of the 20th century, gang activity remained relatively local and disorganized with youth congregating to participate in illicit activities and then disbanding with little

⁴ “Serious street gangs are typically characterized as having a multiple-year history, having a large membership (varies widely), being somewhat organized (having some sort of hierarchy and leadership roles), and being involved in violent crimes in the course of street presence (e.g., homicide, aggravated assault, robbery, use of firearms)” (Howell, 1999, 2006).

intervention on the part of social service agencies or law enforcement. However, the 1980s saw a rapid expansion in gangs and gang activity. While the cause of this gang explosion is not clear, some have speculated that the crack-cocaine epidemic, economic conditions limiting opportunities for youth, gang migration and glamorizing gangs by the media may all have been reasons (Howell, 1998; Miller, 2001).

More recently gangs across the United States have been influenced by the immigration of a wide array of other ethnic groups, most notably from Central America, South America and Asia. The implantation and evolution of transnational gangs has resulted since the 1970s and led to additional gang growth and increased violence over the 1950s (Howell and Moore, 2010). Currently there are many faces to youthful street gang members as whites, females and youth not living in poverty or the inner cities have become active gang members nationwide (Howell and Moore, 2010).

1.1.2. National Estimates of Street Gang Prevalence

There is a substantial amount of uncertainty about the prevalence of street gangs, as well as the numbers of active gang members, in the United States. As Sheldon et al. (2001, p. 26) observed, “there are as many estimates as there are estimators.” For example, estimates of gang membership in the 1990s ranged from 660,000 to over 1.5 million (Esbensen, Winfree, He, and Taylor, 2004). One of the reasons for such varied estimates is the lack of consensus on what constitutes a gang, gang membership or gang activity. Even gang crimes are defined differently across jurisdictions. Moreover, systems for recording accurate data about gangs and gang members are sparse and inadequate (Violence Policy Center, 2009).

The most cited national estimates of gang prevalence and membership come from the annual National Youth Gang Surveys conducted by the National Gang Center (NGC—formerly the National Youth Gang Center). Under funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice, this survey polls law enforcement agencies across the United States about gang problems, gang prevalence and membership.

In its most recent survey the NGC reported that “approximately 774,000 gang members and 27,900 gangs are estimated to have been active in the United States in 2008” (Egley, et al., 2010, p. 1). These estimates are about the same as they were in 2007. However, the reported prevalence of gangs and gang members grew in larger cities, particularly in those with populations over 250,000. The NGC found this particularly significant as “these cities continue

to be the predominant location of both gangs and gang members in the United States” (Egley, et al., 2010, p.2).

In addition, the NGC also found that about one-third of the respondents reported serious gang problems in their jurisdictions and 45 percent reported that these problems were “getting worse” (Egley et al., 2010, p. 2). The reported incidence of gang problems is up substantially since 2001 when the annual survey found less than 25 percent of all study jurisdictions had significant gang problems. In contrast, from 1996 through 2001 the reported seriousness of gang problems among polled jurisdiction had been steadily declining. Of those reporting on gang-related crimes in 2008, 44 percent saw an increase in aggravated assaults, 41 percent reported increased drug sales, 41 percent noted an increase in firearms use and 20 percent reported an increase in gang-related homicides (Egley, et al. 2010, p. 2).

I.1.3. Gangs, Violence and Crime

I.1.3.a. Delinquency and Gangs

Although many teenagers exhibit problematic behaviors, including violence (White and Mason, 2006), research has consistently shown that, compared with other youth, gang members are more involved in delinquent behavior and crime. However, contrary to popular belief “the most common gang-related crimes are minor ones—thefts, vandalism, joy-riding, graffiti writing and drug use rather than drug sales” (Klein, in Reuters, 2007, p.2).

One longitudinal study in Denver revealed that gang members reported two to three times as much delinquency as non-gang members, often in the form of fighting with other gangs, but did not differ in their commitment to delinquent peers or their commitment to positive peers (Esbensen, Huizinga, and Weiher, 1993). Other longitudinal research on gang populations has found similar results, such as the Seattle Social Development Project, which determined that gang membership increases delinquent involvement even after controlling for the influence of delinquent friends (Battin, Hill, Abbott, Catalano, and Hawkins, 1998). Another pivotal longitudinal study tracking 4,000 young people in Rochester, New York across almost 10 years found that 30 percent of the sample joined a gang at some point before the end of high school. The gang-involved youth, about a third of the sample, accounted for the vast share of self-reported delinquency committed—65 percent of the delinquent acts, 86 percent of the serious delinquent acts, 69 percent of the violent delinquent acts, 70 percent of the drug sales, and 63

percent of the reported drug use. In addition, compared with youth who never joined a gang, the gang members were significantly more likely to drop out of school, become teenage parents, and have unstable employment (Browning, Thornberry, and Porter, 1999; Thornberry and Burch, 1997; Thornberry, Huizinga, and Loeber, 2004).

Importantly, the subjects who were gang members had higher rates of delinquency, especially violence, drug sales, and illegal gun possession, during the years they belonged to gangs than during the years they did not (Thornberry et al., 2004). Related findings from a Cleveland, Ohio study showed that gang-involved youth were more likely to commit a range of crimes than were other at-risk youth not involved with gangs (Huff, 1998). Interviews with high school students in Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Diego also revealed that gang members, both male and female, committed more delinquent acts and serious offenses than did non-gang members (Fagan, 1989). The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) showed that victims perceived perpetrators of violent crimes to be gang members in about 6 percent of victimizations (Harrell, 2005). Gang members are also more likely than other juveniles to carry firearms and in one study a third of gang members reported that “it was okay to shoot someone who disrespected them” (Howell and Decker, 1999, p. 6).

These studies offer several conclusions about the relationship between gang membership and crime. Gang membership increases the level of criminal and delinquent behavior on the part of its members. That is, while individuals are in gangs, their level of criminality increases compared to the period of time before they joined the gang. Equally important, the level of criminality declines once an individual leaves the gang. This reinforces the conclusion that the gang itself contributes to levels of crime, not just that gangs attract individuals already involved in crime. The group context of gang behavior provides support and opportunities for members to engage in more illegal behavior as well as more serious illegal behavior. According to Thornberry et al. (2004), the connection between gangs and delinquency is not simply a matter of gangs attracting the most delinquent youth, but rather the reality that “[t]he social processes of being an active gang member clearly facilitate or enhance involvement in delinquent behavior” (Thornberry et al., 2004, p. 10).

1.1.3.b. Risk Factors

While such group context models provide more support for gang members’ increased criminality than do so-called ‘kind of person’ models, certain types of individuals nonetheless experience a

greater risk of becoming involved in gang activity. Klein and Maxson (2006) note that “risk factors are grouped within the five ecological domains of individual, family, peer, school, and neighborhood” (p.139). However, their review of 20 studies disclosed a “large number of conflicting results” (p. 139), leading them to the conclusion that a major challenge for gang control programs is to identify the youth most likely to join gangs and then concentrate on them.⁵ Other researchers have documented that at risk youth are often characterized by low self-esteem, depression, early sexual activity, certain antisocial beliefs and behaviors (e.g., hyperactivity, aggression, tolerance for deviance), exposure to a significant number of serious negative life events, and, most importantly, early drug and alcohol use and delinquency—especially violent delinquency (Browning et al., 1999; Esbensen, 2000; Hill, Lui, and Hawkins, 2001; Howell, 1998; Thornberry, 2001; Thornberry et al., 2004). Low levels of commitment and attachment to school and teachers, poor school performance, and low expectations for educational success have also been linked to gang involvement. Youths are more likely to join gangs if they come from families that are poor, are structurally unstable, lack parental supervision, have low levels of communication between parents and children, or are dysfunctional in certain other ways (e.g., parents are accepting of violence and exhibit low levels of attachment to children; siblings exhibit antisocial behavior). Exposure to criminality may also put youth at risk for joining a gang. Association with delinquent peers and a history of gang activity in the family both have been shown to predict later gang membership. One study determined that formal criminal intervention and dealings with the juvenile justice system may cause youth to identify with deviance and become involved in deviant social groups, namely street gangs and delinquent peers (Bernburg, Krohn, and Rivera, 2006).

1.1.3.c. Communities and Gang Involvement

Risk factors for gang involvement tend to cluster within disadvantaged communities. Poverty, unemployment, lack of education, and overall economic isolation and lack of opportunity are commonly blamed for the emergence of gangs. Explanations for the high prevalence of gangs in minority communities include racism, political exclusion, and social marginalization. Further analysis suggests that African-American gang involvement is associated with exposure to gang members, while Latino gang involvement was associated with psychological variables and

⁵ This idea is the foundation of the Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development Program (GRYD), discussed below in Chapter II.

school peer groups (Curry and Spergel, 1992). Research has also shown that social disorganization, neighborhood violence, and local availability of drugs can encourage the growth of gangs (Esbensen, 2000; Hill et al., 2001; Howell, 1998; Thornberry, 2001). It is important to remember, as Esbensen (2000) points out, that the dynamics of gang environments are much more variable than stereotypes would lead us to believe, and many gangs are not located in poor, minority neighborhoods.

This clustering of individuals at risk for gang involvement often translates into community-wide problems. For example, a study of school crime found that a student who attended a school where gangs were present was more likely to have been physically attacked or been a victim of theft at school, including theft by force or threat, in the previous six months (Howell and Lynch, 2000). The National Youth Gang Survey reveals that a significant portion of participating law enforcement agencies reported at least one gang-related homicide from 1999 to 2000. This was true in 32 percent of cities with a population between 25,000 and 50,000, 55 percent of cities with a population between 50,000 and 100,000, and 64 percent of cities with a population between 100,000 and 250,000 (Egley, 2002). In the two cities with indisputably the most serious gang homicide problems—Los Angeles and Chicago—more than half of all homicides in 2001 and 2002 were reported to be gang-related (Egley and Major, 2004). Gang-related homicides are heavily influenced by the ethnic composition of the community (Curry and Spergel, 1988) and tend to involve minority males whose crime involves the use of firearms in a public place and with a large number of participants (Maxson and Klein, 1985).

Although empirical research suggests incidents of gang violence are more often related to turf disputes than to drugs (Block and Block, 1993), the presence of gangs within a community will also likely increase drug-related activities, particularly drug sales. The nature of this association has come under debate within the research community. Some scholars argue that street gangs represent well-organized distributors of illegal drugs whose profits allow them to engage in increased gang activity; such gangs are described as formal-rational organizations with a leadership structure, roles, rules, common goals, and control over members. In order to effectively control drug sales, gangs should possess an organizational structure involving roles, rules and a hierarchy of leaders; forward group goals that all members endorse; promote stronger allegiance to the larger organization than to subgroups within it; and control and discipline members to produce compliance with group goals.

The image of gangs as well-organized groups sharing common goals in the sale of drugs stands in stark contrast to the alternative claim that street-level drug sales by gangs are seldom well-organized or cohesive; instead, drug sales represent the activities of individual gang members often acting independently of their allegiances. Researchers such as Klein, Maxson and Cunningham (1991) and Reiner (1992) argue that gangs lack the organizational structure and commitment to common goals to be successful in drug sales. In his extensive report, Reiner (1992) (at the time, the District Attorney of Los Angeles County) observed that gangs in Los Angeles did not control drug sales because they were disorganized and had a loosely confederated structure. He found that traditional street gangs were not well suited for drug distribution or any other business-like activity and that they were weakly organized, prone to unnecessary and unproductive violence, and full of brash, conspicuous, and untrustworthy individuals who drew unwanted police attention. Indeed, one of the most difficult issues in studying gangs is distinguishing between the activities of individual gang members and those of the gang.⁶ Individual gang members often act individually or in subgroups outside their gangs, a distinction that applies to the non-criminal and criminal activities of gang members, including drug sales.

I.1.4. Summary

Youth gangs have been in existence in America for over two centuries. Over time, gangs have changed and evolved, especially in response to immigration patterns. Gang membership has notably increased in cities, with perceptions of the gang problem growing among law enforcement agencies. However, our knowledge of the gang problem has also improved over time. Research on the connections between delinquency and gang membership, individual-level risk factors and community-level risk factors, and the impact of gang activity on communities has increased the ability to react to the gang problem on a national level. The next section explores street gangs in the specific context of Los Angeles, the “nation’s capital” for gang violence.

⁶ Gang-related crimes can be defined as those acts committed by a known gang member (individual-level definition) or those acts motivated by gang objective (gang-motivated definition).

I.2. Street Gangs in Los Angeles

I.2.1. Evolution of LA Gangs

The precursors of street gangs in Los Angeles were the *palomilla*, small groups of young Mexican men first observed in Texas in the early 1900s (Howell and Moore, 2010; Rubel, 1965). These groups reportedly migrated westward and later became known as “boy gangs” as they settled in the Los Angeles area (Howell and Moore, 2010; Vigil and Long, 1990). Membership in these early groups was augmented by the migration of young Mexican men to and from the area following the Mexican-American War and the ceding of what is now known as California to the United States by Mexico. From these early groups of youth, Latino gangs grew over three distinct periods, according to Howell and Moore (2010).

The first period was during the 1930s and 1940s. During this stage, young males formed groups based upon friendships as a means of social adaptation in the poor neighborhoods in which they resided and were marginalized. Of note is that in contrast with gangs in other parts of the country, these emerging gangs developed strong cultural ties to the neighborhoods where they lived. Indeed many gang names reflect this strong attachment to and identification with neighborhood. Territory-based conflict arose as a result, both with other gangs and with social and government institutions (Howell and Moore, 2010).

The second period began in the 1940s and continued over several decades with the immigration of millions of Mexicans into the Los Angeles area and other parts of the Southwest. This immigration led to growth in previously established territorial street gangs (some of which became inter-generational) and the emergence of new gangs as new poor Latino neighborhoods became settled. Conflicts grew as a result.

The last period is associated with the emergence of black gangs. As with eastern and northern industrial cities, there was a substantial migration of Southern blacks in search of good paying urban factory employment following both World War I and World War II. However, instead of a better life, blacks encountered institutionalized segregation and inequalities. According to Howell and Moore (2010), the restrictive housing covenants that discriminated against black citizens in Los Angeles were particularly important for the formation of black street gangs. Challenges to these housing restrictions led to violent attacks by white groups and as a result, black youth formed their own defensive street groups. In addition, school-based gangs were formed for protection against white youth violence. As violence against blacks by

white youth diminished over time, conflicts among black clubs grew within the context of street socialization of new immigrant youth from the rural South living in the ghettos of Los Angeles (Howell and Moore, 2010). By the 1960s, these protective clubs evolved into large black-only street gangs that became organized into two primary camps—the Bloods and the Crips, both of which adopted territorial identities similar to those developed by earlier Latino gangs. Many of these gangs came to view each other as arch enemies and have engaged in ongoing blood feuds with one another to this day (Howell and Moore, 2010).

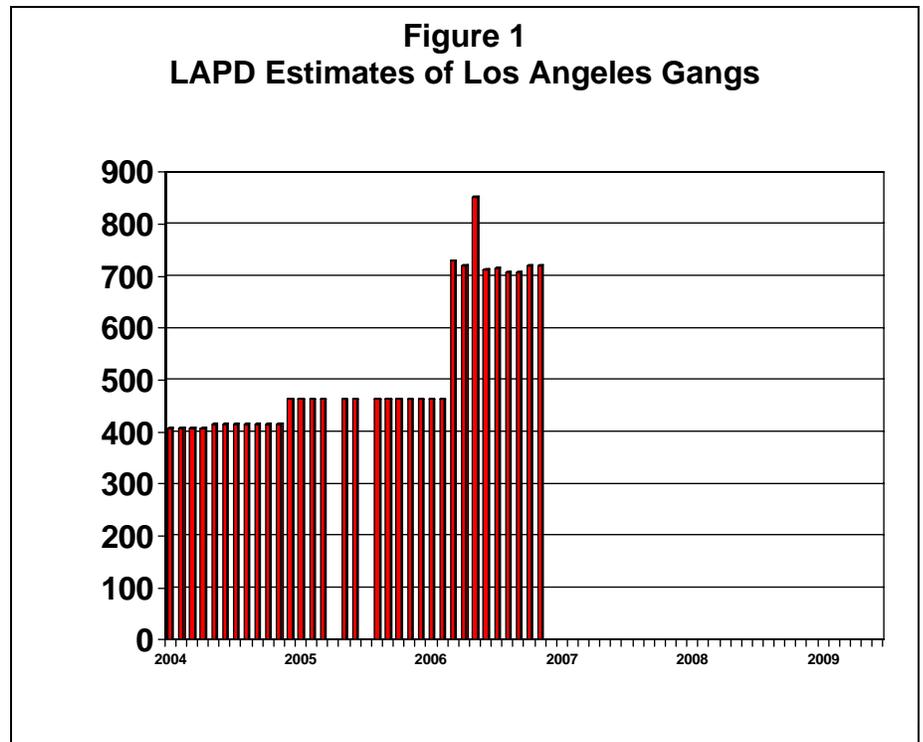
More recently, some gangs have rejected racial barriers to membership and recruited across ethnic lines and international gangs; one such gang is MS-13, which originated in El Salvador. The ongoing growth of Latino, Black and other racial and ethnic gangs in Los Angeles has been accompanied by increased violence and criminal activity, and the alienation of significant segments of the youth of the city from the rest of society.

I.2.2. Recent Prevalence Estimates in Los Angeles

The media regularly portrays Los Angeles as having the highest concentration of gangs, gang members and gang violence of any area in the United States. For example, Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca was once quoted by Reuters as saying, “Los Angeles County and City is, unfortunately, the *gang capital of America*” (Reuters, 2007). Brenda Walker (2008) calls Los Angeles “*Ground Zero* for gangs in the country.” Unfortunately, as with national statistics, accurate and reliable prevalence and membership estimates are quite limited and published figures vary widely. Complicating the understanding of the gang problem in the City of Los Angeles is that Los Angeles County as a whole is often included in prevalence estimates. For example, Reuters (2007) estimated countywide there were over 1,000 gangs and 88,000 members. Walker (2008) cites estimates of 1,200 gangs with 80,000 members, 23,000 of which are in Hispanic gangs in the city and another 16,000 that are in black gangs in the city.

The Los Angeles Police Department’s (LAPD) reports on gang membership and crime are often cited as authoritative estimates of gang prevalence. According to their website (lapdonline.org) there are currently approximately 400 active gangs with about 41,000 members in the City of Los Angeles. For a number of years, LAPD published monthly estimates of prevalence, but these were discontinued in 2006, when the number of gangs was estimated to be over seven hundred.

Summaries of month-to-month estimates by LAPD on the number of gangs from 2004 through late 2006 are presented in Figure 1. Year-end estimates from 1993 through 2004 generally were about the same as those presented for 2004 and consistent with the current published number of around 400 gangs. However, as can



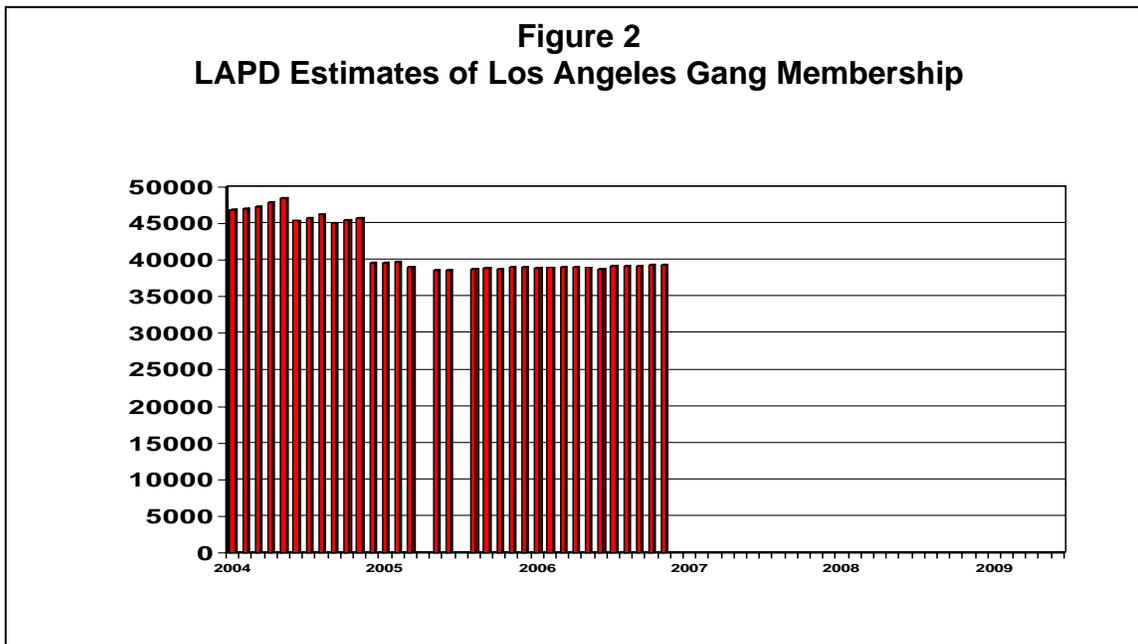
be seen in the chart there was a slight increase in the number of gangs in early 2005 to well over 400 gangs through the early months of 2006.⁷ However, in the summer of 2006 the estimated number of gangs increased markedly and at one point was more than double the historical average and the current LAPD estimate.

LAPD’s current estimated gang membership suggests that about 5 percent of all known street gang members in the United States reside in the City of Los Angeles. In addition, slightly over 1 percent of Los Angeles residents are thought to be active gang members. If correct, this suggests that youth are five times more likely to be in a gang in Los Angeles than in the United States as a whole.

As can be seen in Figure 2, past LAPD gang membership estimates indicated relatively stable levels around 40,000 each month from 2005 through late 2006 when city-specific estimates were no longer published. Prior to 2005, gang estimates were substantially higher with monthly memberships of over 45,000. An examination of year-end estimates back to 1993 indicates that overall gang membership declined during the 1990s and early 2000s. LAPD

⁷ The monthly estimates were not available for April and July of 2005 and are shown as missing. These months should not be interpreted as periods of zero gangs.

reported over 61,000 members in 1993 and a peak membership at the end of 1997 of over 64,000 (<http://lapdonline.org>).

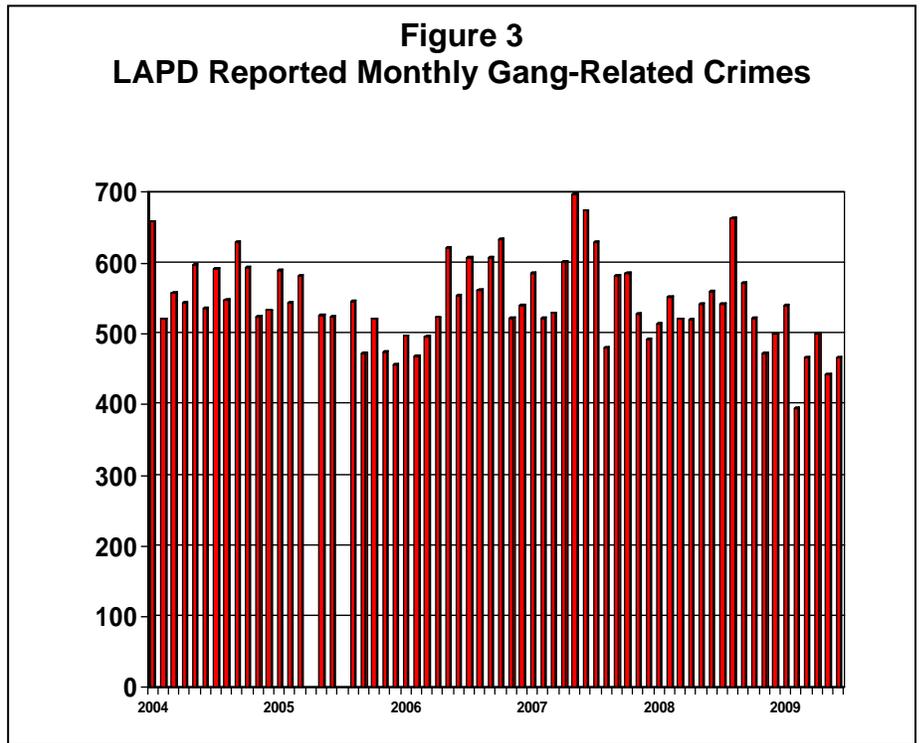


I.2.3. Gangs, Violence and Crime

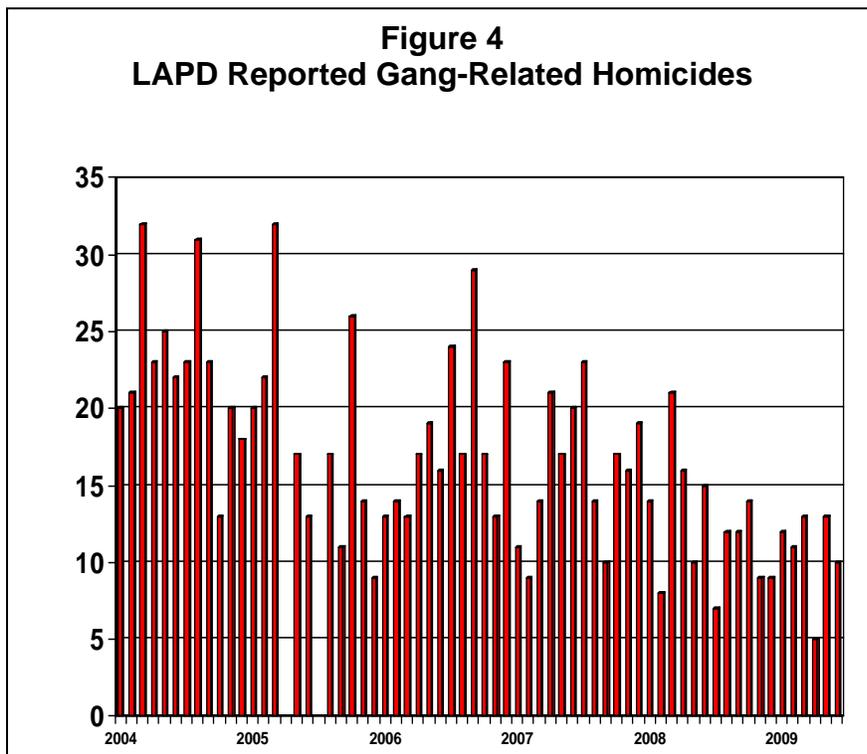
Figure 3 presents the monthly totals of gang-related crimes⁸ published by LAPD (lapdonline.org) from 2004 through the middle of 2009. As can be seen in the monthly series, gang-related crimes have been characterized by notable spikes during the summer months and followed by reductions thereafter each year. In addition, the overall trend is one of gradually declining gang-related criminal incidents by gang members, particularly from the peak of about 700 a month in the middle of 2007. Indeed, recent LAPD summary incident statistics confirm this decline over the past three years. They report that total gang-related crime declined 15.8 percent from 2008 to 2009 and another 9.5 percent from 2009 to 2010. Part I serious crime also declined for the City of Los Angeles as a whole—down 12.4 percent from 2008 to 2009 and 7.1 percent from 2009 through 2010 to date (lapdonline.org). Nonetheless, gangs are responsible for a disproportionate share of serious violent crime in Los Angeles. A comparison of LAPD reported gang-related Part I crimes in 2008 to those of the city as a whole shows that over 40 percent of all robberies and aggravated assaults are gang-related. Over 80 percent of homicides are labeled as gang-related.

⁸ After July 2007 LAPD reported homicide, *aggravated assault*, attack on police officers, rape, robbery, carjacking, kidnapping, shots inhabited dwelling, arson, *criminal threats* and extortion in their gang crime summaries. Prior to that they counted homicide, *attempt homicide*, *felony assault*, attacks on police officer, robbery, shots inhabited dwell, kidnap, arson, *witness intimidation*, extortion and carjacking.

The Violence Policy Center suggests that the majority of gang-related homicides in California—approximately 75 percent from 1981 to 2001—took place in Los Angeles (2009, p. 9). Figure 4 presents month-to-month reports of homicides labeled as gang-related by LAPD to illustrate trends in violence committed



by gangs. As with all serious gang-related crimes, there have been cyclical peaks in homicides in summer months, although curiously the highest numbers of homicides were reported in the early



months of both 2004 and 2005, when incidents exceeded 30 per month. Homicides also gradually decreased from 2004 through 2009, although at a substantially sharper rate than all gang-related crimes. By the end of the reporting period, monthly homicides were less than a third of what they were at their peaks in the middle of the decade. LAPD reports that these declines for gang-

related homicides were 19.6 percent from 2008 to 2009 and another 1.2 percent from 2009 to 2010. For the city as a whole, declines of 23.7 percent from 2008 to 2009 and 2.7 percent from 2009 to 2010 were reported for homicides by LAPD (lapdonline.org).

I.1.4. Summary

Street gangs in Los Angeles began to emerge in the early part of the 20th century. The immigration of Mexican youth into impoverished areas of the city gave rise to Latino gangs who adopted strong neighborhood attachments and territorial orientations. Migration of blacks from the South into the ghettos of the city gave rise to black groups organized for defense against attacks by white youth. These evolved into large black gangs that also became territorial and encountered conflicts with other groups, social organizations, and the criminal justice system. Current LAPD estimates suggest that there are at least 400 active gangs with over 41,000 members in Los Angeles, although there is no external validation of these numbers. While gang crime and violence have been declining in recent years, gang members are still engaged in a disproportionate amount of serious violent crime across the city, most notably for firearm-associated homicides. It was within this context that the Office of the Mayor in the City of Los Angeles developed a citywide gang prevention and intervention initiative, known as the Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) Program (conceptualized in 2007 and implemented in 2008 and 2009).

Chapter II

The Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development Program

II.1. Introduction

The Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) Program is a gang prevention and intervention program that was implemented in 12 geographically delimited neighborhoods in Los Angeles in 2008 with an annual budget in excess of \$20 million. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's GRYD office selected these neighborhoods (known as GRYD "zones") in Central L.A. (one zone), East L.A. (three zones), South L.A. (six zones), and the Valley (two zones). The program is intended to inhibit gang joining by at risk youth, and to help gang-involved youth and young adults transition out. With suppression efforts already in place in Los Angeles when this program was implemented, GRYD has a strong emphasis on case management and wraparound service provision. This section introduces the GRYD program, including the origins, framework, and organizational structure of the program.

II.2. Origins

GRYD developed directly out of L.A. Bridges (Building Resources for the Intervention and Deterrence of Gang Engagement), a \$44 million community-based gang prevention and intervention program funded by the City of Los Angeles.⁹ Bridges was implemented in 1997, and was a major citywide initiative that covered 29 areas defined as high-crime. Although there were strong advocates for Bridges (most notably the city council), a long-term evaluation was never conducted.¹⁰ The office of the city controller conducted an audit and reported the findings in March 2000, with extremely pessimistic conclusions. In addition to lacking the intended gang prevention impact, the audit also pointed to ineffective fiscal management, a lack of coordination, and an unfocused strategy; the city controller's overall recommendation was to terminate the program.¹¹ Although the mayor attempted to shut down Bridges, the city council overrode his decision in a 12-0 vote. As the program continued, two short-term (six month)

⁹ Bridges I is the prevention component, and targets middle school age youth for services; Bridges II is an intervention component that targets youth already involved in gangs.

¹⁰ As Klein and Maxson (2006: 115) recount, evaluators in the first year only collected baseline data, and due to it being a "political hassle," did not bid on continuation funding. There was no formal evaluation in Year 2.

¹¹ See <http://articles.latimes.com/2000/apr/01/local/me-14889> for commentary.

evaluations, which were unable to decipher much outside of a short process evaluation, produced heavy criticism in the media (Klein and Maxson, 2006). Following the skepticism and eventual public outcry of this expensive and broken program, the City Council and other advocates finally accepted that Bridges needed to be terminated.

Under the leadership of Mayor Villaraigosa, the GRYD office was established in July of 2007. The GRYD office began releasing its first prevention provider Request for Proposals (RFP) in April 2008, and in June 2008, the Mayor and City Council authorized the GRYD office to end the Bridges program. Then in October 2008, the first six GRYD prevention provider contracts were executed. While the GRYD office was releasing the subsequent sets of RFPs (for the six remaining prevention sites and all 12 intervention providers) and finalizing new GRYD contracts, the Bridges contracts were maintained (through December 31, 2008).¹² Up until the spring of 2009, some providers were still finishing contracts under Bridges, and several GRYD providers reported smoothly transitioning from Bridges one month to GRYD the next.

Six targeted areas in Bridges (Baldwin Village, Boyle Heights, Cypress Park/Northeast, Newton, Pacoima-Foothills, and Ramona Gardens) transferred over to GRYD and became the first zones to be funded for prevention services. Six other areas were added subsequently (77th II Division, Florence-Graham, Panorama, Rampart, Southwest II, and Watts). Nine of the twelve prevention providers selected for GRYD were previously contracted under Bridges I; several intervention providers were previously Bridges II contractors, and three providers were both Bridges I and II contractors. However, the GRYD office attempted to restructure the program in response to the L.A. City Controller's Citywide Blueprint for a Comprehensive Anti-Gang Strategy (City Controller, 2008). In a follow-up audit, the city controller determined that "some significant steps and progress have been made" as Bridges transferred over to the GRYD office, and recommended further fiscal and services coordination, a focused strategy, increased collaborations (especially among the City, County, and school districts), and a formal evaluation (Chick, 2009).¹³ The next section documents the GRYD framework that developed in response to the criticisms and failures of L.A. Bridges and the recommendations of city auditors.

¹² These public documents are all available online: <http://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/>

¹³ Although the GRYD office asked the evaluation team for reactions to this publically released report, UI/Harder decided not to formally respond in an effort to remain independent of the City Council's interactions with the GRYD office.

II.3. The GRYD Framework

II.3.1. Goals and Mission Statement

In the GRYD Action Plan for the City of Los Angeles,¹⁴ the GRYD office drafted the following mission statement:

To establish safe, clearly identified places, in every community with a high level of gang crime, where youth and their parents can receive unconditional support, services and counseling. We need to meet these kids on their own turf—with programming based on their needs and interests—and connect them with positive adult and teen role models who can point the way to a productive future. To weave a web of relationships between community residents and existing institutions, working together toward shared goals. To unite all of L.A. to invest in our youth: City and County departments, community and faith-based groups, educational institutions, philanthropies, businesses, and individual donors and volunteers.

To achieve these public safety and collaboration goals, the City originally identified four main components of their community-based strategy: neighborhood-based gang prevention, neighborhood-based gang intervention, crisis response, and suppression. For the purposes of the evaluation, however, there are three main components of the GRYD program administered by the GRYD office. The first is prevention—the provision of services to at risk youth to prevent them from joining gangs. The second is intervention case services—programs to assist gang-involved youth to exit their gangs and lead productive lives in their communities. The third is crisis intervention—outreach activities designed to reduce gang conflicts and associated violence, including response to crisis situations in progress. Intervention case services and crisis response services are in some zones managed by a single provider and are sometimes categorized simply as intervention, instead of two different components. The remainder of this section describes these different program components, how the evaluation team understood the early GRYD “models” based on RFP solicitations, and how the GRYD office was organized to administer the wide variety of services across the three components.

¹⁴ Mayor Villaraigosa's Gang Reduction Vision, *Healing Our Neighborhoods: A Citywide Partnership to Combat Gang Crime*, <http://www.ci.la.ca.us/mayor/villaraigosaplan/PublicSafety/GangReductionStrategy/index.htm>

II.3.2. Program Components

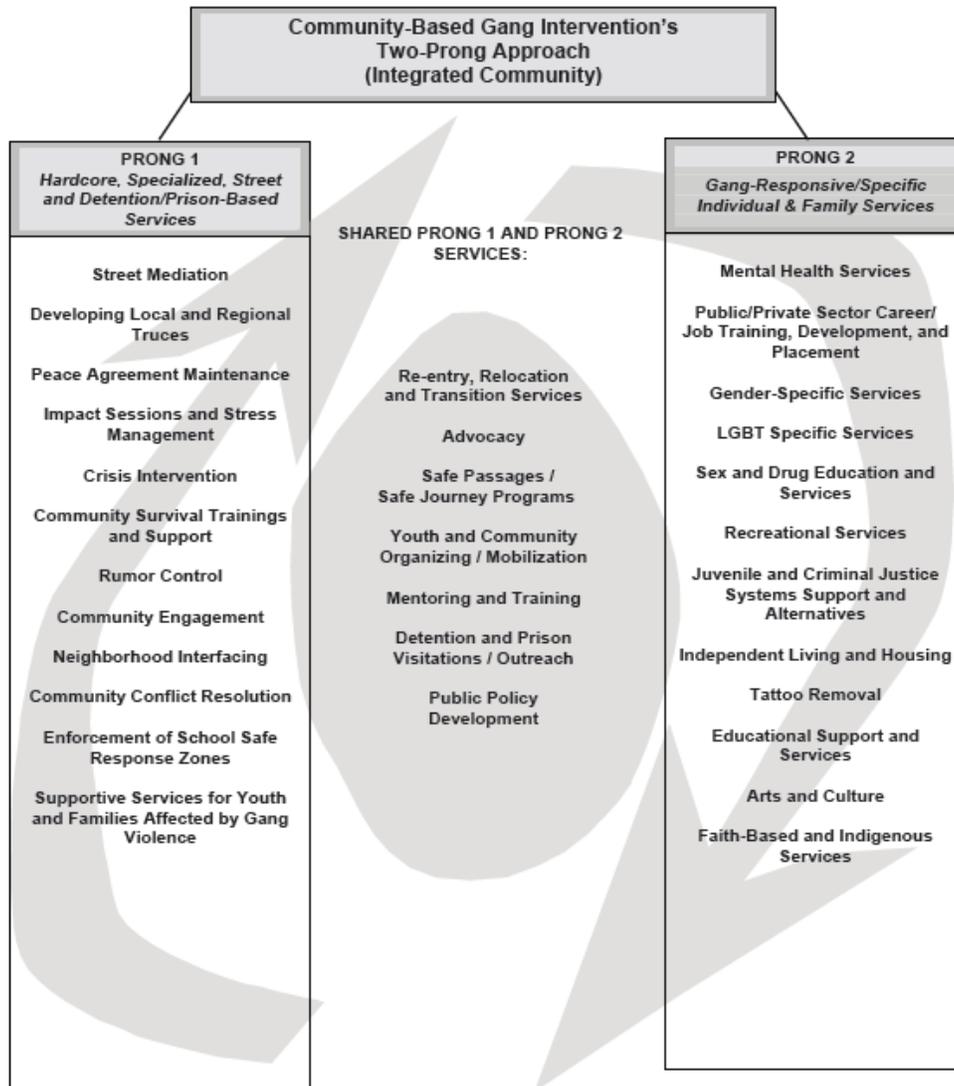
Prevention services are meant to provide a comprehensive resource center for youth, and to target those who are at the highest risk of joining a gang. Working with researchers from the University of Southern California (USC) and University of California-Irvine (UCI), GRYD implemented a screening tool for prevention services. Known as the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET), this interview instrument asks youth a series of questions about behaviors, friends, family, important life events, and other potential influences in a youth's life (or risk factors) to determine program eligibility. YSET originally contained two screens (or two separate administrations of the interview) with 146 questions; this was reduced to one combined instrument (and only one interview session) with 90 questions at the end of 2009.¹⁵ With an emphasis on placing the right youth into services that are intended to inhibit gang joining, the GRYD office had a strong emphasis on the prevention component of the GRYD model from the early planning stages.

The intervention component of the GRYD program was designed by the Los Angeles City Council's Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development's Community Engagement Advisory Committee and ultimately adopted by the GRYD program.¹⁶ This is a two-pronged strategy; the "street" aspect consists of activities such as crisis intervention, peacemaking, and outreach, while the second component involves individual and family rehabilitative services. In addition, several services (such as reentry, mentoring, and training) are designed to overlap (see logic model below). As implemented though, case services and crisis outreach/response were conceptualized as unique and separate GRYD program components.

¹⁵ These numbers refer to labeled questions, but multiple questions also have subsets (where youth may be asked additional questions if applicable). In total, a youth could potentially be asked 186 questions in the initial YSET and 131 in the new YSET.

¹⁶ This committee was commissioned in the spring of 2007 and released a report detailing this community-based intervention model in November of 2009. At the same time the report was released, the committee announced that the GRYD office had adopted this intervention strategy. However, the GRYD office never formally released documentation claiming this as their (full or partial) program model.

Figure 5
Community-Based Gang Intervention Model



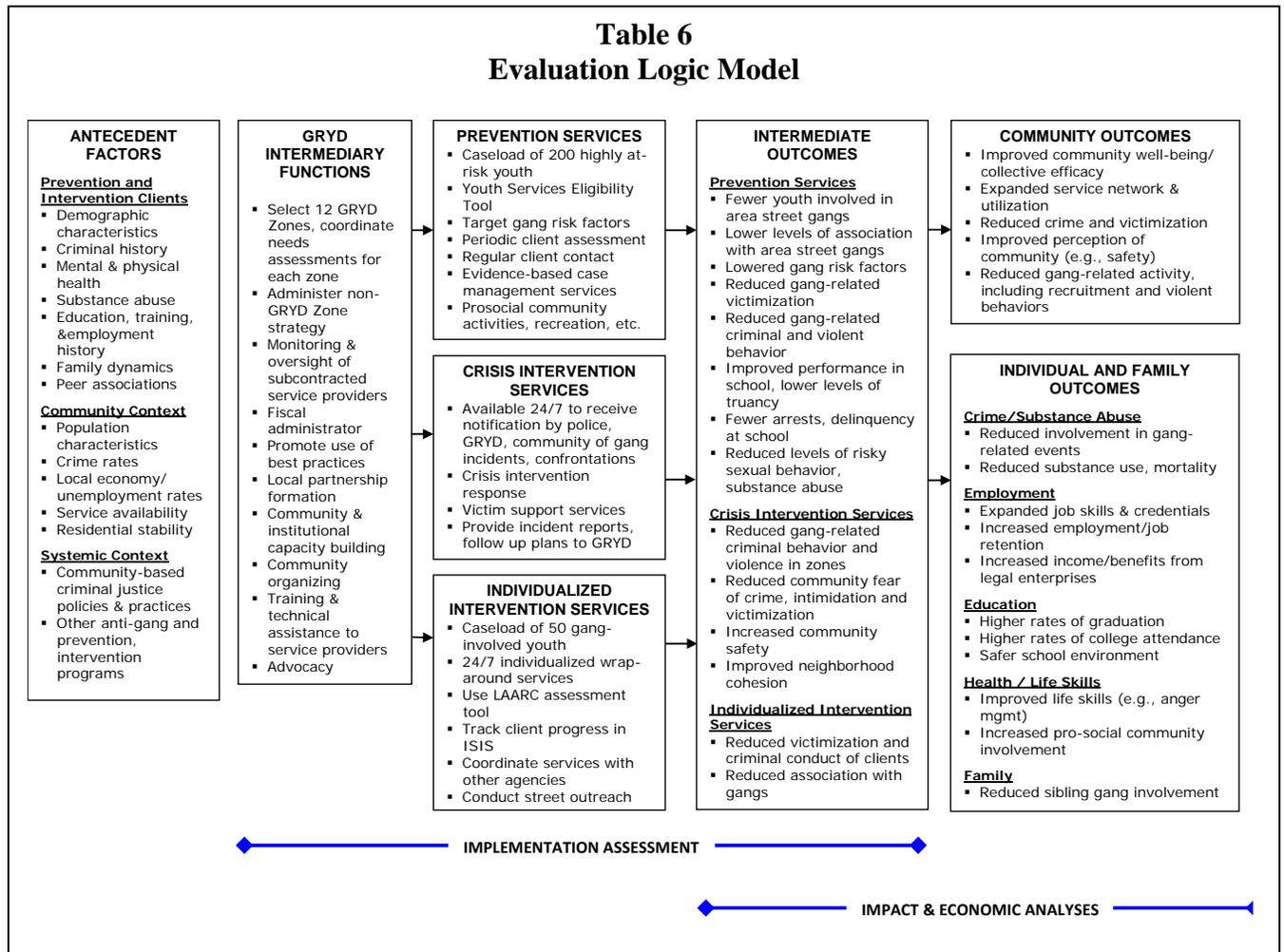
Source: The Community Engagement Advisory Committee’s “Community-Based Gang Intervention Model: Definition and Structure” (2008)

Although the GRYD office’s Action Plans for the City of Los Angeles mentions two other elements of the program model—crisis response and gang suppression—the former is part of the intervention component, and suppression (including police suppression, buy-back programs, and a gang unit) was already in place before GRYD was implemented. In addition,

although the GRYD office may have adopted the intervention model displayed above, there was never a clear prevention model or a framework that combined all of the GRYD components.

II.3.3. The Role of Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

Based on an interpretation of the local context, service plan, and desired impacts of GRYD (as listed in the GRYD RFPs), UI/Harder designed a preliminary logic model in the evaluation proposal to conceptualize the GRYD framework (see below).



As the project progressed, it was clear that there were serious issues with identifying and implementing a model, and various descriptions of the “model” have been disseminated.¹⁷ For

¹⁷ By “program model” we mean a clear, written set of distributed guidelines that translate program goals and objectives into appropriate, specific standards and procedures, including services, training, and monitoring.

example, the GRYD office has described the approach as a “four-part neighborhood based strategy” encompassing prevention, intervention, uniform crisis response, and suppression (Mayor Villaraigosa's Gang Reduction Vision, 2008); a comprehensive strategy inspired by and based on the Gang Reduction Program’s (GRP) model, which highlights prevention, intervention, re-entry, and suppression as the main components (a March 2010 bulletin provided to the evaluation team); and as a program that is “complementing suppression with data driven prevention and intervention services”

(<http://mayor.lacity.org/Issues/GangReduction/index.htm>).¹⁸ The effect this confusion had on the evaluation is elaborated in Section III; the impact on providers and service provision is further discussed in Section IV, Program Development. For the purposes of this report, the GRYD program is considered to have three major components: prevention, intervention services, and crisis intervention.

In light of the various program descriptions, the RFP process used to select and fund providers for each of these components played an important role in developing the nature of GRYD programs and activities in Y1. The gang and crime problems were defined by Needs Assessment Reports the City contracted for in 2008 and high crime areas were pre-selected (most of them were areas under a preexisting police suppression program, CLEAR¹⁹). The RFPs for prevention, intervention case services and crisis intervention providers described or suggested only general program activities for providers within the context of a limited number of individual and community risk factors. The vague nature of these initial RFPs resulted in the proposal and subsequent funding of a wide variety of sometimes similar and often disparate activities, particularly for prevention and case services. As a result, there was little in the way of what might be called a standardized GRYD model across the zones. It wasn’t until later in 2009 that the standardization of practices was encouraged by the GRYD office. For example, the introduction of the Los Angeles Violence Intervention Training Academy (LAVITA) RFP in September 2009 and its award to the Advancement Project in early 2010 sparked a new focus on

¹⁸ On the Mayor’s website, Summer Night Lights, YSET, prevention, and intervention are highlighted as main aspects of the program; reentry and crisis response appear to be grouped within intervention. Accessed June 1, 2010.

¹⁹ The Community Law Enforcement and Recovery (CLEAR) program aims to reduce gang activity in Los Angeles by collecting intelligence, increasing visibility in the community, and using specific enforcement strategies that target gang crimes. See http://www.lapdonline.org/special_operations_support_division/content_basic_view/1013 for more information.

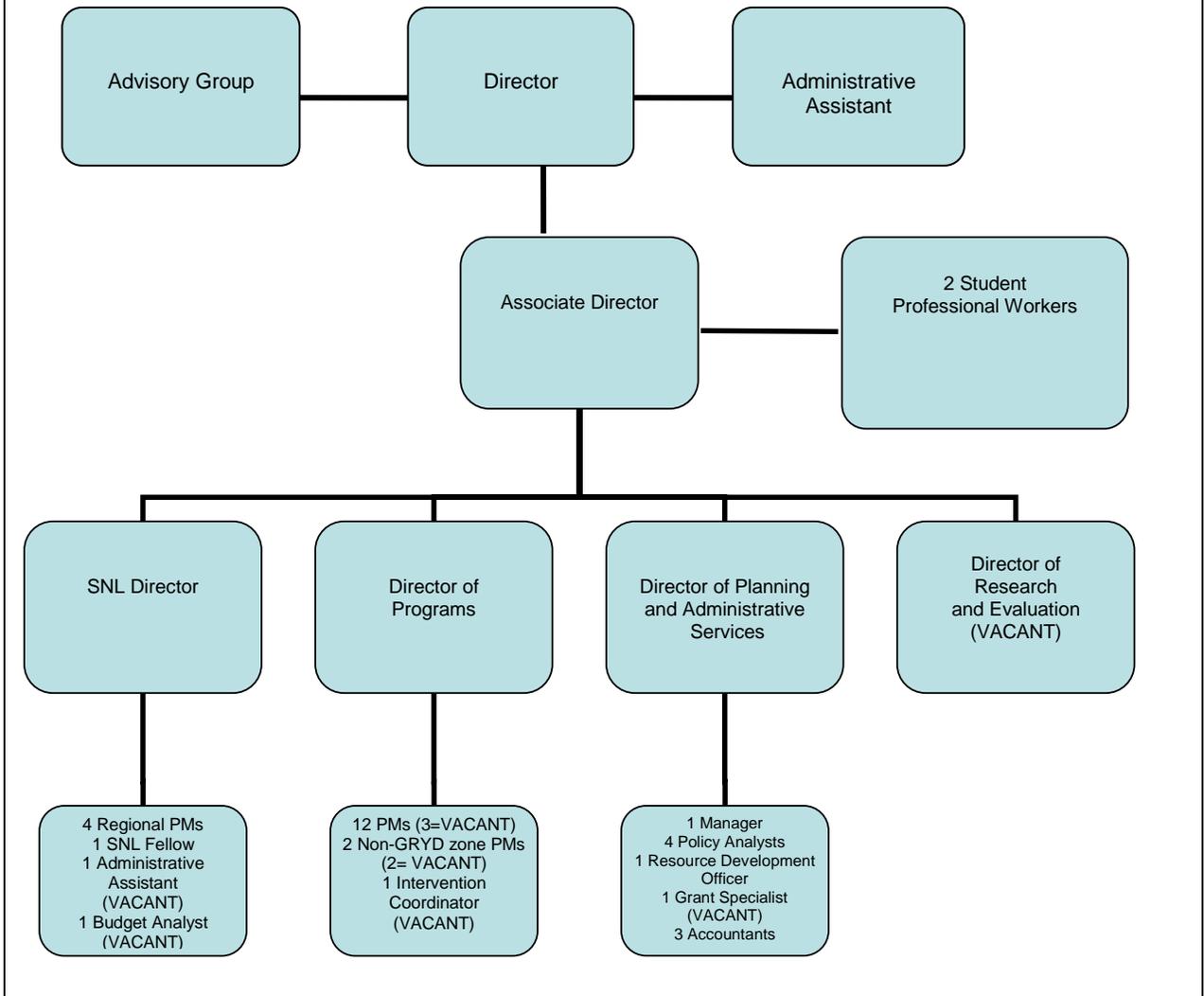
guidelines and training for intervention workers.²⁰ By June 2010, almost a third of the gang intervention enrollees had graduated from the Academy.

II.4. GRYD Office Organization

In a 2009 report, the city controller made an explicit recommendation to the GRYD office to form a strong, centralized leadership for the GRYD program. Although finances were initially scattered across city departments, pulling the former Bridges program into the GRYD office led to restructuring and a tightening of roles and strategic planning. This section discusses the various divisions within the GRYD organizational structure and the primary roles of key players, in addition to an overview of the budgetary issues that threatened to dismantle part—or all—of the program. The organizational structure the GRYD office proposed for 2009–2010 is displayed below.

²⁰ Intervention workers are sometimes referred to as Gang Intervention Specialists (GIS) or Crisis Intervention Workers (CIW), but this varies among providers in Los Angeles. Throughout this report, GIS and CIW will be generally referred to as intervention workers.

Figure 7
GRYD Office Organizational Chart, 2009–2010



II.4.1. GRYD Leadership

The original Director left the program in September of 2009 to become the Mayor’s Chief of Staff and was no longer intimately involved in GRYD after his departure. The new Director emphasized evidence-based research and, along with the Associate Director, was interested in defining a model based on proven or promising practices. The Director and Associate Director worked closely together, with at least one of them in attendance for major GRYD program events (such as forums for providers). There were four key divisions in the

GRYD organizational structure: Summer Night Lights (SNL), Programs, Planning and Administration, and Research and Evaluation. In addition to these divisions, a side component of the GRYD program was an Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC), consisting of prominent academic researchers.

II.4.2. Summer Night Lights (SNL)

Summer Night Lights (SNL) is contained in the GRYD office's organizational chart, although it was never clearly linked to the rest of the GRYD program. On June 30, 2008, months before the first GRYD provider agencies were selected, the Mayor's Office launched the SNL program in eight parks within seven GRYD zones. Although not included in the RFP or contract for evaluation, SNL has been a critically important GRYD component. SNL was designed to have "expanded programming, after-school activities, athletic leagues, arts initiatives and family programs" from 7 pm to midnight, Wednesdays through Saturdays from the first week in July to the first week in September.²¹ In 2009, SNL expanded to include 16 parks in all 12 GRYD zones and Hollywood. In 2010, SNL has expanded yet again—to 24 parks in or near GRYD zones.

Although the Mayor's Office reported promising findings from the first year of SNL,²² the program also presents challenges to the GRYD office and service providers, the primary issue being staffing. SNL consumes an extraordinary amount of time (five hour shifts four days per week) and both GRYD office and provider agency staff struggled to balance other duties associated with GRYD. In addition, the GRYD office was often distracted by the high intensity of the SNL program, which is problematic for the development of other GRYD program elements. These issues are further discussed in Section IV, Evaluation Findings.

II.4.3. Programs

There are 12 Program Managers (PMs), one for each GRYD zone. PMs are responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of GRYD zones. This includes leading coordination and collaboration efforts, assisting providers with contractual goals and progress, and the planning and implementation of SNL. As discussed in the zone profiles (see Chapter IV. for more information), PMs had high turnover and temporary leave rates during the first year and

²¹http://www.ci.la.ca.us/mayor/villaraigosaplan/PublicSafety/GangReductionStrategy/LACITY_004757.htm

²² See <http://mayor.lacity.org/Issues/GangReduction/SummerNightLights/index.htm> for a summary of these findings, which were drawn from LAPD statistics. The GRYD office Status Report, Number 3 (Period January 1, 2009 - June 30, 2009), pages 11-13, also provides information on SNL. Available online at <http://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/>.

a half of the program implementation. There are also two non-GRYD zone PMs, although their role was outside the scope of the evaluation, so it is unclear what they did within those zones or how they related to GRYD zone PMs. An intervention coordinator was also specified for this division, although this role was vacant. However, the intervention component grew during the first year of the evaluation, with a temporary intervention working group meeting to discuss training intervention workers and performance measures (this group dispersed but was rumored to begin again in the next cycle of funding).

II.4.4. Planning and Administrative Services

The Manager in the Planning and Administrative Services division was an especially important liaison for the evaluation team. Although he did not have full decision making powers, he acted as a project coordinator in many ways and was able to move the project forward for both the evaluation team and GRYD office. Among other tasks, the Policy Analysts in this division provide administrative and logistical support, ensure that contractual obligations are fulfilled, work with PMs to determine needs in the GRYD zones, provide technical assistance to providers when needed, and analyze and report on GRYD program outcomes.

II.4.5. Research and Evaluation

The Director of Research and Evaluation position was vacant, and there were no staff members in this division during the first year of the evaluation period.

II.4.6. Evaluation Advisory Committee

Finally, in addition to the core GRYD office roles there were a voluntary group of academics who comprised an Advisory Committee. This group initially consisted of three gang researchers who designed the YSET interview instrument for prevention eligibility (Dr. Karen Hennigan, Dr. Malcolm Klein, and Dr. Cheryl Maxson) and two additional well-known gang researchers (Dr. Scott Decker and Dr. Finn Esbensen). Subsequently, the group was expanded to include Dr. David Huizinga and Dr. Michael Katz. This group provided advice and feedback to the GRYD office and evaluators throughout the first 15 months of the evaluation (Y1).

II.3.7. Budgetary Issues

Throughout 2009 and 2010 Los Angeles, like many cities, was heavily affected by the economic crisis. This led to a cycle of budget cuts in a variety of city departments and services. The media speculated on which city services would be reduced, with a special focus on the GRYD program.

By the spring of 2009—after Los Angeles had already cut back on employees’ salaries and reduced the employee payroll by 2,400 jobs through early retirement programs, saving an estimated \$300 million—the *LA Times* announced that the City was over \$200 million in debt, with a projected \$1 billion deficit by 2013.²³

While Mayor Villaraigosa accepted fiscal negotiations for other city programs and services, he vetoed attempts to amend the GRYD budget plan and a provision that would allow the City Council to have authorization rights on the GRYD budget. The Council accepted this veto, and GRYD funding—while modestly reduced—stayed intact overall.²⁴ At the time of this report, there had not been any major structural or programmatic changes to GRYD in the midst of the budget crisis.

²³ <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2010/04/despite-getting-new-revenue-la-budget-shortfall-deepens-to-2224-million.html>; <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2009/11/la-faces-1-billion-deficit-by-2013-budget-chief-calls-for-pension-reforms.html>

²⁴ <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2010/06/villaraigosa-vetos-budget-provision-giving-council-control-of-some-antigang-money.html>; <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/lanow/2010/06/la-council-supports-villaraigosas-veto-of-antigang-portion-of-budget-bill.html>

Chapter III

The Y1 GRYD Evaluation

III.1. Introduction

As the GRYD office moved towards a new gang prevention and intervention strategy (and sought to remove itself from the unfavorable reputation of LA Bridges), a major priority was a formal, long-term process and outcomes evaluation. The GRYD office's Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) played a large role in the scoring and ranking of the proposals received, and also conducted phone interviews with the three highest scoring proposal teams to determine the evaluators for the GRYD program. The Urban Institute (UI) and Harder+Company Community Research (Harder) were awarded an initial 12 month contract in April 2009 for a multiyear evaluation planned by the GRYD office. This section discusses the research objectives and goals of the evaluation, reviews the initial overall proposed methodology for the actual Y1 implementation process and outcome/impact designs and methodologies, and details the research challenges that were encountered.

III.2. Research Goals and Objectives

Determining the effectiveness of GRYD involves both a process and outcome evaluation. The GRYD office noted four specific research questions in the evaluation RFP:

1. Implementation fidelity to strategic plans: are the strategies and programs in the GRYD zones doing what they are intended to do?
2. Did GRYD program components result in the hypothesized outcomes: how effective are the gang-reduction strategy and its components?
2. Formative performance measurement, benchmarking and feedback: are there early indicators to guide program modifications or required funding changes?
4. Lessons learned, zone-specific and pooled zone-wide evaluation findings: what are the indicators of success in the program and how are they measured?

In addition, UI/Harder proposed two additional primary research areas:

5. How do the program and its outcomes change over time throughout the life of the strategy? What are the levels of collaboration and partnerships among service providers and other stakeholders prior to strategy implementation and how does it change during the program period? What is the role of the community in GRYD and what is their influence on the success of the strategy?
6. How cost-effective is GRYD overall, by individual zone and by each strategy component?

In other words, the process evaluation was designed to understand whether the providers and GRYD office are faithful to the program model; which components should be modified during the process; how success is operationalized; and the continuous development of partnerships and collaboration, while the outcome/impact evaluation was designed to determine which strategies and specific services are effective and whether GRYD is cost-effective. These goals guided the following research objectives:

- Working with key provider staff in each zone to establish timelines and benchmarks in the implementation process.
- Identifying the data collection sources, such as forms or logs that are filled out regularly by each provider, and documenting events, such as staff meetings, trainings, and networking efforts. UI/Harder will also collect relevant program documents, such as financial statements and case management files to assess dosage levels, client contact levels, case management loads, and program costs.
- Conducting periodic staff member interviews on program implementation successes and challenges. UI/Harder will also conduct focus groups with staff members to gather their perceptions on the strategy and implementation process.
- Gathering information on the perspectives of program participants and including process questions in all interviews, including questions about the program and dosage levels.
- Conducting periodic program observations in each zone, using a standard observation protocol. These observations will take place at least once per quarter in each zone. UI/Harder will also schedule observations of individual case management efforts

(e.g., intake assessment interviews, discharge interviews) quarterly in each zone with each provider.

- Reviewing LAPD records—incident, arrest, and calls for service data and information on CLEAR activity in each zone. Additional data will include information from case files and the LAPD gang unit. UI/Harder will also conduct interviews with officers who work in each zone to gather their perceptions on youth behavior and gang activity.
- Collecting school-level information such as graduation and college attendance rates and school safety measures to assess overall changes in educational outcomes.

The objectives described above are broken into three tables to display the process data sources and measures, individualized (or case managed) data sources and outcomes, and crisis intervention data sources and outcome measures. The first table displays the proposed data sources and measures for the implementation/process evaluation.

Table 1: Process Data Sources and Measures

Data Sources	Measures
Evaluation forms	Number of clients enrolled Number of face-to-face contacts with clients, family members
Program files (financial reports, activity reports, case management files)	Number of clients exiting program Amount spent on each activity Level of completion of required data elements
Interviews with providers, case managers, outreach workers	(e.g., intake assessment and re-assessments) Implementation benchmarks met
Focus groups	Technical assistance received Problems encountered with implementation
Participant interviews, surveys	Changes in leadership/personnel Communication levels among providers
Program observations	Perceived levels of partnership among providers
Partnership survey (based on GRP survey)	

The following table displays the data sources and individual and community-level measures for outcomes/impacts for prevention and intervention. Prevention and intervention are combined in this table due to the similarities in necessary data collection.

Table 2: Individualized Services Data Sources and Outcomes

Data Sources	Control variables	Outcome measures
LAPD records	<u>Individual level</u> Demographics	<u>Individual level</u> Overall risk score(s)
Police intelligence (from case files, gang unit)	Length of treatment/dosage	Educational outcomes
Client records of services received	Prior involvement in gangs	Gang association/associates
Standardized risk assessments	Siblings in gang	Involvement in gang incidents
Victimization surveys	Substance use/abuse	Victimizations and gang joining prevented
LA Unified School District (LAUSD); Probation, Parole records	Risky sexual behavior	Employment status
Self-reports (surveys, focus groups, interviews)	Risk assessment scores	Health/life skills
Intelligence from others (outreach, case managers, families/siblings)	Participation in pro-social and alternative activities	<u>Community level</u> Incident levels
Community surveys and focus groups	GPA, truancy, arrests, delinquency at school	Gang-related calls for service
Monitoring of community physical attributes	<u>Community level</u> Racial/ethnic population	Crime, gang incidents prevented
	Number of gangs in zone	Educational outcomes
	Type of gangs in zone	Cost effectiveness
	Physical indicators	
	Other services available	

The final table, displayed below, lays out the data sources and community-level measures for crisis intervention.

Table 3: Crisis Intervention Data Sources and Measures

Data Sources	Control Variables	Measures
LAPD records	<u>Community level</u> Racial/ethnic population	<u>Community level</u> Incident levels
Police intelligence	Number of gangs in zone	Arrest levels
Incident reports, follow up plans for each incident	Type of gangs in zone	Crime, gang incidents prevented
Self-reports (interviews, focus groups)	Resident investment in community	Crisis incidents prevented
Incident observations (by violence interrupters)	Physical indicators of gangs, safety	Level of violence in crisis incidents
Community surveys and focus groups		Fear of crime, perceptions of safety among residents
		Intelligence collection methods
		Cost effectiveness

III.3. Original Proposed Methodology

To achieve the process objectives outlined above, UI/Harder proposed a longitudinal descriptive design to document zone-specific and pooled performances and implementation fidelity. The emphasis was on a formative research approach, with regular interaction, feedback, and guidance with the GRYD office and with service providers.

For outcomes of the prevention and individualized intervention services components, an individual level experimental research design was proposed, if feasible. This design would incorporate the random assignment of at-risk youth to an experimental group, which would receive GRYD services, or to a control group, which would not. Successful implementation of such a design would depend on the acceptance by the GRYD office and service providers that youth designated at-risk, and so in need of services, would be randomly assigned to one of the two groups. Those assigned to the control group would not receive GRYD support. This was initially considered satisfactory by the GRYD office, when it was believed that the number of referred youth in each zone would exceed the GRYD service targets (200 for prevention and 50 for intervention²⁵) because the random assignment would then not deny service to more youth than would have been denied anyway due to service provider capacity constraints.

However, based on the past research, including most recently under the evaluation of the Gang Reduction Program in Boyle Heights, the UI/Harder team recognized that even experienced service providers with established recruitment techniques might have difficulties recruiting enough youth participants for their programs, thus putting a randomized design in jeopardy. As a fall back alternative if this were to turn out to be the case, we proposed to implement quasi-experimental designs—either through propensity score methods or regression discontinuity. Propensity score methods would involve matching individuals who participated in GRYD services (treatment group) to those who did not participate (control group) on one or more key covariates measured prior to participation. Under a regression discontinuity design, participants are assigned to a treatment or control group using a cutoff point on a single scale or score derived from an instrument such as the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET). Whereas the strength of the random assignment design stems from the independence of the assignment mechanism (completely random and unpredictable) and the subsequent equivalence for each group of factors other than GRYD services, the regression discontinuity design's strength is

²⁵ GRYD Request for Proposals, 2008, p. 12.

based on full knowledge of the assignment mechanism (completely deterministic or predictable). Under this design, control groups will be made up of youth living in the targeted zones who were tested on YSET but who did not score above the at-risk cutoff point.

For community outcomes, we proposed a pre-post comparison zone design. Comparison communities were to be chosen on the basis of zone characteristics (demographics, crime, gang types, etc.) that were used in the GRYD baseline needs assessments and with input from GRYD leadership to ensure comparison areas have characteristics as comparable as possible to the zones.

III.4. Y1 Evaluation Challenges/Caveats

As anticipated in the original proposal submission, we faced numerous evaluation challenges. The primary obstacles included a slower pace than expected of youth recruitment into GRYD, the lack of a standard service model (and therefore, inconsistent implementation), challenges to the proposed methodology, and difficulties in data acquisition.

III.4.1. The Program Model

It became apparent during the kick-off meeting and from subsequent meetings during the first quarter that the implementation of GRYD in the 12 zones raised more complex issues for the evaluation than envisioned when the proposal was written. There are twelve prime contractors in each of the two components, with crisis intervention activities primarily covered under the prime case-management intervention agency. In some zones the providers in these three areas are either from the same organization or have pre-existing relationships with each other, but in most they do not. There are different provider teams, with different objectives, and different protocols and practices in each zone. All of them have previously established procedures and routines and it seemed likely that they would continue such practices as a part of GRYD. In this sense, it appeared that there was no common GRYD model of service that was being implemented in a consistent fashion across all zones.

At the provider meetings held in May 2009, it appeared there was not a consensus for a GRYD model, and although providers were adjusting well and altering practices to increase recruitment or eligibility rates, these practices varied. This posed a serious challenge to the evaluation, which was conceived in the solicitation and proposal as an evaluation of a single program being implemented in standardized fashion in multiple locations. In fact, the evaluation

encountered numerous zone-specific programs, each of which might have to be evaluated separately. The evaluation team and advisory group initiated discussions regarding the lack of a single, comprehensive program model with the GRYD office, and the three groups worked together towards developing a model. Although elements of a model were coming into place by the end of the first year of the evaluation, there was still no clearly defined or standardized program model. See Section IV., Evaluation Findings, for a discussion of how the concept behind the GRYD model changed and evolved throughout the first year of the evaluation period, and next steps towards finalizing a GRYD model.

III.4.2. Challenges to the Proposed Methodology

First, there were immediate issues with randomly assigning which youth could receive services. There was a reluctance of the part of the GRYD office to deny services to eligible youth. It was also unclear whether providers would follow a random assignment protocol and that they might well provide services to the control group youth in much the same way as they would to the experimental group. This was also complicated by the relatively low numbers of YSET eligible youth—there were not enough youth recruited and eligible for GRYD to fill all of the slots. Therefore, randomly selecting out youth presented political (among other) issues and was ruled infeasible by the GRYD office, at least during the first year.

Similarly, there was an issue with comparing GRYD eligible and non-eligible YSET-tested youth. Providers often served youth who were determined by YSET to be ineligible for services with similar—if not identical—programs. Even if a client was excluded from GRYD through the YSET interview, several providers said they expected to provide services to that client anyway. As a consequence, sufficiently uncontaminated comparison groups were not seen as likely to be developed within zones. In addition, the GRYD policy of letting agencies re-test ineligibles and enroll those whose YSET scores made them eligible was a potential problem for maintaining a useful comparison group. An alternative design, identifying and testing comparison youth in other similar areas in Los Angeles, was considered but did not seem feasible given the resource constraints of the program and the evaluation. Further, it is not clear that there are such areas, or such youth, since the GRYD zones were intentionally chosen because they represented the areas in Los Angeles that most need a gang prevention and intervention service.

III.4.3. Data Acquisition

There were several challenges with data acquisition as well. First, a GRYD Information System (GRYDIS) was to be designed from scratch for the purposes of this program. GRYDIS was intended to serve as a central data system for most program data elements, including information on providers, service programs, activities, and clients. GRYDIS for prevention agencies was to be launched in the fall of 2009, but encountered programming issues (such as altering the interface and upgrading the software version), data element considerations (i.e., adding components to GRYDIS that were necessary for the evaluation and concerns about standardization across zones), staffing issues (for much of the first year there was only one GRYD office staff member responsible for GRYDIS training sessions in all 12 sites for both the prevention and intervention providers), delays in the GRYD office obtaining human subjects privacy/protection for the data, and contractual issues between Los Angeles and Athena, the GRYDIS vendor. The contract was not finalized until the end of the summer in 2009.

For these (and possibly other) reasons, initial GRYDIS training for prevention programs were delayed to January 2010. GRYDIS was rolled out to prevention agencies in the first quarter of 2010 and individual on-site training was provided by two GRYD office staff members during the second quarter of 2010. Full entry across all prevention sites of available data since January 2010 is expected to begin during July 2010, but, even then, is not expected to immediately be comprehensive or totally accurate. Programming a version of GRYDIS for intervention sites has not begun and is awaiting further definition and preference information from provider agencies.

These late start-ups for GRYDIS have had serious implications for the evaluation, since individual level information could not be obtained. Although using providers' existing files was considered halfway through the first year of the evaluation (when it became clear that GRYDIS would not be operational for an undefined amount of time), this option proved infeasible. Most providers do not have a viable type of electronic record system and there was a range in the type of data elements collected varied across the sites. The data collected at the sites did not usually include specific client level information such as services received and length of services (dosage). Therefore, the GRYD office and the evaluators agreed to rely on the consistent and standardized data that was to be captured for both performance monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Second, there were delays in obtaining LAPD data. The first memorandum of understanding for LAPD data acquisition was submitted in the summer of 2009, but not executed until October of 2009. Incident report data were not received until near the end of the first year of the evaluation period, and because of the lateness of acquisition, along with the fact that X, Y coordinates were missing in the initial data transmissions (thus preventing geocoding of data by GRYD zone), it was not possible to process LAPD data in time for this end of year report. However, new data are in the process of being provided by LAPD and, assuming timely delivery, baseline analyses will be completed for submission with the evaluation's next quarterly report.

III.5. Actual Y1 Implementation Process Design and Methodology

Although evaluators were unable to obtain individual record files (due to the delays in GRYDIS, as discussed above), interviews, focus groups, and program observations were conducted during Y1 of the evaluation. These detailed discussions and observations provided information on the basic structure and operations of the GRYD office and service providers (including staffing, outreach, services provided, and communication within the agency and with other agencies, changes in staffing, and challenges and successes perceived). In addition to document reviews and site visits, Harder staff was in frequent telephone and email communication with providers to gather information about site activities.

Second, UI/Harder conducted semi-structured focus groups with police detectives from the LAPD gang unit (see Section IV.3.2.a. for a discussion of these findings).

In addition to the detailed qualitative data obtained, all providers are required to submit GRYD office monthly reports, which detail the number of clients they have, the number of clients who have exited the program, and demographics about the youth enrolled in their program. This information is documented by zone in zone profiles.

III.6. Actual Y1 Outcome/Impact Design and Methodology

Because of the nature of GRYD program model development and implementation delays, along with data acquisition challenges described earlier, the primary focus of Y1 outcome assessment activities was on the prevention component of GRYD. The overall goals and objectives of the prevention component of GRYD are to implement a variety of evidence-based programs that are designed to improve factors that past research has shown to be associated with an increased risk

of joining gangs and thereby reduce the incidence of youth engaging in delinquent and criminal activities associated with gang membership. Therefore, during Y1 the evaluation methodology concentrated on developing methods of assessing short-term risk factor and behavioral changes that might be attributable to GRYD.

All youth referred or recruited for participation in GRYD prevention services are first screened for eligibility with the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET). As is described in more detail under the implementation findings section of this report, YSET was developed by researchers at the University of Southern California and is administered by prevention providers upon referral to all youth. Although YSET provides important data for the evaluation, it was designed to determine eligibility for the GRYD program (and specifically, prevention services). The instrument has undergone revision during Y1, with the final version being rolled out into the field in the fall of 2009. The evaluation team developed a retest tool based upon YSET in early 2010. It is designed to measure changes in individual level risk factor scores over the course of participation in GRYD at intervals of approximately every six months. It also captures self-reported delinquency, crime and substance abuse indicators for individual youth. A copy of this instrument was delivered to the GRYD office and a more detailed description of its development is offered in Section IV.8., Risk Factor Pilot Retest.

In order to prepare for risk factor and behavioral change measurement for all GRYD prevention youth and similar comparison youth beginning in Y2, the reassessment instrument was pretested during May and June of 2010. One hundred and sixty-six youth across five GRYD zones and two “Non-GRYD” zones were administered the reassessment instrument by volunteer providers in these zones. Changes in risk factor scores and self-reported behaviors were compared to those reported on initial YSET screens (N=150 because of missing initial screen data). The pilot retest was very successful and lessons learned have been integrated into Y2 plans for repeated measures of individual prevention youth risk factor and behavioral changes for the duration of the evaluation. The specific risk factor results for all prevention youth involved in the pilot retesting are presented in Section IV.8. These results are illustrative of future measurement and analytic plans, but should not be interpreted as definitive outcome findings given the limited sample sizes and a lack of comparison youth at this stage of the evaluation.

Chapter IV

Y1 Evaluation Findings

IV.1. Overview of Evaluation Findings

The previous sections of this report have established the basic context for understanding the evaluation’s findings to-date. These are inextricably connected to key features of the GRYD program’s origins, the model’s general framework and the structure and operations of the GRYD office. Among the most important implications for the evaluation of earlier sections of this report are:

1. Origins: the shaping of the GRYD concept by several public documents; the potential program “default factor” for several GRYD agencies that had Bridges I or II contracts; and the impact on program development of GRYD office and provider staff resource commitments to SNL;
2. GRYD framework: variability in GRYD program development at the provider level due to the role of eligibility testing in prevention and reliance on existing intervention models; and the shaping of programming emphasis by the RFP and award process; and
3. GRYD office organization: the program consequences of the way GRYD office field staff were deployed; the effect of changes in GRYD leadership on model specification; and the consequences of being in a development mode with respect to program structure.

Although there were multiple challenges to the evaluation (as described in Section III), the evaluation team was able to address research questions regarding program fidelity, early indications of necessary program modifications, how the program goals and strategy changed over time, the recruitment and enrollment of zone youth in the GRYD program, and lessons that can be taken away from the first year and a half of GRYD. This chapter reviews how the GRYD program developed and evolved; the prevention, intervention, and crisis intervention program components; the levels of recruitment and services delivered to GRYD youth, development and implementation challenges and successes; lessons learned; and pilot results from a reassessment of GRYD program youth.

IV.2. Y1 Program Development

IV.2.1. GRYD Guidelines

During the first year of the GRYD program client eligibility guidelines, with strong service implications, were present in the YSET for prevention service providers. However, service guidelines for GRYD providers in all three components (prevention, intervention case management, and crisis intervention and management) were limited. Some of the reasons for slow and uneven progress toward model articulation that have been derived from interviews with both site and GRYD office staff include:

- The lack of a written program manual for any component that could guide program development, training and technical assistance and ensure accountability across sites.
- The lack of client, community or incident-based data systems for recording characteristics, activities and outcomes. Prevention GRYDIS was brought online toward the end of Y1 (though it has not yet generated GRYD-wide documentation), but, so far, there have been no cross-zone data systems developed by the GRYD office for intervention providers (integration of intervention provider information into GRYDIS is being considered at the time of writing).
- Early requirements that providers “hit the ground running” at the same time that they were engaged in start-up tasks such as staffing, recruiting clients, establishing partnerships and subcontracts—all with the assistance of GRYD office staff. Although not officially a planning or start-up year, much planning work was done, and will continue with the creation of the Los Angeles Violence Intervention Academy (LAVITA), the implementation of the new GRYD Prevention Model outlined in June 2010, and with the expansion of SNL during the summer of 2010.
- A commitment of GRYD office and provider staff resources in the summer of 2009 to SNL, represented by both pre-event planning and intense participation during the two months of SNL (four days per week, long-night operations). A side effect of this commitment was reduced engagement of Program Managers in GRYD zones and with GRYD providers. In contrast to Y1, when SNL was not included in the evaluation contract, SNL will be an important component of the Y2 GRYD evaluation.

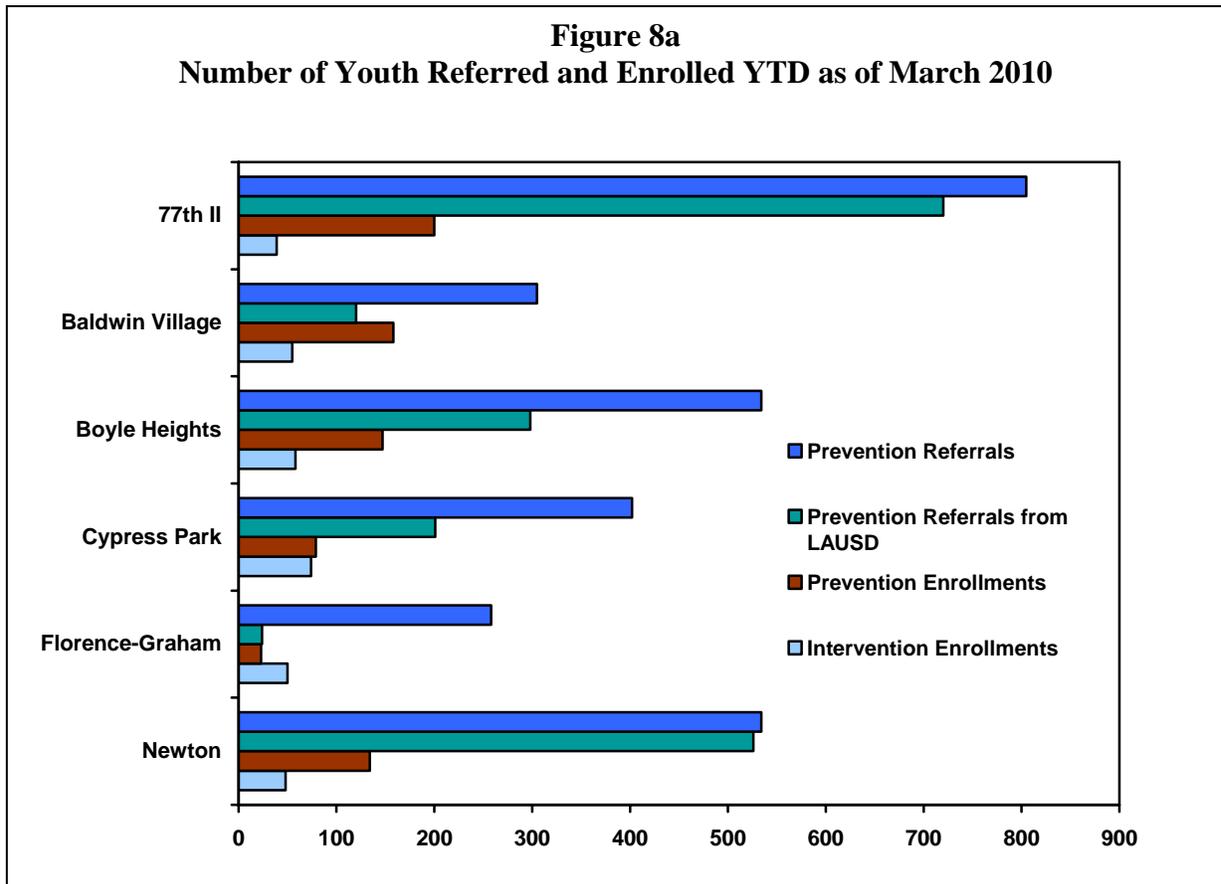
- GRYD office and intervention provider staff resources focused primarily on managing and responding to crisis events. There was less focus on development of case management intervention services.
- Limitations on the acceptance of formative program feedback from the evaluation team; provider reluctance or inability to accept and meet evaluation information needs; and GRYD office discontinuation or cancellation of forums and working groups considered necessary by the evaluator team.
- GRYD office staff turnover, especially at the top, which changed programming focus and initially introduced uncertainty about GRYD model development, but which, by year's end, had led to positive and constructive developments for the GRYD program through the development of evidence-based program models.

There are a number of program consequences resulting from the slow development of a comprehensive program model. They include the defaulting by service providers—within their GRYD contract obligations—to their existing dominant programming activities including, whether appropriate or not, practices learned by many of them as Bridges I or II contractors. In any case, the lack of a written program manual or clear comprehensive standards have contributed to the diversity of program practices already mentioned. The consequences for evaluation have been more resources required to record and assess disparate implementation practices and procedures, and, going forward, less ability to attribute impact to specific or well-implemented practices.

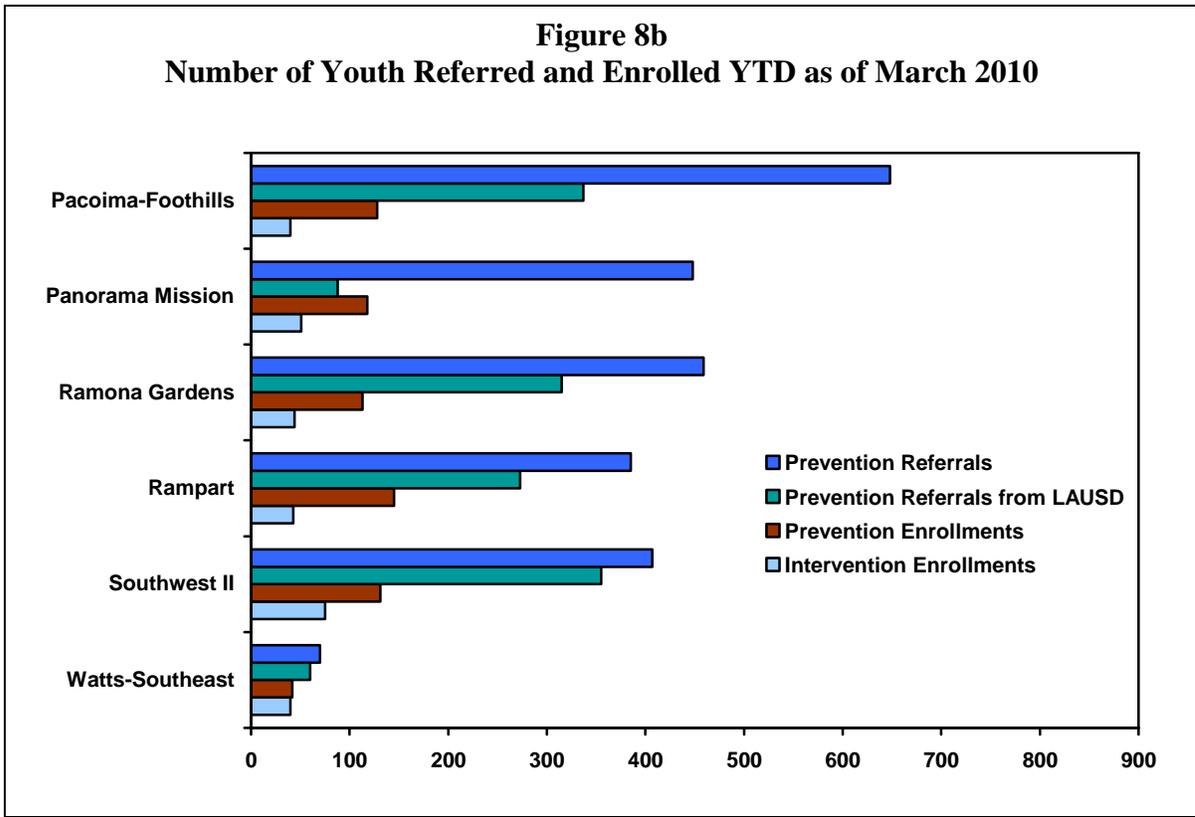
IV.2.2. Program Referrals and Enrollment

The strategies for recruiting youth and obtaining referrals from community agencies and organizations evolved throughout Y1. As discussed in the zone profiles, providers often had difficulty obtaining the minimum enrollment levels for both prevention and intervention case management services. The figures below depict the total number of referrals prevention providers received; the number of referrals received from the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the top referral source for 10 of the 12 zones; the total number of youth enrolled in the prevention GRYD program; and the total number of youth enrolled in the intervention (case management) GRYD program. Intervention referral information was not available. Figure 8a contains referral and enrollment information for 77th II, Baldwin Village,

Boyle Heights, Cypress Park, Florence-Graham, and Newton. Figure 8b contains referral and enrollment information for Pacoima-Foothills, Panorama Mission, Ramona Gardens, Rampart, Southwest II, and Watts-Southeast. These figures were obtained from the GRYD office's monthly reports.²⁶



²⁶ These reports were designed by the GRYD office before UI/Harder+Company were contracted to evaluate GRYD. The documents ask providers to report basic figures for certain program services, youth eligibility and enrollment, and other general information.



According to these figures, zones varied in referral levels, referral sources, and enrollment. Watts, which had one of the lowest prevention enrollment rates, received about one and a half the amount of referrals as the number of youth they enrolled, and Baldwin Village received approximately twice as many referrals as the number of youth who were enrolled. Two zones had approximately three times the number of prevention referrals compared to those enrolled (Rampart and Southwest II). Five zones had approximately four times the number of prevention referrals compared to those enrolled (77th II, Boyle Heights, Newton, Panorama-Mission, and Ramona Gardens), two zones had around five times (Cypress Park and Pacoima-Foothills), and Florence-Graham (which had a very low prevention enrollment total) had approximately 11 times. It is clear that many of the youth who are referred to the GRYD prevention program are not enrolled. Providers attributed this to ineligibility, as determined through YSET interviews. Specifically, providers frequently reported that they needed to explain the program in more detail to their referral sources (such as who the program is designed for) to

improve their enrollment rates. More detailed information on the challenges providers faced with eligibility and referral sources is described in the zone profiles.

An important caveat should be noted about these data. The figures that providers reported to the GRYD office varied even within zone report submissions (with different numbers of enrolled youth reported for age, race/ethnicity, and other categories). Since actual enrollment numbers were sometimes unclear, enrolled youth who were found eligible after taking the YSET were reported for all zones. Therefore, the total number of prevention and intervention youth officially *enrolled* into GRYD YTD through March 2010 is reported.²⁷ These numbers do not speak to the number of *active* youth, or the length of time a youth was enrolled. In general, all statistics reported should be considered close estimates, but due to a lack of a standardized data management system, the reliability of the monthly report figures is unclear.

IV.2.3. Program Services

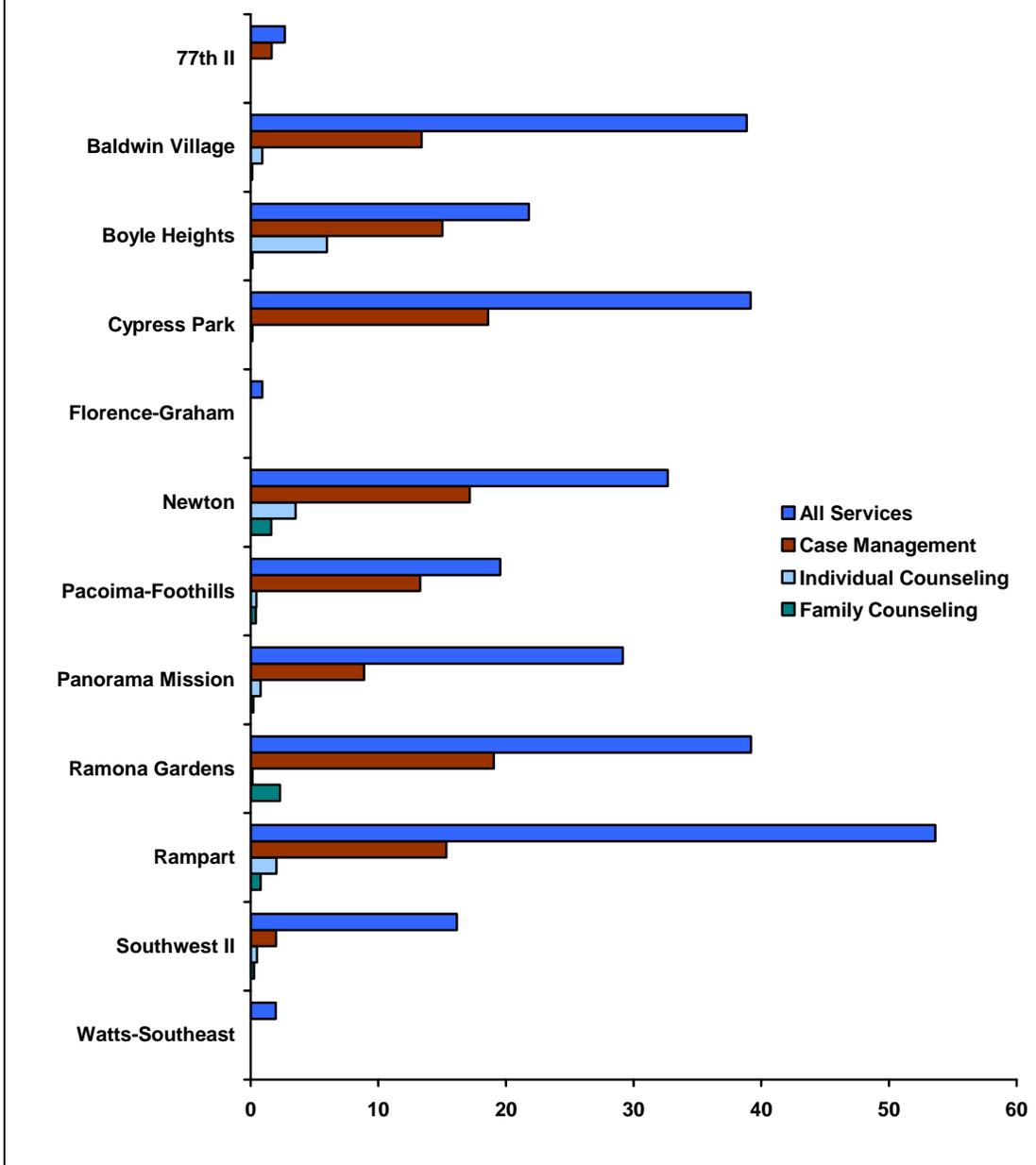
While referrals and enrollment varied across zones, the amount of variation in service provision was even more striking. Figure 9 (below) displays the average number of sessions per enrolled prevention youth. In other words, the total number of services for different categories (case management, individual counseling, and family counseling) was divided by the number of enrolled youth in each zone. Individual counseling was selected due to its popularity among GRYD providers, and family counseling was selected because of the Y2 focus on family-based services (which is discussed in later sections). However, the types of services (and the frequency of the most popular services) vary greatly among zones. Therefore, the total number of all services provided was also considered.

The source for Figure 9 is also the GRYD office monthly report, and data include all services reported through March 31, 2010. The data inconsistencies become more apparent here. Three sites (77th II, Florence-Graham, and Watts) marked data fields as “TBD” (to be determined), “on-going,” or otherwise missing. The numbers reported should all be treated as rough estimates, since there was not a standardized data management system in place during the reporting period. Since providers use different systems (excel databases, paper files, etc.), some may report more accurate figures than others. In other words, it is unclear whether providers

²⁷ March 2010 is used as the cut-off point in all of these data figures for two main reasons. First, there was a delay in providers reporting to the GRYD office, and a subsequent delay in the GRYD office’s transfer of files to the evaluation team. In addition, these figures match the month of the final evaluation team site visit as reported in the zone profiles.

recorded the actual number of service sessions offered to youth, or whether they estimated what they may (or should) have provided (i.e., multiplying the number of services they intended to provide with the number of clients). The lack of standardization also raises issues of measurement, and what constitutes a “session.” However, in lieu of GRYDIS, these statistics provide the best data available at the current time and are at least suggestive of actual service levels.

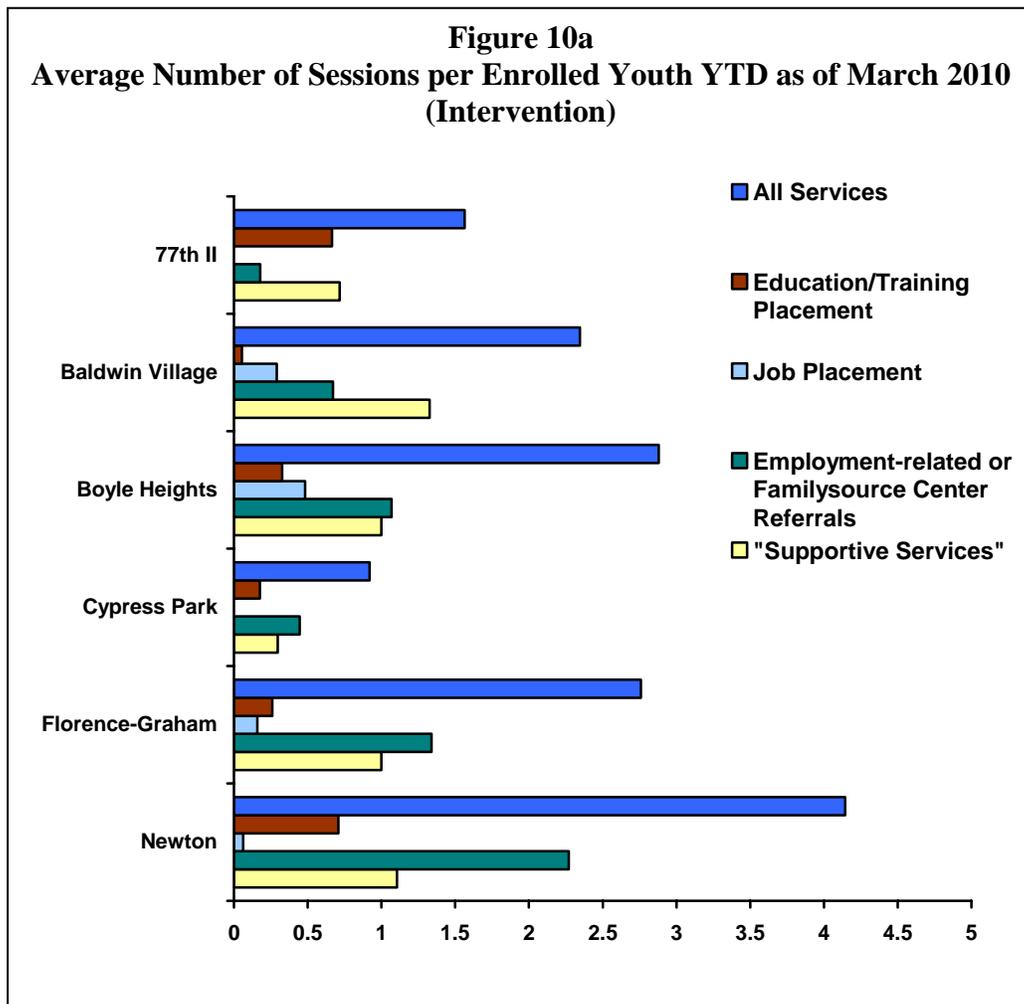
Figure 9
Average Number of Sessions per Enrolled Youth YTD as of March 2010
(Prevention)



As shown in Table 9 above, the average number of services reported to be provided per enrolled youth varies greatly. While this may be due to data issues (as described above), it is known that some providers deliver more service units than others. For example, while Rampart reports an average of 54 service sessions per youth in the all services category, the other zones (excluding 77th II, Florence-Graham, and Watts, due to data issues) range from 16-39 sessions on

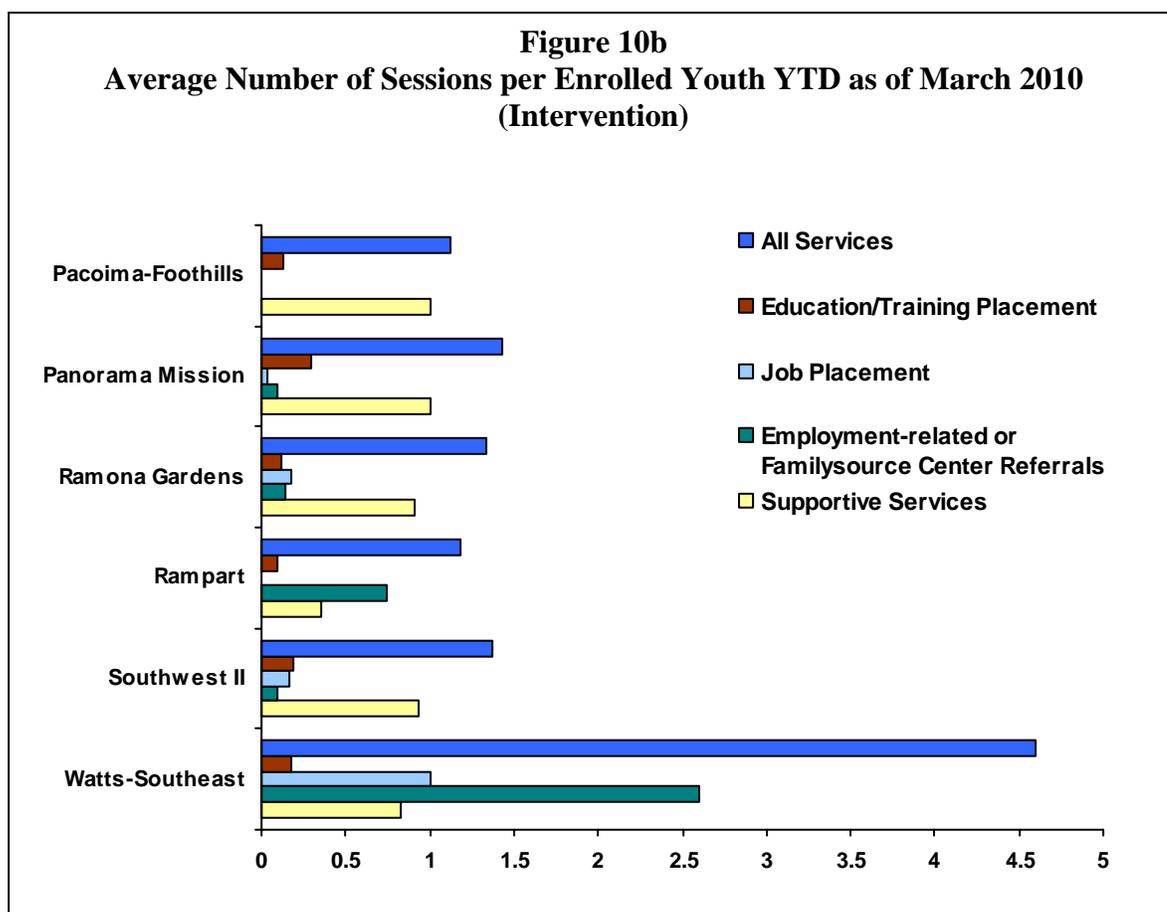
average per youth over the course of a year and a half when considering all service and program types.

A similar zone comparison was conducted for intervention programs and services. The GRYD office monthly reports ask intervention providers to quantify the number of services provided to clients in four general areas: education/training placement, job placement, employment-related referrals and FamilySource Center referrals,²⁸ and supportive services.²⁹ Figures 10a and 10b (below) display the average number of sessions per enrolled youth for all 12 zones.



²⁸ This is a program sponsored by the City’s Community Development Department. FamilySource has an interdepartmental agreement to reserve service slots for GRYD clients. For more information on this center, see: http://mayor.lacity.org/PressRoom/PressReleases/LACITYP_008757.

²⁹ It is unclear what this encompasses, or whether this term was ever defined to the intervention providers.



In summary, the information presented in these charts, drawn from reports generated by the providers themselves, indicates widespread differences between sites not just in recruitment and enrollment practices, but also in services delivered. Drawing firm conclusions about the significance of these differences is complicated by the fact that GRYDIS, or any other standardized client information system, did not exist at the time reports on recruitment and services were being made. Consequently, there was no overarching synthesis of approach that would have led to greater confidence in the numbers. Thus, it is possible that a number of the differences are a by-product of idiosyncratic data gathering and compilation at the site level. It is also possible that the differences in service type and service level have been exacerbated by the lack of a standardized approach, based perhaps on best practices, to the issue of working with gang-prone or gang-involved youth. This issue will be explored in greater detail in the next stage of the evaluation.

IV.2.4. Variations and Similarities Across Zones

Evaluation findings for the GRYD program's first contract period with its service providers (approximately 1-1/2 years of operation through June 2010) are primarily about the implementation of GRYD at multiple levels and how the program evolved at these 24 sites over time. The evaluation team constructed individual zone profiles for each of the 12 targeted neighborhoods, which have been delivered to the GRYD office separately from this Y1 report.³⁰ While summary information is provided throughout this chapter, each profile contains site-specific information on the area (including demographics and a brief history of the location); baseline gang prevalence and activity; and a discussion of the Y1 implementation period for prevention, intervention, and crisis intervention, including challenges and successes.

The similarities across zones are noticeable in these zone profiles, but the differences in implementation are also readily apparent. Early on, the evaluators observed and reported to the GRYD office that program development might be too agency-specific to support a useful aggregate all-GRYD evaluation. The alternative of conducting 12 separate prevention and 12 or even 24 separate intervention evaluations was and is considered infeasible. The reality of program coherence across zones and components is of course somewhere between full standardization and total disparity. It is also important for this report to address an earlier "finding" expressed in the Six-Month Evaluation Report and elsewhere, including verbally to the GRYD office: the lack of a fully articulated GRYD program model and the consequences of that condition for providers and for the evaluation.

In reality, all programs like GRYD have both formal and informal structures. Formal structure, including written purposes, objectives and procedures, while always somewhat idealistic and never fully interpreted, is essential for ensuring overall direction and stability and for comparing an organization or program with explicit standards, and with other entities. Informal structure, which includes beliefs and practices that may even "work around" formal structure, while more volatile and difficult to understand, is essential for motivation, creativity and simply getting things done. The formal structure of GRYD programming is revealed in RFPs, agency proposals and workplans and in the examination of program components that have explicit GRYD office endorsed standards. GRYD informal program structure is revealed in

³⁰ The 12 Zone Profiles document GRYD recruitment, activities, and service provision for each of the zones. They can be obtained from two sources: the GRYD office, or the Urban Institute Web Site (after release in early September, 2010) – <http://www.urban.org>.

interviews and observations about actual systems and operations at the GRYD office and site levels. Findings at the site level are described in the sections below.

IV.2.5. Program Components

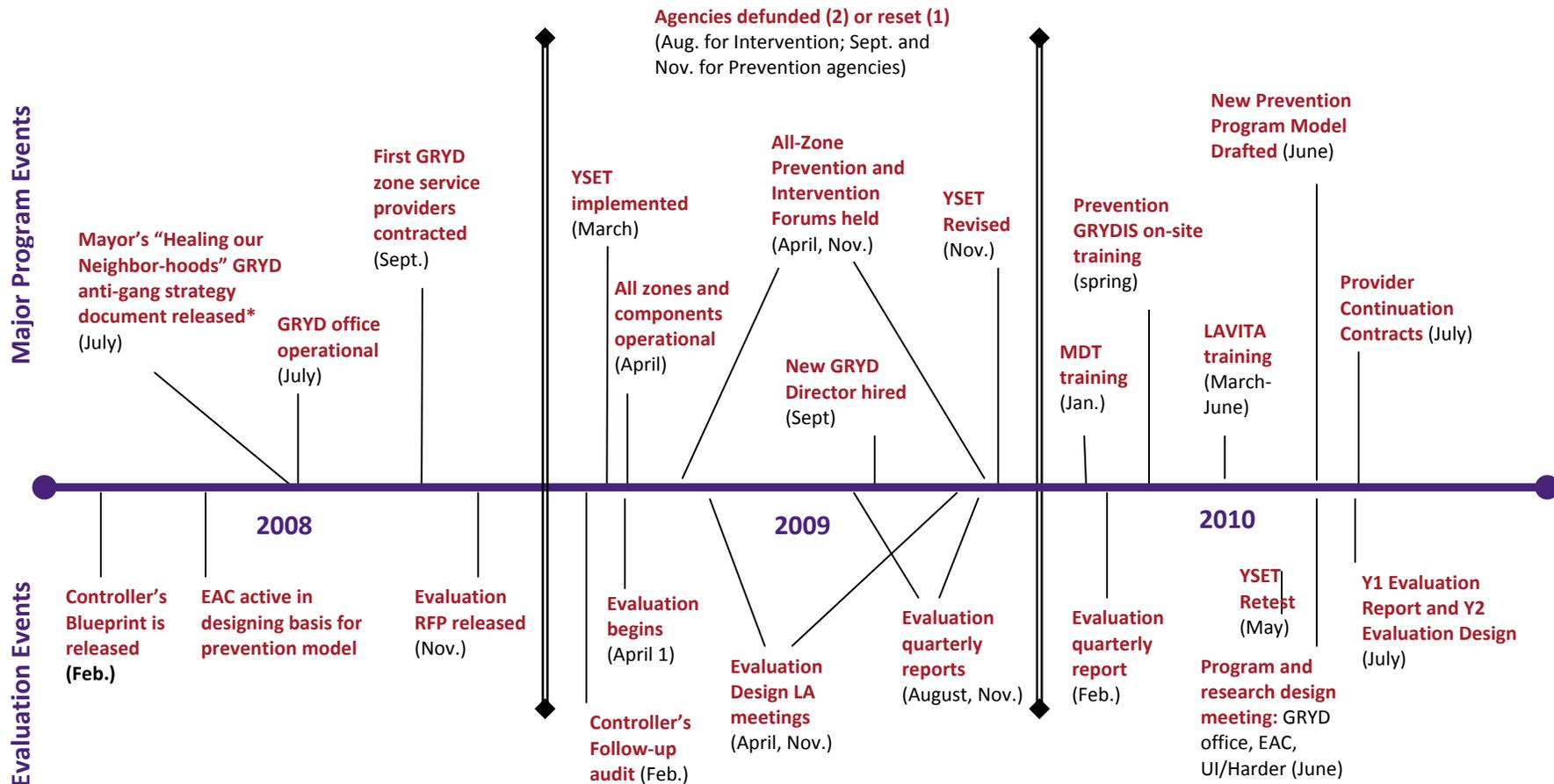
In the remainder of this chapter, four questions are addressed for each of the three clearly distinct GRYD program components of Prevention, Intervention Case Management and Crisis

Intervention:

1. What is the basic program model and its constituent services?
2. How has the model evolved since GRYD began?
3. What is the situation as of June 2010?
4. What future alterations in the model are planned at this time?

The answers are quite different across the three components and even across zones or agencies for a given component. Although the specifics of program development for each zone are found in some detail in the 12 zone profiles separately provided to the GRYD office, highlights from them and other observations that addressed the four questions are explored below. The evolution of each program component should be seen in the context of the general evolution of GRYD since its inception. Milestones for GRYD and the evaluation are presented in a general timeline on the following page.

Milestones in the Evolution of GRYD and the Evaluation: 2008-2010



*The Mayor's Gang Reduction Strategy paper was presented in April 2007

Ongoing Program and Evaluation Activities include regular correspondence and meetings among the GRYD office, providers and the evaluation team and resulting documents, decisions and actions. The evolution of GRYDIS occurred throughout most of 2009 and 2010.

IV.3. The GRYD Prevention Component

IV.3.1. The Initial Prevention Model and Proposed Services

The basis of the GRYD Prevention model was the Prevention RFP issued October 1, 2008. This document presented the core concept of gang joining risk factors and offered general examples of how the selected agencies were expected to address them. However, the proposals and work plans of the 12 funded prevention agencies show little evidence of a common program model. As a consequence, as discussed above in Chapter III, the GRYD office gave a great deal of attention during Y1 to creating a more standardized approach.

A wide range of services have been provided by GRYD prevention agencies. Early service documentation by the evaluation, taken from provider proposals and verified in field visits, demonstrates diversity (primarily in dosage and service type) in the five following areas:

Case management

- Arranges services for client within provider's programs
- Arranges services for client outside of provider's programs (i.e., referrals)
- Tracks academic performance
- Meets with clients 3 times/week or more
- Amount of time spent with clients
- Involves family (meetings; case plan)

Individual focus

- Counseling
- Mentoring
- Tutoring
- Substance abuse
- Anger management
- Life management skills
- Delinquency, gang prevention, violence prevention, leadership, and/or development workshops
- Career exploration/vocational training/internships
- Re-entry opportunities for HS dropouts

Family focus

- Family counseling (by a licensed provider)
- Parenting programs/classes

Social activities

- Recreational outings/activities/field trips
- Group counseling
- School assembly presentations
- Sports

Community/environment

- Community programs
- Safe passages (volunteers patrol streets to/from school or programs)

Of note is the perceived promotion of mental health-related services such as counseling and therapy in the RFP. Interviews with providers and independent grant writers revealed that the bidding agencies responded to the RFP’s table of Program Elements (p.10) and discussion of evidence-based models (pp.12-14) by noting that five of the six Elements and four of the six “models” offered highlight counseling, therapy or clinical treatment. In fact, as shown in the following table, there was considerable variation in the “counseling and therapy” complexion of actual services provided across the 12 prevention contractors.

**Table 4
Prevention Counseling and Therapy Services**

Zone/Agency	Prevention Contractors’ Counseling and Therapy Services
Baldwin Village Community Build, Inc. (CB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case managers offer counseling ▪ Subcontracted licensed mental health providers provide one-on-on cognitive behavioral therapy ▪ Intensive or specialized mental health services are referred out as needed
Boyle Heights Alma Family Services (AFS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-house therapy provided by licensed therapists at MA level and a clinical supervisor ▪ AFS’s partners initially approached them to lead the GRYD project because of their strong mental health background, juvenile justice experience, and established infrastructure to provide clinical and administrative supervision and oversight.

Zone/Agency	Prevention Contractors' Counseling and Therapy Services
Cypress Park Children's Hospital LA (CHLA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CHLA has a psychology fellow (Ph.D. level) and a bilingual clinical therapist on staff to provide mental health services
Florence Graham LA Metropolitan Churches (LAM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LAM expressed that they were beginning to refer clients to Community Build's Family Resources Center for services which they do not have
77th Division II Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A licensed therapist is on staff to provide individual and family therapy
Ramona Gardens Violence Intervention Program (VIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VIP has a program manager and a staff member who are MSWs. They provide clinical supervision to the case managers and provide mental health services. VIP has a close relationship with the USC medical center's mental health services located next door to them and refer youth to them. ▪ VIP is the lead for GRYD in Ramona Gardens because of its financial stability and their mental health component. ▪ Legacy LA (subcontractor) does not have a therapist on site but they can refer youth to VIP for mental health. It is unclear how often Legacy LA actually refers youth to VIP. They tend to refer out for mental health services. ▪ Barrio Action (subcontractor) has in-house mental health resources and appears to be utilizing them.
Pacoima Foothill El Nido Family Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-house counseling offered by MA level Counselors. ▪ El Nido has 2 MA level Counselors and 1 Program Supervisor/Counselor.
Panorama City New Directions for Youth (NDY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Counseling provided by sub-contracted agency, El Centro de Amistad.
Rampart El Centro del Pueblo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-house counseling offered by MA level Counselors trained in FFT. ▪ Children's Institute, Inc., one of the sub-contractors, also provides a Clinical Director who supervises the clinical work of the FFT trained therapists. Clinical Director was described as providing time as an "in-kind donation" to the GRYD program.
Newton People Coordinated Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case managers offer counseling
Southwest II Brotherhood Crusade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case managers offer counseling ▪ Subcontracted mental health services—background of providers unknown
Watts Southeast Watts Labor Community Action Committee (WLCAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case managers offer counseling ▪ Subcontracted licensed mental health providers provide one-on-one and family therapy

All prevention agencies' proposals and work plans addressed reducing the youth's gang joining risk through a variety of services meant to focus on the six risk factors described in the RFP: poor parental supervision, early childhood aggression, delinquent beliefs, negative life

events, delinquent peers, and commitment to street-oriented peers. There were a few examples listed for each of the six risk factors in the RFP, all of which suggested evidence based strategies. These examples included parent training, therapy, counseling, mentoring, tutoring, and other “program activities designed to reduce client’s involvement and commitment to street-oriented peers.”

However, there were more risk factors considered for prevention services eligibility than were outlined in the original RFPs upon which many providers developed their proposals and services. Eligibility for gang prevention services was based upon the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET), developed for the GRYD office by a team of academic gang experts. Under YSET, the original 6 risk factors were reorganized and expanded to a total of 10 areas of risk that could be targeted. These 10 risk factors are described in detail below, based on informal conversations with Dr. Karen Hennigan, one of the YSET development team members and the lead USC data manager.

Antisocial tendencies / Lack of prosocial

The first section in the YSET has items based on two subscales of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), which is frequently used in clinical settings. The SDQ refers to certain questions as conduct disorder, which the YSET team renamed the antisocial scale. The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) also influenced this risk factor category, but the YSET team noted that the assessment would have been expensive and difficult to use. Instead, the lack of prosocial tendencies was combined with antisocial tendencies after the YSET team found high correlations between the two.

Weak parental monitoring

This scale, which asks whether respondents’ parents or guardians are aware of where they are, who they associate with, and their activities outside of the home, was included because it has been extensively used in prior research that links risk factors and delinquency.

Critical life events

This risk factor category was originally derived from strain and delinquency research, incorporated from questions used previously by Terry Thornberry and Cheryl Maxson, and narrowed down to gang-related indicators. Although this was originally called

“negative life events,” the YSET team felt that not all significant life events were negative, and the category was renamed.

Risk taking

Based on concepts of an individual characteristic, risk taking has been included in prior delinquency research related to risk factors. The specific scale in YSET was previously used in the Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) evaluation (see Esbensen, 2003).

Impulsivity

This risk factor scale was also previously used in the GREAT evaluation (Esbensen, 2003) and other delinquency research, and refers to acting before thinking through the consequences.

Neutralization

The neutralization risk factor questions are related to justifying or rationalizing delinquent behaviors.

Negative Peer Influence

This scale asks youth about the decisions they would make when they are in certain situations. Specifically, respondents answer whether they believe they would hang out with or go along with friends who would get them into trouble with their parents, in school, or with the police.

Peer Delinquency

The peer delinquency scale asks youth to describe the types of delinquent behaviors friends engage in and the number of friends that participate in these behaviors.

Self-Report Delinquency

The self-report delinquency scale is a more extensive list of the types of behaviors listed in the peer delinquency scale, and asks whether the youth has ever done certain activities (in a graduated list from minor to major delinquent acts) in the past six months or ever. This risk factor is also frequently used in delinquency research, and the YSET team adapted these questions from Esbensen (2003).

Self-Report Substance Use

Youth are asked to report their history of substance use. Esbensen also reduced this list from his GREAT survey.

It should also be noted that the shift from the original YSET interview to a combined YSET instrument (discussed in more detail in Section IV.8) changed the number of questions in each section (primarily deleting or combining questions), but none of these main risk factor categories were deleted. Instead, self-report delinquency and substance use were combined into one category and questions in the previous YSET were rearranged to form a new topic area, Family Gang Influence. Family Gang Influence simply asks questions related to the family's involvement in gangs. Based on the language used (and examples provided) in the RFP, providers designed their program services around the original six risk factors although some providers expanded referrals or services throughout the implementation period to meet additional client needs (such as substance abuse). Findings from an assessment of these activities, conducted by the evaluation team in December 2010, are displayed in the following table.

Table 5
Prevention Service Elements for Risk-Reduction

YSET Risk Factor For Gang Joining	Specific elements of program services that are explicitly related to reducing the risk factor
<p>A. ANTISOCIAL TENDENCIES</p>	<p>Brotherhood Crusade (SWII)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anger Management is taught as a module of Brotherhood Crusade’s Life Skills Class, but the agency feels that it would be more effective to have a stand-alone extensive Anger Management Class in which youth complete an entire Anger Management curriculum that will: Define anger, describe the sensations of anger; identify various reasons for anger; teach techniques & activities for controlling aggressive anger; teach appropriate alternatives; use role-play to demonstrate antisocial and pro-social ways of dealing with anger; conflict resolution, etc. ▪ For youth that do not do well in groups, or who miss classes, they can be taught Anger Management concepts on a one-on-one basis by the Instructor or the Case Managers. ▪ Life/Social Skill Curriculum: Teaches pro-social behaviors such as empathy, the social norms of reciprocity, responsibility, equity and remorse. The curriculum should also identify the antisocial behaviors and their consequences (i.e. violence towards others, dangerous & thoughtless behavior, selfishness, dishonesty, and breaking the law). ▪ Multi-systemic Therapy (MST): Goal-oriented treatment that specifically targets those factors in each youth’s social network that are contributing to his or her antisocial behavior. Thus, MST interventions typically aim to improve caregiver discipline practices, enhance family affective relations, decrease youth association with deviant peers, increase youth association with pro-social peers, improve youth school or vocational performance, engage youth in pro-social recreational outlets, and develop an indigenous support network of extended family, neighbors, and friends to help caregivers achieve and maintain such changes. Specific treatment techniques used to facilitate these gains are integrated from those therapies that have the most empirical support, including cognitive behavioral, behavioral, and the pragmatic family therapies. <p>Community Builds (Baldwin Village)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cognitive Based Therapy: Empirically grounded therapy using problem focused, directive and practical approach to the treatment of conduct problems, association with antisocial peers, and trauma induced maladaptive responses. <p>El Centro del Pueblo (Rampart)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Life Skills Classes: The client will be given a curriculum of life skills by targeting behaviors and the consequences that would create a sense of guidance of self-control and responsibility towards once actions by providing the youth the adequate tools to reduce antisocial tendencies. <p>El Nido Family Centers (Pacoima Foothill)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management/Mentoring (Heart of Champions and Girls Support Group, Unusual Suspects, Heroes of Life): Mentors promote and role model pro-social skills by enhancing youth’s social relationships, improving their cognitive skills through instruction and conversation and providing a positive development of Self.

YSET Risk Factor For Gang Joining	Specific elements of program services that are explicitly related to reducing the risk factor
B. WEAK PARENTAL SUPERVISION	<p>Brotherhood Crusade (SWII)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parenting Training: parental supervision, assertive discipline, role-modeling desired behavior, active listening, improving school involvement, using positive reinforcement, using praise for good behavior, contracting, improving emotional bonding. <p>El Centro del Pueblo (Rampart)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parenting class: Parents learn about the importance of youth being supervised even though they are not elementary school aged children. ▪ Recreational Services: Youth enrolled in structured recreational activities are supervised and therefore family members do not need to worry about the youth during those hours. ▪ Juvenile Intervention Prevention Program: Parents through the parenting classes learn about their legal responsibilities and how best to set up parameters at home for times when they are not present. <p>El Nido (Pacoima)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family therapy: Counseling session addresses family systems and patterns in order to disrupt dysfunctional patterns <p>New Directions (Panorama City)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parenting Education Curriculum: Getting parents involved with workshops and other activities. Empowering parents with tools/programs to increase financial stability. Mentor/Tutors fill the void in the interim; they help correct some of the youth's views on adults and supervision.
C. CRITICAL LIFE EVENTS	<p>Brotherhood Crusade (SWII)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Life/Social Skills curriculum for youth that teaches them coping strategies to deal with critical life events. ▪ Anger Management: Dealing with the anger that result from critical life events. <p>El Centro del Pueblo (Rampart)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anger Management: This is a curriculum that addresses critical life events that could cause anger problems that could continue be manifested through the youth's behavior. This service provides the youth a support group. ▪ Teen group: This group is a life skills group focused on anger management and gang involvement. Youth also view it as a support group where they can share about their experiences and seek out peer support. <p>El Nido Family Centers (Pacoima)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual and Family Psychotherapy: To address grief and loss issues and challenge the youth/parent's belief system and irrational thoughts and to replace them with more appropriate forms of self-expression. ▪ Anger Management Classes/ Heart of Champions and Girl Support Group: To address critical life events and assist the youth/parents enhance their decision making skills along with developing pro-social belief systems and relationships and enhance their ability to communicate events effectively.

YSET Risk Factor For Gang Joining	Specific elements of program services that are explicitly related to reducing the risk factor
DE. IMPULSIVE RISK TAKING	<p>Brotherhood Crusade (SWII)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Life Skills Curriculum that addresses: Poor and beneficial peer choices, decision making, responsibility, and role-play activities. <p>EI Nido Family Centers (Pacoima Foothill)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management, Adolescent Support Groups (Heart of Champions, Girls Support Group, Unusual Suspects, Heroes of Life): Addresses character building, action and consequence dilemmas and scenarios; assist the youth spotlight on long term consequences as opposed to the immediate future and/or “instant gratification” syndrome, and develop healthy coping strategies amongst the youth and parents. ▪ Case Managers/Mentors are developing relationships with the youth/parents and addressing impulsive behaviors along with presenting the youth with better decision making skills so that they can learn to deal with life’s issues in healthier ways. ▪ Individual/Family Counseling: Address impulsive risk taking issues and their significance; enhance the development of self-control, impulse control and self-direction. <p>New Directions for Youth (Panorama City)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anger Management/Conflict Resolution: This will help them to find non-aggressive solutions to problems, increase youth’s problem solving skills and train them to make a commitment not to contribute to aggression and violence that can trigger impulsive risk taking.
F. GUILT NEUTRALIZATION	<p>Brotherhood Crusade (SWII)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Life Skills Curriculum: Identifying dysfunctional beliefs and values. <p>EI Nido Family Centers (Pacoima Foothill)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heart of Champions: Address the youth’s and parents’ values and virtues. The program asks the youth to compare and contrast their current values and tackles justifications for the maladaptive values. The youth are exposed to positive character building virtues and asked to “ponder the future with such positive values”.
G. NEGATIVE PEER INFLUENCE	<p>Brotherhood Crusade (SWII)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Life Skills Curriculum: recognizing and alternative to negative peer influence, role-play, expression activities using journaling, poetry. ▪ Recreational Diversion Activities: such as chess, using arts as a positive form of expression, sports, educational & cultural field trips that promote pro-social environments and affiliations with positive peer networks. <p>EI Nido Family Centers (Pacoima Foothill)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case Management, Adolescent Support Groups (Heart of Champions, Girls Support Group, Unusual Suspects, Heroes of Life and Youth Speak!Collective): Address negative and positive peer influences and the value of each, youth and parents

YSET Risk Factor For Gang Joining	Specific elements of program services that are explicitly related to reducing the risk factor
	<p>will learn about empowerment, respect and engaging in positive social activities and the benefits derived from them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adolescent Support Groups (Heart of Champions, Girls Support Group): Addressing the significance of involving positive peer influences into their daily lives as opposed to negative influences; involving the youth and parents with other positive social group activities in order to role model. <p>LAM (Florence Graham)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urban Technology Group, We Care Ministries: Helps youth identify the existence of negative peer influence in relation to its negative effect on their goals and aspirations while showing youth tactful ways to avoid such influences without being ostracized by their peers. <p>WLCAC (Watts SE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaging youth in community sports league through 1 of 3 local recreation and parks community centers; field trips during the summer months that engage youth 3 times weekly, allowing youth to develop relationships with peers outside of their neighborhoods; youth employment.
H. PEER DELINQUENCY	<p>Brotherhood Crusade (SWII)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Life Skills: Dealing with peer pressure, and alternatives to peer delinquency, responsibility, consequences, etc. <p>El Nido Family Centers (Pacoima Foothill)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adolescent Support Groups (Heart of Champions, Girls Support Group): Address youth's decision making, development of pro-social belief systems, relationships, and provide positive alternatives to replace poor decision making skills in order to reduce involvement and commitment to negative peers. <p>LAM (Florence Graham)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urban Technology Group, Solid Rock/Boys2Men—Helps youth identify negative effects of peer delinquencies on their immediate wants and perceived needs while providing them with alternatives to such association. <p>WLCAC (Watts SE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reducing negative peer involvement using a point system for attendance and interaction with peers; giving youth leadership roles at the facility (i.e. task oriented responsibility); promoting youth employment; encourage peer leadership and positive influence (i.e. peer mediation); using field trips to promote positive interactions among the youth.

YSET Risk Factor For Gang Joining	Specific elements of program services that are explicitly related to reducing the risk factor
T. FAMILY GANG INFLUENCE	<p>EI Nido Family Centers (Pacoima Foothill)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parent Support Group: On-going parenting support group that acknowledges the parents barriers to the ongoing process of raising children along with addressing and empowering parents to continually assert their parental role within their families and discuss “stopping the cycle” of family gang influence. ▪ Parent Council: Parents making themselves more visible in the programs and role modeling the importance of positive family unity and involvement. ▪ Case Managers/Mentors are developing relations with parents and addressing concerns such as familial gang influence; enhancing parents ability distinguish between positive and negative familial influence. ▪ Family Therapy: Family counseling session addresses family systems and multi-generational patterns and dysfunction in order to disrupt such patterns.

IV.3.2. Evolution from 2008 to present

As indicated in the timeline and discussed above, the evolution of GRYD prevention programming was stimulated across all zones by all-site forums during the spring and fall of 2009 and by the introduction of Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) training in January 2010 and start-up a few months later. MDT is a multidisciplinary partnership of key stakeholders who know about the youth in the community and collaborate towards common goals. GRYD office examination of the Functional Family Therapy (FFT) model and communication with providers about the importance of family intervention was also beginning to move thinking and planning toward new and more standard prevention strategies. FFT essentially takes a family-based approach to prevention and intervention services. The involvement of prevention providers in a beta test of GRYDIS also promoted coherent model development and generated input to decisions about services to code and training to provide to each site.

Program evolution of course occurred in different forms and paces at different sites, but several site-specific experiences were fairly typical. The development of staffing and services was one common experience across all sites, if easier at some sites than others. Some examples follow.

Prevention: Evolution in staffing and services

77th-II—AADAP

A new Program Manager was assigned to this GRYD zone in July 2009. Additionally, AADAP hired several new staff. Two full time case managers were hired in October 2009 and an additional full time case manager was hired in February 2010. A part time case manager was also hired in February 2010.

AADAP also added an additional service site in February 2010. Staff expressed that mixing middle school students with elementary school students in group counseling was not good. For that reason case managers began running group sessions at Western Elementary.

Outreach activities were most intense during Spring and Summer 2009 when the program was focused on recruitment. As enrollment grew the program began to focus more of its attention on service delivery.

As services to families took on more emphasis after September 2009, a number of agencies responded with important adaptations.

**Prevention: Evolution toward enhanced family services
Baldwin Village—Community Build**

Community Build staff agreed that the YSET effectively identifies troubled youth. Serving these youth comes with a set of challenges. For example, staff found that many of their clients' parents/caregivers also need assistance and plan to enhance their parenting services. The agency plans to develop a program for parents called "Creating Lasting Family Connections" as well as a parent group.

A number of others services, from one-on-one mentoring to group workshops changed and took shape during Y1. Some of the shaping, as discussed in provider forums, was toward a tighter relationship between a youth's risk factors and his or her individual service plan.

IV.3.2.a. Relationships with LAPD Gang Units

GRYD's relationships with LAPD has primarily been with regard to how to interface for gang crisis intervention, which ties together the polar opposite strategies of suppression and intervention, both part of the Mayor's anti-gang strategy. However, the role of LAPD in the referral of youth to prevention programs and participation in zone MDTs has also evolved. As part of the evaluation, UI/Harder conducted interviews with CLEAR officers and gang detectives in districts responsible for law enforcement services in all 12 zones (resulting in 12 interviews in total). Interviews revealed that these detectives generally feel like a part of the GRYD program and are supportive of the goals and mission of GRYD. The detectives also reported that they believe CLEAR and gang injunctions are a significant component for gang reduction and deterrence. Although there have been tensions between intervention workers and LAPD, due to the often contrasting ideologies and goals, the two groups have also made considerable progress in bridging these differences.

**Prevention: Evolving relationship with LAPD
SW-II—Southwest LAPD**

During the evaluation team interview for the SW-II zone, the sergeant expressed satisfaction with GRYD and particularly with his GRYD Project Manager, who is PM for both Southwest zones. He meets often with her regarding the MDT and now Summer Night Lights. She picks up GRYD youth referral notes every week from a box at the station detective area.

Ramona Gardens—Hollenbeck LAPD

On the prevention side, the police are active partners with the GRYD office reaching out to at risk youth on the fence. They have piloted a ticket system in the zone for referrals where the youth gets a copy and the other goes to the GRYD office. The gang unit here is the only one doing this at present but they hope it will expand.

The GRYD program has clearly evolved since its inception and has been moving toward more definition and coherency. Progress in 2010 in that regard outpaced and was more directed than changes occurring in 2009, the first program calendar year. The termination of a very few contracts and subcontracts does not diminish the quality of learning and accomplishment experienced by current GRYD agencies over the last year-and-a-half. GRYD appears poised to enter Y2 with a sharper model and increased capacity to implement it.

IV.3.3. The Prevention “Model” and Proposed Activities at the End of Y1

At this writing the evaluation team has not been privy to Y2 contracts being offered to GRYD providers or the related workplan specifics, including amendments to Y1 practices and procedures. However, it is clear that some sites are now staffed and experienced to take on requirements of the new prevention model unveiled in June 2010. The Rampart zone, for example, has built its capacity to work with families and specifically with services related to Functional Family Therapy (FFT). FFT was identified in El Centro del Pueblo’s initial proposal and became the conceptual model for GRYD family services during the first few months of 2010.

**Prevention: Programming for family therapy
Rampart: El Centro del Pueblo**

The Rampart Prevention program is unique in that they have divided the GRYD into four quadrants and designated an agency to lead efforts within each quadrant. The Program Director from El Centro del Pueblo, the lead agency, oversees all operations of the program and serves as the primary contact for the GRYD office. Each of the four agencies that are leading efforts within a quadrant is staffed with a Family Advocate (i.e., Case Manager), a Youth Advocate, and a Therapist (clinician trained in FFT). The Program Director, four Family Advocates, four Youth Advocates and four Therapists are staffed full time on the GRYD project. In addition, Children's Institute, Inc., one of the subcontractors, provides a Clinical Director who supervises all of the FFT therapists.

The GRYD-wide MDT program (including both prevention and intervention) was also becoming established at some of the sites, although full participation of member agencies such as Probation, LAUSD and LAPD (a necessary component of the MDT strategy), was still not achieved by June 2010.

IV.3.4. Planned Future Alterations to the Current GRYD Model

While the YSET and MDT will continue to promote substantial cross-site structural consistency for GRYD prevention agencies in Y2—with comprehensive YSET retesting as a core measure of success (defined as decreases in levels of risk for gang-joining and in delinquent/criminal behavior)—the new GRYD Prevention Model outlined by the GRYD office in June 2010 is expected to be the backbone of prevention planning and services for Y2. The new model's prevention strategy targets three levels: individual youth, his or her family, and peer groups. The emphasis to-date has been predominant on the individual youth at risk for gang joining. As documented in an assessment of sites developed by the evaluators and implemented by GRYD Program Managers in December 2009, prevention agencies have already been engaged in a number of activities that involve families. A more focused emphasis on the concepts and principles of FFT is now required. The new model's third focus, on peer relationships, is currently the least well defined. Creating opportunities for clarification and written documentation of the GRYD model, including training, technical assistance and evaluation is critical and should proceed with greater intensity after the end of SNL in September.

IV.4. The GRYD Case Management Intervention Services Component

IV.4.1. The Initial Intervention Services Model and Proposed Services

Although the GRYD RFP for gang intervention services provided a framework for services, major issues such as client eligibility and intake criteria were not well articulated. This situation continues. In late 2009 the evaluators worked with the GRYD office to draft a set of service categories that could be incorporated into GRYDIS. The objective was to define and operationalize a standard set of services across sites. This service list was shared with the intervention providers with the objective of obtaining provider input and modifying the service provision list accordingly. However, no further progress was made on getting provider input or advancing the design of GRYDIS for intervention case management. Nonetheless, the draft service list, presented below, is an initial representation of the types of service activities engaged in by GRYD intervention case management programs, and constitutes a prototype set of service categories for entry into GRYDIS.

IV.4.2. Proposed GRYDIS Services List for Intervention Case Management

IV.4.2.a. Services for Youth

Anger Management

- This refers to any workshop or session where youth are exposed to non-violent conflict resolution strategies or a reduction in violent or aggressive outbursts. Such sessions occur in group settings focusing specifically on anger management, not group counseling.

Academic Assistance

- This category refers to any school-specific skills or training the youth receives. This can include tutoring, after school programs that specifically target academic enrichment, assistance with re-entry into school, and GED assistance. This does not include career exploration or job skills training.

Mentoring

- This refers to a relationship between a client and an adult role model where the overall goal is positive youth development and/or improved life skills. However, this should be a formal relationship (where the youth and adult acknowledge one another as mentor/mentee). In other words, while a case manager could also be a formal mentor to a client, the role of the case manager alone (providing services, tracking program progress, etc.) does not constitute mentoring. If the primary role of an adult/youth relationship is based on a different service, select that service instead—e.g., if the main purpose of the relationship is to improve the youth’s grades, “Academic Assistance” should be selected.

Recreational Activities

- This service may include field trips and peer and/or family outings. Activities could also include educational events or sports activities if these are aspects of the program and are not being offered as separate services.

Individual Counseling (Formal)

- This service refers to formal one-on-one therapeutic counseling sessions that typically seek to provide youth with pro-social behavioral skills, coping strategies, or related advice. This includes, but is not limited to, cognitive behavioral therapy, grief counseling, and trauma counseling. Counseling is provided by a licensed clinician.

Individual Support/Counseling (Informal)

- This service covers informal one-on-one support/counseling sessions between the youth and case managers or intervention workers with the objective of providing youth with pro-social behavioral skills, coping strategies, or related advice.

Case Management/Wrap-around Services

- This refers to the coordination of services for clients based on individualized service plans. A formal, client-specific procedure is established to ensure delivery of services, progress tracking, and redirecting of services when appropriate.

Sports

- This refers to any program that emphasizes sports activities as the *main* component of a service. In other words, if a program is primarily recreation-based with an occasional sport activity, select “Recreational Activities” only, not “Sports.” Sports services could involve a team that meets regularly (such as a league), but could also include introducing youth to a variety of different sports throughout the program.

Substance Abuse Treatment

- Any program that attempts to reduce drug and/or alcohol use among participants. This could resemble an Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous program, or a school-based program or workshop. Even if these sessions occur in group settings, only select this service type if substance abuse treatment is involved (i.e. not “Group Counseling”).

Violence Prevention Workshops

- Violence prevention or anti-gang sessions typically provide strategies for avoiding more violent lifestyles, in addition to educating youth about gangs and violence, and domestic violence. Methods may include small group workshops, classroom settings, or larger school assemblies.

Job Training/Placement

- This service focuses on helping youth to develop job readiness skills and prepare for and find jobs. This may include interview preparation, job skills training, professional development, internships, and/or obtaining and maintaining employment.

Leadership and Youth Development

- This refers to positive development of youth’s attitudes, behaviors, and skills. Leadership skills, personal goals, and values are often emphasized. This could include workshops or a series of events.

Group Counseling

- This service refers to programs where the main purpose is collective counseling or therapy. This may have a pro-social or positive peer interaction focus, but does not include more specific types of counseling (such as anger management or substance abuse).

Arts and Enrichment Activities

- This refers to programs that help youth develop new and useful skills that do not fall into other categories. Examples could include learning to drive mini-bikes, music, poetry, fine arts, photography, writing for a newspaper or being involved in the production of various types of media, etc. This could also include programs where the primary focus is cultural understanding and appreciating diversity.

Community Appreciation/Mobilization

- This category refers to programs that involve youth in their communities. This may include beautification projects, environmental programs, participating in community events, peace rallies and other related projects.

Tattoo Removal

- This service refers to providing assistance by helping to erase the visible signs of gang involvement so that youth will not experience the negative consequences of visible tattoos.

Legal Aid

- This service includes providing guidance and support for criminal and immigration status issues, helping clients clear warrants, expunge records, and working to resolve child custody issues.

Life Skills Workshop

- Workshops that cover general life skills topics such as coping skills, communication, sexuality, cultural awareness, and financial management.

Teen Parenting

- Service provided to youth who are teen parents. Services can be provided in class sessions or workshops to emphasize parenting skills. Includes program such as Babies and Me.

IV.2.4.b. Services for Family

Family Counseling (Formal)

- This service refers to formal family counseling sessions provided by a licensed clinician that focuses on improving healthy family interactions. Emphasis is often placed on communication among family members and may be directed towards clients who have emotional or behavioral problems in school or in social settings. Although these sessions are designed to be in group settings, only select this service (not group counseling) if the primary service is family counseling.

Family Support/Counseling (Informal)

- This service refers to informal family support or counseling provided by case managers or intervention workers that focuses on improving healthy family interactions.

Parenting Classes

- This refers to any class sessions or workshops that specifically emphasize parenting and supervisory skills for parents of the youth. This does not include personal treatment programs that may have an indirect effect on parenting, such as substance abuse treatment or anger management for parents.

Basic Needs Assistance

- This service refers to assisting youth obtain housing, health care, general relief, emergency food or clothing, etc. This can be done directly through taking youth to appropriate agencies and walking them through the process to access these services or providing a referral and following up with the youth.

Additional evidence of the variety of structures and services found across GRYD zones is indicated in the following table, which shows the diversity of agency contractual arrangements across zones and for the two intervention sub-components of case management and crisis response. (Crisis response is addressed in the next section).

Table 6
Intervention Services

Zone/Lead Provider	Intervention Service	
	Case Management Provider/s	Crisis Intervention Provider/s
Baldwin Village Community Build, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Build ▪ No sub-contracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Build ▪ No sub-contracted agencies
Boyle Heights Soledad Enrichment Action (SEA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEA ▪ No sub-contracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEA ▪ No sub-contracted agencies
Cypress Park Public Health Foundation Enterprises/Aztecs Rising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aztecs Rising ▪ No sub-contracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aztecs Rising ▪ No sub-contracted agencies
Florence Graham SEA/Chapter Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEA ▪ No sub-contracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapter II ▪ SEA
77th Division II HELPER/Venice 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HELPER ▪ Developing Options (sub) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HELPER ▪ Developing Options (sub)
Ramona Gardens SEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEA ▪ Barrio Action (sub) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEA ▪ Aztecs Rising (sub) ▪ Legacy LA (sub)
Pacoima Foothill Communities in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communities in Schools ▪ No sub-contracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communities in Schools ▪ No sub-contracted agencies
Panorama City Communities in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communities in Schools ▪ No sub-contracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communities in Schools ▪ No sub-contracted agencies
Rampart Public Health Found Enterprises/Aztecs Rising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aztecs Rising ▪ No sub-contracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aztecs Rising ▪ No sub-contracted agencies
Newton SEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEA ▪ No subcontracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SEA ▪ Going Beyond Boundaries (sub)
Southwest II HELPER/Venice 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HELPER ▪ No sub-contracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HELPER ▪ TEAMWorks (sub)
Watts Southeast Kush, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KUSH ▪ No sub-contracted agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KUSH ▪ No sub-contracted agencies

IV. 4.2. Evolution from 2008 to present

Intervention sites reported a number of changes in structure and services over their first year of operations. The experience at Ramona Gardens, presented below, related to their special organization of subcontractors but indicated other issues as well.

Intervention: Programming for family therapy Ramona Gardens: SEA

The first three months of implementing the GRYD program was especially challenging for the providers of intervention services because staff reported receiving very little orientation and direction from the GRYD office and, internally, SEA did not have a program director until September. Also, case management had “three personalities” because each agency (SEA and its subcontractors) had their own referral, assessment, and intake forms, which Barrio Actions case managers then had to decipher and fit into their own forms. In September, the intervention providers streamlined all forms so that all the agencies are utilizing the same standardized forms. The program director came on board in September and now the GRYD staff meets as a team once a week to discuss individual clients and plan events together.

Unlike GRYD prevention agencies, intervention agencies do not have a common assessment tool to determine eligibility for services. The Los Angeles Risk and Resiliency Check-Up Assessment Tool (LARRC) was specified as an intake tool in the RFP but was never enforced. It has only been used by one or two intervention agencies. For example, Community Build uses LARRC as an assessment tool to develop individual service plans. However, other agencies have invented their own intake and assessment procedures, and Aztec’s Rising has devoted considerable staff time in designing and testing its own assessment tool for determining client case management. It is also important to note that informed consent procedures have not been instituted to date by the GRYD office for intervention clients. As a result providers have not been able to share confidential case intake or service data with the evaluators.

Intervention: Assessment system development
Rampart: Aztecs Rising

Eligibility requirements established by the GRYD office include: age, residence or significant time spent within the zone, gang membership or affiliation, and desire to leave the gang life. During the first year of the program, Aztecs Rising developed an agency-wide Eligibility Assessment Form to help determine eligibility for potential case management clients. To be accepted as a case management client, the potential client needs to demonstrate a total of at least eight risk factors in three sub-sections: (1) education or employment, (2) family, and (3) gangs. The Eligibility Assessment Form was piloted by staff beginning in October 2009 and was fully implemented with incoming potential case management clients by January 2010. Scoring of risk factors on the Eligibility Assessment Form in combination with information from intervention workers are used to determine eligibility for case management services.

IV.4.2.a. Relationship with LAPD

The GRYD office's relationship with LAPD, which represents the suppression component of the Mayor's anti-gang strategy, has also evolved (predominantly toward cooperation and even productivity). LAPD gang officers interviewed at each of the GRYD zones this past spring shared with the evaluators stories of varying relationship quality but definite evidence of progress, particularly with regard to Gang Intervention Worker roles and the sharing of incident information. GRYD providers report more regular contact and communication and "figuring out" how to work better together or avoid areas of conflicting interest. KUSH staff reports that their relationship with LAPD has grown substantially as a result of the GRYD program. In addition to working with the program manager, LAPD officers approach and share information with GIS directly. The Ramona Gardens, Cypress Park, and Baldwin Village experiences with LAPD are briefly summarized below.

**Intervention: Evolving relationship with LAPD
Ramona Gardens—SEA**

Working with LAPD was reportedly difficult, especially in the beginning of the project. There was a reported lack of communication and competing goals between LAPD and the GRYD program; LAPD wanted to arrest while intervention workers were trying to move youth away from the gang lifestyle. Intervention providers have been working well with upper management of LAPD but the line officers were not getting the message from their bosses, and as a result the intervention workers felt they have been mistreated. However, their relationship has improved such that the intervention providers now make an effort to let LAPD know which youth are in the GRYD programs; in turn, LAPD makes an effort to help those youth.

Cypress Park—Northeast LAPD

The Northeast Area police report working effectively with the intervention services provider. These efforts are longstanding (they pre-date GRYD) and focus on basic services for reentry. Of note is that intervention, prevention and the police meet at the police station every two weeks to share information—when queried the detective responsible for law enforcement activities in this zone reported no mistrust between the police department and GRYD providers. Indeed the police, including patrol, regularly make referrals to prevention.

As with prevention agencies, intervention agencies also found that some services were needed in order to solve dominant problems that went beyond their core objective—gang reduction for intervention. Two of these macro problems encountered by intervention providers are substance abuse and homelessness. (Substance abuse is addressed in the YSET for prevention agencies).

**Intervention: Evolving services for substance abuse
Baldwin Village—Community Build**

Community Build, which is the only agency contracted to provide both prevention and intervention components, decided to increase substance use services to intervention clients. A number of clients' substance abuse or chemical dependency conditions were seen as an obstacle to creating a non-gang alternative lifestyle, as intervention workers often lose people to recidivism because of drug dependency. Late in the program year, Community Build was searching for a partner to provide substance abuse services. A number of Community Build's clients are also homeless and resources in the area are limited, which has presented a challenge for the agency.

IV.4.3. The Intervention Services Model at the End of Y1

At the end of the first contract year, the GRYD office still lacks a standard service model for intervention case management. The failure of at least two efforts in the fall of 2009 to organize agencies for the development of standard approaches—an open conference led by an external consultant and later a working group of selected intervention agency representatives—hampered progress toward a standard case management or crisis intervention model, and inhibited the engagement of intervention service providers with the evaluation. The evaluation team plans to work with LAVITA staff during Y2 in an effort to overcome these obstacles.

IV.4.4. Planned Future Alterations to the Current Model

Y2 intervention contracts and their associated work plans may identify a more standardized intervention model for case management (these have not been made available to the evaluation team at the time of writing). The GRYD office has noted that the evolving curriculum for LAVITA includes training on case management and its integration with violence intervention practices. At present, only two gang intervention workers from each zone have gone through LAVITA training. By the end of Y2 it is expected that perhaps three times that many will have been trained, resulting in a critical mass of new and shared thinking among intervention workers from different zones about case management and crisis management. The GRYD office believes the LAVITA program has helped pave the way for more cooperation and involvement of intervention agencies in model development in the coming year. A planned re-start of GRYDIS design and programming for intervention case management should also promote the specification of client identification, service categories and selected individual level outcomes. On the other hand, the evaluation of prevention outcomes has recently shifted focus from individual clients to community level impacts.

IV.5. The GRYD Crisis Intervention Component

IV.5.1. The Initial Crisis Intervention Model and Proposed Activities

As with intervention case management services, the intervention RFP also provided a framework for crisis intervention and its companion service, community gang peacekeeping. No manual has been developed, although the gang member approach has

been widely practiced in Los Angeles for years, and several seasoned gang member programs were tapped for GRYD contracts or subcontracts. The formal training of gang workers has come from many quarters but it was not until the spring of 2010 that LAVITA codified and presented formal, consistent training to GRYD gang intervention workers across all GRYD zones. Before then, crisis intervention work was guided only by the traditional practices of existing programs, bracketed by GRYD requirements for targeting age and geographically defined GRYD zones.

IV.5.2. Evolution from 2008 to Present

The evolution of crisis intervention has many sources, including the experiences of GRYD staff that have been on-call for crisis incidents, unevenly developing relationships with LAPD gang officers, and the acquisition of technologies to improve crisis response.

**Intervention: New structure for crisis response
Watts Southeast: Kush, Inc.**

During an interview with the evaluation team at LAPD's Southeast gang unit, the respondent gang officer noted that the GRYD crisis intervention approach had some positive aspects but also believed effectiveness depended on the individual outreach worker. A flaw with the rapid crisis response is that retaliation actually takes a lot longer than anticipated. However, this also could be due in part to the calming effects of the outreach workers. This calming also is advantageous to the detectives because it gives them more time to solve a case. Communication between the police and intervention workers were reportedly positive except for cases where line patrol officers do not know the intervention workers. But they do cooperate with each other, which may be due to the fact that the captain is supportive and informal intervention activities pre-date the GRYD program in this zone. GRYD has provided a structure and organization to crisis intervention.

**Intervention: Razor notification
Cypress Park—Aztecs Rising**

The GRYD office has reportedly been slow in getting certain program components together. For example, the agency had not received the Blackberry devices needed to facilitate coordination of intervention services. Consequently, staff initially used their personal phones to respond to the intervention crisis incidents. Staff started receiving the needed equipment in January 2010, when they obtained LiveScan clearance, which gives gang intervention specialists (or outreach workers) access to information about incidents from LAPD and GRYD Program Managers. As of the end of January about four to five gang intervention specialists had Blackberries.

IV.5.3. The Crisis Intervention Model at the End of Y1

A coherent crisis intervention model is evolving out of the LAVITA training. As noted above, only two gang intervention workers from each zone have gone through the Academy, although that number is expected to approximately triple during Y2. The impact of LAVITA on actual crisis intervention work or success is not currently known, but measurement of its effects has been incorporated into the objectives of the GRYD evaluation going forward.

IV.5.4. Planned Future Alterations to the Current Model

Any alterations to the crisis intervention model going forward will depend on both what is learned and applied by gang intervention workers at the Academy and by an anticipated revival of an intervention focus group early in Y2. It is expected by the GRYD office that those two factors will result in program standardization, worker professionalization, crisis response efficiency and effectiveness, closer tie-ins with intervention case management and better relations with LAPD.

IV.6 Y1 Program Development and Implementation Successes and Challenges

IV.6.1. Successes

At the end of Y1, there is both accomplishment and movement toward cross-site program consistency. That development bodes well for an increase in the scope and utility of the evaluation. Nonetheless, the Y1 evaluation has for most of the past contract period faced large differences across Prevention site programs and very large differences across Intervention, for both the case management and crisis intervention components.

A set of general findings applies to all GRYD provider agencies, or to all prime contractor agencies within each of the two major components, including the following:

- (1) All contracted and subcontracted agencies were experienced youth development and/or gang reduction service providers who could demonstrate an understanding of GRYD purposes and had the capacity to provide the services that GRYD requires; all exhibited an appropriate level of community

relevance for GRYD; and all worked to improve these qualities, including shuffling subcontractors when required by performance considerations.

- (2) Though prevention agencies mostly conducted their activities on the basis of programs with which they were already familiar (i.e. pre-GRYD practices adapted to some extent to the YSET risk factors), they were also influenced by new service model elements put forward by GRYD. Towards the end of the program year (June, 2010), such influences were increasing, particularly in the prevention area. The program year ended with a new Prevention program strategy that the GRYD office expects to implement in the program year beginning July 2010.
- (3) Intervention services were originally determined by existing LA interventionist experience and cultures, and appeared resistant to change. However, the creation of the LAVITA program and the first round of formal training that has been conducted seems likely to increase the level of cross-zone standardization and professionalization.
- (4) All agencies from both components, including the mid-year replacement agency, have stabilized much of their individual operational practices, which makes them both more conducive to separate evaluations but in some ways less amenable to aggregate evaluation, at least at the end of Y1. Nevertheless, if the Y2 awards to providers (not yet available) have incorporated the performance standards that the GRYD office has embedded in the new Prevention Strategy and the LAVITA curriculum, the prospects for positive impacts and the effective measurement of such impacts will be greatly enhanced.

Some positive illustrations are presented below.

77th-II—Prevention: AADAP—YSET administration successes

In response to some of the challenges of YSET, staff reported implementing several strategies. First, to make youth feel comfortable, staff began to meet with youth for 30 minutes before administering the YSET to build rapport. This also served as a way to determine whether or not the youth would fit the criteria needed to get into the program.

Another successful approach has been holding case management meetings once every week to discuss their best practices and develop strategies to help alleviate some of the barriers related to the YSET. Some staff also shared that they ask referral sources to send documentation (i.e. documentation of suspensions or behavioral issues) to provide support that the youth should be in the program along with the referral.

The GRYD office found several programmatic ways to encourage cross-component collaboration between prevention and intervention providers, including (a) referrals to intervention services of youth identified by YSET testing as gang-involved, (b) co-participation in SNL, and (c) co-participation in the MDT. Apart from referrals, SNL and the MDT, common zone prevention and intervention agencies such as WLCAC and Kush have begun to work more closely together. For example, in April and May 2010, a Kush case manager conducted a presentation with WLCAC prevention clients at WLCAC's site. Other cross-component collaborations are presented below.

Collaboration between Prevention and Intervention Providers Across providers in two GRYD zones

In February 2010, Communities in Schools (CIS) began holding meetings with the prevention providers for the two GRYD zones that they serve, El Nido Family Centers for the Pacoima/Foothills GRYD and New Directions for Youth (NDY) for the Panorama City/Mission GRYD. During these meetings, staff from CIS and the prevention agencies discuss clients that they would like to refer to one another's program.

Sometimes USC will ask NDY to confer with the intervention provider about YSET results. Therefore, they began meeting with CIS to discuss cases that have been referred to intervention. NDY reports that approximately 15 youth have been referred to the intervention program. CIS sends NDY status updates for those youth who have been referred to the intervention program. When asked if CIS had referred any youth to the program at NDY, one respondent stated that a few had.

Collaboration between Prevention and Intervention Providers Within the single two-component GRYD contractor

Community Build prevention and intervention collaboration: Towards the end of 2009, Community Build began holding meetings that integrated both prevention and intervention staff. Interviewed staff reported the process has created synergy between the two programs and enhanced their services. For example, the programs have referred potential clients and clients' siblings to one another. Intervention workers often know prevention clients and their families, which has been helpful in locating prevention clients and providing prevention providers information about their clients' families.

IV.6.2. Program Implementation Challenges

IV.6.2.a. General Challenges

Specific challenges experienced by GRYD service providers varied a great deal across agencies and program components. For example, several intervention sites have noted the challenge of staying within GRYD-prescribed geographic boundaries.

GRYD boundaries – Intervention

- **Boyle Heights**—SEA staff expressed some frustration with the concept of working within a geographical zone because they were not restricted geographically in their previous intervention work under the Bridges contract. At times GIS may respond to crisis incidents that occur outside of the GRYD zone but follow-ups to these incidents are not conducted typically.
- **Ramona Gardens**—The intervention staff indicated that the current GRYD boundaries do not make sense to them. Since they felt that many of the problem gangs are not covered by the target area, they reported wanting some flexibility and the ability to cover a greater geographical area.

For intervention agencies, a key challenge was providing employment opportunities to the older gang-forsaking clients.

Intervention: Rampart—Aztecs Rising
A challenge to find jobs for clients

One of the challenges initially described by staff was working with the WorkSource and OneSource Centers. The provider said that some of their clients were not ready for this type of service and that those programs were not used to serving the type of clients that the GRYD intervention program serves. Initially, there was some miscommunication about the type of services that would be available through the WorkSource Centers; Aztecs Rising staff thought that slots for jobs had been secured for GRYD clients but later found that the program was just offering some training, resources, and job postings. Aztecs Rising expressed that paid trainings leading to high quality jobs or internships were needed for working with this population.

A challenge that has been expressed by prevention and intervention agencies, the GRYD office, LAPD gang officers and other stakeholders, is getting formal MDTs up and running with full participation of MDT member agencies. This challenge is neither unexpected nor considered to be overwhelming. However, not getting an MOU signed with the Department of Probation has been a serious impediment. Other dissatisfactions have come from not having parents at MDT meetings (a frustration expressed by LAUSD personnel) and not having youth in attendance (noted as a problem by some LAPD officers).

The transportation of clients to services is a persistent challenge for human services in large low income metropolitan areas, particularly those where gang boundaries present an even bigger barrier. Transportation problems are illustrated below in three of the GRYD agencies.

WLCAC

Staff reported that they are doing what they can to run the program, but sometimes feel blocked in moving forward. WLCAC reported that they would occasionally need urgent assistance but “red tape” presents time-consuming obstacles. For example, they requested permission to purchase vans, but staff turnover at the City and lack of pricing guides for van purchases have slowed the process. Staff had been using their personal vehicles to transport clients. As of the February 2010 site visit, WLCAC was waiting for a memo from GRYD on how to move forward. The issue had been resolved by the March 2010 visit, but planning for transportation remains a challenge.

Brotherhood Crusade

BHC staff noted in the April 2010 site visit that transportation has become an increasing challenge for them. Clients need transportation to avoid encounters with rival gangs or potential recruitment into gangs. Staff mentioned they had originally proposed a larger transportation budget, which the GRYD office did not approve.

Community Build

A growing concern is transportation for GRYD clients. The agency did not anticipate the number of clients who moved homes or changed schools. As a result, CB staff have requested to extend the two van drivers’ hours and are working to organize groups of clients to walk from Audubon Middle School to the program site.

IV.6.2.b. Unusual or Extreme Challenges

Extreme Challenge #1: Prevention Agency Performance

The GRYD office and prevention provider for the Watts Southeast GRYD zone terminated the Prevention contract by mutual agreement in January 2009. They were replaced in December 2009 by the agency that provided and continues to provide GRYD Prevention services for a nearby non-GRYD zone.

Problems with staffing, training, subcontracted services, client recruitment and GRYD office communication were noted by agency staff interviewed by the evaluator. According to agency staff, bringing in and training GRYD staff took longer than expected. One staff member noted that YSET training took place later than they would have liked.

The original provider had proposed a GRYD program that offered mental health services (subcontracted to another agency), family services and life and leadership skills development. Clients were enrolled in prime provider agency internships, some receiving stipends, and attended team building/group work classes. Few, if any, clients ever received mental health counseling from the subcontractor.

Although staff reported outreach to numerous locations and screened large numbers of youth, their eligibility and enrollment rates remained low (24%—44 eligible out of 181 screened). LACC staff reported good communication with GRYD staff, but felt they could have used more support from the GRYD office. Staff also felt that GRYD policies, procedures, and formal communications could be improved.

Extreme Challenge #2: Alleged Prevention Provider Malfeasance

All funding for prevention services in the Florence-Graham zone was halted due to questions surrounding the legitimacy of reported YSET interviews. USC reported that the cases submitted looked very similar, which prompted an investigation on every YSET interview submitted by all organizations. No irregularities were found at other GRYD prevention providers, but USC discovered 29 manipulated cases sent from Florence-Graham. As a result the GRYD office suspended funding and meetings were conducted with the agency, the City Attorney and GRYD upper management.

After a one month suspension in October 2009, the agency was reinstated as the GRYD prevention provider in the Florence-Graham GRYD zone. As a requirement of their reinstatement the agency was required to hire all new staff except for the Executive Director. Complicating the re-start, not all original subcontractors were willing to return due to issues with timely payment of services. The provider indicated that payment issues were the result of delays at the GRYD office and that they do not have the funding reserves to pay their subcontractors while they wait for city payments.

These events resulting in a five month hiatus in prevention services in Florence-Graham, from October 2009 through February 2010, and staff stated that these events caused the loss of a whole year's worth of work. Although there were approximately 55 legitimate youth enrolled in the program before services were halted, staff was able to reconnect with only four youth by the time prevention services re-started in March 2010.

Extreme Challenge #3: Intervention Agency Performance

The GRYD service contract with Unity Two in the 77th-II zone was terminated in August 2009; the contract with the HELPER Foundation for 77th-II intervention services was signed two months later. Unity Two's subcontract with SEA in the Newton zone was also terminated in August. SEA chose to subcontract with Going Beyond Boundaries in September, reportedly feeling that the new agency had a better chance of handling the intensity of the contract, among other reasons.

It is noteworthy that these three extreme challenges all had positive conclusions: the rehabilitation of LAM, the assumption of prevention services to Watts Southeast by WLCAC, and the assumption of intervention services by HELPER and crisis intervention services by Going Beyond Boundaries.

IV.7. Y1 Program Development and Implementation Lessons Learned

The first year experience with creating the GRYD program was about creative learning—what and how to implement in a difficult and changing environment. GRYD providers had a general framework within which to proceed, and some measure of relevant service experience to draw on. However, no operations manual or other comprehensive, detailed, written document regarding services was available for training or reference. As expected, the new (and then reorganized) GRYD office, at both leadership and field staff levels, was also learning to develop and implement a service model during Y1.

Typical of a new initiative, much of what was learned by GRYD prevention, intervention, and crisis intervention service providers falls into aspects of infrastructure, which is of course critical for program development and operations. Providers, in varying degrees of difficulty and success, learned a great deal about each of the following:

- (1) Adapting prior practices. Coming into GRYD with experience serving one specific population or in one type of environment (such as only serving at-risk youth or gang-involved youth or providing services at a school site or only for particular gangs) was not enough. Sometimes simply relocating services to an unfamiliar neighborhood resulted in problems of community connection.
 - a. Prevention: focusing on the risk of gang joining was a major adaptation from working with youth who were simply at risk of other outcomes such as school dropout or even delinquency. Some providers had to adjust staff hiring to look for those who were experienced in working with at-risk youth. CHLA ended their contract with a subcontractor because they could not adjust to this change.
 - b. Intervention: restricting crisis response services to the GRYD zone or, in some cases, being asked by the GRYD office to go outside the zone, was sometimes a challenge to deployment.
- (2) Working with new service partners. Prevention providers were able to keep most services in-house; most intervention providers required not only referrals but subcontracting to cover certain service types and geographic areas. This was

especially true of intervention sites, where learning how to do this sometimes meant re-staff or renegotiating subcontracts with new providers.

- (3) Working with institutional partners. In many cases, prior productive relationships existed with LAUSD, although there were fewer with LAPD. These had to be invented and learned. Working with institutional partners was promoted in 2010 by the MDT and learning that service model is ongoing. Building relationships with LAPD was often successful because of a Program Manager's facilitation.
 - a. Prevention: providers and the USC researchers had to learn to work together on YSET administration and related communications and services.
 - b. Intervention: relations with WorkSource have progressed with clearer expectations.
- (4) Collaborating across components. Prevention and intervention deal with different age populations, different school and work situations, different services needs and different orientations to gangs. This tends to restrict opportunities for collaboration to client referrals or to certain families where different siblings might be available for each program. Facilitated by the MDT program, some prevention and intervention providers are clearly realizing the value of greater collaboration between them.
- (5) Working with the GRYD office. The key link to GRYD-provider relationships has been the Program Manager.
 - a. Prevention: PMs helped several sites to develop community connections, particularly for recruiting eligible youth and establishing advisory councils.
 - b. Intervention: GRYD office personnel, gang intervention workers and LAPD have had to co-invent systems for crisis response.
- (6) Working with the evaluator. Encounters at forums and in the field have advanced critical working relationships between provider personnel and evaluation team members.
 - a. Prevention: sites have come to expect and accommodate regular

visits for data gathering and special systems for delivering consent forms and retests.

- b. Intervention: perhaps understandably but not productively, sites learned to resist and reject substantial involvement with evaluators in certain program development activities.

IV.8. Risk Factor Pilot Retest

IV.8.1. Youth Prevention Risk Factor Screening

A unique feature of the implementation of the prevention component of GRYD is that providers in each of the zones are required to screen referred or recruited youth before enrolling them in gang prevention services. This screening process involves the use of the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET), developed by researchers at the University of Southern California for the GRYD office. YSET was designed to measure individual and environmental factors that past research has shown are associated with the likelihood of youth joining street gangs. As previously mentioned, YSET was originally structured to elicit responses from screened youth on ten gang-joining risk factors: antisocial/lack of prosocial tendencies; weak parental monitoring; critical life events; risk taking; impulsivity; neutralization; negative peer influence; peer delinquency; self-report delinquency; and self-report substance abuse. Each risk factor domain was measured by four or more questions, each of which was assigned an unweighted numerical score. Summations across the questions for each domain constituted the scale score for each risk factor.

When first implemented in 2008, YSET included two separate screening instruments (YSET 1 and YSET 2). In the early stages of GRYD all referred youth were to receive YSET 1. Those found to be eligible and those with borderline risk factor³¹ scores were then administered the YSET 2 to explore more closely their individual risk levels. But by November 2009 the two YSET screening instruments were merged into a single one (YSET Combined) for all referred youth. The number of risk factors was reduced to nine by combining several scales and adding Family Influences as another risk factor category.

³¹ Having high scores on five or more risk factors meant youth were eligible. Three or fewer resulted in a determination of not being eligible. Four risk factors was considered marginal or borderline.

Since one of the goals of the evaluation is to track changes in individual level risk factors among participating youth over time, the evaluation team developed a reassessment tool based upon measures incorporated into both YSET 1 and YSET Combined during Y1. Repeated assessments of both serviced and comparison youth will take place approximately every six months across all zones beginning in Y2 of the evaluation, as discussed in Chapter V below.

Individual scale items were slightly different in YSET 1 and YSET Combined. Some items were dropped and several were merged. UI conducted a factor analysis on shared items responses from the YSET 1 database, which covered screens through July 2009. A similar factor analysis could not be performed on the YSET Combined since individual items responses were not entered into the YSET database following YSET Combined roll out. The factor analysis and comparisons of the YSET 1 and YSET Combined items led to the development of a reassessment instrument by the evaluation team. This risk factor reassessment tool focuses on the risk factor domains measured in both YSET 1 and YSET Combined and the Family Influence risk factor added to YSET Combined. The reassessment domains are also consistent with those emphasized as being particularly important to GRYD prevention provider services in a GRYD office provider workshop held in the fall of 2009.

IV.8.2. Reassessment Pilot Retest

A pilot retest (May-June 2010) was conducted in five GRYD zones and two non-GRYD zones where prevention providers volunteered to participate. The participating GRYD zones were Boyle Heights, Pacoima Foothill, Panorama City, Rampart, and Southwest II. The non-GRYD participants were Watts Labor Community Action Committee (WLCAC) and Child and Family Guidance Center (CFGC). A total of 166 youth were retested using the shortened Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET). The number retested by zone ranged from eleven to thirty-eight. These youth were selected by the Urban Institute starting with those who were enrolled earliest in GRYD prevention programming and still were enrolled in the program at the time of the retests. All retests were administered by each zone's prevention provider staff.

The primary purpose of the pilot retest was to determine the optimal approach that will be undertaken GRYD-wide in Y2 and beyond and to identify adjustments that will

need to be made in our planned retest procedures. The pilot is not an outcome assessment and the reported findings should not be used to make judgments about the general effects (outcomes) of the GRYD program. The findings should also not be used to compare performance of providers across participating zones. The number of youth tested was relatively small in comparison to the total number of at-risk youth enrolled in prevention programs and the sample is not necessarily representative of all GRYD youth. Furthermore, only GRYD youth were retested and comparisons could not be made to youth not receiving services.

The Risk Factor Table (Table 7) summarizes the changes in YSET risk factor scores for all youth retested and for each one of the participating zones. Changes were examined across seven risk factors measured on the YSET. These were: antisocial/prosocial tendencies; parental supervision; critical life events; impulsive risk taking; neutralization; negative/positive peer influence; and peer delinquency.³² Item specific responses for all pilot sites and each zone or non-zone are attached.

³² Delinquent and substance abuse items were not scaled; instead, self-reports for six months prior to initial screen and six months prior to retest were compared as indicators of potential behavioral outcomes, rather than predictive risk factors. Family risk, as measured by the number of family members in gangs, was not included in the pilot as well since it was not part of the original YSET instrument.

**Table 7: Summary of Risk Factor Scale Changes
GRYD YSET Pilot**

Zone	Scale A Antisocial	Scale B Parental Supervision	Scale C Critical Life Events	Scale DE Impulsive Risk Taking	Scale F Neutralization	Scale G Peer Influence	Scale H Peer Delinquency
All (N=150)	- 3.24*	- 1.18 *	- 1.30	- 2.95 *	- 3.02*	- 1.21*	- 1.41*
Boyle (N = 10)	- 4.60 *	- .50	- 1.30	- 2.72	- 4.84 *	- .80	- 1.00
Pacoima (N=22)	- 1.77	+ .68	- 1.00 *	- .91	+ 1.55*	+ 1.27	+ .89
Panorama (N=20)	- 4.83 *	- 1.45	- 4.30 *	- 5.60 *	- 5.35*	- 2.45 *	- 5.00 *
Rampart (N= 16)	- 3.08*	- .75	- .93	- 1.50	- 2.31	- 2.31	- 1.32
Southwest (N=37)	- 2.05*	- .36	- 1.94 *	- 3.43 *	- 3.48 *	- .17	- 1.32
Non- GRYD WLCAC (N=16)	- 4.81*	- 3.81*	- .31	- 3.40 *	- 3.50 *	- 2.50	- 2.25
Non- GRYD CFGC (N=29)	- 3.62 *	- 2.31 *	- 1.76 *	- 2.52*	- 3.83 *	- 2.36*	- 1.31

- is a decline in risk factor scale scores
 + is an increase in risk factor scale scores
 * p < .05 on paired t-tests

The figures in this table are the pre-post changes in average risk factor scale scores, where a score preceded by a minus sign (-) indicates a decline in gang-joining risk. Such declines are supportive of what the GRYD office hypothesized would result from participation in prevention services: a reduction in client propensity to join gangs and engage in delinquent or criminal behavior. On the other hand, a score preceded by a plus sign (+) indicates that the risk factor became worse for the average youth. Those cells highlighted in the table are where changes were statistically significant (p<.05) on paired mean t-tests. The only statistically significant change that was inconsistent with what was hypothesized was for neutralization in Pacoima, which is highlighted in orange.

Across all retest youth (N=150)³³ risk factor scale scores declined in each of the measured domains. Of note is that, with the exception of critical life events, risk factor score changes were also statistically significant. Of these improvements in youth retested, the largest improvement was found in antisocial/prosocial tendencies. The next most improved risk factor domain was neutralization.

Similar results were found in Boyle Heights with risk factor improvements across all of the scales. While the direction of change was consistent with pooled results, in Boyle Heights risk factor improvements were only significant for antisocial/prosocial tendencies and neutralization. Panorama City showed the largest improvement changes of any of the retest sites and was well above the averages of all retested youth. The improvements were particularly large in Panorama City for impulsive risk taking, neutralization and peer delinquency. Only the changes in parental supervision were found to be not statistically significant. In Rampart, the changes were also consistent across all of the risk factor scores, but with more modest improvements than those found in the other sites. Only antisocial/prosocial tendencies changes were found to be statistically significant in this zone. In Southwest, the largest improvement in risk factor scores came under neutralization. This change was statistically significant as were improvements in antisocial/prosocial tendencies, parental supervision, and impulsive risk taking. For the non-GRYD WLCAC youth significant risk factor improvements were reported for antisocial/prosocial tendencies, parental supervision, impulsive risk taking and neutralization. However, while the changes were more modest for the other categories, they were still in the hypothesized direction. Similar findings were reported for the non-GRYD CFGC with the largest improvements being in neutralization and antisocial/prosocial tendencies. There were also significant improvements in critical life events and peer influence for CFGC youth.

In contrast to the generally improved changes in risk factors found in most of the pilot sites, in Pacoima Foothill only three domains, antisocial/prosocial tendencies, critical life events and impulsive risk taking showed improvements, with critical life events being statistically significant. All of the other scales showed increases in risk, the largest being for neutralization where the change was statistically significant.

³³ Missing data from initial YSET screens precluded the inclusion of all retested youth in the pilot analyses.

In general, however, the pilot retest results showed fairly consistent improvements in risk for prevention youth across sites and within most of the individual zones. There was some variability across risk factor scales and individual zones, although antisocial/prosocial tendencies demonstrated improvement consistently across sites.

Table 8 shows the changes in youth self-reported delinquent and substance abuse behaviors. These figures were calculated by summing the number of self-report behavior items showing improvements in the last six months as compared to self-reports of the same behaviors in the six months prior to the initial YSET screen. The instruments seek responses from youth about whether they engaged in twenty separate behaviors during these time periods.

As can be seen in the table, there were reported improvements in 13 anti-social behaviors and negative changes in 6 behaviors for all pilot retest youth—a margin of more than a 2 to 1 improvement. Panorama City and Boyle Heights showed the largest number of self-reported behavior improvements and both also had no behaviors with negative changes. In Rampart, WLCAC and CFGC the number of behaviors with positive changes outweighed negative ones. However, while there were some behaviors that positively changed in Pacoima Foothill and Southwest, there were many more with negative changes.

Table 8: Summary of Self-Reported Delinquency/Substance Abuse Behavioral Change Six Months Prior to Initial YSET Screen Compared to Six Months Prior to Retest

Zone	Number of Self Report Behaviors Showing Positive Change	Number of Self Report Behaviors Showing Negative Change
All	13	6
Boyle	16	0
Pacoima	6	9
Panorama	18	0
Rampart	11	5
Southwest	3	15
Non GRYD WLCAC	9	4
Non GRYD CFGC	14	2

Therefore, for self-reported delinquent and substance abuse behaviors, the pilot retest showed variability across zones. In most cases positive changes outweighed negative changes, but in two zones the findings were in the other direction. It is important to understand that these results are from a small pilot retest, and that they may not be replicated when YSET retesting is extended to all zones and all prevention clients.

Chapter V

Challenges and Solutions

V.1. The Program and Evaluation Context

V.1.1. Background

When reviewing Y1 activities within the GRYD program and the accompanying evaluation, it is critical to note that GRYD is particularly complex compared to most community based public safety programs. It has twelve primary geographic zones, three distinct components (prevention, intervention, and crisis management), and 18 provider agencies, all operating independently and at differing stages of implementation (to date). Of course, all programs face implementation challenges and it is common for significant amounts of time (generally more than expected) to be needed for full implementation to take place.³⁴ However, the complexity and geographic scope of the GRYD program make it more susceptible to implementation difficulties than most similar programs. That many of these challenges were in fact encountered (and documented during the year in evaluation reports provided to the GRYD office) is to be expected.

These factors have profound consequences for the evaluation of the program (as well as for the management of the program). During the first year, they have influenced a wide range of decisions about evaluation design and activities and have shaped what it has been possible for the evaluation team to do and achieve to this point in time. For example, the plan to implement a rigorous experimental design (resting on the assumption made in the evaluation proposal that the GRYD program would be more or less fully operational when the evaluation began) was, for a variety of reasons, deferred at an early stage by the GRYD office. Subsequently it was agreed that outcome evaluation in general—that is, an assessment of whether the GRYD program was producing the desired results or not—would not be feasible or appropriate during the first year because the fluidity of the program was too great.

³⁴ For example, OJJDP's Gang Reduction Program, in which Boyle Heights participated, required almost two years after commencement before effective implementation was realized. LA Bridges I and II experienced similar difficulties.

Consequently, the primary emphasis of evaluation activities during Y1 has been on program implementation issues. In accordance with the solicitation and the terms of the award, the evaluation team has provided the GRYD office with continuous formative feedback. This has been codified in formal activity reports to the GRYD office (available separately).³⁵

V.1.2 The Dominant Issues and Responses to Them

Most of the challenges arising from the GRYD program context have been discussed in some detail in earlier Chapters of this report. To frame this concluding discussion brief summaries of different aspects of the context within which the GRYD program and the evaluation were implemented are listed below:

- (1) The initial absence in the formulation of the GRYD program of a well-specified program design/model (over and above the statement of general principles and recommended activities contained in the RFPs) that providers in each of the three components (prevention, intervention case management, and crisis intervention) were required to follow.

The consequence of this was that the evaluation and the program were potentially confronting up to 36 different contexts (12 zones, 3 components in each zone), an unmanageable configuration. By the end of Y1, however, the GRYD program had reached a more developed statement for the prevention program focusing on three components—the individual, the family, and peer groups. A formal statement of this revision was produced with the intent of integrating it into Y2 prevention provider activities. For intervention, the LAVITA academy had been established and was providing training to a first cohort of intervention staff. The advantage of this for the evaluation is that it will permit a more rational and thorough assessment of provider services and their effects.

- (2) A lack of enforceable language in provider contracts requiring provider

³⁵The following reports were submitted to the GRYD office:
GRYD Evaluation Progress and Activity Report – Y1, Quarter 1, August 25, 2009
GRYD Evaluation Interim Findings Report – Y1, First 6 months, November 3, 2009
GRYD Evaluation Progress and Activity Report – Y1, Quarter 3, February 9, 2010

cooperation with the evaluation.

This made it difficult for either the GRYD office or the evaluation team to insist on provider compliance with evaluation requirements. It also contributed to GRYD office decisions to cancel scheduled group meetings for prevention and intervention providers and to disband a working group on intervention practitioners organized by the evaluation team to provide input to evaluation requirements. Provider resistance, particularly from intervention providers, was considered too strong to overcome. Y2 provider contracts are intended to address this issue.

- (3) Not initially creating GRYD more akin to a standardized demonstration project that would necessarily trade off some pre-existing provider preferences for a clear and defensible demonstration of achievements.

Though providers (informally in discussions with the evaluation team), and the GRYD office (contractually in the award and in subsequent meetings) agreed that a strong evaluation is necessary to avoid the LA Bridges I and II lack of accountability, and to clearly identify which provider services have the most beneficial effects, the infrastructure for accomplishing this was not in place during Y1. Y2 awards are expected to correct this problem.

- (4) The slower than anticipated level of recruitment of youth to the prevention program, and the difficulties or absence of recruitment procedures in the intervention program.

Though it was to be expected that some time would be needed to build up youth participation levels, the pace of recruitment was much slower than expected. By the end of Y1, for instance, a number of providers had not yet reached the target levels. This constrained the evaluation's ability to establish and begin implementation of a scientifically rigorous design. By the end of Y1, however, the pace of recruitment was such that all zones can be expected to have reached their target levels during the first few months of Y2.

- (5) The unexpectedly slow development and implementation of the program's

information system (GRYDIS), which was still not fully operational by the end of Y1 (June 2010).

Initial estimates by the GRYD office were that GRYDIS would be operational late summer 2009. This would have made it possible for the evaluation team to document provider activities and summarize service delivery to GRYD clients. The process in fact consumed the entire year. This is a not uncommon characteristic of automated information systems that are being developed from scratch, but it seriously hampered what it was possible for the evaluation team to report about the program. The GRYD office and the evaluation team jointly determined that no parallel and duplicative information collection system should be imposed on providers while GRYDIS was being developed. It was considered that the burden would be unreasonable and could well impede program activities. Assuming that providers will find GRYDIS sufficiently useful to their operations and client management and that data input to GRYDIS will be comprehensive, the system should provide, in Y2, the information on prevention provider clients and services that the evaluation needs. It is not yet certain that GRYDIS can or will be adapted to intervention provider needs.

- (6) The slow processing of the UI-LAPD MOU at the LA City level, and subsequent technical difficulties in obtaining geo-coded data from LAPD after the MOU was signed.

It has taken 15 months to get to the point where geocoded LAPD data are being provided. After all the legal difficulties were overcome, the cooperation level from LAPD has been excellent and, going forward into Y2, we anticipate being able to fully document law enforcement activities in the GRYD zones and in comparison areas in other locations in the city. With the support of Captain Kevin McCarthy, Chief Beck's designated point of contact for the evaluation, LAPD's Compstat section is producing crime, arrest, and call-for-service data going back to 2004/2005. Ongoing data provision will be conducted at six month intervals through the end of the evaluation.

- (7) The failure of LA City and USC to sign a contract for the conduct of YSET (still not in existence at the end of Y1).

Though this did not prevent the USC team from conducting the initial YSET eligibility screening reviews or from returning the eligibility decisions to the providers (but only because USC and the USC YSET team agreed to do the work even though there was no contract), it did complicate the provision of YSET information to the evaluation team. This delayed the commencement of the YSET retest process that is a key component of the evaluation. However, with the cooperation of the USC team in providing initial client responses to the YSET interview, the evaluation team was able to successfully conduct a pilot implementation of the client retest process in April and May of 2010. Results are presented earlier in this report. In addition, negotiations between the City and USC are reported to be concluded, and an ongoing contract is expected to be signed by July, 2010.

- (8) The unexpected (by the Evaluation team) time commitments to Summer Night Lights (SNL) by provider and GRYD staff during critical start up periods of program implementation (summer, 2009) and the evaluation's need to engage in field work at the same time.

During Y1, evaluation of SNL was not incorporated into the solicitation, the proposal, or the award. Consequently, no preparation for its effects was built into

the evaluation work plan, and evaluation activities in other areas were slowed when SNL began consuming program manager and provider time. The exclusion of SNL from the evaluation has now been corrected, and documenting and measuring SNL activities and effects are an important component of Y2 work.

V.2. Conclusion for Y1

The evaluation (and the GRYD program) have been confronted by many challenges during Y1. In this report, we have identified these and delineated the responses to them by both the GRYD office and the evaluation team. The situation at the end of Y1 is encouraging in a number of critical areas.

First, the service provider contracts are expected to be much more explicit with respect to formal program and evaluation requirements. This will enhance programmatic monitoring and management, as well as the interface between the evaluation and providers.

Second, the GRYD office has made major forward movement in both the Prevention and Intervention areas. Program definition has occurred, and training is being provided. This will increase the strength and consistency of service provision and should result in superior client experiences.

Third, a necessary information system, GRYDIS for prevention agencies, is now on-line for data entry, and should assist providers in day-to-day management of clients and activities. To the extent that it does, the evaluation will benefit by being able to electronically derive client and service details in a simple and ongoing process.

Fourth, LAPD data provision problems are now solved and citywide, geocoded data sets will shortly be available. These will support in-depth analysis of crime and gang activity both in GRYD zones and elsewhere.

Fifth, the pilot of the YSET retest process has demonstrated that providers are able to effectively conduct retests of their clients. This will enable the evaluation team to set up and implement the retest process across all zones and for all clients in Y2. The feedback to providers about individual client progress will permit adjustment and adaptation of service provision on a case-by-case basis. The process will also permit, by

the end of Y2, outcome assessment of the GRYD program with respect to client changes in risk scores and delinquent or criminal behavior.

Finally, at a Los Angeles meeting on June 23-24, between the GRYD office, the Evaluation Advisory Committee and the Evaluation team, the following important design decisions were reached:

- It was agreed that a randomized experimental design has a low probability of being successfully implemented for the prevention component, and that a failed experimental design would be worse than a successful, though somewhat less rigorous, alternative. Consequently, it was decided that the prevention evaluation would employ a regression discontinuity design, coupled with other analytic techniques (for factors not suited to regression discontinuity—e.g., self-reported delinquency/criminality). This approach does not risk the “denial of service” ethical dilemma that would be a consequence of randomly assigning at-risk youth to a non-service control group. For that reason and others it is thus not likely to stimulate provider resistance.
- Intervention effects will be assessed during Y2 at the community level, rather than at the individual level. This decision was based on two factors. First, the fact that informed consent by intervention clients is often not obtained has the consequence that the federal prohibition barring access to individual youth data in the absence of informed consent would prevent review and analysis of client-specific information by the evaluation team. Second, intervention agency staff have expressed concern that their ability to effectively work with clients would be compromised if those clients learned that they were being individually assessed by an external organization. During Y2, this issue will be revisited to explore alternate possibilities for individual level analysis.
- The evaluation team will establish a working relationship with LAVITA staff and will develop procedures and techniques for assessing the impact of LAVITA on intervention activities in the GRYD zones.
- An evaluation of Summer Night Lights will be incorporated into the evaluation scope of work. During the 2010 SNL period (July-Sept), the evaluation team will co-operate and co-ordinate with SNL information gathering being conducted by

the GRYD office (through surveys), and will subsequently develop an approach to measuring community response to SNL. In addition, the evaluation will analyze LAPD data to make an assessment of the effects of SNL on crime and delinquency.

- The YSET retest process will be initiated across all zones early in Y2 and will be conducted by prevention providers. All GRYD prevention clients will be retested at 6 month intervals after program entry. UI/Harder will randomly identify a sample of retested youth for one-on-one interviews with evaluation team staff. The purpose will be to check the retest responses for the interviewed youth and clarify/elaborate those responses as needed.
- The GRYD Cabinet and the GRYD Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) will not be included in the evaluation's Y2 scope of work. However, during Y2, Harder/UI will obtain information concerning Cabinet and MDT activities from the GRYD office in preparation for possible Y3 evaluation of those activities.

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Appendix A



ANTONIO R. VILLARAIGOSA
MAYOR

Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD)

Office of the Mayor

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

-  77th Division (II)
-  Baldwin Village/Southwest
-  Boyle Heights/Hollenbeck
-  Cypress Park/Northeast
-  Florence-Graham/77th
-  Newton
-  Pacoima/Foothill
-  Panorama City/Mission
-  Ramona Gardens/Hollenbeck
-  Rampart
-  Southwest (II)
-  Watts/Southeast

