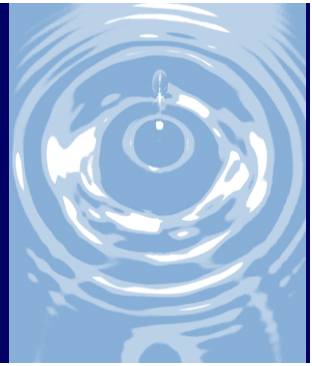


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Baldwin Village GRZ Needs Assessment

Final Report

**L.A. Mayor's Office
Gang Reduction Youth Development (GRYD)**

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¹ Tables illustrated in text are listed here. For *Healthy Cities* figures and tables, which are referred to in Chapter 2 but not depicted in text, please see Appendix A.

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Chapter One: Overview of Study

Study Purpose and Background

The City of Los Angeles, home to nearly four million people, continues to struggle with one of the most serious public safety crises in its history. With the busiest port in the nation, an international border, and the dense five-county region surrounding the city comprising nearly 21 million people, resources are stretched as law enforcement struggle to respond effectively to gang crime and related community disorder. After more than two decades of concerted gang policing and prosecution efforts, Los Angeles has nonetheless more than 400 known gangs and roughly 39,000 identified gang members.

In 2007, Mayor Villaraigosa released the *City of Los Angeles Gang Reduction Strategy* (April 18, 2007) in response to the call for action by *The Advancement Project*² earlier in the year. The Mayor's Strategy called for building a comprehensive response system to the gang problem in eight targeted areas called Gang Reduction Zones. To accomplish this goal, the Mayor established the Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) to assist the GRYD areas in building their response systems, which includes programming and activities ranging from prevention to intervention to suppression to reentry. The first step in this process was to conduct needs assessment studies in each of the GRYD areas in order to tailor funding to the local needs of the community.

The current study summarizes the results of the comprehensive community-based needs assessment for the Baldwin Village GRYD area. It is important to note that this GRYD encompasses all of the Baldwin Village area in addition to two other distinct areas that are not necessarily neighborhoods. To make this distinction results from the community survey and focus groups will be distinguished by the following: Baldwin Village, Rancho Cienega area, and Coliseum/Leimert area.

As indicated above, the aim of this study was to capture the community voice with regard to implementing an effective balance of gang prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry efforts. To this end, the research team approached this study from the perspective of overall community need, viewing gang membership and violence as a symptom of the problem rather than the problem in and of itself. This approach allowed respondents to provide feedback on the perceived strengths of their community as well as overall gaps in the programs and services available in their communities.

Study Methodology

The project was driven by a multi-pronged approach including: (1) Socio-demographic and crime data profiles of the Baldwin Village GRYD; (2) community surveys with residents in the area; and (3) focus groups with parents, youth, and agencies/entities that provide services in the GRYD. All data collection instruments were standardized and constructed in a culturally sensitive format in both English and Spanish; all methods of data collection involved interpreters and translators when necessary. Interpreter-translators, focus group leaders, and community survey interviewers were hired from within the community in order to increase participation and enhance the validity of information obtained. To better understand the procedures used for each of these data collection methods, the methodology for each approach is described below.

² See *Citywide Gang Activity Reduction Strategy: Phase III Report* at http://www.advanceproj.org/doc/p3_report.pdf

Socio-Demographic and Crime Data Profiles

Analysis of general community descriptive and gang crime data was provided to CSLA research staff by *The Advancement Project* and was summarized by CSLA research staff in the current report. Consequently, we refer readers to the GRYD Office and research staff at The Advancement Project for any questions related to the type of data acquired for analysis and the procedures used for analyzing the data. The authors of this report can only take responsibility for the interpretation of the analysis provided to us.

Community Surveys

The purpose of Community Surveys was to assess community members' perceptions of community strengths, their fear of crime in the community, their access to services, areas for strengthening the community, extent of crime problems in the community, and their perceptions of responsibility for improving the safety of the community as well as the effectiveness of various entities to improve safety (see Appendix B for copy of the survey). The survey was comprised predominately by close-ended items with Likert-style response categories (ranges 1 to 4 and 1 to 5). Additionally, two open-ended questions were included to capture residents' perceptions of strengths of and needs in the community. The survey was developed collectively by all GRYD needs assessment contractors and GRYD staff in order to create a standard survey instrument that would allow for comparison across GRYD areas.

Five interviewers were hired from the three neighborhoods in the GRYD to administer the survey in one-on-one sessions with residents. CSLA provided training to these interviewers prior to data collection. Convenience sampling was used given the extreme time limits; however, appropriate guidelines were instituted to ensure adequate sampling across domains (e.g., no more than 10% of respondents could be family/friends of the interviewer; 50% were to be female; 50% were to be residents over the age of 30yrs; 75% were to have children under the age of 18yrs). In total, 239 surveys were collected from community members during the course of this study. Of these, 139 surveys were completed by residents in Baldwin Village, 75 were completed by residents in the Rancho Cienega area, and 25 were completed by residents in the Coliseum/Leimert area.

Focus Groups

Focus groups with residents and agencies/entities that provide services in the area were conducted to collect qualitative data regarding perceptions of: (1) The most pressing problems in the area vis-à-vis gang crime/violence, (2) the need for specific type of resources, and (3) the types of responses necessary to improve the community's well-being and safety.

Focus groups utilized a semi-structured format with groups of 8-10 participants.³ Separate focus groups were convened for youth, parents, business leaders, community-based organizations, the Los Angeles Unified School District, the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles County Probation, the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. Attempts were made, whenever possible, to ensure respondents represented all three neighborhoods in the Baldwin Village GRYD. Table 1.1 summarizes the total number of meetings held in

³ Due to interest among various groups, many focus groups exceeded the initial goal of 8-10 people.

the GRYD for all groups. As shown in Table 1.1, 167 individuals participated in discussions related to the needs of this community.

Table 1.1 Summary of Focus Groups Held and Number of Participants

Focus Group	# of Participants
Residents	
Parents	45
Youth	44
<i>Subtotal Residents</i>	<i>89</i>
Agencies/Entities that Provide Services	
Los Angeles Unified School District Dorsey and Audubon	24
Department of Children and Family Services	12
Department of Mental Health Service Providers Meeting	24
Los Angeles Police Department	5
Probation	8
Community-Based Organizations	5
<i>Subtotal Agencies/Entities</i>	<i>78</i>
Total All Participants	167

Focus group discussions were guided by a set of 8 to 10 questions (see Appendix C for a list of the questions by participant group). All facilitators for the youth, parent, and community-based organization groups were drawn from the community, and all focus groups with agencies/entities were conducted by CSLA project staff. Prior to conducting the groups, all participants were assured that all focus group data would be confidential. Focus group transcriptions were analyzed to identify themes and patterns.

Although the focus groups reported in Table 1.1 represent a wide variety of perspectives in the GRYD, the authors of this report acknowledge that everyone’s voice in the GRYD could not be included. Due to time constraints placed on this study (two months), we were limited in the number of focus groups we could conduct and the number of people we could reach. Given more time, additional focus groups would have been held in an attempt to connect with more community groups and government agencies such as Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs, Health Services, and California Department of Corrections—Department of Juvenile Justice.

Strengths and Limitations

Given the short timeframe allotted for this study (2 months), we are especially pleased with the amount and quality of data collected. In total, the viewpoints of 406 respondents were collected across the entire GRYD. Such a strong response is a testament to the dedication of community residents, community leaders, and agency personnel who willingly reached out to facilitate the process of data collection to ensure that the information we received was a valid reflection of community opinion and needs. The use of standardized community surveys and focus group guidelines assisted in this regard. However, our study does have some methodological limitations imposed largely by the tight timelines. As mentioned earlier, we utilized convenience sampling in the community (as random sampling was not possible), and not all voices in the three neighborhoods that comprise the large and diverse Baldwin Village GRYD could be studied within the timeframe. Nonetheless, the consistent pattern of results across data collection methods arguably reflects the validity of the data to reflect the experiences and concerns of residents as well as individuals who provide services in the area.

Chapter Two: Community History and Profile

The Baldwin Village Gang Reduction Youth Development Zone is a structurally disadvantaged sub-area within Baldwin Village, which is also known as “The Jungle.” Originally, the nickname “The Jungle” was given to the area because of its lush, green landscaping, but more recently, the name has taken on a negative connotation because of its reputation for drive-by shootings and violent crime (see Figure 2.1). The residential profile of the area is dominated by two story apartments buildings built in the late 1950s. Surrounding Baldwin Village is the city of Baldwin Hills named by the famous horse racing pioneer, Elias J. “Lucky” Baldwin. The city is one of the wealthiest majority-African American areas in the United States, with African Americans representing approximately 79 percent of the population and is often referred to as the Black Beverly Hills because of celebrity African American residents such as Tina Turner, Ray Charles, John Singleton, and the late Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley.

Baldwin Village experienced the exodus of White residents in the 1960s and the area became dominated by African Americans and Latino residents. Gangs became a prominent feature of Baldwin Village starting in the 1970s. Their involvement in illicit drug sales resulted in a wave of violence, which in turn generated wide-spread fear among residents. Baldwin Village is part of the Crenshaw District, centered at Hillcrest Drive and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, and is home to a majority of the members of the Black P. Stones gang (approximately 500 members). The Black P. Stones is thought to be a transplanted offshoot of the Chicago Blackstone Rangers, which is affiliated with the Bloods.

This gang is described by law enforcement officials as a sophisticated criminal enterprise engaged in drug sales, robbery, burglary and all forms of violent crime. The gang is divided into two “sets,” with the largest set being located in Baldwin Village. Geographically, this gang is active in locations in other West Coast communities as well communities as far East as North Carolina. In a recent year (2004), the Baldwin Village Black P. Stones gang was accused of committing 261 robberies, 40 sexual assaults, and 7 murders.

The gang problem in Baldwin Village is unique in that the problem consists largely of one gang (Black P. Stones) that is concentrated in a relatively compact one square mile geographical area. Furthermore, this gang is entrenched in a residential area of approximately 560 privately owned apartments. Gang rivalries and conflicts over turf within Baldwin Village itself are not a problem since the Black P. Stones claim nearly all turf. Although small numbers of MS 13 and Crips gang members are reported in the area, the Baldwin Village gang problem boils down to approximately 500 Black P. Stones gang members entrenched in compact area of privately owned apartments. This makes gang control and reduction efforts especially challenging because police officials have to deal with a substantial number of different apartment owners and managers and not just a single public housing authority.

The juxtaposition of extreme affluence and disadvantage has made this area the subject of great interest, not only because of the crime implications, but also because of the unique sociopolitical and practical implications of rich and poor Americans, of the same race, living in extremely close proximity. The area is home to Baldwin Hills Elementary, Audubon Middle School, Susan Miller Dorsey High, Hillcrest Elementary, Coliseum Elementary as well as Windsor Magnet school, Marilton Design School and a Los Angeles Public Library.

Demographics

Total Population. In 2007, the Baldwin Village GRYD has a total population of approximately 26,900 concentrated in an area of 1.9 square miles. Although population density is distributed unevenly throughout, there are several high-density areas with up to 3,723 residents in a single census block group; no census block group has fewer than 265 residents (see Figure 2.2).

Race and Ethnicity. African Americans and Latinos account for 92 percent of the residents in the Baldwin Village GRYD Zone (see Table 2.1 and Figure 2.3). The concentration of African Americans is substantially greater than for the City of Los Angeles (70% versus 10% respectively) and for Los Angeles County (70% versus 9% respectively). The concentration of Latinos in Baldwin Village GRYD is about half that of the City of Los Angeles (22% versus 50% respectively) and of Los Angeles County (22% versus 47% respectively). African American residents are dispersed throughout the GRYD whereas Latinos tend to be concentrated in a small number of census block groups in the west side of the zone (see Figure 2.4).

Gender and Age. About 44 percent of the residents in the Baldwin Village GRYD are males and 56 percent are females (see Table 2.2 and Figure 2.4). Although the distribution of youth and adults is relatively equal, two important features should be noted: approximately 29 percent of the population is 19 years old or less, and about 12 percent are between the ages of 20 and 29. This means that a substantial proportion of the residents (about 41%) are in gang-prone/crime-prone age groups. The distribution of young residents in the Baldwin Village GRYD is uneven with higher concentrations residing in a small number of Southwest block groups. In these tracts, the concentration of residents under age 18 is up to 35 percent of the total population.

Household and Family Characteristics. Household income for the 11,739 households in the Baldwin Village GRYD is among the lowest in the Los Angeles metropolis. This is especially evident when the lowest income categories are compared to the City of Los Angeles and to Los Angeles County. Nearly a third (31%) of the households in the GRYD had incomes of less than \$15,000 in 2007. This compares to 18 percent for the City of Los Angeles and 14 percent for Los Angeles County (see Table 2.3 and Figure 2.6). Median household income in the zone in 2007 was \$36,500, which is about 64 percent of the average household income for Los Angeles County, a percentage that has remained virtually unchanged since 1990 (see Table 2.4). Interestingly, the sources or types of household income in the Baldwin Village GRYD are not much different than those for the City of Los Angeles or Los Angeles County. For example, 73 percent of household income in the zone is from wages, which is about the same as both the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County. Household income sources such as supplemental security income or public assistance are also about the same (see Table 2.5).

The Baldwin Village GRYD is characterized by relatively high rates of unemployment as are the areas surrounding the Zone. The unemployment rate for residents over age 16 in a large portion of the Zone was 12 percent or greater, with some areas having unemployment rates as high as 27 percent (see Figure 2.7). As would be expected given the low levels of household income and the high unemployment rate, the Baldwin Village GRYD has a substantial number of families living in poverty. Overall, in 2007 1,793 or 28 percent of all GRYD Zone families were living in poverty, and in one census block group 53 percent of all families were in this category (see Figure 2.9).

The Baldwin Village GRYD also has a high number and percentage of households headed by a single parent—overall, approximately 19 percent of all households (range between 2 percent and 29 percent). As Figure 2.10 shows, more than two-thirds of the census block groups in the GRYD had greater than 17% of their households headed by a single parent.

Educational Attainment, Academic Performance, School Attendance, and High Risk Youth.

Educational attainment in the Baldwin Village GRYD is greater than in the overall City of Los Angeles or Los Angeles County (see Table 2.6 and Figure 2.11). In terms of the percentage of residents 25 years or older, the Zone has about half as many residents (8% versus 19% and 17% respectively) with less than a 9th grade education, and it has a higher percentage of residents who have earned a high school diploma or equivalent (25% versus 17% and 19% respectively). A greater percentage of Baldwin Village residents have some college (29% versus 17% for the City of Los Angeles and 20% for Los Angeles County); however, the percentage of residents with a baccalaureate degree is lower (10% versus 16% and 16% respectively). Overall, the higher rate of education attainment is a noteworthy positive attribute of the Baldwin Village GRYD. However, it should also be noted that about one-fourth of the residents age 25 and older have less than a high school education, and these residents tend to be concentrated in about half of the census block groups. Several census block groups just outside the GRYD (within a one-mile radius of the zone) had greater concentrations of adults without high school diplomas (See Figure 2.12).

Academic Performance Index (API) scores for schools (or school boundaries) within the GRYD show considerable variability across schools. The API scores for elementary schools range from a low of 632 (42nd St Elementary) to a high of 729 (54th St Elementary). The API score for the Audubon Middle School is 568, and the scores for Dorsey (514) and Crenshaw (524) High Schools are similar (see Table 2.7).

Elementary school attendance rates vary only slightly from one school to the next and range from a low of 91.5 percent to a high of 94% (see Tables 1.8 and 1.9). The attendance rate for Audubon Middle School is approximately 90 percent, and the rate for Crenshaw High School (83.9) is about five percentage points lower than that for Dorsey High School (88.7).

The Baldwin Village GRYD has a substantial number of foster youth within LAUSD elementary school boundaries, and this is similar to surrounding areas to the south, east, and north, (see Figure 2.13), with the greatest number (n=30) located within the 42nd St Elementary School boundary. The boundary for the Audubon Middle School also has a substantial number (n=67) of foster youth (see Figure 2.14).

Audubon Middle School has a small number (n=6) of youth on probation, but that number increases substantially, when GRYD high school attendance boundaries are examined (see Figures 2.15 and 2.16). In 2006, there were 38 youth on probation within the Crenshaw High School attendance boundary and 29 youth on probation within the Dorsey High School attendance boundary.

Crime Patterns

Violent Crime. The Baldwin Village GRYD experienced a substantial amount of violent crime in 2007 (see Figure 2.17 and Table 2.10). Violent crime occurred in nearly all census block groups, ranging from a low of 2 violent crimes in a census block group to a high of 47 violent crimes in a census block group, with the average number of violent crimes in a census block group being 11. Most of the areas surrounding the Zone also had substantial numbers of violent crimes in 2007. Eleven homicides occurred in 2007, with the

greatest concentration occurring in two census tracts in the southwest corner of the Zone (see Figure 2.18). Although there was a significant number of violent crimes in the Baldwin Village GRYD, it is also important to note a substantial 17 percent decrease in violent crime in 2007 compared to 2006. The biggest decrease in violent crime was in the midnight to 4:00 p.m. period, with a much smaller decrease in the 4:00 p.m. to midnight period (see Table 2.11, and Figure 2.19).

Property Crime. Property crime was prevalent in the Baldwin Village GRYD in 2007. Overall, there were 1,359 property crimes or an average of 68 property crimes per census block group. Property crime for census block groups ranged from a low of 17 to a high of 146 property crimes (see Figure 2.20 and Table 2.10). Although property crime occurred in every block group, high numbers of such crimes were concentrated in about half of the block groups in the Zone. Property crime decreased in 2007 by 3 percent, and was 4 percent lower than 2005 levels. Figure 2.21 provides trend lines for both property and violent crime in the Baldwin Village GRYD Zone.

Gang-Related Crime. In 2007, just over 200 hundred gang-related crimes occurred in the Baldwin Village GRYD (see Figure 2.22). The range of gang-related crimes for census block groups in the Zone ranged from a low of zero (0) gang-related crimes to a high of 24 gang-related crimes, with the average block group having 5 such crimes. The number of violent gang-related crimes in 2007 was 153, and they tended to occur in the same census block groups as non-violent gang related crime (see Figure 2.23). The maximum number of violent gang-related crimes in any census block group was 22. Figure 2.24 depicts the distribution of violent gang-related crimes and their proximity to parks and schools.

As the figure demonstrates, nearly every school in the Baldwin Village GRYD is located in a census block group with at least some violent gang-related crime, and several schools are in areas with higher concentrations of violent gang-related crime. Figure 2.24 also shows that all of the public parks in the Baldwin Village GRYD are adjacent to census block groups that have some of the highest concentrations of violent gang-related crimes.

Crime Victims. Although property-crime victimization of those under age 18 has decreased substantially in the past year (-47%), property-crime victimization has increased substantially for those in the 18-24 age group (+30%) and those in the 25-34 age group (+36%). The pattern of change for violent crime is somewhat different (see Table 2.12 and Figures 1.25 and 1.26). Violent victimization of those less than 18 years old has decreased by 2 percent over the past year and by 5 % for those in the 18-24 age group. The decrease in violent victimizations is substantial for those in the 25-24 age group (-21%) and in the 35-44 age group (-23%).

The number of homicide victims is relatively small and therefore percentage changes become dramatically inflated (see Table 2.13 and Figures 2.27 and 2.28). However, with regard to gang-crime victimization, there were several meaningful changes between 2006 and 2007. Gang-crime victimizations decreased by 16 percent for those in 18-24 age group, by 13 percent for those in the 25-34 age group and by 33 percent for those in the 45 years and older age group. The only age group that did not experience a decrease in gang-crime victimization is the 35-44 age group, where there was a 63% increase in gang-crime victimizations.

Summary

By all indicators, the Baldwin Village GRYD is in need of concentrated investment in gang reduction and community building efforts. This is a high population density area with a substantial proportion of its residents being in gang-prone and crime-prone age groups. This structurally disadvantaged community is characterized by high levels of unemployment and single parent households. The number of households living in poverty is substantial making it is one of the poorest areas in the City of Los Angeles. The GRYD is also characterized by substantial numbers of at-risk and high-risk youth living within its boundaries, including foster youth and probation youth.

Both violent and property crime levels are high in the Baldwin Village GRYD. However, both types of crimes have declined in recent years, and the 17 percent decrease in violent crime in 2007 is especially encouraging. Attempts should be made to isolate those factors that contributed to that decline so that they can be incorporated into the overall gang reduction and youth development strategy for the area. Obviously, gangs and gang-related crime, especially violent crime, is a major problem for the area that will be best addressed using a multifaceted approach involving primary and secondary prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry services. However, long-term success in gang and gang-crimes reduction will require ameliorating the problems that contribute to the community's structural disadvantage including reducing poverty, increasing family stability, education, and employment.

Chapter Three: Community Strengths & Needs Reported

Community Strengths and Needs

The socio-demographic and crime profile of the Baldwin Village GRYD portrays an area plagued by many economic and social structural disadvantages. Given such a profile, one might expect residents to be bleak in their view of the community and its potential; however, results from the community survey indicate that residents readily identify strengths within their neighborhoods and are often optimistic about the possibility of improving the well-being and safety of those neighborhoods.

To explore the perception of community strengths, residents were asked what they considered to be the best things about their respective areas (Table 3.1). Responses indicate that residents shared similar beliefs about community strengths. This included community members, the accessibility of local services, physical features of their communities, and a certain sense of safety.

Table 3.1 Top 5 Strengths for Neighborhoods in Baldwin Village GRYD

Baldwin Village (N=312)	% of Total	Rancho Cienega (N=156)	% of Total	Coliseum/Leimert (n=59)	% of Total
Community Members	21.8	Accessibility	23.7	Environment	26.2
Accessibility	18.7	Environment	20.1	Community Members	15.4
Environment	18.4	Community Members	18.3	Accessibility	15.4
Safety	13.3	Local Services	7.7	Shops	10.8
Shops	5.1	/Safety	7.1	Safety	9.2

NOTE: All three strengths from respondents were combined to determine the top cited strengths for the community; hence, the N size represents number of responses rather than number of respondents.

Residents of Baldwin Village saw community members as one of their most important strengths and described such positive features as willingness to get involved, come to the assistance of others, and work together. Baldwin Village's location was also considered an asset, with its accessibility to schools, churches, shops and local services, as well as access to surrounding locations in the Los Angeles area.

Rancho Cienega residents also considered their location to be an asset, particularly its accessibility to schools, shopping, jobs, and other local services. Physical aspects of their community were cited as strengths as well. Many residents cited the local park and its facilities such as tennis courts, while others noted the well-kept appearance of streets and homes. Residents also considered community members as a source of strength, often mentioning the friendliness of fellow residents and the value of having connections with other residents. Local services, including a movie theatre, were regarded as a positive feature of their community as well. Some also noted a sense of safety while in their community, which they described as having stability and an absence of problems such as drugs.

Residents from Coliseum/Leimert felt the state of their physical community was among its top strengths, particularly Leimert Park and the cleanliness of their neighborhood. Community members were also cited as an asset, especially neighbors and family. The location of the neighborhood again makes it convenient to necessary services and nearby freeways to access the surrounding Los Angeles area; residents also considered smaller shopping centers and the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, a large shopping mall, as

positive features. A feeling of safety was noted by residents as well, commonly referring to their neighborhood as quiet.

Within the community survey, residents were asked to identify what their neighborhood needed to better support its young children and youth. Responses were tabulated across more than two dozen domains; the top five answers for each neighborhood are presented in Table 3.2. As is evident, there is general agreement across the GRYD with regard to community needs with a few distinctions. Interestingly, Rancho Cienega and Coliseum/Leimert shared the same top five concerns, which focused largely on quality of life and community investment themes. Baldwin Village on the other hand, voiced more supervision and safety-related concerns. Specifically, while Rancho Cienega and Coliseum/Leimert focused on youth programs/activities, facilities and parks, community involvement, and job assistance—Baldwin Village residents were more interested in higher levels of youth supervision, increased police presence and enforcement, and improved environmental safety.

Table 3.2 Top 5 Community Needs to Better Support its Children and Youth

Baldwin Village (N=299)	% of Total	Rancho Cienega (N=179)	% of Total	Coliseum/Leimert (n=60)	% of Total
Youth Programs/Activities	17.2	Youth Programs/ Activities	24.0	Youth Programs/Activities	25.8
Safe Environment	10.1	Community Involvement	10.4	Community Involvement	12.1
Police Presence/Enforcement	9.4	Job Assistance	9.3	Community Facilities/Parks	10.6
Parental Involvement	8.8	Community Facilities/Parks	8.2	Safe Environment	9.1
Police Services	8.1	Safe Environment	7.7	Job Assistance	7.6

NOTE: All three strengths from respondents were combined to determine the top cited strengths for the community; hence, the N size represents number of responses rather than number of respondents.

A starting point for building an effective comprehensive response system to gang involvement and gang crime is recognizing and understanding how the community positively views itself. By taking an assets-based approach to solving problems, communities focus on building resilience while at the same time reducing risks, thereby building hope, attachment, and efficacy among community residents and the agencies/entities that provide services within the community. Ironically, some of the strengths identified were ultimately identified as areas of improvement for the community. At first, this may seem contradictory, but to the contrary, such results, we believe, indicate the extent to which a community understands itself. The true irony is that communities faced with extreme disadvantage and the constant pull of social problems may know itself better and therefore hold more potential than communities that do not face such adversity. In the end, no one thing is all good or all bad. Rather, everything offers opportunity.

Community Survey and Focus Group Results

The original plan for reporting survey and focus group results for the GRYD was to separate the results and find commonalities at the end of each section; however, in preparing the results from both data collection methods, the themes were so similar that the report format was changed. Rather than separating the results by data collection method, this section integrates the results of both methods across the common

themes that surfaced in analysis. Specifically, the thematic domains that guide this section are *Safety*, *Community Investment*, and *Access to/Need for Services*.

Safety

The theme of Safety captures residents' concerns for physical safety. In particular, results indicated the need to (1) clean up and improve the physical features of the community such as graffiti removal, adding stop signs, lighting, and cleaning streets; (2) provide more security and safety in their area (i.e., on the streets and in the parks) by increasing resident vigilant supervision and police presence/enforcement; and (3) increase school safety, which includes safe passage for students to and from school as well as safety once students are on school grounds.

Most residents reported feeling safer in their area during the day as opposed to the night (Table 3.3). This was true about residents across areas; approximately one out of five in Baldwin Village felt unsafe during the daytime, whereas even fewer (only one out of ten) felt unsafe during the day in Rancho Cienega and Coliseum/Leimert. Interestingly, residents' responses in Baldwin Village and Rancho Cienega suggest that even during the nighttime only one-third of residents feel worry for safety concerns. In the Coliseum/Leimert Park Area even less (only 24 percent) feel unsafe after dark.

Curiously, despite most participants reporting feeling relatively safe during both day and night, nearly half of all residents reported that fear prevented them from engaging in activities outside the home. Overall, residents of Coliseum/Leimert area reported feeling the most secure and safe during both day and nighttime; however, these residents also reported the greatest amount of fear as a barrier, preventing them from engaging in activities (60%). Generally, residents in the Baldwin Village GRYD do not appear to feel a great amount of concern for personal safety issues; in fact, contrary to expectations, most residents indicate a relatively high level of feeling safe. It is important to note, however, that Latino respondents were significantly more likely to report feeling "unsafe or very unsafe" during the day or night and were more likely to alter their activities than African-American respondents. This finding may be related to increasing racial tensions in the area due to the influx of Latino families into areas historically populated by African-Americans.

Table 3.3 Fear of Crime
Percentage of Respondents Reporting Feeling "Unsafe" or "Very Unsafe" in Their Areas

	Baldwin Village (N=139)		Rancho Cienega (N=75)		Coliseum/Leimert (N=25)	
	N	%	n	%	n	%
Feel Unsafe or Very Unsafe at Night	56	33	27	35	6	24
Feel Unsafe or Very Unsafe at Day	27	20	9	13	3	12
Fear Prevents me from doing things	77	43	36	50	10	60

NOTE: The range for these variables was 1 to 5 and 1 to 4. For simplicity, only the results for the "Unsafe" and "Very Unsafe" categories are reported. Means were computed for each variable using all response categories and compared for statistical significant using analysis of variance procedures.

*Overall mean differences across areas were statistically significant at $p < .05$.

A range of activities was perceived to be a problem in communities surveyed (Table 3.4). However, only one problem, drug use, was indicated by more than half of respondents, across all three areas. Consistent

with the findings for community needs, Baldwin Village respondents rated more activities as problems than respondents in other areas. Such problems included gang activities, crime, drug sales, and drug use as problems. Rancho Cienega reported the highest level of concern about drug use, with 70% of respondents endorsing this item. For Coliseum/Leimert, after drug use, the next highest concern of residents was graffiti.

Interestingly, areas were similar on perceived police harassment; with only about one-third of all respondents across all areas believed police were unduly harassing of residents. This exact pattern is mirrored in residents' response to intimidation by gang members, where only a third of all residents believed it to be a problem.

Table 3.4 Problems Facing the Community
Percentage of Respondents Reporting Activity as "Often a Problem" or "Always a Problem"

	Baldwin Village (N=139)		Rancho Cienega (N=75)		Coliseum/Leimert (N=25)	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
Gang Activity	81	60	34	46	6	24
Crime	74	56	33	46	10	40
Police Harassment	42	32	27	38	9	36
Graffiti	59	44	37	50	12	48
Drug Sales	72	56	32	44	10	40
Drug Use	41	66	19	70	8	66
Intimidation by Gang Members	47	36	28	38	9	36

NOTE: The range for these variables was 1 to 5. For simplicity, only the results for the "Often a Problem" and "Always a Problem" are reported. Means were computed for each variable using all response categories and compared for statistical significant using analysis of variance procedures.

*Overall mean differences across areas were statistically significant at p<.05.

Focus group responses underscored the debilitating effect of drug sales and drug use in these areas. There was a general call for more police efforts to shut down the drug markets; yet, an equal amount of concern expressed about poor police-community relations. In particular, there appears to be significant issues related to the way in which police and youth interact. Youth felt they were subject of police harassment, particularly with regard to stops that required them to identify themselves and submit to searches.

Overall, there seemed to be a split opinion with regard to role of police and community relationships with the police. There was general consensus among focus group participants that police, even more enforcement in some instances, were necessary to create safe areas; yet, participants also expressed concern about the way in which the police interacted with the community. In a few cases, participants gave credit to current police officers for reducing problems in the area. Some focus group participants (residents and agencies/entities that provide services) recommended that more LAPD officers live in the area they are policing so they can understand and relate to the community. The inconsistent view of the police was underscored through observations of police-community relationships during a ride-along. Some residents readily showed disdain for the officers and their requests while an equal number of residents greeted the officers with familiarity and appreciation. The distinguishing factor between these two types of reactions seemed to be age. Younger residents were more likely to resist police presence while older residents

invited it. Given the call for more safety in Baldwin Village, particularly the need to create safe locations for children to play, it is critical that LAPD and the community take steps to improve their relationships.

The challenges inherent to police-community partnerships in these areas were not lost from the perspective of law enforcement and other government agencies. Both police and other service providers cited the need for improved police-community relations and communication in the Baldwin Village GRYD. Law enforcement, in particular, cited the difficult history between the LAPD and Baldwin Village and recognized the need to improve relationships the community.

Interestingly, youth also indicated concern over regular intimidation by gang members, who often asked ask youth to identify themselves when they were in public areas and/or tried to recruit them as members. Youth felt their activities were significantly constrained by gang culture (i.e., wearing the right colors, turf boundaries, and associates), and did not feel safe in many areas, including schools. Focus group participants from schools, DCFS, and probation all recognized this and added that much of the truancy at local schools is due to a lack of safe passage to school and on occasion, absence of a safe environment once they arrive at school. Parents also commented their limited ability to keep their children isolated from gang members. They reported that gangs intercept their children on the streets when they are on the way to school, and their children are either harassed or recruited by gang members when they are outside to play. Unfortunately, schools were generally not considered to provide adequate security or prevention to safeguard youth against such gang intimidation

One last concern related to safety is the perceived tensions that are building across African-Americans and Latinos, particularly with regard to gang violence. LAPD officers indicated that Latino residents are more often to be the victims of gang violence, and as indicated above, Latino residents are more likely to feel unsafe in their communities. This issue surfaced during the several focus groups and represents a critical area for intervention within the GRYD.

Table 3.5 Effectiveness of Responses to Gang Crime
Percentage of Respondents Reporting “Somewhat Dissatisfied” or “Very Dissatisfied”

	Baldwin Village (N=139)		Rancho Cienega (N=75)		Coliseum/Leimert (N=25)	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
Police *	50	38	43	57	17	68
CLEAR *	42	34	38	50	13	52
Gang Injunctions *	44	33	33	43	14	48
Elected Officials *	46	35	47	63	16	64

NOTE: The range for these variables was 1 to 5. For simplicity, only the results for the “Somewhat Dissatisfied” and “Very Dissatisfied” are reported. Means were computed for each variable using all response categories and compared for statistical significant using analysis of variance procedures.

*Overall mean differences across areas were statistically significant at $p < .05$.

The concerns expressed earlier are reinforced by community survey findings related to the effectiveness of the police, CLEAR, gang injunctions, and elected officials (Table 3.5). Overall, most respondents in Rancho Cienega and Coliseum/Leimert were largely dissatisfied with all attempts to combat gang activity and crime. Especially singled out were elected officials, policing efforts, and the CLEAR initiative with more than half of residents dissatisfied with the services. It is unclear whether respondents understood the question related

to CLEAR since this program is only directed at the Baldwin Village area. Overall, Baldwin Village took the most moderate stance with just above one-third of respondents indicating dissatisfaction with all four categories. The differences between Baldwin Village and Coliseum/Leimert are the most dramatic, with a 20-30% endorsement rate difference. It is important to note, in general, that both Rancho Cienega and Coliseum/Leimert areas are comprised of wealthier, better educated residents who may be reporting dissatisfaction with these initiatives differently than in Baldwin Village. For instance, regardless of problems related to police-community relations, Baldwin Village receives a great deal of attention from law enforcement to reduce violence in the area. The other areas may not receive the same amount of attention due to lower levels of problems that require the attention of the LAPD.

Community Investment

A second theme was residents’ desire for greater involvement by all stakeholders in the local community (Table 3.6) and improved community infrastructure to support programs, services, and activities in their neighborhoods. Their responses reflected an awareness that all invested parties must come together to increase neighborhood cohesion and build stronger networks.

The community survey asked respondents to rate the importance of various community stakeholders in strengthening the neighborhood (Table 3.6). Results showed both similarities and differences across groups. Families received similar ratings across all three areas, with approximately one quarter of all respondents rating families as “very or extremely important” to strengthening the area. Families, however, were not rated as important by the greatest percentage of respondents. Police was rated as more important than families by respondents in all areas, but Baldwin Village respondents were more likely to rate the police as important compared to the other areas, which is not surprising given the level of crime in the area.

**Table 3.6 Ratings for Importance in Strengthening the Area
Percentage Responding “Very Important” or “Extremely Important”**

	Baldwin Village (N=139)		Rancho Cienega (N=75)		Coliseum/Leimert (N=25)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Schools *	69	60	9	12	6	24
Religious Organizations *	48	34	17	23	5	20
Police *	58	42	19	25	9	36
Families	36	26	20	27	7	28
Community Leaders*	39	28	5	7	4	16

NOTE: The range for these variables was 1 to 5. For simplicity, only the results for the “Somewhat Important” and “Very Important” are reported. Means were computed for each variable using all response categories and compared for statistical significant using analysis of variance procedures.

*Overall mean differences across areas were statistically significant at p<.05.

In contrast to the other areas, Baldwin Village respondents were more likely to rate schools, religious organizations, and community leaders as more important than respondents in the other two areas. In fact, 60% of respondents felt schools played an instrumental role in strengthening the community. These findings are, again, not necessarily surprising when considering the socio-demographic differences between the communities. Baldwin Village potentially relies more on external entities for support compared to the other areas which, based on anecdotal descriptions, appear to be more self-sufficient. Schools, for

instance, may be rated low because many residents in these other areas send their children to private schools.

Without exception, respondents from across all three areas reported remarkably similar perceptions of who should be responsible for controlling problems related to gang crime (Table 3.7). In particular, approximately equal levels of responsibility were assigned across areas to families (64-68%), community leaders (54-66%), schools (52-53%), and police (64-76%). The widest variation in the assignment of responsibility was with elected officials; nearly three-quarters of participants in Rancho Cienega but only about half of participants in Baldwin Village ranked this highly. Remarkably, every community believed equal or greater responsibility lay with police (rather than families). While Rancho Cienega and Coliseum/Leimert had over three-quarters of respondents indicating that police bore the greatest responsibility (76-77%), Baldwin Village rated police responsibility the same as family (64%).

Interestingly, the community reporting the greatest dissatisfaction with police and other responses to gang crime (Coliseum/Leimert), is also the community to assign one of the highest levels of police responsibility (3.7). Paradoxically, Coliseum/Leimert also has the least concern for negative or problem activities (Table 3.4) in their community (with the exception of drug use), and reports feeling the safest of the three areas (Table 3.3)

**Table 3.7 Level of Responsibility in Controlling Gang Problems
Percentage Reporting “Very Responsible” and “Extremely Responsible”**

	Baldwin Village (N=139)		Rancho Cienega (N=75)		Coliseum/Leimert (N=25)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Families	86	64	48	64	17	68
Community Leaders *	72	54	49	66	15	60
Religious Organizations *	57	44	33	44	10	40
Elected Officials *	70	54	53	70	16	64
Schools *	69	52	40	53	13	52
Police *	86	64	58	77	19	76

NOTE: The range for these variables was 1 to 5. For simplicity, only the results for the “Very Responsible” and “Extremely Responsible” are reported. Means were computed for each variable using all response categories and compared for statistical significant using analysis of variance procedures.

*Overall mean differences across areas were statistically significant at $p < .05$.

The overall trend regarding residents’ perceptions of effectiveness in improving area safety is guarded (Table 3.8). Across the board, few entities were rated as highly effective. One exception leaps out for Baldwin Village where police were given the highest rating across the board (42%). Schools were next for Baldwin Village, garnering 35% of residents’ votes for their effectiveness in improving area safety. Ranked least effective at improving area safety in Rancho Cienega and Coliseum/Leimert were elected officials; Baldwin was much more forgiving, ranking them equally with other community entities such as families, community members, religious organizations, and community youth organizations.

Noteworthy is the relationship between perceived responsibility for addressing problems, and reported effectiveness of the same entities. For example, all three areas hold families to a high standard of responsibility (approximately two thirds); yet in the same communities only about one quarter rate the families as effective.

Table 3.8 Effectiveness of Stakeholders Responsible for Improving Safety of the Area—Percentage of Respondents Reporting “Very Effective” or “Extremely Effective”

	Baldwin Village (N=139)		Rancho Cienega (N=75)		Coliseum/Leimert (N=25)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Families	58	25	39	19	14	24
Community Leaders	38	29	8	11	3	12
Religious Organizations	34	27	11	15	5	20
Community Youth Organizations	38	29	8	11	3	16
Elected Officials	31	24	4	5	1	4
Schools	46	35	10	13	3	12
Police	55	42	17	22	4	16

NOTE: The range for these variables was 1 to 5. For simplicity, only the results for the “Very Effective” and “Extremely Effective” are reported. Means were computed for each variable using all response categories and compared for statistical significant using analysis of variance procedures.

*Overall mean differences across areas were statistically significant at $p < .05$.

These findings parallel those from the focus groups. All focus group participants were united in a belief that the family was a primary contributing factor for youth participation in gangs and therefore a primary area for intervention. Families contributed in at least two ways. First and most often heard was the complaint that parents were not sufficiently involved in their children’s lives and failed to provide adequate supervision or suitable role modeling. Although a lack of parental interest was cited as a reason for this, more often respondents acknowledged that many parents were absent from their children’s lives due to the need to work multiple jobs and long hours.

Problems within the family represented a second way in which families contributed to youth problems. Absent fathers, abuse/neglect, domestic violence, parental substance abuse and/or crime, and intergenerational gang involvement created home environments that were unable to provide supervision and appropriate socialization and nurturing for children. Children from these types of environments, in turn, were considered more vulnerable to the lure often offered by gangs. In some families, children were socialized into gang membership from an early age due to intergenerational gang involvement by parents or siblings. Thus, focus group participants unanimously voiced the need for more parental involvement and positive role models in the community, access to alternate activities, and mentoring.

Schools were generally seen as a place of opportunity by focus group participants, but unfortunately, several problems related to the school environment were viewed as barriers to fulfilling their role. Parent and agency/service provider focus group participants complained about the limited use of school sites for programming and recreation for youth in the respective neighborhoods. Schools were viewed as a central, generally safe location (relative to other public spaces) for parents and youth to access services, but due to legal and logistical barriers, schools were generally underutilized in this way.

Additionally, school environments for education were viewed with concern. Some participants in both the parent and youth focus groups felt that teachers and administrators were not fulfilling their potential as positive influences in the lives of their students and were not sufficiently meeting the academic needs of youth, particularly those at-risk for gang involvement. Community-based organizations stressed the need for developing respectful relationships between teachers and staff and parents. Even school personnel acknowledged that many teachers could do a better job at reaching out to and engaging Baldwin Village

parents in their child's education. There was some concern expressed that a social divide prevented more respectful relationships from developing between school personnel and residents. Social workers and probation officers reinforced these concerns for school and noted the variability with which schools cooperated and collaborated with their agencies.

Focus group participants that represented schools and agencies providing services at schools noted the numerous pressures on school personnel to address a wide range of social problems, which ultimately competed with the time needed to educate students appropriately and expose them to alternate activities. For instance, school-based mental health counselors and social workers emphasized the prevalence of trauma and grief among students, beginning in elementary school and continuing into secondary education. Despite the high rates of trauma and grief among students, trauma services are few and limited to crisis situations. Meanwhile, participants believed that many of the children who go untreated perform poorly in the classroom and engage in problem behavior in the classroom as well as in the community.

Finally, there was recognition among focus group participants that a community infrastructure was necessary to support the types of programs and services recommended in the community. Transportation, for example, was cited as a barrier to accessing programs and services currently available. Being outside at night and crossing gang turf boundaries posed serious safety concerns for many residents. Youth, in particular, were at risk for violence when they crossed into rival gang territories. Additionally, focus group participants from agencies that provide services stressed the fact that community services are currently fragmented and that there was a strong need for collaboration among agencies in order to centralize direct services for residents and connect services more effectively to the areas that need them most.

Access to Services

The third theme identified from community survey and focus group results was Access to Services. Study participants consistently expressed a need for better and more access to services at the local level. Specifically, respondents wanted more youth programs (i.e., structured activities, drug/gang prevention and intervention, educational support programs); more social services for adults (i.e., clinics/healthcare, counseling, job assistance, life skills training, and educational programming); and improved community infrastructure to support the availability of and participation in activities and programs (i.e., community facilities and parks, local government and business services, and transportation).

Without exception, all three areas indicated problems locating and accessing local resources, but surprisingly, Baldwin Village was the least likely area to rate services as difficult to access. In fact, ratings did not exceed 50% for any category among Baldwin Village respondents and only exceeded 55% for access to gang prevention programs, counseling, and mentoring in the other two areas. Afterschool programs and youth recreational programs were the most available types of programming in the Baldwin Village and Coliseum/Leimert areas.

These results indicate that a programming, services, and activities are available in these areas, which may appear confusing at first. Most assume that areas experience problems because of a lack of programs. The focus group responses help clarify the meaning of these results. According to all focus group participants, there are three critical issues related to programming. First, everyone participating in focus group indicated that many recreational activities are offered in the area but they have a high fee associated with them; thus,

many of the youth who could benefit from them are unable to participate due to the inability of their families to afford the fee.

Table 3.9 Ability to Access Services
Percentage of Respondents Reporting “No Help at All” or “Very Hard to Get Help”

	Baldwin Village (N=139)		Rancho Cienega (N=75)		Coliseum/Leimert (N=25)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Finding a Job	58	44	36	48	13	54
Gang Prevention Programs for Youth *	68	50	56	75	18	72
Family/Mental health/ Substance Abuse Counseling	55	41	42	57	13	52
Mentoring *	42	32	52	70	14	56
Afterschool Programs *	26	19	33	44	6	24
Youth Recreational Programs *	30	22	33	45	7	28

NOTE: The range for these variables was 1 to 5. For simplicity, only the results for the “No Help At All” and “Very Hard to Get Help” are reported. Means were computed for each variable using all response categories and compared for statistical significant using analysis of variance procedures.

*Overall mean differences across areas were statistically significant at $p < .05$.

Secondly, there was an acknowledgement among several focus groups that programming and services exist, but it is unclear whether they are targeted appropriately for youth and families in these communities and whether they are effective programs. Youth, for example, expressed a desire for programs designed to facilitate greater awareness of higher education opportunities and assist students with their preparations for attending college. While they acknowledged that tutoring programs were in place, some youth complained they were not effective. Finally, several participants, including youth, indicated the absence of community coordination and collaboration. Youth, for example, recommended that there be more community meetings that included residents as well as service providers.

Despite these findings, youth as well as parents, agency personnel, and service providers emphasized the need to provide alternative, structured activities that would provide all youth with a safe environment, a desirable way to engage in constructive activities, positive role models, and access to opportunities outside of the neighborhood. Such activities included, but were not necessarily limited to: Art programs, music and dance programs, athletic activity, entrepreneurial projects, and field trips to museums, concerts, and other areas such as the mountains and/or the beach. Focus group participants also felt there was a need for programs that would allow youth to develop skills, facilitate future careers, and cultivate leadership (e.g., motivational speakers). Parents and youth cited the need for more programs aimed at helping youth succeed academically (i.e., tutoring) and for programs designed to prepare or otherwise encourage youth to pursue higher education.

With regard to programming generally, participants stressed the need for programming that targeted specifically to the interests of girls and boys and incorporated youth as active participants in defining activities and designing safe havens (i.e., youth centers). Several focus group participants expressed the need to connect activities such as these to build pride in the community.

In general, focus group participants stressed the need to begin prevention efforts as early as possible, starting at the elementary school level, if not sooner, and continue those efforts into the middle school and

high school. There was frustration expressed about targeting secondary education schools while leaving little or no programming in the elementary schools. The predominant view was that gang recruitment began heavily in the early years of middle school; thus, beginning prevention programming in middle schools and high schools does little to reduce the impact of gang intimidation. Similarly, problem behavior generally is more likely to begin at an early age and if identified, is easier to address at younger ages than at older ages. LAPD officers believed strongly that early prevention efforts helped youth avoid problems in the long run. With regard to law enforcement's role in prevention programming, there was a perceived need for increasing police-based programs within the schools, particularly in terms of sustaining more long-term relations with students throughout middle and high school when relations with youth often turn negative.

It was added by many participants that youth activities should be available consistently after-school, on holidays, and throughout the summer. As mentioned earlier, participants believed that the cost for these programs should be more affordable or free, as the costs for many of the current programs available have fees that youth and parents in these communities cannot afford. Parents and youth also believed that there was a need for greater public awareness of available programs and encouraged future efforts to explore new, more effective, methods for disseminating information about available programs, services, and activities.

The need for parenting classes raised the issue of increasing participation in available classes, especially for families that are in need of the services but generally reluctant to participate in them. Agency personnel and service providers unanimously believed that incentives related to the basic needs of families must be used. Gift cards for food or providing food at class meetings were two examples of such incentives. Interestingly, the school focus group participants believed that parents would be more likely to participate in activities if they were attending events that highlighted their children. Participants believed that there must be outreach to families from within the community to encourage participation. For families with intergenerational gang involvement, it is critical that their experience not be stigmatized; rather, it was believed that both parents and youth would respond better if their experience was recognized and incorporated positively into intervention. For youth, incentives that connect them to alternative, interesting activities must be used. Many youth avoid programs because they consider them boring and uninteresting.

Residents also indicated the need for more school involvement and program improvement, with an emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and quality of teacher-student relationships. Teachers were viewed as potential role models for youth, but this requires better support and training for teachers. Specifically, social service providers pointed out the need for improved education for youth with special needs, citing low literacy skills as an key problem.

Finally, there was discussion among agency personnel and service providers, in particular, about the need for intervention programming and services (i.e., tattoo removal) for youth actively involved in gangs. Participants often acknowledged, however, how difficult it was to extricate youth from gangs once they were a member, leaving many to conclude that services should assist youth and families to relocate from the community in which the gang membership is rooted.

Community survey data as well as focus group data stressed the need for the improvement of social services in the three neighborhoods. Specifically, all focus group participants saw a need for more job assistance programs, vocational or training programs, and greater job opportunities. This point was raised as a key issue in several focus group discussions.

Increasing access to mental health and substance abuse counseling for community residents was also highlighted as necessary in these communities. Mental health service providers and school personnel overwhelmingly believed that there was a need for trauma counseling for all residents, particularly young children and adolescents. In fact, these focus group participants felt that much of the problem behavior and risk for gang involvement was at least in part due to the inability of children and youth to constructively cope with traumatic events and the resulting grief that often permeated their lives. Additionally, there was general support for increasing the number of support groups to focus on self-esteem, expressing feelings, and talking about problems. Drug use was noted as a problem in these neighborhoods in all sources of data. Consequently, there was a general perception that access to appropriate substance abuse treatment was needed in these areas.

Although the re-entry of offenders into the community was not addressed directly in many focus groups, there was a general sense that all of the programming described above should be harmonized with offender re-entry efforts. Many parents as well as agency personnel were concerned that the prison culture was spilling out into the communities and becoming a lifestyle for older youth and young adults. Consequently, concern was expressed for increasing offenders' ability to get job, increasing their positive connections to the community, and providing them with incentives not to return to prison. One participant recommended connecting offenders re-entering the community to a City-supported clean-up crew for the GRYD area. Through this effort, the offender would have the opportunity to build his credibility and training to move into more permanent maintenance positions for the City. It was generally acknowledged that for many youth and young adults, the only effective method of reducing the attractiveness of gang membership is to equip them with job skills that would secure their entrance into a law-abiding lifestyle.

Summary

Throughout the survey and focus group data, the overarching theme expressed by respondents was the need to strengthen families and, by doing so, begin to rebuild their neighborhoods. Without exception, respondents felt that a strong community starves local gang recruitment efforts by providing attractive options and opportunities for local youth and re-entering offenders. A strong social network centered on resources for parents, youth education and job assistance programs, substance abuse and counseling resources, and adult education programs were unanimously identified as the key to enhancing the cohesion of a community. In this way, a cooperative effort will bring together such diverse stakeholders as business owners, religious organizations, and social services—all united in a willingness to invest in the future of their community. Next, we turn to specific recommendations for accomplishing these goals.

Chapter Four: Building an Effective Community Response

Overall Reflections

The CSLA research team was responsible for conducting needs assessment reports for both Ramona Gardens/Hollenbeck and Baldwin Village GRYD areas. In doing so, we received feedback from more than 1,142 individuals, collectively, in these areas. Although the areas are distinct and different in many ways, we were surprised to hear many of the same issues arise in the data and in our discussions. Thus, the reflections and recommendations that we have are largely similar for both areas. While the recommendations themselves are similar across areas, the implementation of those recommendations will be vastly different; hence our call for a community infrastructure to individualize strategies for program and service implementation. Before we review our recommendations, however, we felt it was important to summarize the general sentiments expressed by respondents during data collection, as we believe they provide substantial insight for the City as it begins to partner with these areas to build a comprehensive response system.

During the data collection process, for instance, a majority of the respondents in both areas expressed frustration with attempts to address gang problems regardless of who the respondents represented (i.e., residents as well as representatives of schools and other social service providers). Specifically, respondents felt that their areas were constantly the focus of needs assessments without corresponding follow-through for resources to support community change. This frustration was amplified by perceived political pendulum swings in which promises by different administrations went unfulfilled or were only temporary. As one respondent pointed out, “It seems like the programs that work are the first to lose funding.” These feelings of unstable commitment fueled skepticism and pessimistic views of current efforts to effect change in the neighborhoods. Despite such views, however, all respondents were supportive of their communities and wanted them to succeed. Consequently, they provided our research team with two important suggestions that would help overcome the disappointments of the past.

Perhaps the most significant suggestion from study participants is attention to the terminology used to describe efforts intended to help communities. There was a general consensus among respondents to view their communities in more positive ways. The terminology often associated with gang reduction efforts has historically highlighted the problem rather than the solution. For example, in the past, the term *gang reduction zone* was used to identify priority areas for intervention. Such terminology may make sense from a political standpoint (i.e., reflecting the need for more attention and resources), but unfortunately, such terminology often reinforces stereotypes related to the dangerousness and undesirability of a community—images that residents, particularly youth, must battle every day. For any effort to be successful, it is critical to recognize that gangs are a symptom of the overall social problems that face youth and families in these areas. Thus, a more desirable use of terminology would be naming areas, for example, Youth and Family Empowerment Zones, which focuses attention on the overall solution that communities need to successfully overcome the daily hurdles that residents face. Use of solution-focused terminology places attention on building strong communities for youth and families so that social and economic pressures do not lead to gang membership.

A second suggestion heard from respondents in both areas encouraged City and County governments to move from funding models that reinforce, if not create, uncoordinated and uninformed responses within a

community to a model that centers on a strategic and coordinated use of funds. Currently, funds are often distributed in communities for independent services (e.g., recreational activities) that are not connected or coordinated with other services. This method of funding then creates at least two problems. First and most importantly, it limits the potential impact of the services in the community because the services are delivered in an isolated way. It is not uncommon to hear that a program cannot get enough referrals; yet, the program was developed based on the needs of the community. Secondly, this funding model has inspired, arguably, a culture of competitiveness among community-based organizations. This, in turn, amplifies political influence in the use of funds and sustains a culture in which there is more attention placed on who is receiving funds and the amount of funds received than on how funding can and should be used most effectively for a community. As demonstrated in many of the conversations held in this study, the consequence of this is a lack of collective hope in the community and an absence of trust in the government's ability to assist in the process of change.

We argue that the key to successfully building stronger communities in the identified GRYDs is to generate hope within communities by building trust in cooperative relationships among community residents, businesses, schools, other service providers, City government and County government. While this may seem like an ambitious goal, we believe that it is far more tangible than one might expect. Advocacy in these GRYD areas is not new to these areas. There are multiple groups organized to address youth development as well as other social problems in these areas. In fact, the presence of advocacy in these areas is an asset to these communities. The problem, then, is not a lack of will or person-power to effect change; rather, it appears that a lack of coordination and sustainable funding across agencies, programs, and services undermines much of the potential found in these areas.

Building hope and trust in this way requires a shift in thinking about community involvement in the strategic planning and funding process. It is essential that communities come together to coordinate the efforts that exist in their areas and to build a strategic plan (using this needs assessment as a basis) that is used to guide City funding. By doing so, communities become empowered and responsible to establish an internal infrastructure to eliminate unnecessary competition, duplication, and fragmentation and to enhance their ability to use funds effectively and efficiently. The City, in turn, must work collaboratively with the communities and use community guidance to make funding decisions. As one respondent commented upon hearing this idea, "...you mean a 'trickle-up economics' rather than 'trickle-down economics.'" "Exactly" was our response.

To help the City contemplate such an approach, we first provide a detailed explanation of how this could work. The recommendation for infrastructure applies to both the Ramona Gardens/Hollenbeck and Baldwin Village GRYD areas. Following the recommendation for building community infrastructure for youth development, we offer specific programming recommendations for the Baldwin Village area based on the results reviewed in Chapter 3.

Recommendations for Building Community Infrastructure

To build a community infrastructure, we recommend that the City require the GRYD areas to create a Community Cooperative for Youth and Family Empowerment. The composition of the Cooperative must include (at a minimum) (1) representatives from the area (i.e., parents and youth); (2) a representative from all collaborative groups that exist in the area; (3) Los Angeles Police Department; (4) representatives from organizations that represent community based organizations (including group homes, foster care agencies,

etc.—profit and non-profit); (4) representatives from all schools serving the area; (5) a representative from the business community; (6) representatives from key City (e.g., Parks and Recreations, CDD, HUD); (7) representatives from county agencies such as DCFS, DMH, ADPA, and Health Services; and (8) a representative from landlord/management associations in the area. The Cooperative is not intended to replace any other group; rather, the expectation is that the Cooperative will serve as a “hub” for exchanging ideas and identifying how the community can build its resiliency to social problems it faces.

Specifically, the goals of the Cooperative are to produce a local infrastructure through which communities can (1) take ownership of the solutions to the problems that they face, (2) utilize their local resources more strategically and effectively, and (3) interface proactively with City and County governments to ensure that their needs are met and sustained over time. The guiding philosophy of the Cooperative’s efforts is based on an assets-based model in order to give the community a venue to clearly and strategically voice its needs to effect sustainable progress and change. Although the Cooperative takes leadership and ownership over this process, the City and County become partners in helping communities grow stronger. For instance, any funding the City intends to distribute the community would be coordinated with the priorities identified by the Cooperative based on their strategic plan.

In the first year, the Cooperative would be required to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Identify all representatives for membership and become a working body
2. Review the GRYD Needs Assessment Report and begin the development of a strategic plan from the results
3. Produce an inventory of community assets and add it to the strategic plan
4. Produce a resource inventory of services available in the area by categorizing them according to the components of the Comprehensive Strategy—Primary Prevention, Secondary Prevention, Intervention, Suppression, and Reentry (Note: This is a collective effort in which each representative must provide a list of services provided by the body he/she represents)
5. Identify current gaps in the continuum of services and work to redefine assessment, programmatic, and service needs according to the needs of the community and increase their ability to accomplish these needs (e.g., see programmatic recommendations below)
6. Identify current areas of fragmentation, lack of communication, and any other barriers that prevent effective programming and partnerships across agencies and services within the community
7. Prioritize the needs of the community and offer strategies to accomplish needs
8. Identify key outcomes that must be measured by all funded services and programs

Upon completing these tasks, the Cooperative will have a working strategic plan that guides community activities and City funding into the future. The City, in turn, should structure its funds to align with the needs of the community. Each year, the Cooperative will provide an annual report that summarizes progress related to the strategic plan and signs of success such as new partnerships, physical and social changes in the area, and any other outcomes identified by the Cooperative. Based on its progress, the Cooperative will update its plan based on its progress and continue to build interagency communication and coordination using existing resources. Ultimately, the Cooperative should strive to identify the use of Best Practices, Evidence-Based Programming, and Promising Programming.

To ensure the Cooperative’s ability to accomplish these tasks, a staffing and support plan is necessary. We recommend that the Cooperative be lead collaboratively by a person elected by the Cooperative members

and a university based “Cooperative Manager.” Additionally, the GRYD Program Manager will be part of the Cooperative Management Team. The role of the elected Cooperative Leader is to motivate the group and guide its work through the tasks. The Cooperative Manager will work with the elected leader to navigate and accomplish Cooperative tasks. In other words, the Cooperative Manager would produce the products based on the Cooperative’s work. Another key responsibility of the Cooperative Manager will be to assist in building partnerships across agencies, providers, and residents. The Cooperative Manager represents a unique person who has both the ability to conduct academic work in an applied context and the ability to build bridges across individuals and groups who can partner with one another to be more effective. Due to the nature of these tasks, we believe it is essential that the Cooperative Manager be viewed as a neutral entity and have access to academic resources; consequently, we strongly recommend that the GRYD office consider contracting with a local university to provide this person to GRYD Cooperative groups. In the case of Baldwin Village, one university-based Cooperative Manager would be sufficient for the three Cooperatives in the GRYD (i.e., Rancho Cooperative, Coliseum/Leimert Cooperative, and Baldwin Village Cooperative). Finally, the role of the GRYD Program Manager is to represent the City, ensure the participation of other City departments in the process, participate in the planning process, and assist the Cooperative in connecting to private foundations to augment the existing funds and promote sustainability.

In addition to funding for a university-based Cooperative Manager, each Cooperative receive a nominal amount of funding to provide team-building training for Cooperative members at the beginning of the effort and to support the completion of tasks throughout the year.

Ultimately, it is our recommendation that a GRYD must have a Cooperative before any funds will be distributed to the area. Until the initial work of the Cooperative is completed, however, we recommend that funding be distributed in accordance with the programmatic recommendations contained in the GRYD Needs Assessment Reports and all contractors who receive funds in the first year be required to participate in and report progress to the Cooperative.

Once the Cooperative strategic plan and priorities are identified, we recommend that agencies seeking funding be required to demonstrate the following in their application: (1) how their services would meet the prioritized needs identified by the Youth Development Community Cooperative comprehensive plan; (2) how their services will be coordinated or partnered with other services in the area; (3) their ability to partner with agencies in the community; (4) their use of Best Practice and Evidence-Based Programming or Promising Programming; (5) their commitment to report on outcomes identified by the Cooperative; and (6) their commitment to regularly participate and report to the Cooperative on their progress.

Recommendations for Building a More Complete and Comprehensive Service Continuum

In thinking about specific recommendations for the Baldwin Village area, it seemed consistent with the recommendation for building a community strategic plan to organize our suggestions according to objectives born from the themes reviewed in Chapter 3. Hence, the following objectives are recommended based on experience in the GRYD areas and analysis of the data provided by residents and agencies/entities that provide services to the area. As mentioned above, the recommendations are largely similar across GRYD areas; however, the implementation of them requires very different strategies. It is our opinion that the community is in the best position to decide how these recommendations are accomplished through the development of a Cooperative.

Objective 1: Improve community safety

- Fund efforts to improve the physical environment and safety of public places. Law enforcement's role is typically viewed as suppression; however, there is a significant need to utilize police resources in a way that helps communities feel safer when in public places. This requires a different interaction with the community and could ultimately assist in the overall suppression efforts.
- Involve law enforcement in community efforts to problem solve and in doing so, build trust between police officers and community residents.
- When using CLEAR in Baldwin Village, work with community residents to build a relationship that is not built on adversarial ways of thinking. CLEAR will only reach its potential if suppression efforts can be balanced with interaction and services that reflect an understanding and respect of the community.
- Beautify and utilize community parks once the safety of those parks is assured.
- Establish youth centers that are easily accessible to youth and involve youth in the design of those youth centers.
- Implement methods to ensure safe passage for children and youth to and from school.
- Improve the safety of school environments by collaboratively working with law enforcement agencies such as the LAPD, Probation, and the Department of Juvenile Justice.
- Work with government agencies to improve quality of life issues in the community (e.g., Parks and Recreation).
- Engage landlords and land owners to participate in discussions of community safety and ask them to play a role in ensuring their properties are provided with sufficient security and are not "breeding grounds" for criminal activity.
- Recognize and directly address growing racial tensions between African-Americans and Latinos in the GRYD.

Objective 2: Strengthen communities

- Coordinate community activities and services to address gaps in services and to reduce fragmentation and duplication of services.
- Hold community activities that express the cultural identity of the community and build pride among its residents, particularly youth. In general, create a sense of hope among residents and for youth, provide an infrastructure that will help them achieve their goals.
- Offer parent education as early as possible in the parenting process and continue education throughout the developmental stages of childhood.
- Provide family intervention within the home and/or in places that families can readily access.
- Create incentives for participation that connect to the basic needs of these families (i.e., food, childcare, etc.).
- Use parent mentors from within the community. This model requires identifying parents who are resilient within the community and using them to peer mentor other parents in the neighborhood.
- Build upon and improve relationships between parents and schools.
 - Increase parent education and awareness of their children's needs and educational rights and keep them informed of their child's progress in the classroom.

- Provide teachers and school staff with training on how to better engage parents, children and youth from these neighborhoods.
- Train agency personnel and provider staff to understand the community and incorporate the cultural experience of the community into their interactions with clients and into the programming clients are given.
- Use current community groups and/or develop groups that will engage residents and provide a way to effectively and efficiently disseminate information throughout the community.
- Reintegrate offenders returning to the community by providing them with jobs and building positive attachments for them on the community. Consider connecting offenders re-entering the community to a City-supported clean-up crew for the GRYD area. Through this effort, the offender would have the opportunity to build his credibility and training to move into a more permanent maintenance position for the City
- Connect more seamlessly with the faith-based community to provide critical services for youth, families, and offenders returning to the community.

Objective 3: Improve the availability and quality of prevention and intervention programming in the area.

- Conceptualize prevention programming in a continuous, developmental way rather than sporadic programming limited to one developmental stage. In other words, respondents consistently reported the need to saturate elementary schools with prevention programming and continue programming in developmentally appropriate ways into the middle school and high school. Although specific programs may end, targeting youth for age appropriate programming should be seamless and continue throughout their school career.
- Programming should provide easy access to positive, alternative activities. Particular emphasis should focus on youth who are not exhibiting behavior problems with outreach to youth engaged in problem behaviors. This provides these youth with opportunities to support their resiliency and gives youth who are engaging in problems an incentive to make better choices. These activities should become a reason to do well and make positive choices. Participation in these activities should be used as positive incentives to increase participation in various prevention and intervention services.
- Clearly define intervention programming, infuse Best Practice and Evidence-Based Programming into the services offered in the community, and make it more available to youth engaged in problem behaviors, such as (but not limited to) substance abuse, delinquency, and gang involvement. Gang intervention programming may need to consider ways to help youth and families relocate and succeed in new areas.
- Funding should be based on success—incentives for program staff, should be developed to improve positive outcomes. For example, gang intervention workers can be hired on a base pay with incremental increases for proven success with youth on their caseload in areas such as school attendance, school grades, attendance in treatment programming, and behavior.
- Provide an array of structured activities that appeal to children and youth in these communities. Involve youth in choosing and designing their activities. For instance, youth often suggested programs such as arts programs, music programs, tutoring, educational counseling for college, and entrepreneurial programs in which youth have the opportunity to learn how to run a business.
- Overcome barriers that prevent agencies and programs from offering programming and services on school grounds.

- Increase access to recreational activities and areas available to children and youth at schools, parks, and other open areas.
- Involve the LAPD in prevention and intervention programming, particularly school-based prevention.
- Coordinate community-based prevention and intervention programs with services available through DCFS, DMH, and Probation.
- Develop and provide programming that is culturally competent and incorporates youths' backgrounds and experiences in a positive way.
- Ensure that gender-specific programming is available. At the prevention level, this may involve dance programs, cooking programs, and fashion design programs (all indicated by youth respondents). At the intervention level, it is critical to provide counseling for young girls who are pregnant and who have abusive histories.
- Reduce fees associated with activities.

Objective 4: Improve access to social services for residents.

- Make trauma and grief counseling widely available.
- Improve access to appropriate mental health and substance abuse programs to residents.
- Provide these services locally or provide safe passage to areas where services can be accessed.
- Make sure services are bilingual and understand the issues presented by newly arrived immigrants.
- Improve access to job training and job placement services for youth and adults. Connect offenders returning to the community with jobs that help them sustain a productive, crime-free lifestyle.
- Provide easy access to life skills courses for adults.
- Improve access to services that promote healthy functioning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the results and recommendations contained in this report reflect the opinions of residents and agency/entity personnel that provide services in the Baldwin Village GRYD. We believe that the information we collected clearly reflects a collective belief that the communities within the Baldwin Village GRYD can provide positive, supportive environments for children and families. It now becomes the responsibility of the communities in the Baldwin Village GRYD to come together and work with the City of Los Angeles to best utilize funds and support. Likewise, it requires the City of Los Angeles to listen to these communities and allow them to lead the efforts toward building safer and more resilient communities.

Building hope as well as avenues for children and families to succeed requires funds but is not necessarily expensive; rather, it requires vision, leadership, commitment, determination, and patience. All of which are possible; in fact, we witnessed all of these qualities during the course of this project. We thank these communities once again for allowing us to tell their stories. We have tried to capture their stories accurately and hope the recommendations we have provided will help these communities achieve the visions they most graciously shared with us.

APPENDICES

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⁴ Figures and tables provided by Healthy Cities were not labeled; this is a listing with our own imposed ordering for convenience. Please refer to Healthy Cities' titles on documents to locate for reference.

Figure 2.27: Homicide by Age Group of Victim in the Baldwin Village Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) Zone 2005-2007

Figure 2.28: Gang Crimes by Age Group on Victim in the Baldwin Village Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD) Zone 2005-2007

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Appendix B: Survey Instrument

Date Completed: _____

GRYD Site: _____

Interviewer ID: _____

CITY OF LOS ANGELES GANG REDUCTION ZONES COMMUNITY SURVEY
(AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH)

Hi, my name is _____ and I am helping the City of Los Angeles in conducting a survey of our community. We are asking residents to answer a short set of questions about what they like or dislike in their neighborhood and any improvements they would like to see. Results of this survey will be used to provide better services in this area. Your answers will be kept confidential and at no point will we ask for your name or address. Would you like to participate?

1) Are you: <i>(Read each option and check one)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female				
2) What race or ethnicity do you consider yourself to be? <i>(Read each option and put a check next to those to which the person says yes. Okay to check more than one if the person says yes to more than one)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Black/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Asian-Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Latino/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African-American <input type="checkbox"/> White/Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____				
3) How old were you on your last birthday?	_____				
4) In which community do you live?	<i>Read them the 3 neighborhoods and if necessary explain</i> 1) Baldwin Village 2) Rancho 3) Coliseum/Leimert				
5) What would you say are the three best things about your neighborhood? a. b. c.					
6) How safe do you feel being outside in your neighborhood at night?	Very Unsafe 1	Unsafe 2	Somewhat Safe 3	Safe 4	Very safe 5
7) How safe do you feel being outside in your neighborhood during the day?	1	2	3	4	5
8) How often does worry/fear about crime prevent you from doing things you would like to do in your neighborhood?	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Often <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Often <input type="checkbox"/> Never				
9) In your opinion, how easy is it for people in your neighborhood to get help with the following? <i>(Read every statement and options 1- 5, circling only one answer)</i>					
	No Help Available at All	Very Hard to Get Help	Sometimes Available	Can Usually Find Help	Help is Always Available
a. Finding a Job	1	2	3	4	5
b. Preventing Youth from Joining a Gang	1	2	3	4	5
c. Early intervention programs for young children to prevent them becoming involved with gangs	1	2	3	4	5
d. Stopping Gang Violence	1	2	3	4	5
e. Getting medical or dental care	1	2	3	4	5
f. Getting Family/ Mental Health/Substance	1	2	3	4	5

Abuse Counseling					
g. Mentoring for Youth	1	2	3	4	5
h. Afterschool Programs for Youth	1	2	3	4	5
i. Transportation assistance	1	2	3	4	5
j. Youth Recreational Programs	1	2	3	4	5

10) Please rate the importance of each of the following for strengthening your neighborhood:

(Read every statement and options 1- 5, circling only one answer)

	Not at All Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Very Important	Extremely Important
a. Families	1	2	3	4	5
b. Community Leaders	1	2	3	4	5
c. Religious Organizations	1	2	3	4	5
d. Community Youth Service Organizations	1	2	3	4	5
e. Businesses	1	2	3	4	5
f. Elected Officials	1	2	3	4	5
g. Recreation & Parks	1	2	3	4	5
h. Schools	1	2	3	4	5
i. Police	1	2	3	4	5

11) Please indicate how much a problem, in your opinion, each of the following is in your neighborhood.

(Read every statement and options 1- 5, circling only one answer)

	Not a Problem at All	Rarely a Problem	Sometimes a Problem	Often a Problem	Always a Problem
a. Gang Activity	1	2	3	4	5
b. Crime	1	2	3	4	5
c. General Disorder (trash, noise)	1	2	3	4	5
d. Family Stressors and Instability	1	2	3	4	5
e. Police harassment	1	2	3	4	5
f. Domestic Violence	1	2	3	4	5
g. Graffiti	1	2	3	4	5
h. Too many liquor stores	1	2	3	4	5
i. Homelessness	1	2	3	4	5
j. Drug sales	1	2	3	4	5
k. Drug use					
l. Intimidation by gang members					
m. Lack of Jobs	1	2	3	4	5
n. Poor Quality Schools	1	2	3	4	5

12) What level of responsibility do you feel each of the following should have in controlling problems related to gangs (e.g., crime, intimidation)?

(Read every statement and options 1- 5, circling only one answer)

	Not Responsible at All	Only Somewhat Responsible	Moderately Responsible	Very Responsible	Extremely Responsible
a. Families	1	2	3	4	5
b. Community Leaders	1	2	3	4	5
c. Religious Organizations	1	2	3	4	5
d. Community Youth Service Organizations	1	2	3	4	5
e. Elected officials	1	2	3	4	5

f. Schools	1	2	3	4	5
g. Police	1	2	3	4	5

13) Over the past year, how effective do you think each of the following groups/agencies has been in improving the safety of your neighborhood?

(Read every statement and options 1- 5, circling only one answer)

	Totally Ineffective	Only Somewhat Effective	Moderately Effective	Very Effective	Extremely Effective
a. Families	1	2	3	4	5
b. Community Leaders	1	2	3	4	5
c. Religious Organizations	1	2	3	4	5
d. Community Youth Service Agencies	1	2	3	4	5
e. Elected officials	1	2	3	4	5
f. Schools	1	2	3	4	5
g. Police	1	2	3	4	5

14) How satisfied are you with the response of each of the following to gang problems in your neighborhood during the past year?

(Read every statement and options 1- 5, circling only one answer)

	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
a. Police	1	2	3	4	5
b. The Community Law Enforcement and Recovery (CLEAR) Program	1	2	3	4	5
c. Gang Injunctions	1	2	3	4	5
d. Elected officials	1	2	3	4	5

15) What three things do you feel your neighborhood needs in order to be better able to support its young children and youth?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Thank you for helping us with this survey.
Your answers are very important for helping improve services in the community.

Appendix C: Focus Group Question Guide

Questions Used for Parent Focus Groups

1. Are gangs a problem in your neighborhood? If so, what types of problems do gang members cause in your neighborhood?
2. Have you noticed any changes with regard to gangs over the past 3-5 years—e.g., changes in the number of members, activities, etc?
3. What do you think is causing the gang problem in your community?
4. What is the risk (low, moderate, high) of an average child in your neighborhood becoming involved in gangs and which youth are most vulnerable to join gangs?
5. What is your community currently doing to respond to gangs? What are the strengths of these approaches? What are the weaknesses of these approaches?
6. What does your neighborhood still need in terms of resources and responses to effectively address the problem?
7. How would rate or prioritize the list of resources and responses you just listed?
8. What do you perceive as barriers to improving the response to gangs in your neighborhood?
9. How can participation in services and programs for parents and youth be increased?
10. Is there anything else you would like to add to this discussion?

Questions Used for Youth Focus Groups

1. Are gangs a problem in your neighborhood? If so, what types of problems do gang members cause in your neighborhood?
2. Have you noticed any changes with regard to gangs over the past 3-5 years—e.g., changes in the number of members, activities, etc?
3. Why do kids join gangs? Why do kids not join gangs? What types of things might motivate a gang member to leave a gang?
4. What is the risk (low, moderate, high) of an average child in your neighborhood becoming involved in gangs and which kids are most vulnerable to join gangs?
5. What do you think your community is currently doing to respond to gangs? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches?
6. What should your community be doing to respond to gangs? For example, what types of programs, services, and activities do you think will discourage kids from joining gangs or encourage gang members to leave a gang?
7. How would rate or prioritize the list of programs, services, activities, etc. you just listed?
8. How can participation in services, programs, and activities be improved among kids?
9. Is there anything else you would like to add to this discussion?

Business

1. Are gangs a problem in your neighborhood? If so, what types of problems do gang members cause in your neighborhood?
2. Have you noticed any changes with regard to gangs over the past 3-5 years—e.g., changes in the number of members, activities, etc?
3. What has been the impact of gangs on commercial business in the area?
4. What do you think is causing the gang problem in your community?
5. What does your neighborhood still need in terms of resources and responses to effectively address the problem?
6. How would rate or prioritize the list of resources and responses you just listed?
7. What do you perceive as barriers to improving the response to gangs in your neighborhood?
8. Is there anything else you would like to add to this discussion?

Questions for Focus Groups with Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Mental Health, Schools, Community-Based Organizations, Police, and Probation

1. To what extent are your clients and the services you provide impacted by gangs in this area?
2. Have you noticed any changes in the impact of gangs over the past 3-5 years?
3. What does this community still need in terms of resources and responses to effectively address the problem?
4. What do you perceive as barriers to improving the response to gangs in this community?
5. How can participation in services and programs for parents and youth be increased?
6. What role can and should your agency play to improve the community's response to gangs?
7. How would you describe the level of collaboration between schools, law enforcement, social service agencies, and community-based organizations? Briefly explain.
8. Is there anything else you would like to add to this discussion?