

# Gang Reduction Program

2010 – 2011 Two Year Report

**CITY OF OXNARD**

2010 – 2011

Prepared for the City Manager's Office by:  
Mike Matlock, Consultant, Gang Reduction Coordinator

2/28/12

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## Introduction

Dealing with the issue of gang violence is not new for the City. For decades the Police Department has directed significant resources to a strong, sustained, and focused suppression effort which has been coupled with the many general programs offered by the Recreation Department for the City's youth to keep them involved in positive activities and off of the street.

Several years ago, the City joined with the County of Ventura to increase its gang prevention and intervention efforts. In the year 2010, the City of Oxnard mounted the most robust gang reduction program of its history by adding specific gang prevention and intervention programs to its list of strategies.

This report contains summaries of the prevention, intervention and suppression efforts that were in place during 2010 and 2011 in addition to reporting on the results that the programs have experienced.

## Summary

The *Prevention* of gang involvement can start very early in a child's life and can literally include every positive activity and every positive adult presence, all of which builds resiliency to the negative influences that come later in childhood. The City of Oxnard's main involvement in 2010/2011 in the prevention area consisted of general programs which provide positive activities for the City's youth as well as significant work in maintaining a multi-discipline City/County collaborative that has created a community youth violence reduction strategic plan and action plan.

The City's *Intervention* activities included Operation PeaceWorks and Transformation Works, aimed at active gang members up to age 24, and Awakening Minds/Changing Paths, which is directed at middle school students that have been expelled or are in danger of expulsion and their siblings. A vibrant street outreach program also seeks to engage gang members in the neighborhoods and offer them help in leaving the gang life.

*Suppression, or Enforcement,* activities have remained robust and have occurred in concert with the prevention and intervention efforts. Suppression consists of both reactive investigation of gang crimes and proactive enforcement efforts aimed at deterring gang crime and activity. A successful undercover operation resulted in a significant number of arrests in 2011, on federal charges, of members of the City's largest criminal street gang.

Violent gang crime is down in 2011 by 43% from 2009 and even lower (56%) for those gang assaults involving guns, and is a reversal of a three year upward trend that began in 2006. There were 53% fewer victims of gang violence in 2011 than there were two years earlier. Thirty active gang members did not have a single arrest or police contact after being introduced to the intervention efforts of Operation PeaceWorks, and the cumulative number of arrests and police contacts by everyone that was involved in the program dropped tremendously.

The City remains dedicated to a strong, collaborative approach of blending prevention, intervention and suppression in order to reduce gang violence. While the value of such an approach continues to prove itself throughout the State and across the Nation, more importantly the approach has proven itself to work in Oxnard.

## Details

### LEADERSHIP

#### Oxnard Alliance for Community Strength

Led in 2010 by Mayor Dr. Thomas Holden, Supervisor Kathy Long, Mayor Pro-Tem Andres Herrera (replaced in 2011 by Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Irene Pinkard) and Supervisor John Zaragoza, the Oxnard Alliance for Community Strength ("ALLIANCE") is a collaborative between the City of Oxnard and the County of Ventura to reduce youth violence in Oxnard. Further, the ALLIANCE strives to reflect the voice of the community, and aims to include representatives from all sectors of the community within its membership. The structure of the ALLIANCE includes a policy team and a technical team. The policy team oversees the overall mission and direction of the ALLIANCE. The technical team oversees the implementation of the policies and strategies of the ALLIANCE. Membership of the ALLIANCE is open to all agencies, organizations and individuals involved in the prevention, intervention and suppression of youth violence, as well as to youth and parents.

The mission of the ALLIANCE is *'To develop and provide coordinated resources to create a safe environment for our youth and families in their homes, schools and communities'*.

Its vision is *a thriving Oxnard in which all people feel safe and all young people have hope and opportunity supported by caring adults, strong families, and empowered communities.*

Initiated by the ALLIANCE, the SAFETY Blueprint was developed by its members, with community and youth input in 2008 with The California Endowment<sup>1</sup> (TCE) funded technical assistance from the Prevention Institute<sup>2</sup>. The purpose of the SAFETY Blueprint is to describe the range of elements

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<sup>1</sup> The California Endowment is a private, statewide health foundation whose mission is to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved individuals and communities, and to promote fundamental improvements in the health status of all Californians.

<sup>2</sup> The Prevention Institute is a non-profit national center dedicated to improving community health and well-being by building momentum for effective primary prevention. Primary prevention means taking action to build resilience and to prevent problems before they occur. The Institute's work is characterized by a strong commitment to community participation and promotion of equitable health outcomes among all social and economic groups. Since its founding in 1997, the organization has focused on injury and violence prevention, traffic safety, health disparities, nutrition and physical activity, and youth development.

needed in Oxnard to increase positive outcomes for young people, and consequently, to also reduce violence, shift social norms and promote safety for all. The intent of the SAFETY Blueprint is to inform and guide a coordinated and collaborative effort among multiple, diverse sectors and the community that spans a prevention, intervention, and enforcement/suppression continuum.

In 2010 the ALLIANCE completed its rigorous ten-month development of an Action Plan that was initiated in 2009 through a TCE initiative. The Prevention Institute assisted with the development of the plan per the request from TCE. The Action Plan was introduced to the community in November 2010 at a collaborative gathering, the 'CommUnity Summit', held at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center and attended by 300 community members and agencies.

The intent of the Action Plan is to guide the implementation of the SAFETY Blueprint and the Community Wisdom Narrative: Community Consejos Report over three years. The Action Plan has five goal areas with prioritized strategies and activities that were developed with community input through focus groups, surveys conducted in English and Spanish, and ad hoc committees. Each goal area is represented by a corresponding task force.

The five goal areas are:

- Every young person in Oxnard can name a caring adult in his/her life.
- Every parent/guardian in Oxnard has the skills to foster positive relationships and home environment.
- All schools have coordinated support for at-risk youth (in or out of school).
- Highly impacted neighborhoods in Oxnard are saturated with a coordinated strategy of public and private efforts across the continuum of prevention, intervention, and suppression/enforcement.
- Every public and private agency and community member in Oxnard recognizes the importance and power of honoring and embracing cultural strengths and values in their homes, workplace and community to create safe and thriving environments.

In 2011, the Technical Team met on a near weekly basis to further the work of the ALLIANCE and commence the implementation of its Action Plan. The spring of 2011 marked a year of transition from a developmental phase to one of implementation. The Policy Team Co-chairs recommended that in order to demonstrate success, rather than initiate all five task forces at once, the ALLIANCE Technical Team guide the implementation of two. A decision was also made to combine the youth and families goal into one task force, since they are intimately connected.

The next undertaking was to recruit two sets of task force co-chairs, one for the Youth and Families Task and the other for the Schools Task Force, which occurred in October 2011.

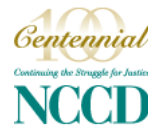
As part of the task force implementation process, each task force will conduct an asset/needs assessment under its goal area in early 2012. The results will assist the task force members in determining which activities to recommend to the ALLIANCE for implementation of its action plan.

Two Requests for Proposals (RFP) were written and disseminated into the community in 2011. The RFPs were seeking an evaluator for the Action Plan implementation and translation/interpreter services for quarterly ALLIANCE all partners meetings, focus groups, and monthly task force meetings.

An ALLIANCE Prisoner Reentry Ad Hoc Committee was formed and began meeting in 2011. A Second Chance Planning Grant was submitted at the federal level and awarded to the City in the fall of 2011. The grant award is \$50,000 for one year with the potential of applying for a Second Chance Implementation Grant upon successful completion of the yearlong planning process.

The City of Oxnard has also taken on a leadership role in seeking grants to fund its gang reduction effort. From 2009 through the end of 2011, the City and entities working in conjunction with the City succeeded in bringing in approximately \$3.5M in grant funding.

### California Cities Gang Prevention Network



The City of Oxnard has been an active member of the 13 California Cities Gang Prevention Network (CCGPN) since its inception five years ago. Besides Oxnard, the Network is comprised of the cities of Fresno, Los Angeles, Oakland, Santa Rosa, Richmond, Sacramento, Salinas, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose and Stockton all of whom are working together on critical issue of youth and gang violence prevention through a comprehensive community wide approach. The network is funded by grants from private foundations. The Network's goals are:

- Reduce gang-related violence and victimization
- Establish or improve collaboration in each City that blends prevention, intervention, and suppression, and that involves City leaders and community stakeholders
- Get in front of the gang issue before policies based on "fear" divert funds from essential infrastructure (such as schools, police, services for children and youth) to corrections.
- Identify and document City responses to key program and policy questions (e.g., essential approaches to anti-gang efforts; what doesn't work; who must be involved, etc.).

- Forge a vibrant peer-learning network among the 13 participating cities.
- Identify State policy and practice that would support effective community practice.

Teams from each city meet regularly to improve collaborative approaches, learn from other cities, document effective practices, and discuss lessons learned.

The CCGPN has been so successful, that it has been extended two years beyond its initially funded three year period. Oxnard's work was highlighted in December of 2010 at the National League of Cities annual conference in Denver, Colorado.

In addition to monthly conference calls of the lead person from each Cities team, there are two meetings of the group that have occurred each year.

The CCGPN continues to be a valuable resource from which to learn and network. Membership in this network has likely played a valuable role in the City of Oxnard's success at being awarded State grants and has provided exposure that led to the development and training of the present Street Outreach program here.

### California Partnership for Safe Communities

As a result of the City's grant funded adoption of the Group Violence Reduction Strategy, known as Operation Ceasefire, it is a member of the California Partnership for Safe Communities which makes available technical assistance from the State in implementing this strategy. Due to the success of program implementation, Oxnard has been used as a demonstration site for new cities implementing the strategy.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF  
GANG AND YOUTH VIOLENCE POLICY

### National Network for Safe Communities

Oxnard is also a member of the National Network for Safe Communities, operated out of John Jay College in New York, which promotes the Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS) across the Nation. Association with this network has provided Oxnard's Gang Reduction Program with exposure to Cities across the country that are utilizing the GVRS as well as developing racial reconciliation and police legitimacy programs. These efforts center around re-connecting the police with the community after exposing shortcomings of past efforts and re-affirming that both entities have the same goal of community protection.

 NATIONAL NETWORK FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES  
Saving Lives, Saving Communities

## PREVENTION

Overall, the efforts of the youth violence prevention has focused on bringing a coordinated and focused strategy to create the needed capacity to reduce youth and community violence in the City of Oxnard through culturally relevant youth and community engagement and leadership development. The expectation of the last four years has been to create greater coordination among the existing collaborators to better utilize the resources within their programs, make use of the lessons learned, and put in action prevention strategies with the ultimate objective of paving the way for a systematic change that is conducive for the co-creation of safer and thriving communities in the City of Oxnard.

### Recreation Department

While sometimes not fully appreciated for its involvement in gang prevention, the Recreation Department continued to provide a variety of youth programs that play a very large role in violence prevention. The Recreation Department operates five youth centers (including the Police Activities League), 24 afterschool programs in the Oxnard and Hueneme School Districts, and offers five youth sports leagues throughout the year in addition to summer camps and other enrichment activities. It is estimated that Recreation Department programs reach 15,000 Oxnard youth per day.

### Oxnard Community Peace Project

The California Endowment (TCE) funded a project from which a collaborative was formed between the Oxnard ALLIANCE for Community Strength (the ALLIANCE), The Partnership for Safe Families & Communities of Ventura County (*the Designated Child Abuse Prevention Council*), and the Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation (CEDC), Inc. which served as the fiscal and lead agency. The partners were called the TCE Collaborative. The purpose of the grant is to engage community residents and local leaders in Oxnard in the implementation of a primary prevention-oriented strategic framework designed to decrease youth and gang violence. Activities included assisting with the development of the ALLIANCE Action Plan, family workshops, community leadership development for advocacy, planning and action, and youth activities such as mural projects, community gardens, and neighborhood cleanup. The grant period commenced on November 1, 2008 and ended in November 2010 with the CommUnity Summit, described later in this report. The project was called the Oxnard Community Peace Project (Ocpp) and it began where the year-long Oxnard Family Power Project (also funded by TCE) concluded its work in the summer of 2008.

Parents that benefitted from the training obtained through the grant have put their newly acquired skills to use. A parent group of Haydock Intermediate School students was able to secure the assistance of the Oxnard School District in partnering with the City of Oxnard to provide organized sports at the school for families that were unable pay the costs associated with sports leagues. Football, boys and girls basketball, volleyball, soccer, softball and cheer leading are all now available at

Haydock. Parents have also taken responsibility for providing additional supervision around the school and Durley Park, where they walk the common routes to school in the morning to assure safe passage. They have also interacted with the Neighborhood Council in an effort to make the park safer, and have participated in neighborhood cleanups. The group has also worked with Ventura County Public Health to bring exercise, health and nutrition classes to the neighborhood and just recently received support from the school district to build an organic school garden.

While the group has accomplished much, it is believed that the greatest accomplishment is that they are learning to collaborate towards common goals and learning how to get things done in a system that none of them really engaged with before. A middle school principal reports, 'They have become great advocates for their children and their children are having greater success in school because of it'.

*'They have become great advocates for their children and their children are having greater success in school because of it'*

## INTERVENTION

### Operation PeaceWorks / Transformation Works

Operation PeaceWorks (OPW) is a gang intervention program funded by a California Gang Reduction, Intervention and Prevention (CalGRIP) grant from the State of California Governor's Office of Gang and Youth Policy (OGYP) and administered by California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA). The program has been funded by two California Gang Reduction, Intervention, and Prevention (CalGRIP) Program grants. The first grant funded two years and ended March 31, 2011. A second CalGRIP grant was applied for in 2010 and took effect in 2011 which will fund the program through the end of 2012.

Operation PeaceWorks is a partnership between the City of Oxnard, Oxnard City Corps, City Impact, Inc., Oxnard Clergy Council, and the Ventura County Chapter of Parents of Murdered Children (POMC). The target area is the Cities of Oxnard, Port Hueneme and the unincorporated area of El Rio; the goal is a rapid reduction in gang related assaults and homicides. The program has three basic components: *Direct Intervention, Street Outreach, and Public Education.*



The *Direct Intervention* portion is partially modeled after the Group Violence Reduction Strategy known as 'Operation Ceasefire' from Boston, which has been replicated in approximately 70 cities throughout the Country. It seeks to target those youth most involved in gang violence and offers them not only an opportunity to step away from gang violence, but help in doing it. It uses an approach where representatives from the criminal justice system and the community, together, confront the identified youth (ages 12 to 24), in person, at a meeting known as a 'Call-In' with the message that the violence will no longer be tolerated in the community. Speakers at the Call-In include the Chief of Police, prosecutors, gang and probation officers, ex gang-members, wheelchair bound shooting victims, the clergy, and mothers who have lost



sons to gang violence. It has been found that much of the effectiveness of this strategy is that gang members hear from members of their own community, and people that have been where they are now, that the violence is not acceptable. This 'moral voice of the community' is powerful and the judgment of peers, family members and communities that crime is wrong has been shown to have greater impact on behavior than the threat of formal sanctions.



In an enhancement to the Operation Ceasefire model, Oxnard area youth are asked to enter a job training/civic responsibility program at Oxnard City Corps. Those that agree to enter the program and step away from violence are



told that police efforts aimed at them will be reduced for as long as they are in the program and not involved in gang activity. They are assigned a case manager to assist them through the program and provide other needed assistance such as GED classes, classes on job seeking skill building, mentoring, and counseling (provided by a second CalGRIP- Workforce Investment Act grant known as Transformation Works administered by City Impact, a community based organization).



A meeting is held monthly to review the progress of program participants by all agencies involved in supervising and providing services, as well as the Police

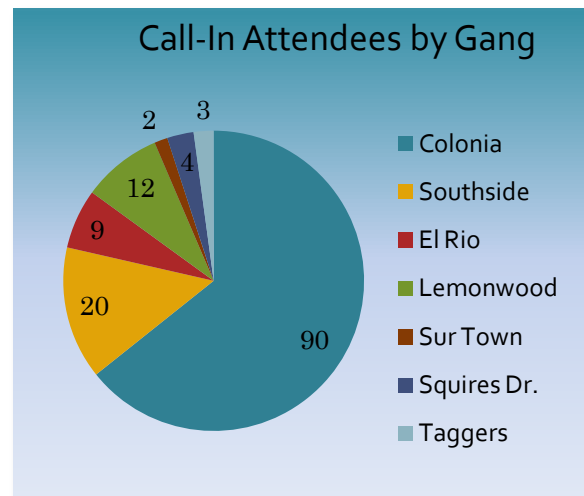
Department. This assures that all partners are coordinating the efforts to assist the participant, and

that partners can be unified in either their positive reinforcement for progress or consequences for negative behavior.

Those that refuse to step away from the violence are informed that they will be under intense police and prosecutorial scrutiny as they are known to be responsible for the gang violence in the City, and that the community will be in support of those efforts in order to safeguard the community. Those that continue the violence and are arrested are vigorously prosecuted to the full extent of the law, both State and Federal. An additional element of this component in the first two years of the program was a plan to reduce firearms available to gang members through identifying and disrupting gun sources and maximizing federal prosecution of gang members arrested for firearms possession.

### Community Call-Ins

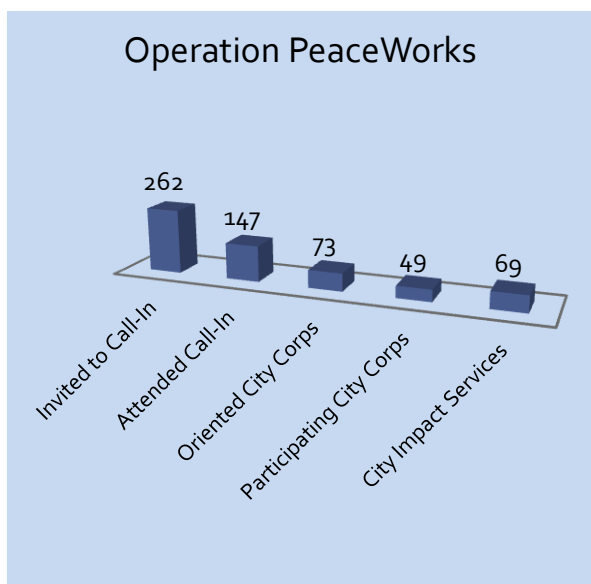
The first Call-In took place in November 2009. Since then there have been 16 Call-Ins through the end of 2011, four of which were held at the Juvenile Facility. Call-In invitees are comprised of probationers who were served with letters to attend by their probation officers, youth incarcerated in the juvenile facility, or non-probationers invited by police officers or street outreach workers. There have been 262 people who have been invited to attend a Call-In and attendance has ranged from 5 to 24 with a total attendance of 147. Ages range from 13 to 24 with most of the participants (81%) being between 15 and 19 years old as the emphasis was placed on probationers. Those who have been served with one of two civil gang injunctions make up 33% (47) of Call-In attendees.



This strategy has not yet been applied to parolees, that will begin in 2012.

In most cases, only one gang was invited to each Call-In and there have been six gangs represented: Colonia, El Rio, Lemonwood, Southside, Squires, and Surtown. Additionally, some members of tagging crews have attended with the gang to which they align themselves.

By the end of 2011, 73 young men had agreed to participate in the program and attended at least an orientation of the program. Of these 73 participants, 49 (67%) entered the program following their attendance at a Call-In; the others were referred or volunteered to join the program once the word got out of the programs existence.



Participation levels vary and many of the 49 did not continue through with the program. There is an average of 24 who are actively involved (receiving services and/or volunteering hours) at any given time.

As detailed below, 69 participants received additional services through City Impact, Inc.

## Results

Youth committed to the program have shown a dramatic decrease in their activities that would lead to police involvement. Two studies were conducted of Call-In and program participants through the duration of the first grant which had effectively begun in November 2009:

### *First Grant Period, Halfway Point, through December 2010*

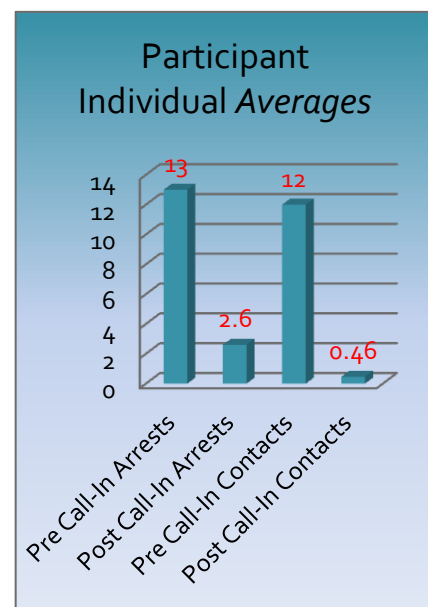
A study of the 24 participants and graduates (15 of whom were served with one of the two gang injunctions) at the end of 2010 showed that prior to them entering the program every one of them had been arrested multiple times (the least was 4 arrests, the most was 28 arrests) and they cumulatively accounted for a total of 258 arrests and 368 police contacts. Following entry into the program:

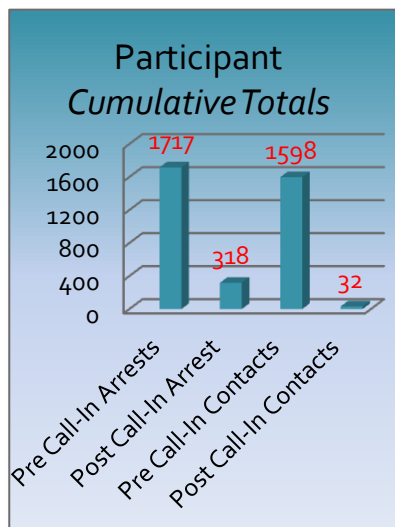
- Half of the 24 have not had an arrest or police contact. The other half had a total of 13 arrests and 23 police contacts since entering the program (two participants accounted for 7 of the arrests and 9 of the contacts). Most arrests were for probation violations and there were no arrests for gang assaults.
- The reduction in combined arrests and contacts is approximately 94% and although the time periods pre and post program are very different, at the time it was considered very promising given that all participants were believed to be particularly active gang members at the time they entered the program, and it was later seen that the trend held as time passed from the participant's Call-In.

### *First Grant Period Completion, March 31, 2011*

Of the 126 that attended Call-Ins through the first grant period, the following results were achieved:

- 21% of those attending a Call-In had not had an arrest or police contact after the meeting.
- The cumulative pre Call-In total arrests and police contacts for all attending were 2926. The post Call-In total was 355, a reduction of 88%.
- The participants averaged 13 arrests and 12 police contacts, pre Call-In, which dropped to 2.6 arrests and .46 police contacts post Call-In.
- Amongst the first program participants that entered City Corps, 12 have been particularly successful. 10 are now working fulltime and from this group one is having his gang tattoos removed





and three are attending Oxnard College. Each and every one of these 12 was a very active gang member upon entry into the program. These 12 accounted for 125 arrests and 241 contacts pre Call-In. They accounted for 3 arrests and no police contacts after entering the program. They went from an average of 10 arrests and 20 contacts each, to an average of no arrests and no contacts.

As mentioned, many of these youth received services under a separate CalGRIP grant that the State awarded to City Impact, Inc. with the express direction to expand the services provided to Operation PeaceWorks participants. This grant funded a program known as *Transformation Works* and the accomplishments of that work are as follows (of the 78 youth represented below, 69 were OPW participants):

- 44 participants were employed at some point during the project
- 48 youth were enrolled at High School or in G.E.D. prep classes
- 5 youth were enrolled at Oxnard Community College
- 20 youth participated in vocational and/or on-the-job training
- 17 youth received a recognized certificate/diploma/degree: 8 vocational certifications, 3 G.E.D., 6 High School Diplomas
- 14 participants showed an increase in Literacy/Numeracy as shown by increased TABE scores or goals set and attained utilizing the EWIG form
- 29 participants were enrolled at local High Schools for at least two semesters (290%)
- 5 youth received their Industrial Truck Operators License
- 3 youth completed a 5-month boat building program; launching a 9 foot boat in the Pacific Ocean.
- 2 youth received their Machinist Certification at the Center for Employment Training
- 59 youth were enrolled in City Corps's job training and civic responsibility program; building their resume with volunteer and paid work experience
- 44 youth received paid work experience through unsubsidized work opportunities
- 14 youth completed 6-month civic responsibility training
- 10 youth were successfully removed from probation
- 3 youth graduated from the Palmer Drug Abuse Program
- 3 youth successfully completed individual counseling services
- 5 youth participated in a New Fathers Support Program

- 1 youth completed Anger Management classes
- 3 youth are having their gang tattoos removed

Additional details for the first grant period can be found in the 'Operation PeaceWorks, Two Year Report'.

### *Second Grant Period*

The behavior changes of those participants in the second grant period appear to be as promising as the first group. While there are 42 people that have either attended a Call-In or been referred into the program, some attended so close to the end of the year that there wasn't sufficient time to see if there has been any change. The below reflects just those that had been in the program from three to twelve months at the end of 2011:

#### *Walk-Ins/Referrals without attending a Call-In*

- Of the 7 participants that entered City Corps, 43% have not had a new arrest and 29% have not had an arrest or police contact. The cumulative total of arrests and police contacts for this group dropped 94%
- Of the 5 participants that did not enter City Corps, but received services from City Impact, 80% have not had an arrest and 40% have not had an arrest or police contact. The cumulative total of arrests and police contacts for this group dropped 94%
- Of particular note is a 22 yr old that had 32 arrests and 47 police contacts before entering the program in July of 2011 and had no arrests or contacts for the remainder of 2011. He is now working full-time.

#### *Call-In Attendees*

- Of the 15 attendees, 47% have not had a new arrest and 40% have not had an arrest or police contact. The cumulative total of arrests and police contacts for this group dropped 88%

### Juvenile Reentry

In 2011, the direct intervention component was expanded to include a juvenile re-entry program. It began with gang involved juveniles from the target area that had been sentenced to 120 days or more and had participated in programming within the Juvenile Facility, to include Aggression Replacement Training and attendance at a Call-In. Due to a shortage of qualifying youth, the minimum sentence time was reduced to 90 days. They were assigned a case manager to help them transition from the facility to a City Corps Townkeeper crew upon their release. At City Corps they were required to adequately complete a 40 hour period of volunteer work where the participant was evaluated for placement in one of 25 paid Townkeeper positions. Those that performed adequately were guaranteed to receive paid, on the job training for a maximum period of six months, as well as daily exposure to the concept of civic responsibility.

Through the end of 2011, there were 27 youth eligible for participation in the re-entry program that have been given the offer. Of that number, 11 have begun the job tryout at City Corps and 5 have

completed the 40 hour tryout. Two of the five are in paid City Corps positions, with a third due to start in January 2012. One has been returned to custody after a probation violation arrest.

## Street Outreach

In 2009 and 2010, the *Street Outreach* component consisted of volunteer Street Outreach workers through the Oxnard Clergy Council and Social Outreach Services, who responded after violent gang assaults in an effort to dissuade retaliation; distributed peace flyers throughout neighborhoods where gang violence has occurred; and who conducted block parties to attract gang involved and at-risk youth to promote a message of peace.

At the end of 2011, with additional funding from the second grant, the Street Outreach component was transitioned from a volunteer based program to a contracted service. Following a competitive bid process, City Impact Inc. was chosen as the contractor to provide 100 hours per week of street outreach services.

City Impact hired three outreach workers and a coordinator. The grant funded 40 hours of initial training in October which the City arranged by a team from the City of Oakland's gang outreach efforts. In addition to the new staff, training was also provided to existing case managers, the City Corps Townkeeper Coordinator, police investigators and command staff, probation and parole officers, trauma center emergency room personnel and volunteers.

City Impact has named the team the 'Street Impact Team' and they began working in the field in November. They can be recognized by their distinctive white shirts and jackets with the name of the team printed across the back. Street Outreach Workers will be responsible for providing gang intervention services using a twofold approach, integrating both Community-Based Gang Intervention and Individualized Service Provision. Community-Based Gang Intervention is defined as violence interruption and crisis response activities. This includes engagement with law enforcement, parents, community members, and other community stakeholders regarding specific gang-related confrontations, referring potential gang members for wrap-around services (as defined under Individualized Service Provision), working to mediate and diffuse conflict and tensions, reducing attachment of project youth to gangs and gang activities, and actively promote peace-building with active gangs impacting the target area. Individualized Service Provision is defined as wrap-around services such as case management, counseling, academic and vocational education, job training and placement, and other linkages to programs in the community.

## Results

Street Outreach through March 31, 2011 was provided by Social Outreach Services using volunteers. From the inception of Operation PeaceWorks in 2009 through the March 2011, groups providing street outreach such as the PeaceMakers, the HopeBoys, and the Oxnard Clergy Council, under the coordination of Social Outreach Services, have:

- Conducted 7 block parties reaching 1243 youth
- Contacted 2054 community members and 1672 target youth during incident responses and subsequent flyer sweeps.

These efforts have shown the value of street outreach and built the foundation on which these efforts were expanded.



City Impact's Street Impact Team began by their work in November 2011 by meeting with local business, churches, recreation centers and school personnel to introduce themselves and their work and learn of referral resources. They were also introduced to police officers who may encounter them in the field. While they do not work at the direction of the police, their efforts are coordinated and the police are made aware of where they are working on a daily basis. Police officers are encouraged to call upon the Street Impact Team for referrals when dealing with persons at risk of gang involvement.

In the last two months of 2011 (37 days in the field), the Team has accomplished the following:

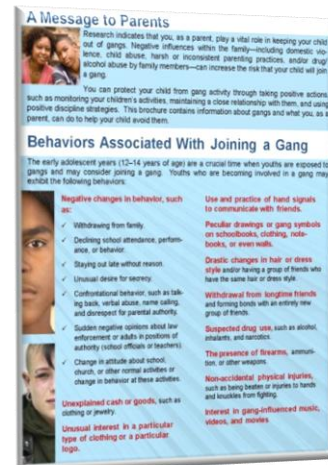


- 335 youth and young adult contacts
- 57 referrals to Operation PeaceWorks
- 13 education referrals
- 51 employment referrals
- 4 support service referrals
- 1 recreation referral
- 26 parents of targeted youth
- 31 follow-up calls to youth previously contacted
- 26 local businesses contacted
- 1 incident response

## Public Education

The *Public Education* component consists of school and community presentations in an effort to educate parents and youth about the perils of gang involvement.

An informational brochure for parents entitled, 'A Parent's Guide to Gangs' was created with grant funds. The English version is complete and it is currently being translated for a Spanish language version. Contained in this guide is a list of behaviors associated with joining a gang; common gang identifiers specific to Oxnard; and suggestions to parents to prevent their child from joining a gang. It also contains the telephone number for the Gang Reduction Program that parents can call for help. These



brochures list as a resource a public website which is currently being developed, so their distribution will start once the public website is functional in early 2012.

The Police Department makes presentations to interested school, parent or community groups on identifying gang indicators and behavior.

### Tattoo Removal

Tattoos are often barriers to employment, and in the case of gang tattoos they constitute a very real danger as they are targeted by rival gangs. Recognizing the importance of removing such markings from gang members trying to leave the gang lifestyle, a tattoo removal laser was purchased with unanticipated salary savings from the grant at the end of the first grant period. In a partnership arranged with the County of Ventura a laser was placed in the Las Islas Clinic in South Oxnard, where a physician and volunteers coordinated by the County would staff a clinic for one half day per month. Operation PeaceWorks participants will receive priority at the clinic for the free service. There are currently three Operation PeaceWorks participants receiving this much in demand service.

### Awakening Minds, Changing Paths

Awakening Minds, Changing Paths (AMCP) is a gang prevention/intervention partnership between the City of Oxnard Recreation Services, Oxnard City Corps, Oxnard Elementary School District, Boys and Girls Club of Greater Oxnard and Port Hueneme, and Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Ventura County.



Together these agencies work to provide opportunities to facilitate change in the youth most at-risk of joining gang life. The program works to provide youth with a chance to change the direction of their life through challenges and opportunities to choose to make good decisions. This is accomplished through both emotional and social means. Emotionally, the youth are involved in relationships with caring adults, youth development support circles and retreats, as well as conflict resolution and non-violent communications. Socially, through community service learning projects, homework study groups and various

outdoor adventures in learning, youth are afforded the opportunity to experience nature and begin to build self-confidence and early leadership skills.

This project employs gang prevention focused strategies. The target population includes 20 at-risk, 6th-8th grade Oxnard Elementary School District (OESD) middle school students and 30 younger siblings of these 20, as well as siblings of youth who are receiving intervention services in two existing Oxnard CalGRIP programs (Operation PeaceWorks and Transformation Works). The project design includes elements that are directed at education, personal empowerment, job skills / development, socialization activities, family strengthening, and community services. The project employs the Big Brothers/Big Sisters national best practice mentoring model.



### Project Components:

- Youth assessment
- Individual mentors for each youth and family
- Ongoing meetings with school personnel and case manager to assess academic goals

### Project Activities:

- Mentoring with positive adult role models
- Community service learning projects, Job Shadowing
- Team-building Adventures in learning such as kayaking, windsurfing, sailing, and taking on the challenge of a ropes course
- Youth development support circles and retreats
- Homework study groups

*"AMCP youth are far from the toughest, most offending youth walking our streets, but they are the ones making decisions that will impact the rest of their lives."*

## Results

The project kicked off with the two day Awakening Young Minds workshop for the targeted middle school group in 2010. It was a resounding success that was well received by the youth and their families. A second, one day, workshop was held for the sibling group and was equally well received. The graduation event was attended by 80 friends and family members.

Participants were exposed to monthly field trips for personal development opportunities such as the ropes course, kayaking, boat building and equestrian activities. A website, documenting these youth experiences, <http://awakeningmindschangingpaths.wordpress.com>, was created for the project.

The first year of the project ended with the staff gaining a wealth of knowledge about its strengths and weaknesses and significant achievements in terms of making life-changing differences in the lives of the youth, who benefited from this intervention as the first cohort of this project. The results obtained from the data that have been gathered from various sources show that:

- A significant number of participants who attended the program from its starting point managed to complete the project successfully or became involved in other positive after school programs.
- The mentor-mentee relationship proved to be successful on all grounds as measured by the BBBS surveys and the survey provided by the project evaluator.
- Enrichment programs were extremely successful and the participant evaluation clearly reflects this finding.
- Program participants give high marks for the positive impact of this intervention on their lives. The program allowed them to find greater confidence in their own abilities, both socially and academically. The project helped them become less compulsive, have

better relations with family members and peers, and resolve conflicts and problems with greater ease.

- The opinions of the caring adults that spent a great deal of time with the participants of this program show a high degree of positive growth and improvement in the behavior and attitude of the students who have been under their care. The overall results of this segment of the evaluation are very encouraging.
- Results of the parents' survey show a remarkable degree of agreement or strong agreement with many questions to which they were asked to respond. Parents think that this program helped their children become more confident, gain a greater ability to find friends, learn better ways to resolve conflicts between them and their peers and family members, and gain greater appreciation for higher education and a desire to succeed in their education and life.

Many of the lessons learned altered the approach taken in the second year. They are:

- Developing an effective mechanism of allowing a broader group of caring adults to assume the role of mentors.
- Start with a larger group of participants in order to allow for a possible high rate of attrition throughout the program year.
- Broaden the scope of the program to recruit from other school districts, such as the Rio School District, which is also in the City of Oxnard.
- Establish a stronger relationship with parents and seek their active participation.
- Broaden the recruitment of adult mentors to include other possible groups who might be interested in the program.
- Develop a more efficient structure for data collection from various agencies and keeping of the record of attendance on regular bases and making firm commitment to meeting the deadline for data collection throughout the program by all service agencies and service providers and project coordinators and leaders.

Perhaps the results can best be stated in the comments of the activities coordinator for the project:

*"I witness youth that have been hardened by life all too soon find the opportunity to be kids again; I watch as walls that have been built out of necessity crumble in awe of a brand new experience and an opportunity never before imagined. I get to watch as these youth begin to see the possibilities that truly exist for them".*



For further details, refer to a July 2011 Annual Project Evaluation Report by program evaluator, Jamshid Damooei, Ph.D. There will be another evaluation report completed in approximately April of 2012.

## Regional Anti-Gang Intelligence Led Policing Program

The Regional Anti-Gang Intelligence Led Policing Program is a statewide grant funded program that is funded through September 2012. The Oxnard Police Department was asked by the State of California to lead this program for State Region 1A. Objectives of this program include the following:

- Create a regional network of gang officers representing each agency in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties and utilize the network to share gang intelligence information through personal communication and a secure website that is currently active to facilitate information sharing.
- Coordinate and share anti-gang efforts in the community through a regional network of anti-gang liaisons
- Build a website for service providers to facilitate coordination as well as provide electronic referrals and shared resources.
- Build a public website to serve as a resource to link those seeking help with a child or family member to available services and information, as well as showcasing the community efforts at combating gang violence.
- One day training conferences for law enforcement and service providers

## Results

The Tri-County Gang Information Network (TRIGIN), a secure law enforcement website was created and launched in 2010. This effort has designated a lead contact for gang issues at every law enforcement agency in the three Counties, organized by a coordinator for each of the Counties. This website allows officers to exchange intelligence relative to gang investigations and gang reduction. In 2011, over 400 law enforcement officers in the three counties were trained on the use of 'TRIGIN' as well as other contemporary law enforcement issues.



Relationships have been established with the anti-gang coalitions that exist in the three counties that will serve as the basis for the upcoming efforts to assist these coalitions with blending their efforts with the law enforcement of their communities to create a comprehensive approach to reducing gang violence. These coalitions include the San Luis Obispo County Anti-Gang Commission, the Santa Barbara South Coast Gang Task Force, and the Oxnard ALLIANCE for Community Strength.

A Ventura County service provider conference on the issue of youth violence, the CommUnity Summit, was held in Oxnard in 2010. There were over 300 attendees who were offered 12 workshops as well as general session meetings. In 2011 there were similar service provider conferences held in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties that were attended by 319.

There will be additional one day conferences held in each County in 2012, with the goal of combining law enforcement and service providers in the same event.



A contract with Healthy City, California's information and action resource for service referrals and social change, to provide integration with each County's 211 service as well as add defined reporting districts and county specific data sets for each of the three counties was completed in 2011. This system will provide for listing and posting of information on each participating service provider, will allow for mapping of data particular to the County, in addition to statewide data, and will provide the ability to form local work groups who can build and save maps useful in their community work. The Ventura County work was completed first, as there had been an effort underway before this grant funding became available. Committees have been established in the other two Counties to determine the data sets of most use to them and to work towards acquisition of that data.



Two other websites, 'TriServe' [www.TriServe.info](http://www.TriServe.info) for service providers and 'EndGangViolence' [www.EndGangViolence.org](http://www.EndGangViolence.org) for parents, educators and community members are near completion and will be completed in early 2012. TriServe will host a comprehensive community calendar where all agencies and organizations can post their community events. It will also post grant opportunities, list agencies and their services, allow for posting of bulletins, and provide the ability for users to engage in on-line forums and discussions to further collaborative efforts within the community.

End Gang Violence.org, the public website, will be a user friendly resource that will allow parents to learn more about indicators of gang involvement and will provide information about prevention and intervention services. The website will also highlight the programs that are in place within the Tri-County area aimed at reducing gang violence. It is intended to be informational and provide easy access to resources, specific to each County.

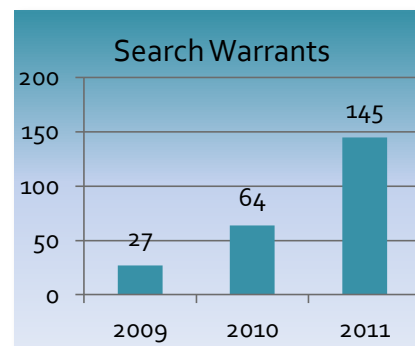


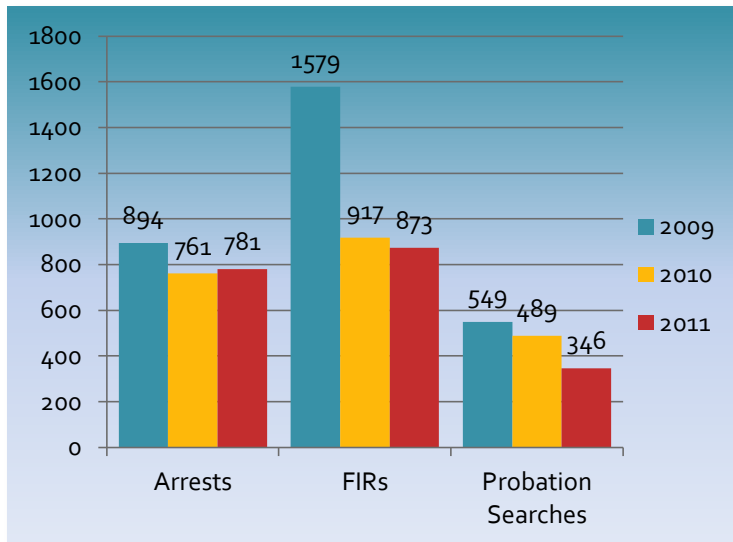
## Suppression

While there has been a marked increase in the City's involvement in gang prevention and intervention activities, suppression remains a key component in the successful reduction of gang violence and has been effectively blended with intervention activities.

While dealing with gangs and gang members is the responsibility of all front line officers in the Police Department, the effort is led by a full-time, seven day per week gang enforcement team called the Special Enforcement Unit, and by the detectives in the Gang Investigation Unit. These teams not only investigate gang crimes that have occurred, but proactively seek out gang members and gang activity in an effort to thwart further violence. They work closely with Deputy District Attorneys assigned strictly to the prosecution of gang crimes and injunction violations. This staffing commitment represents a significant amount of resources dedicated to gang suppression. The Special Enforcement Unit is comprised of 2 sergeants and 18 officers and is responsible for uniformed and plainclothes gang suppression seven days per week. That represents approximately 20% of the Department's field resources. Their work includes uniformed saturation of gang areas, enforcement of the two civil gang injunctions, enforcement of probation terms of gang members, focus on gang members believed to be key to the violence, and a variety of reactive and proactive activities designed to impact gang violence and the gang activity that leads up to violence. There were 13,125 hours of uniformed gang enforcement during 2010, and 10,360 in 2011. The Gang Investigation Unit consists of four detectives dedicated to investigating gang crimes and assisting gang prosecutors in working up cases to successfully bring forth special allegations relating to members of criminal street gangs. These special allegations can greatly increase the sentences of those convicted of gang crimes. The combined work of these two groups has played a key part in the reduction of gang violence. Both units work closely with the Probation Agency and State Parole.

In 2010, these two units made 761 gang related arrests, completed 917 field interview reports, served 64 gang related search warrants (an increase of 140% over the prior year), conducted 489 gang related probation and parole searches of residences, and seized 43 weapons from gang members. These units and the Patrol Division made 123 injunction violation arrests.

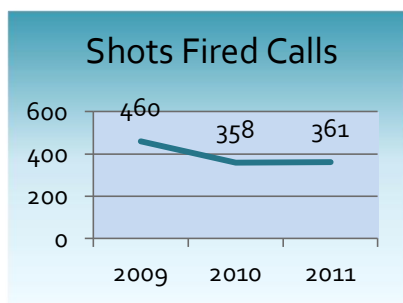




In 2011, these two units made 781 gang related arrests, completed 873 field interview reports, served 145 gang related search warrants (over double from 2010), conducted 346 gang related probation and parole searches of residences, and seized 21 weapons from gang members. These units and the Patrol Division made 141 injunction violation arrests.

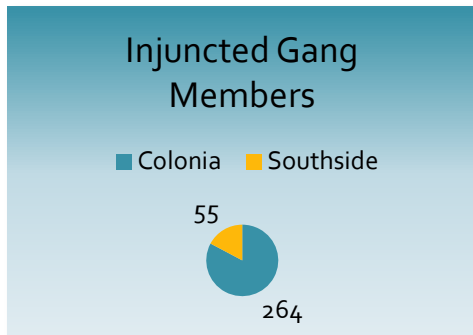
Although there were not separate statistics kept in 2009 on the number of firearms seized from gang members, it is believed by suppression personnel that the 43 seized in 2010 was an increase over prior years. Additionally, many of those weapons seized were taken from gang members during field contacts and following foot pursuits, as opposed to during searches of residences. This indicates that the proactive suppression efforts are effective at locating the right gang members and interceding, quite possibly, in a manner and at a time that prevented a shooting. There were a number of such interdictions and their impact on gang violence cannot be overstated.

An eight month investigation into the criminal activity of the 'Colonia Chiques' criminal street gang was concluded in early 2011. The investigation, called Operation SuperNova, involved Oxnard Police, the FBI, and the US Attorney and was culminated with a large scale sweep on February 9th involving 400 officers from a variety of law enforcement agencies. Twenty-two people were arrested during the operation which involved searches of 20 locations. Eight of those arrested were the result of federal indictments on a variety of charges, predominately for drug distribution. Two other indicted persons had previously been arrested and two remained at large. Most of those that were indicted face Federal sentences, if convicted, of 5 to 40 years, with two defendants potentially facing life sentences due to prior convictions. These indictments demonstrate the support of the US Attorney for the program and their commitment to helping local agencies deal with gang violence plaguing communities.



A reduction of 'shots fired' calls for police service were amongst the objectives of the first grant period, as they were seen as indicators of the level of gun violence in the City to be viewed in combination with gang assaults.

An additional objective was the seizure of more guns by police department-wide. There was success on both fronts as there was a 22% decrease in 'shots fired' calls and the Police Department seized 57% more firearms in 2011 than in 2009.



There are two civil injunctions in place in the City of Oxnard that were obtained in order to abate public nuisances caused by criminal street gangs. The first injunction was obtained against the Colonia Chiques gang in 2005, and the second was obtained against the Southside Chiques gang in 2006. There were 40 gang members added to the two injunctions during 2010, and another 42 in 2011, bringing the total of gang members served with, and subject to, the civil gang injunctions and to 319.

## Effects on Gang Violence

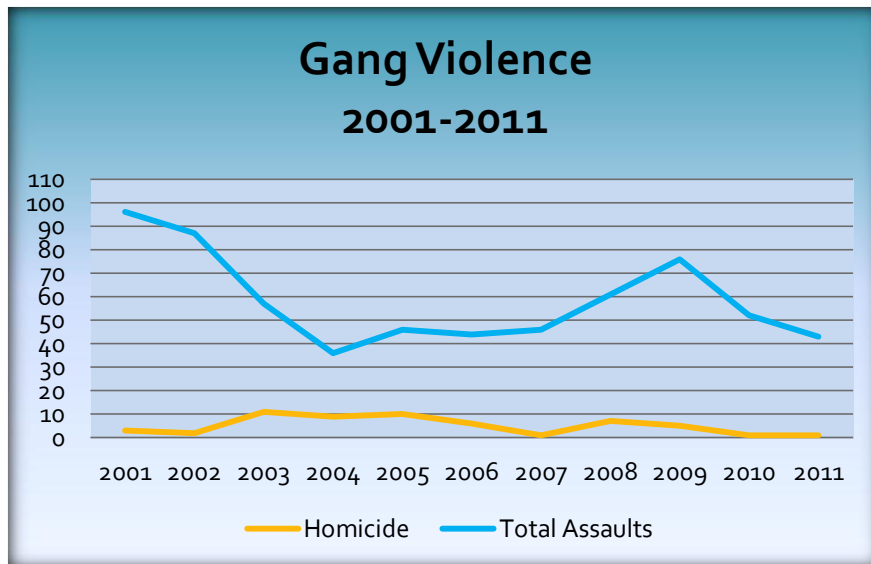
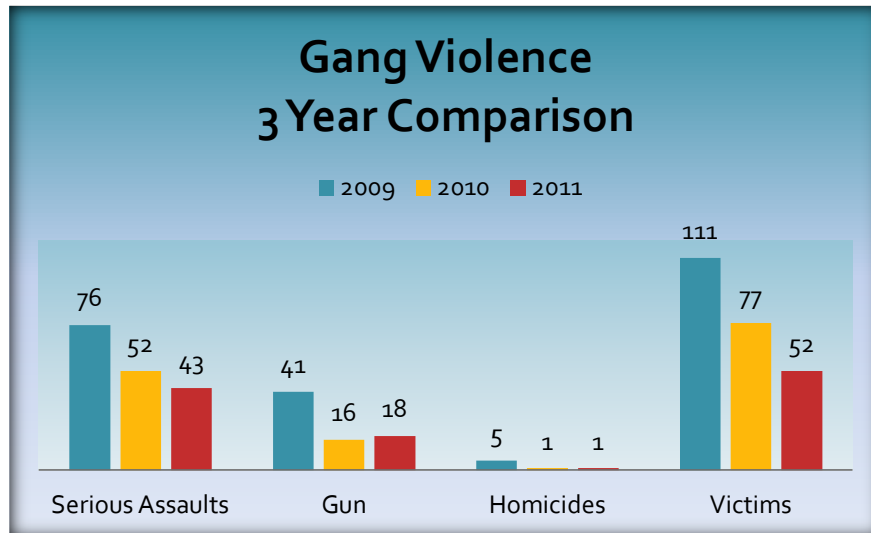
It is virtually impossible to know exactly what most impacts gang violence. Consequently, a gang violence reduction program needs to be viewed in its totality. While it may not be determined which strategy, exactly, is impacting what gang activity, the resulting gang crime (homicides and serious assaults) is certainly one important measure of its success.

From 2001 to 2006, Oxnard experienced a tremendous reduction in gang crime, 54%. The year 2006, however, marked a turning point and over the next three years it shot up 73%.

In 2010, actually beginning in November of 2009, that upward trend was not only stopped, but reversed, ending in a 32% 2010 calendar year reduction in total serious gang assaults from the previous year. The reduction is even more dramatic when looking at those gang assaults involving firearms, where it dropped 63%. There was a 66% reduction in gang related homicides in the City from 2009 (the homicide reduction drops to 50% when including a homicide that occurred within feet of the City's boundary in the unincorporated area of El Rio).

Serious gang assaults continued a downward trend in 2011 that began in November of 2009. The total number of violent gang assaults in 2011 was down 17% from 2010, 43% from 2009 when the decline started, and for a more long term view was down 28% from the past 10 year average. The number of gang assaults involving guns remained about the same for 2011 as for 2010, and is a 56% decrease from 2009. The number of victims of gang violence also continues to decline with 52 in 2011, down from 77 in 2010 and 111 in 2009 and 32% from the 10 year average.

There was only one gang related homicide in 2011, the same as 2010, down from 5 in 2009, and down 83% of the 10 year average.



### Costs

The dots on the gang assault map are more than just a numerical statistic. Each crime has at least one victim, and therefore reductions in this crime area result in fewer young people seriously injured or killed, fewer family members affected by the loss, disfigurement, or injury of their loved ones, and a significant economic savings to the community in investigation as well as emergency and follow-up



medical costs. The average *direct* cost of a non-fatal shooting is estimated at \$35,900<sup>3</sup> (2005 estimate); the average *indirect* cost of a hospitalized gunshot victim is \$249,000 and \$2.8M for a gunshot fatality<sup>4</sup>.

Applying those estimated costs to the reduction in gang shootings and homicides for 2010 (4 less firearm fatalities and 21 less non-fatal shootings than the year prior) total a savings of approximately \$933,400 in direct costs and \$20.2M in indirect costs to the community.

However, as significant as that savings is, the shootings that did occur in 2010 are estimated to have totaled over \$500,000 in *direct* costs and \$6.2M in *indirect* costs, with about an equal amount in 2011. Not included in those totals are costs related to non-firearm assaults such as stabbings.

## Accomplishments

Over the past 11 years, there have been 56 gang related homicides and 644 serious gang assaults, with 809 victims in the City of Oxnard. Pro-active, effective enforcement strategies succeeded in driving down the violence from 2001 to 2006, but then it began increasing and as recently as 2009, gang crime was at 80% of the 2001 level with a total of 5 gang homicides, 71 gang assaults with 111 victims. While the City had a number of positive activity opportunities for youth during this time, there was no gang intervention being conducted by the City, nor any strategic plan for addressing this very serious problem.

Beginning in 2005, the City and the County of Ventura joined together to address gang violence which led to earnestly seeking to significantly increase prevention and intervention efforts to compliment the suppression that was already in place. This involved creating a community collaborative and seeking grants that put money towards intervention programs.

Now, six years later, the City, and its many partners, through a coordinated combination of suppression, intervention, and prevention strategies, have accomplished the following:

- ✓ 83% reduction in gang homicides 2011 compared to the average of the previous 10 years
- ✓ 33% reduction in serious gang assaults 2011 from the 10 year average
- ✓ Created a strategic plan, and an action plan, to guide the reduction of gang violence efforts in the community

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<sup>3</sup> Costs were extrapolated from Miller, T. and Cohen, M., "Cost of Gunshot and Cut/Stab Wounds in the United States, with some Canadian comparisons" *Accident Analysis and Prevention* 1997 May:29(3): 329-341

<sup>4</sup> Phillip J. Cook, *Gun Violence, The Real Cost*; Oxford University Press 2000

- ✓ Instituted a direct intervention program with active gang members, seeking to convince them to step away from gang violence and offering them a job training/civic responsibility program, case manager, and wrap around services to help them leave the gang life which dramatically dropped their frequency of arrests and police contacts
- ✓ Instituted a juvenile reentry program
- ✓ Instituted a mentoring program for at risk middle school students as well as their siblings
- ✓ Instituted the use of street outreach workers in an effort to calm tensions in the aftermath of a violent incident and to engage gang members on a daily basis in an effort to help them leave gang life.
- ✓ Successfully brought approximately \$3.5M in grant funding to the community

## Conclusion

The results indicate that Oxnard's approach of a collaboratively driven, multi-discipline strategy that supplements intensive, focused suppression activities with a range of prevention and intervention programs works to reduce gang violence. And while the progress these past two years, due to a tremendous amount of work done by public agencies, private organizations, the faith community, and individual residents is significant and promising, much work is left to do. While suppression and some intervention results can be seen in the short term, the results of prevention are not seen for years and even decades, when successful efforts will result in less youth becoming involved in gangs due either to education or a change in the social conditions that make gang involvement attractive to our youth, or both.