

**REPORT OF THE
VIRGINIA STATE CRIME COMMISSION AND
VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH**

**THE STUDY OF YOUTH GANGS
IN VIRGINIA**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 30

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
1997**



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
HOUSE OF DELEGATES
RICHMOND

January 8, 1997

TO: The Honorable George F. Allen, Governor of Virginia

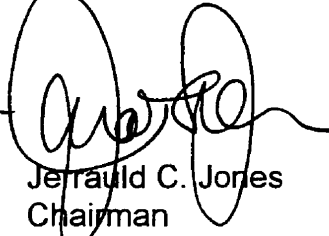

and

Members of the Virginia General Assembly

The 1996 General Assembly, through House Joint Resolution 92, requested that the Virginia State Crime Commission and the Virginia Commission on Youth "be directed to study youth gangs in the Commonwealth."

Enclosed for your review and consideration is the report which has been prepared in response to this request. The Commissions received assistance from all affected agencies and gratefully acknowledge their input into this report.

Respectfully submitted,


Clifton A. Woodrum
Chairman
State Crime Commission
Jerrauld C. Jones
Chairman
Commission on Youth

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Authority for Study.	1
II.	Members Appointed to Serve.	1
III.	Executive Summary.	2
IV.	Study Goals and Objectives.	5
V.	Methodology.	6
VI.	Background.	8
	A. Overview of Youth Gangs in America	
	B. Definitions of Youth Gangs	
	C. Causal Factors	
	D. Prevention and Intervention Models	
	E. Law Enforcement and Prosecutorial Strategies	
VII.	Identification of Youth Gang Activity in Virginia.	18
	A. Previous Statewide Gang Identification Efforts	
	B. Identification Efforts of Current Youth Gang Presence	
	C. Law Enforcement Strategies and Code Provisions	
	D. Community Based Responses	
VIII.	Findings and Recommendations.	43
IX.	Acknowledgments.	48
	<i>Appendix A. House Joint Resolution 92</i>	
	<i>Appendix B. Task Force and Workgroup Members</i>	
	<i>Appendix C. Survey Instruments</i>	
	<i>Appendix D. Youth Questionnaires</i>	
	<i>Appendix E. Survey Responses: Definitions of "Youth Gang" & Recommendations to General Assembly</i>	
	<i>Appendix F. Agencies Identifying Youth Gangs in Virginia</i>	
	<i>Appendix G. Survey Regional Analysis</i>	
	<i>Appendix H. <u>A Survey of School Violence & Potentially Violent Groups in the Peninsula-Tidewater Area of Virginia</u></i>	
	<i>Appendix I. Bibliography</i>	

This project was supported in part by a Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services' Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention grant (No. 96-B8378) awarded to the Virginia Commission on Youth. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services or the U.S. Department of Justice.

I. Authority for Study

The 1996 General Assembly approved House Joint Resolution 92 (Almand) directing the Virginia State Crime Commission to conduct a study on the prevalence, organization, and involvement in criminal activities of youth gangs in the Commonwealth, to develop strategies to reduce or eliminate youth gangs, and to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1997 General Assembly. The resolution directed the study to be conducted in communication with the Commission on Youth.

§ 9-125 of the *Code of Virginia* establishes and directs the Virginia State Crime Commission "...to study, report, and make recommendations on all areas of public safety and protection." § 9-127 of the *Code* provides the Commission the power to "...make such studies and gather information in order to accomplish its purposes...and to formulate recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly." § 9-134 authorizes the Commission to "conduct private and public hearings."

§ 9-292 of the *Code of Virginia* establishes the Virginia Commission on Youth and directs it to "...study and provide recommendations addressing the needs of and services to the Commonwealth's youth and their families." § 9-294 provides the Commission the power to "...undertake studies and gather information and data in order to accomplish its purposes...and to formulate and present its recommendations to the Governor and members of the General Assembly."

The two Commissions, in fulfilling their legislative mandate, undertook the study of youth gangs in the Commonwealth.

II. Members Appointed to Serve

At the May meeting of the State Crime Commission, Delegate Clifton A. Woodrum, Chairman, selected Delegate Raymond R. Guest to chair the Corrections Subcommittee, which was directed to conduct the study of youth gangs. The following members of the Crime Commission were selected to serve on the subcommittee:

State Crime Commission Members

Del. Raymond R. Guest, Jr. Subcommittee Chair (Front Royal)
Sen. Kenneth W. Stolle (Virginia Beach)
Del. James F. Almand (Arlington)
Del. Jean W. Cunningham (Richmond)
Del. John J. Davies, III (Culpeper)
Del. Clifton A. Woodrum (Roanoke)
Sheriff Terry W. Hawkins (Albemarle County)

The Commission on Youth received an overview of the 1996 study agenda at its May meeting. The Commission did not divide into subcommittees but chose to receive briefings on study issues as a committee of the whole. The full membership of the Commission was involved in the study of youth gangs.

Commission on Youth Members	Del. Jerrauld C. Jones (Norfolk)
	Sen. Mark L. Earley (Chesapeake)
	Sen. Yvonne B. Miller (Norfolk)
	Sen. R. Edward Houck (Spotsylvania)
	Del. Eric I. Cantor (Henrico)
	Del. Karen L. Darner (Arlington)
	Del. R. Creigh Deeds (Bath)
	Del. Phillip Hamilton (Newport News)
	Del. Thomas M. Jackson, Jr. (Carroll)
	Ms. Norma M. Clark (Virginia Beach)
	The Hon. Gary L. Close (Culpeper)
	Ms. Lisa R. McKeel (Norfolk)

III. Executive Summary

HJR 92 was conducted jointly by the Commission on Youth and the Virginia State Crime Commission. Three workgroups were established to aid in the study effort: Survey Design, Prevention and Intervention, and Law Enforcement and Prosecution. Both Commissions heard formal presentations by law enforcement officials, academic researchers and direct service personnel on both the characteristics and prevalence of youth gangs and successful prevention and intervention strategies. Three public hearings were held across the state to provide input to the study. All local law enforcement agencies and juvenile court service unit directors were surveyed on their knowledge of the prevalence of youth gangs and their specified procedures for responding to this population. All juveniles committed to a Juvenile Correctional Center between July 15 and September 20 and over 800 juveniles in secure detention were interviewed about their gang involvement.

Growth in reported youth gang activity has occurred throughout the country. Virginia has not been immune to this increase in gang activity as verified by three State Police surveys of gang activity conducted in 1992 and 1994 and the recent data collection conducted for this study. The presence of youth gangs was reported by law enforcement and court service unit directors representing 32 cities and counties statewide. The most recent survey results represent a 220% increase in the number of localities with youth gang activity and a 160% increase in the number of reported youth gangs operating in Virginia. While the growth has been experienced across the state, youth gangs appear to be an urban phenomenon in Virginia, with 88% of the reported gang activity in Northern and Tidewater Virginia.

Despite the definitional variations across the Commonwealth affecting the identification of youth gangs, there is unanimity on the need for increased monitoring, data collection and training on youth gangs. Many communities across the

Commonwealth have components of a comprehensive gang prevention, intervention, and suppression strategy in place; however, no community has fully implemented a comprehensive approach, as presented in this report. Jurisdictional variations in the types of youth gangs require careful analysis. Given the local nature of gang recruitment and activity and the high mobility of gangs, approaches must combine neighborhood-based intervention with inter-jurisdictional collaboration to share gang-related intelligence. The following recommendations are offered to better equip Virginia to stem the tide of youth gang violence.

Recommendation 1

Establish a consortium of universities with experience in working with communities to address youth violence. The consortium will provide training and technical assistance to local law enforcement, community organizations, school and court personnel, social services, and other stakeholders to help them assess their needs and strengths in responding to youth gangs and youth violence. The consortium will also help communities develop and evaluate programs designed to reduce youth violence and eradicate youth gangs.

Recommendation 2

The university consortium will administer a grant fund program to allocate funds to non-profit organizations based in community neighborhoods to provide direct services to youth and their families. Services funded include, but are not limited to, educational and vocational programming, employment assistance, recreational programming and parental support. Emphasis in grant funding will be placed on community, regional and state agency cooperation and coordination of program efforts.

Recommendation 3

Amend Section 19.2-390 of the *Code of Virginia* which relates to the Central Criminal Record Exchange (CCRE) to include information on gang affiliation as defined by the Department of State Police guidelines.

Recommendation 4

The Board of the Department of Juvenile Justice should amend its court service unit minimum standards to require social history reports provided for in Section 16.1-273 of the *Code of Virginia* to include an assessment of gang affiliation of any youth who is subject to a dispositional hearing or transfer hearing in juvenile court.

Recommendation 5

The Department of Juvenile Justice should replicate the process used in adult jails to ascertain the alleged offender's gang involvement as part of the admission process in Secure Detention Centers. This entails expanding the information solicited on the face sheet for each juvenile placed in secure detention.

Recommendation 6

The Office of the Executive Secretary of the Virginia Supreme Court, in collaboration with the Departments of Criminal Justice Services, Corrections, Education, Juvenile Justice, and State Police, the Commonwealth's Attorneys' Service Council, the Virginia Associations of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police, and the Commission on Public Defenders, develop a training protocol to facilitate the education of relevant personnel on gang-related issues. Training should be provided on a regional, interdisciplinary basis. Funding should be provided for this training initiative.

Recommendation 7

The Department of Criminal Justice Services, in collaboration with the Department of State Police, should develop a training protocol for the investigation and intervention of gangs and their related crime.

Recommendation 8

The Department of Criminal Justice Services should be made responsible for the identification and analysis of local curfew ordinances in use in Virginia. Analysis should include whether ordinances have been subject to or upheld in court challenges. Analysis and development of model ordinances should be disseminated to local units of government. In addition, the Department of Criminal Justice Services should investigate the feasibility of using "599" law enforcement funds to support local curfew enforcement.

Recommendation 9

The Department of Criminal Justice Services should develop a central clearinghouse on strategies for graffiti abatement. The Department should develop funding recommendations to address abatement issues and report to the State Crime Commission in November 1997 with recommendations for the 1998 General Assembly Session.

Recommendation 10

Sufficient funds should be provided to the Department of State Police to develop a statewide data base on gang intelligence and gang-related crime. The Department should work with the Secretary of Public Safety and the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Virginia Supreme Court to develop an integrated criminal justice information system which is compatible with current and planned databases for those agencies that supply or use information for the suppression of gangs.

Recommendation 11

Request the Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council to provide training on the use of vertical prosecution in addressing gang crimes.

Recommendation 12

The Department of State Police should study the current witness protection program for gang-related trials. The study should include an analysis of what resources are currently available and what resources are required to adequately fund the program. The Department should report the results of the study to the State Crime Commission by November, 1997, with legislative and budgetary action for the 1998 General Assembly Session.

IV. Study Goals and Objectives

HJR 92 directed the State Crime Commission, in communication with the Commission on Youth, to examine the prevalence of youth gangs and suggest strategies to respond to the issue. The following goals and objectives were established to guide the study effort:

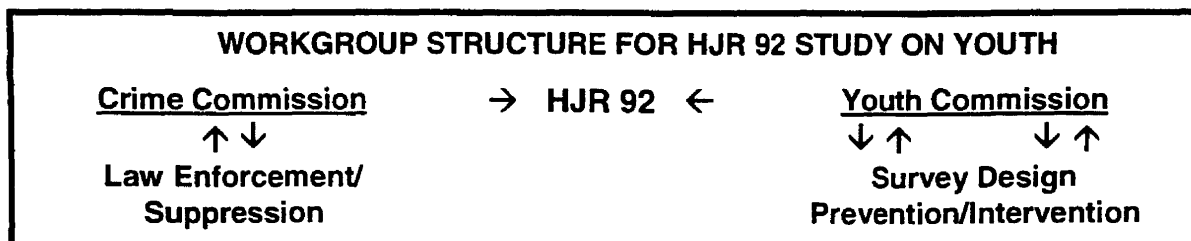
- I. Identify the prevalence of youth gangs in Virginia
 - A. Review previous national and state-based data collection efforts
 - B. Analyze previous data collection methodologies
 - C. Convene group of experts to develop a data collection methodology to include:
 1. Operational definition of youth gangs, street gangs, ethnic gangs, hate groups and auxiliary members
 2. Target recipients of data collection efforts
 3. Timeframe for analysis and dissemination
 - D. Design survey instrument to measure community knowledge and estimated prevalence of youth gangs
 - E. Design questionnaire to be administered to incarcerated juveniles in state and local settings
 - F. Conduct data analysis
- II. Identify effective gang prevention and intervention strategies
 - A. Review national literature on gang prevention research
 - B. Identify gang prevention models which have been evaluated for replication purposes
 - C. Convene group of experts to identify state and national gang prevention programs
 - D. Identify common factors in effective gang prevention programs
 - E. Identify, through the literature, risk factors for gang involvement
 - F. Develop correlation between risk factors and program characteristics
 - G. Develop recommendations for youth gang prevention and intervention models for Virginia

- III. Identify effective gang suppression and prosecution strategies
 - A. Review national literature on effective law enforcement and prosecutorial techniques to respond to youth gangs.
 - B. Convene a group of experts to review national strategies and assess their applicability to Virginia
 - C. Identify strategies currently employed to suppress and prosecute youth gangs in Virginia
 - D. Develop recommendations for statutory and budgetary amendments to enhance suppression and prosecution efforts
- IV. Develop comprehensive youth gang response strategy
 - A. Review research findings for their validation of the subgroups' recommendations
 - B. Compile recommendations from workgroups to identify points of disagreement or duplication
 - C. Convene full workgroup to reach consensus on comprehensive package
 - D. Provide legislative recommendations to Commission on Youth and State Crime Commission for action pursuant to 1997 General Assembly Session

V. Methodology

The staff of the State Crime Commission and the Commission on Youth developed a workplan for the study and organized an oversight task force to examine the issues and develop recommendations. The task force included representation from local law enforcement, the judiciary, prosecution, state criminal justice agencies, community-based organizations serving at-risk youth, and academia. (See Appendix B for full listing of task force and workgroup members.) The role of the task force was to facilitate the sharing of information among the workgroups. The study focus was divided into three categories of research: data gathering to determine the prevalence of youth gangs in the Commonwealth, prevention and intervention strategies, and law enforcement and prosecutorial strategies for suppression of youth gang activities.

Figure 1



The structure of the three workgroups and their role in the study effort is provided in Figure 1. The research activities of each workgroup are described in the paragraphs which follow.

A. SURVEY DESIGN WORKGROUP

A workgroup comprised of staff from the Departments of the State Police and Juvenile Justice, local law enforcement, court service unit staff, and academic and policy researchers was established for survey design and research methodology. The group met a total of six times throughout the course of the study. The group reviewed the national literature on gang surveys and research on gang characteristics and definitions. Previous survey efforts from the State Police were reviewed and adapted for the survey activity undertaken for HJR 92. Local law enforcement agencies were contacted for their definition of “gang” and the Virginia-based definitions were compared to national terminology. The workgroup decided the research effort should have three components: 1) statewide survey administered to all local law enforcement agencies and juvenile court service units to measure their knowledge of the prevalence of youth gangs; 2) interviews with juveniles held in all Secure Detention Centers to ascertain their self report of gang involvement; and 3) interviews with 200 juveniles committed to the state Juvenile Correctional Centers to ascertain their level of gang affiliation.

Design and dissemination of the survey instrument was conducted by the Commission on Youth. The detention center interviews were conducted by professors and master level and above students of the University of Virginia and the College of William and Mary. Interviews held at the juvenile correctional centers were conducted by the Behavioral Service Unit Staff of the Department of Juvenile Justice. The survey instruments and youth questionnaires are provided in Appendices C and D, respectively.

B. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION WORKGROUP

Members of this workgroup included representatives from alternative schools, two community-based agencies, local juvenile court staff, the Department of Education, a Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court judge, trainers in violence prevention and conflict mediation, and academicians with expertise in prevention theory. The workgroup met five times during the course of the study. Workgroup members reviewed and synthesized the gang prevention literature, identified existing Virginia prevention efforts, met with former and current gang members, and developed a youth gang prevention and intervention model to be replicated across Virginia.

C. LAW ENFORCEMENT/SUPPRESSION WORKGROUP

Representatives of the law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges from both the Juvenile and Domestic and Circuit Courts were convened for this workgroup. Effective law enforcement strategies in the areas of intelligence and suppression were identified and assessed. Data collection strategies to monitor gang activity were shared among the workgroup members, with the goal of recommending improved information systems. The *Code* was reviewed and evaluated for availability of court imposed sanctions in response to gang crimes. Prosecutorial strategies and docketing techniques were evaluated. Lastly, training needs were identified.

Analyses of the statewide surveys were completed and presented to the two commissions in Arlington on October 21. Analysis of the youth questionnaires was completed and presented November 20 in Roanoke. The full task force met in November to finalize the recommendations. The proposed recommendations were presented to the Commission on Youth on December 9 and to the State Crime Commission on December 10. Both Commissions voted to support the proposed recommendations at their December meetings.

Public hearings were held in Arlington, Richmond, and Roanoke. Testimony was given by elected public officials, representatives of local churches, law enforcement, civic and community organizations, juvenile court service units, and by former gang members. The findings from the research activities, literature reviews, public testimony and workgroup deliberation were synthesized into the report's Findings and Recommendations.

VI. Background

A. OVERVIEW OF YOUTH GANGS IN AMERICA

Youth gangs have existed in various forms throughout the history of the United States. From the times of immigrant settlements in the country's urban centers to the present, there have been youth gangs.

However, the youth gangs of the 1990s are different from the predecessors in three distinct ways. The first distinction has to do with prevalence. There are more gangs nationwide today than at any time before. The United States has experienced a significant increase in the number of identified youth gangs since 1980. According to the National Youth Gang Center, in 1980 there were approximately 2,000 youth gangs present in 286 cities and towns nationwide. These gangs had an estimated 100,000 members. However, by March of 1996, a national study had found that more than 16,000 youth gangs had spread to an estimated 837 localities. Additionally, the number of gang members had grown five times the 1980 figure to approximately 500,000.¹

Additionally, the nature of youth gangs and their criminal activities have changed. According to a 1996 study,

Many of the youth gangs of the modern era seem to be more highly structured, have more older members, have more members with prison records or ties to prison inmates, have greater numbers and lethality of weapons, be less concerned about geographical territory...and be involved in drug trafficking to a greater extent.²

¹ Howell, James C., Ph.D., Youth Gangs in the United States: A Preliminary Review, March 8, 1996, p. 1.

² ibid, p. 2.

The second distinction can be made with respect to lethality of gang behavior. The availability of automobiles and firearms make today's youth gangs more mobile and dangerous. Historically, gang retribution would take the form of "on-foot hit-and-run forays;" however, retribution in the 1990's can take the form of drive-by shootings.³

A third distinct difference about gangs today is that their presence is not relegated solely to the urban centers of the country. Rather, youth gangs today are spreading to mid- and small-size cities and counties to expand their membership base and entrepreneurial markets. This spread can be attributed to several factors. Some parents have sent their children to live with relatives in other areas hoping to protect them from the influence of the gang culture. This often means that gang activity is simply transplanted. In addition, as gangs have become involved in drug trafficking, the need for market expansion has supported proliferation into areas not already influenced by a gang presence. This has been especially true of the Bloods and Crips, which are now found in many areas beyond Los Angeles. Finally, the entertainment media has brought a lot of the focus to gang culture through a "glamorization" of gangs in movies and "gangsta rap" music. These media markets tend to glorify gang violence and publicize gang symbols, tattoos, and activities.

Research has identified several types of gangs, each of which is described below:

Race/Ethnic-based Gangs—these gangs are typically comprised of members of the same race or ethnicity. The members have cultural ties which bind their association, such as language, but which may serve as a barrier to their integration into the larger community.

Economic-based Gangs—these gangs are organized around a commercial activity and the central rationale for the gang is profit. Members may be from a single race or neighborhood or they may be diverse.

Territorial Gangs—this type of gang organizes to lay claim to a particular geographic territory or neighborhood. A territorial gang usually "tags" its turf with the gang's graffiti and is willing to defend the territory with violence. Gang fights often take place over conflicting territorial claims. Membership in these gangs can be from any race or ethnic background.

Previous research can provide descriptions on the demographics of gangs and their members nationwide. The average size of youth gangs in the United States was 25-75 members with some gangs being as small as 8-12 members. Male gang members outnumber female members by approximately seven to one; however female membership is on the rise. Nationally, the age range for gang membership is 12-21 years. In addition, the ethnicity of gang members is 47% African-American, 43% Hispanic, 6% Asian and 4% white.⁴

³ Ibid, p. 2.

⁴ Ibid, p. 3.

Nationwide, youth gangs are still located primarily in lower income neighborhoods, housing projects, ghettos, barrios and working class communities; however, trends in recent years show a rise in suburban gangs in more affluent areas. The ethnic and racial overrepresentation in gang membership is not indicative of a predisposition by these groups for gang membership; rather, it is indicative of an overrepresentation of ethnic and racial minorities in urban areas, where most gang violence tends to occur.

B. DEFINITIONS OF YOUTH GANGS

Our knowledge and understanding of youth gangs in America began to develop in the late 1950's and 1960's. This occurred in part as a result of research projects attached to intensive gang intervention programs in New York, Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles. The focus of these research efforts was the structure and the dynamic process of leadership and decision making within the youth gang.

During the next two decades, the social research community turned its attention to other law breaking phenomena among youth, specifically in the areas of substance abuse and individual acts of violence. But, from the mid-1980's, there has been a renewed research interest in youth gangs due to the growth of gang activity across the country.

The proliferation of youth gangs has forced researchers to clarify definitional terms to a degree which was not initially warranted. The spread of street gangs across the country required an expansion of gang theory to incorporate economic and political concepts. As gang recruitment targeted younger children, an understanding of the developmental process, family dynamics and subculture pressures were required. The growth of ethnic gangs has necessitated a better understanding of immigration acculturation and assimilation issues.

Clearly defining what is meant by the term "youth gang" is problematic. Some of the literature on gangs tends to describe social gangs which are "similar to unsupervised play groups."⁵ The problem of ascertaining exactly what constitutes a youth gang is compounded by the knowledge that most adolescents form social relationships in groups. Even when the presence of criminal activity is included as a necessary characteristic of a youth gang, as opposed to a social gang, it is difficult to be precise because delinquents tend to commit criminal acts in groups, yet their criminality may not be gang-related. In addition, the membership of youth gangs is rarely limited to those who are under the age of majority. The term "youth gang" implies that there are no adult members, which is clearly not the case. Therefore, both words--"youth" and "gang"--constantly require modification and explanation.

The definition of a youth gang is partially determined by the user of the definition. Law enforcement will focus on the characteristics and criminal behaviors of the gang

⁵ Knox, George W., An Introduction to Gangs, Wyndham Hall Press, Bristol, Indiana, 1994, p. 3.

members in response to their work in the suppression of gang activity. (See Appendix E for a compilation of definitions of “youth gang” provided by chiefs of police, sheriffs, and court service unit directors in their survey responses.) Prevention programs will use another definition which is perhaps broader to define their target populations. Definitions used for enforced criminal penalties seek to delineate specific crimes and reference criminal statutes.

Researchers have developed typologies of gangs as a means by which the contextual use of the term gang and the various meanings of the word can be understood. Some gangs are highly organized, others are turf oriented, with a moderate degree of organization, and still others are less organized and more opportunistic and erratic in their behavior. All of these gangs exist on a continuum, making it difficult to draw an arbitrary line and determine when a group becomes a gang. Once a gang comes into existence, the gang may change over time in its degree of organized structure and activity. Academic researchers have developed a variety of definitions of youth gangs which share common themes. A brief sample is listed below.

Youth gang—a self-formed association of peers, bound together by mutual interests, with identifiable leadership, well-developed lines of authority, and other organizational features, who act in concert to achieve a specific purpose which generally includes the conduct of illegal activity and control over a particular territory, facility, or type of enterprise. (Arthur B. Miller, 1982: 315-316)

Law violating youth groups—an association of three or more youths whose members engage recurrently in illegal activities with the cooperation and moral support of their companions. (Miller, 313)

Federal criteria identified in state and local definitions of “gang”—

- 1) formal organization structure (not a syndicate);*
 - 2) identifiable leadership;*
 - 3) identified with a territory;*
 - 4) recurrent interaction; and*
 - 5) engaging in serious or violent behavior*
- (April 1994, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Fact Sheet #12).*

Youth gang—A group of people that form an allegiance based on various social needs and engage in acts injurious to public health or public morals. (Spergel, Chance and Curry)

Criteria that seem to be recurrent in various gang definitions are:

- Size/membership characteristics (race, ethnicity, physical characteristics)
- Nature of activities (graffiti, financial, territorial, social)
- Symbols of identification (colors, shoelaces, tattoos, earrings)
- Continuous methods of association
- Defined leadership/structure
- Specific territory (geographic, financial, personal relationships)

The most essential feature of a youth gang, from a researcher's point of view and one which is echoed by law enforcement and justice system professionals, is that the gang members routinely engage in recurrent law violating behaviors. The law breaking behavior is done both individually or in small groups and often in an organized, continuing fashion. For the purposes of HJR 92, after a review of the literature and meeting with representatives from the academic, law enforcement, and service provider communities, the following definition was adopted:

Gang Members—youth who identify themselves as a group by a name or a symbol and engage in recurrent criminal activity. Gang characteristics *may* include one or more of the following:

- structured style of dress;
- hand signals;
- claim a geographic territory or turf;
- identifiable leadership;
- regular or continuous association; and
- initiation practices.

Street Gang—A gang which is influenced by and based predominately on American culture. Examples would include Crips, Bloods, Boulevard Boys, Black Gangster Disciples and 6th Street Crew.

Ethnic Gang—A gang which is predominately comprised of youth from non-American cultures with non-English languages. Examples would include Latin Kings, Latin Locos, Mara Salvatrucha and Jamaican Posse.

In terms of implications for practice for the purpose of the study, a group is a gang when it exists for, and supports the criminal activity of, its members.

C. CAUSAL FACTORS

At the heart of a gang prevention program must be a strategy that competes with the gangs to meet the needs and interests of young people. Gangs are successful in recruiting young people because they fill a void in their lives for belonging, status, protection, power, excitement and authority. Programs which strengthen families indirectly make it possible for youth to have a stronger sense of belonging and self esteem. A youth development strategy should build self esteem by instilling in young people four basic senses: a sense of competence, a sense of usefulness, a sense of belonging, and a sense of power or influence. Agencies' programs must meet these needs in a way which reaches the at-risk youth at a younger age and more successfully than the gang.

Youth who become involved in gangs are not easily characterized. Increasingly in Virginia, gangs include youth who are from urban, rural, and suburban settings, economically stressed and economically secure, socially successful and unsuccessful, intellectually challenged and intellectually strong. Youth have always sought membership in groups, whether they are church groups, sports teams, clubs, social cliques or gangs. Group affiliation is a natural and unavoidable part of adolescent

development and maturation process as youth move from family dependence to self sufficiency. For every ten youth in any particular category, while one may join a gang, nine will not. Nonetheless, gang membership is not entirely mysterious. Gangs meet well-defined social and psychological needs:

Security/Comfort/Safety—Gangs promise protection from other gangs and from the uncertainties of life. Access to tangible benefits such as weapons, drugs and allies is among the most powerful recruiting appeals.

Identity/Status—Gangs promise respect by association with a powerful group. Among ethnic groups, they reaffirm pride in a particular race, place or culture.

Accomplishment/Opportunity—Gangs offer the prospect of success which may be elusive elsewhere. Where economic deprivation is major factor, the possibility of income (even if illegal) and mobility can be a strong draw.

Families, friends, and immediate communities are best designed and equipped to provide these needs. But, when these immediate structures fail, gangs are exquisitely tuned to step in to meet the needs of young people. Youth suffering the pains of dysfunctional families, failure, transient communities and crumbling community institutions turn towards gangs unless there are clear, strong alternatives. Any program which intervenes must offer alternatives to satisfy these same basic needs to some degree. To prevent gang membership, communities have to provide something of equal or greater attraction than the lure of gang status, excitement, and sense of belonging. From the long-term point of view, strengthening families, churches, and non-gang peer support systems seems to be the most effective approach. However, if we cannot rely on the family as an effective agent of socialization, the last defense against the growth of youth gangs is the community itself. It is the role of the community in fashioning a comprehensive response to youth gangs with equal emphasis on prevention, intervention and suppression strategies that holds the greatest promise.

D. PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION MODELS

Members of youth gangs often define themselves by the communities in which they live. Their criminal actions often affect the community and the conditions of the neighborhood, in terms of graffiti, vandalism and, at its most extreme, acts of violence. However, within the community, especially in the neighborhoods, lies the solution to youth gang involvement and expansion.

The prevention literature is quite exhaustive with respect to identifying risk factors for engagement in anti-social behaviors. As part of the study activities, the Prevention/Intervention workgroup reviewed and synthesized the literature. As a second step, characteristics of effective gang prevention/intervention programs were identified. Chart 1, which follows, represents a summation of risk factors for gang involvement, juxtaposed with effective youth gang prevention/intervention program characteristics.

Chart 1

**CORRELATION OF RISK FACTORS FOR GANG INVOLVEMENT
TO PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS**

RISK FACTORS FOR GANG INVOLVEMENT	Age of Onset	CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD GANG PREVENTION PROGRAMS
Fragmented Service System	0-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-level systems approach-prevention/intervention/suppression
Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization Lack of bonding and caring Community disorganization Lack of monitoring School transitions Availability of Drugs and Firearms Easy availability of drugs Positive attitudes towards drug and alcohol use	0-4 8-15 8-15 12-15 8-15 8-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots, staffed by community people • Targeted to a specific community • Models true public/private partnerships • Has representation from the faith, business, media and school communities • Provides a stable funding base to small community based agencies • Provides cross neighborhood affiliations • Establishes a neutral turf • Provides strong linkages to the schools • Deals with the individuals in the context of family/schools/community
Extreme Economic and Social Deprivation Lack of employment opportunities	6-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available to all income levels
Parental Attitudes and Involvement Lack of prenatal care Loss or separation from primary caregiver Lack of bonding and caring Low family expectation of success Lack of bonding and caring Lack of monitoring Family condones teen use of alcohol and drugs Unclear family expectation of behaviors Family history of alcoholism Family history of criminality	0-4 0-4 0-4 5-7 5-7 8-15 12-15 16-18 16-18 16-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporates family members • Strengthens families abilities to meet their children's' needs • Provides in home services • Provides consistent on-going involvement • Provides positive role models

continued

**CORRELATION OF RISK FACTORS FOR GANG INVOLVEMENT
TO PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS (cont.)**

RISK FACTORS FOR GANG INVOLVEMENT	Age of Onset	CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD GANG PREVENTION PROGRAMS
Family Management Problems Parental alcoholism, criminality and mental illness Family management problems Inconsistent or harsh discipline Family Conflict Family discord or abuse	0-4 8-15 8-15 0-4	
Community Laws and Norms Favorable to Drug Use, Firearms and Crime Positive attitudes towards drug and alcohol use Community norms and laws favorable to misuse	8-15 16-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes local autonomy • Has on-going access to technical assistance agencies • Has media involvement and support • Program messages and activities are consistent
Early and Persistent Anti-social Behavior Anti-social behaviors Academic Failure in Elementary School Poor school climate Academic failure Labeling and identifying student as high risk Truancy and suspension	5-7 8-15 8-15 12-15 16-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets younger children • Attractive to youth and capitalizes on their talents • Provides assessments and evaluation of youth • Provides opportunity for youth to give back to community • Strengthens individual youth's coping mechanisms • Has a youth board
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an evaluation of the program

Source: Developed by HJR 92 Study of Youth Gangs Prevention and Intervention Workgroup, Commission on Youth, 1996.

Any successful effort to curtail the growth of youth gangs in Virginia and decrease gang-related violence in the streets, neighborhoods, and schools must include the cooperative efforts of parents, educators, community leaders, and public and private agencies. Communities and neighborhoods which organize themselves to develop comprehensive responses to youth gangs find they are effective in decreasing gang

violence.⁶ The first steps in organizing a community are most often initiated after a violent incident involving gangs which galvanizes the community. However, research has shown communities are more successful when they organize prior to a tragedy.

The purpose of a community coalition, or task force, is to raise awareness of youth gangs and to develop and implement community-wide strategies to prevent gang involvement and intervene with youth gang members. No strategy is more important in responding to youth gangs than the responsible communication and coordination of adults involved in the lives of youth and the interaction of those adults who are responsible for the care of youth at risk. The involvement of leaders and participants of all segments of a community is necessary in a coalition. Rarely are all the necessary members of the community on board at the onset, but the coalition should continue to reach out to other groups as it develops.

Unfortunately, in many American neighborhoods gangs function more effectively and meet more often than local community organizations.⁷ Any successful strategy must be based on up-to-date information about the gang problem in that community and should be coordinated with knowledgeable individuals who have a local perspective on the issues, including the young people of the community. These community coalitions often begin informally with one group of individuals contacting other members of formal or informal networks to discuss needs and brainstorm ideas for addressing those needs. While not exhaustive, and clearly dependent upon the local dynamics within each community, organizations and associations which should be involved in a coalition effort are:

- local law enforcement;
- local juvenile justice system representatives;
- local school system;
- non-profit, community based organizations;
- neighborhood groups;
- merchants associations;
- members of local media;
- religious organizations; and
- youth.

Flexible partnerships are needed among the wide range of public and private agency service providers in a youth's life. Schools must accept that the business community may be able to offer something which certain youth need more than education. Police must accept that social workers, drug programs and family services cannot become police auxiliaries any more than recreation staff should take on the role of securing public safety. Churches and parents can do some things which no one else can. Intervention should be seen as an offer of a resource, rather than as a judgment,

⁶ San Antonio, Texas, Lake Tahoe, Nevada, Bingham, New York, and Champaign, Illinois have all evaluated their community based comprehensive approach and have found them to be effective in decreasing the number of active youth gang involvement and gang-related homicides. From papers presented at the 1996 National Youth Gang Symposium

⁷ Knox, p. 427.

a condemnation or a punishment. This kind of understanding comes only through frequent and productive interaction, and can occur only through ongoing broad-based community activities. In contrast, when schools spar with parents, or police criticize social services, they are perceived by youth as feuding adult gangs, legitimizing the notion that youth should use force to get what they want and need.

On the most basic level, schools can play a preventative role by offering meaningful educational experiences which engage the young person at risk for gang involvement. By providing young people with a sense of mastery and success, as well as reaching out to parents to become partners in their child's educational process, the schools are in effect inoculating a young person against gang involvement. Specifically, the first step schools can take in a comprehensive approach is to educate all personnel and the parents about gangs. Schools must also offer candid participation in the assessment process of the problems and needs of the community. Through in-service training and community education, the schools can play a leadership role in the educational process of a community. By recognizing and responding to signs of gang activity, the schools can respond proactively. Close relationships with law enforcement, strict reinforcement of zero tolerance for gang-related activity in the schools' behavior and dress code policies, as well as graffiti removal programs, are basic first steps for schools to undertake.

E. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTORIAL STRATEGIES

Law enforcement's role in community gang efforts needs to be twofold, in terms of their role in suppression and as part of a community network. Their primary role is that of suppression, in which identification of gang members, crime analysis, and increased law enforcement and incarceration are realized. These goals can be met through working with neighboring police agencies, in that gangs are mobile, and members relocate and affiliate with juveniles from other jurisdictions. Information on gang activity and graffiti should be shared with neighboring police agencies and records shared across jurisdictions.

Intelligence gathering includes the monitoring, tracking, and classification of gangs and gang members. The results of this information should be shared throughout the local police department and shared regionally with other law enforcement agencies. Through the centralization of gang information, police departments are better informed regarding the current alliances and conflicts among gang members. Intelligence gathering should also involve the recording of gang graffiti. Law enforcement personnel need to be trained in understanding youth gangs. Participation in state and regional training on the issues allows the police to remain informed of effective suppression approaches.

Community-based, problem-oriented policing is an approach many law enforcement agencies have adopted to respond to gangs and other examples of neighborhood crime. Community-based policing approaches consist of officers who work in teams in a designated neighborhood. The same officers work in the same area

on a daily basis and form relationships with the residents and merchants of the neighborhood. Police officers become part of the community fabric and are aware of problems in the community and maintain a visible presence in the neighborhood. In some instances, extra patrols can be deployed in neighborhoods with gang activity. High profile patrols have been found to minimize organized gang activity and reduce conflict.

The secondary role is as a member of a multi-agency referral network. This network, with the law enforcement's participation, will allow the sharing of information within organized guidelines which take confidentiality laws and interagency agreements into account. Referral into the network can be initiated by any member and directed to any participating member.

VII. Identification of Youth Gang Activity in Virginia

A. PREVIOUS STATEWIDE GANG IDENTIFICATION EFFORTS

The City of Norfolk was the first Virginia locality to formally acknowledge a youth gang problem. In 1989, police officers, juvenile court staff and city leaders began "noticing some disturbing trends involving juveniles and crime" in the city.⁸ Local concerns led to two actions by city officials. First, a "gang squad" was formed within the Norfolk Police Department to monitor graffiti, juvenile crime and gang activities. Officers from the department received intensive training on gang identification and containment from officers in other states with known gang problems. Second, the Norfolk Gang Task Force was formed to study the extent of gang activity in the city. This task force consisted of representatives from the schools, courts, public housing, local government, social services and community service agencies. The task force analyzed the problem and put forth prevention and intervention recommendations to City Council on activities which could impact the problem in Norfolk.

With the assistance of the Norfolk Police Department, the Virginia State Police organized the first Virginia Street Gang Seminar in January 1992. At this seminar, the first of three State Police surveys was administered to ascertain gang prevalence in Virginia. Subsequent surveys were also administered in September 1992 and August 1994. The surveys were administered to the local law enforcement representatives from 29 urban/suburban jurisdictions who attended the conferences. The State Police surveys defined gang presence in terms of having at least two of the following indicators:

- having a structured style of dress,
- engaging in delinquent and/or criminal behavior, and/or
- having a unique name or identifiable leadership.

⁸ 1992 Virginia Street Gang Seminar Report, Virginia State Police, p. 3.

The 1992 survey responses indicated that there were approximately 100 street gangs comprised of 1,350 members in nine jurisdictions. Street gang activity at this time appeared to be concentrated in the Tidewater area, with three-fourths of the estimated number of gangs coming from Norfolk and Virginia Beach. Firearms appeared to be the choice of weapon of most gangs and narcotics trafficking, the leading criminal activity. Other reported criminal activities included armed robbery, larceny, breaking and entering, and vandalism.⁹

The 1994 survey results were similar to those from the 1992 survey, in terms of the jurisdictions' acknowledging a youth gang problem and the types of crimes committed by gang members. One notable exception to the localities with known gang problems was Prince William County. In 1992 Prince William representatives reported having no youth gangs; however, by 1994 they had 15 known gangs, including a well-known Chicago-based gang. At the time of the 1994 survey, it was noted that Virginia "jurisdictions still will not admit to a 'street' gang problem. [Rather, localities] continue to want to identify their local gangs as 'drug' gangs claiming neighborhoods as their turf."¹⁰

B. IDENTIFICATION OF CURRENT YOUTH GANG PRESENCE

Three research activities were undertaken as part of the HJR 92 study activities to identify youth gang presence in the localities and securely confined and state committed juvenile populations: statewide survey of law enforcement and juvenile court service units; Secure Detention Center juvenile survey; and Juvenile Correctional Center juvenile survey. The results of each data collection efforts follows:

1. Law Enforcement and Court Service Unit Survey

Unlike the previous State Police surveys, which were targeted at large urban and suburban localities, the HJR 92 survey was administered on a statewide basis to 125 Sheriffs, 160 Chiefs of Police and 35 juvenile court service unit directors to ascertain the level of youth gang activity in Virginia. Follow-up efforts were conducted by the Virginia Sheriffs Association, the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, the Virginia State Police, HJR 92 workgroup representatives and the Commission on Youth staff to encourage survey responses. As Table 1 illustrates, the overall survey response rate was 64%.

The surveys addressed several issues which had been either specified in the study resolution or identified by the Survey Design workgroup members (Appendix B). These included the prevalence of youth gangs, the demographic/criminal characteristics of the youth gangs, local strategies for identification and intervention with youth gangs and operational problems for the courts and jails resulting from youth gangs in the community. The responses present a statewide profile of the youth gang

⁹ Virginia State Police Summary of Gang Surveys, August 4, 1994, p. 1.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 7.

Table 1

Survey Response Rate		
Respondent Group	Surveys Received	Response Rate
Sheriffs	86 of 125	69%
Chiefs of Police	86 of 160	48%
Court Service Unit Directors	33 of 35	94%
Statewide Totals	205 of 320	64%

In order to guide the survey participants in a common understanding of what constituted a youth gang for the purposes of the study, a broad and flexible definition of "gang" was developed by the research workgroup (Exhibit A). The definition was derived by analyzing definitions from 13 state and national law enforcement agencies to determine common characteristics. In addition to the definition of "gang," respondents were also provided definitions of "street gang," "ethnic gang" and "hate group" to guide their responses.

Exhibit A

Survey Definitions

Gang--youth who identify themselves as a group by a name or a symbol and engage in recurrent criminal activity. Gang characteristics may include one or more of the following:

- ♦ structured style of dress,
- ♦ hand signals,
- ♦ claim a geographic territory or turf,
- ♦ identifiable leadership,
- ♦ regular or continuous association, and
- ♦ initiation practices.

Street Gang--gang which is based predominately on American Culture. Examples would include: Crips, Bloods, Boulevard Boys, Black Gangster Disciples and 6th Street Crew.

Ethnic Gang--gang which is predominately comprised of youth from non-American cultures with non-English languages. Examples would include: Latin Kings, Latin Locos, Mara Salvatrucha and Jamaican Posse.

Hate Group--a group of youth whose organizational identity and criminal activity is the result of hating other groups of people that are dissimilar from themselves.

Source: Virginia Commission on Youth HJR 92 Surveys, Summer 1996.

Although all survey respondents were provided the same definitions to guide their answers to the surveys, there are four independent factors which had an impact on the statewide results. First, juveniles tend to commit crimes in groups, creating differing perceptions by respondents both within and across localities of what constitutes a gang. In addition, some jurisdictions may not be aware they have a local gang presence due to a lack of knowledge about the activities and signs which indicate gang presence in the community. Local government and law enforcement officials may deny the presence of youth gangs when they do exist. Research has indicated that the reasons for the denial include: an unwillingness to provide the gangs with the legitimacy that recognition brings; a desire to shield the public from a phenomenon that can cause concern for safety; and the impact of an official acknowledgment on local economic development. The third factor that impacts the statewide results is the fluid nature of gangs. The HJR 92 surveys were administered in July and August of 1996 and provide a point in time picture of activity in Virginia. Since the survey administration, there have been both mergers between gangs and eradication of some gangs by law enforcement. Gang membership is also fluid. Members may relocate to other jurisdictions or, as they mature, eventually "age out" of the youth gang participation. Finally, the results of the HJR 92 survey could be impacted by both the different names and multiple spellings that exist for a given gang. This phenomenon was particularly evident in Northern Virginia.

The survey results represent police reports, sheriff reports and/or court service unit reports. There were instances where respondents from the same jurisdiction responded differently to the question of whether youth gangs were present. In these instances, the jurisdiction was reported to have gangs if one of the three respondents noted the presence. If a respondent reported the presence of youth gangs, but did not provide the gangs' names, the respondent was contacted by staff to determine why no names were provided.

As Exhibit B illustrates, survey respondents reported the presence in 32 localities. Approximately 260 youth gangs were identified in these localities. Of this number, 57% (148) were identified by the respondents as street gangs, 40% (103) ethnic gangs and 3% (9) as hate/other groups. The survey results represent a 220% increase in the number of localities reporting youth gangs since the State Police survey in 1994. The number of gangs statewide has grown 160% during this period. See Exhibit B which follows.

The survey results would indicate that youth gangs in Virginia appear to still be an urban phenomenon. Table 2 shows that 88% (229 of 260) of the reported statewide youth gangs were located in either the Northern Virginia or Tidewater region. In addition, although the majority of the gangs statewide are street gangs, 59% of the youth gangs in the Northern Virginia region are ethnic gangs and Northern Virginia has 85% of the total statewide number of ethnic gangs. A more detailed regional analysis of the reported gangs can be found in Appendix G.

Table 2

Youth Gang Presence by Region				
Region	Street Gangs	Ethnic Gangs	"Other" Gangs	Total
Northern Virginia	55	88	5	148 (57%)
Tidewater Virginia	69	9	3	81 (31%)
Central Virginia	11	5	0	16 (6%)
Piedmont Virginia	12	1	1	14 (5%)
Western Virginia	1	0	0	1 (.4%)
Statewide Totals	148	103	9	260*

* Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Virginia Commission on Youth Analysis of HJR 92 Surveys, Fall 1996.

Street Gangs

The surveys asked specific questions about the presence and characteristics of street versus ethnic gangs. Thirty-two localities were reported to have youth street gangs. Seventy-two percent of the survey respondents reported that the street gangs in their locality had formed between 1990 to 1995 and 17% (7) reported that the street gangs had formed within the last year. The growth of street gangs in Virginia within the last year mirrors the national trends of expansion into more rural areas. Of the jurisdictions which reported street gangs had formed within the last year, all but one (Richmond City) were suburban and rural jurisdictions. These jurisdictions included Loudoun, Lunenburg, Chesterfield, Mecklenburg, Spotsylvania and Stafford Counties.

The majority of the survey respondents (85%) reported that the average age of the street gang members in their jurisdictions was 14-18 years, making the most of the members under the purview of the Juvenile Justice, rather than Criminal Justice, system. Table 3 provides a profile of the street gang characteristics. Two-thirds of the respondents with street gangs reported that the gangs had specific graffiti, structured dress, turf and hand signs. In addition, 60% of the survey respondents reported that the street gangs in their localities had initiation practices. Examples of the initiation practices included commission of a crime, beat in/jump in, walk in and/or in the case of female members sex in/group rape.

Similar to the State Police surveys, the HJR 92 survey respondents reported that Virginia street gangs engage in felonious criminal activities. Eighty-five percent of the survey respondents reported the street gangs in their locality committed violent crimes against persons; 71% reported drug manufacturing/distribution; and 71%, breaking and entering. However, the large majority of the respondents (73%), who reported that street gangs engage in violent crimes against persons, also reported that the crimes were directed at members of other youth gangs rather than random acts of violence against citizens. Street gangs were also reported by 80% of the respondents to use weapons in the commission of their criminal activities. Examples of the types of

weapons used by Virginia street gangs include handguns, knives/switchblades, brass knuckles/chains and baseball bats/clubs. All but three of the respondents reporting weapon use by their street gangs cited firearms as a weapon that is regularly used by gang members.

Table 3

Street and Ethnic Gang Characteristics		
Gangs Characteristic	Street Gangs	Ethnic Gangs
Specific Colors	50% (16)	72% (13)
Tattoos	47% (15)	72% (13)
Graffiti	69% (22)	78% (14)
Ritual Scars	28% (9)	50% (9)
Structured Dress	66% (21)	61% (11)
Hand Signs	63% (20)	67% (12)
Turf	63% (20)	56% (10)
Leadership	56% (18)	72% (13)

Percentages reflect percent of respondents with each type of gangs reporting the characteristic.

Source: Virginia Commission on Youth analysis of HJR 92 surveys, Fall 1996.

Ethnic Gangs

Respondents in 18 localities reported the presence of ethnic youth gangs. Three types of ethnic gangs were identified by these respondents: 14 reported having Hispanic youth gangs; 12 reported Asian youth gangs; and 6, Jamaican youth gangs. However, ethnic gangs appear to be a newer phenomenon in the state and are isolated predominately in Northern Virginia. Twenty-one percent of the respondents that reported having no ethnic gangs reported that the gangs had formed in the past year and 59% reported that the gangs had formed between 1990 and 1995. Eighty-five percent of the ethnic gangs statewide are in Northern Virginia.

Similarly to street gangs, 79% of the respondents reported the average age of the majority of ethnic gang members to be 14-18 years. However, as Table 3 illustrates, the percentage of survey respondents reporting specific characteristics for the ethnic gangs was higher for every classification except two: structured dress and turf. The survey comments suggest that the higher percentages of group characteristics are due to a more cohesive structure within ethnic gangs than street gangs. Sixty-nine percent of the survey respondents who reported the presence of ethnic gangs also reported that they had initiation practices. Examples of ethnic gang practices were similar to those of the street gangs.

Ethnic gangs also were reported to be involved in felonious criminal activity. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents said the ethnic gangs were involved in violent crimes against person, 62% drug manufacturing/distribution and 66% breaking and entering. However, according to the 91% of the survey respondents, ethnic gang violent crimes against persons are directed at members of other youth gangs. A large

percentage (83%) of the respondents with ethnic gangs reported that the ethnic gangs in their jurisdictions use weapons in their criminal activities.

Tracking Gang Activity

Survey respondents were asked several questions to determine the degree to which local and/or regional tracking of gangs and gang members occurs in the state. Only 15% of the respondents reported that their department or office had a definition of “gang” (Appendix E). In addition, 3% of the law enforcement departments reported keeping records on gang related crime and 5% have specialized gang units. The lack of definitions and record keeping prompted 90% of the survey respondents to report the need for statewide coordination of gang information for local query.

Tracking gang activity is not conducted, nor is court-imposed on youth gang members imposed, on a uniform basis. Although 69% of the court service unit directors reported they regularly communicate youth gang involvement to the judge, only 44% identify youth gang membership pre-dispositionally for potential placement in secure detention. Also, 56% of the directors reported that gang-involved delinquent offenses are routinely prosecuted and 44% reported that the mob-related statutes are used in their districts to prosecute youth involved in gang-related crimes.

Intervention and Prevention Programs

The HJR 92 surveys asked a number of questions to ascertain the types of intervention and prevention programs that both the courts and law enforcement are using to deal with youth gangs. Approximately one-third (38%) of the court service unit directors in districts with reported youth gangs had court administered programs to positively intervene with youth gang members. Examples of the types of programs administered by these courts were:

- Street Law Program;
- Mentor Programs;
- Intensive Probation/Supervision; and
- Project Launch (job program).

However, 50% of the court directors in areas with youth gangs reported using community-based programs and services to positively intervene with gang members. Examples of the community-based sources included Boys & Girls Clubs, Barrios Unidos and Latino Outreach Programs.

Local law enforcement also reported using several types of activities for gang prevention and containment in their communities. The Drug Awareness Resistance and Education Program (DARE), Serious Habitual Offender Comprehensive Action Program (SHOCAP), and Positive Attitude and Commitment to Education (PACE) programs were mentioned as positive prevention activities conducted by law enforcement in their communities. In addition, many departments reported making presentations in schools to youth on crime and gang prevention. Four types of policing practices were mentioned most often as a means of containing youth gang crimes: community policing in areas with gang activity, maintaining gang intelligence files, surveillance of gang members, and quick graffiti removal.

Suggested General Assembly Action

Survey respondents made several suggestions to the General Assembly to assist them in dealing with the rising presence of youth gangs in their communities. First, respondents reported the need for state funds to:

- hire specialized/multi-linguistic law enforcement and probation staff with expertise in gang practices,
- assist in graffiti abatement,
- establish computerized tracking (local, regional and statewide), and
- establish prevention programs for at-risk youth in areas with known gang activity.

Survey respondents also reported that the state should provide statewide training on youth gang prevention, identification and intervention activities. The training should be provided to law enforcement, court service unit staff and Juvenile Court judges. Finally, survey respondents suggested the need for a statewide working definition of “gang” and, in some cases, enhanced penalties for gang-related criminal activity. See Appendix E.

2. Secure Juvenile Detention Center Survey

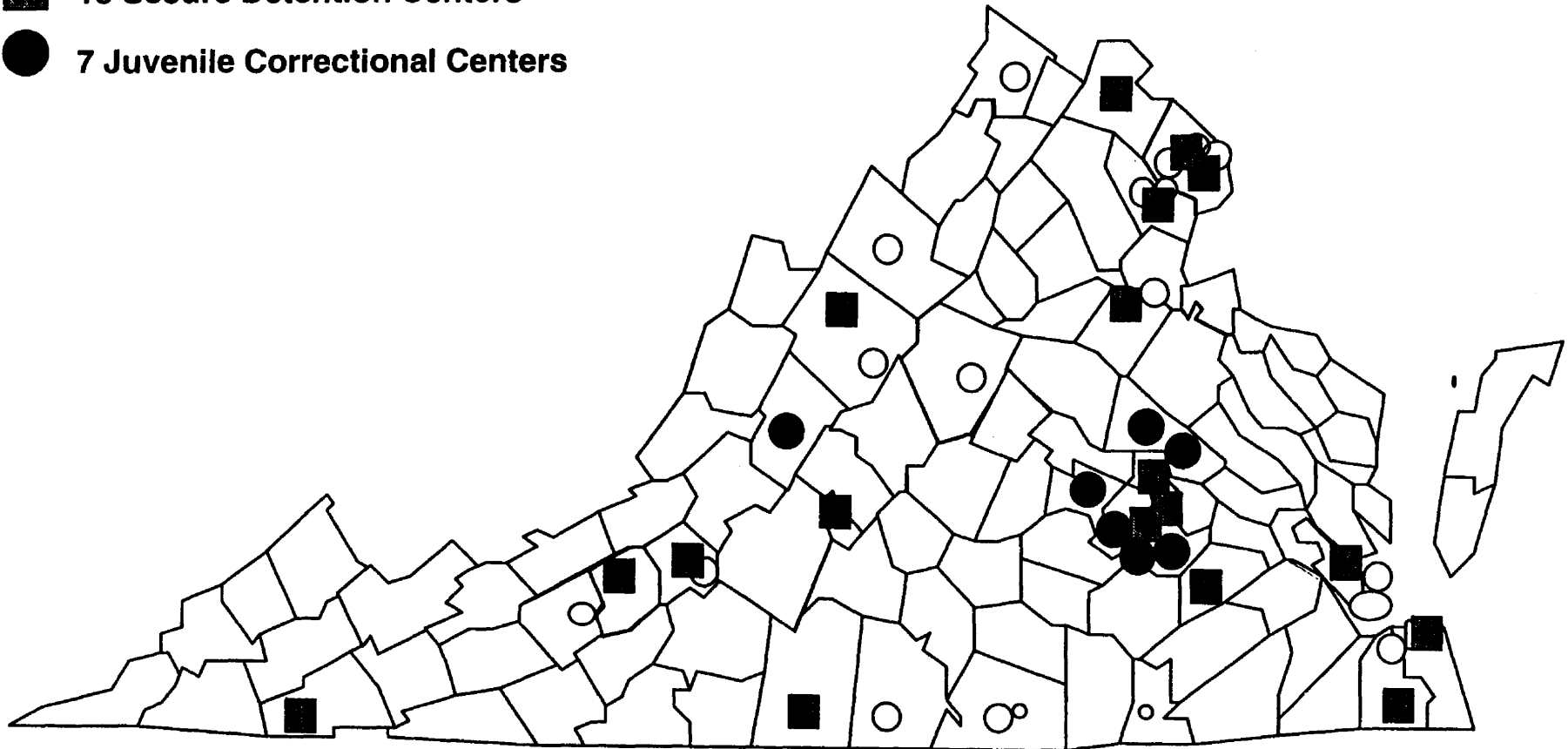
While law enforcement and the court service units reported information on their perceptions of youth gangs in Virginia, they were not the only sources of information used by the HJR 92 study effort to determine the extent of gang activity statewide. Two separate data collection efforts were undertaken by the study to determine the proliferation of gang membership in the state’s incarcerated population. Juveniles in Secure Detention Centers and Juvenile Correctional Centers (JCCs) were administered surveys during Summer/Fall 1996 to ascertain self-reported gang membership. This section will discuss the Secure Detention Center survey. Exhibit C illustrates the location of secure detention and correctional centers across the state.

Juveniles in the state’s 18 Secure Detention Centers were administered voluntary, verbal questionnaires to determine both the degree of gang membership in the secure detention and the degree of gang activity unknown to law enforcement and the court service units. The youth surveys in 17 centers were administered on an individual basis by faculty and graduate students from the University of Virginia and the College of William and Mary. Staff from the Highlands Detention Center administered the survey to youth in their facility. The surveys were administered to every juvenile who was available in each center on the day of the interviews. Some juveniles were exempted from the survey because they were in court, under disciplinary action or unwilling to participate. Thus, 96% (748 of 777) of the available population was administered a survey. At the conclusion of each interview, surveys were rated by the interviewers as valid, suspect or invalid in terms of the information provided. Interviewers based their ratings on personal characteristics of the youth, i.e., tattoos, burn marks, consistency of responses and behavior/manner of the youth during the interview. Ninety percent of the surveys (675 of 748) were considered valid by the interviewers and included in the analysis.

Exhibit C

Secure Detention Centers and Juvenile Correctional Centers in Virginia

- 18 Secure Detention Centers
- 7 Juvenile Correctional Centers



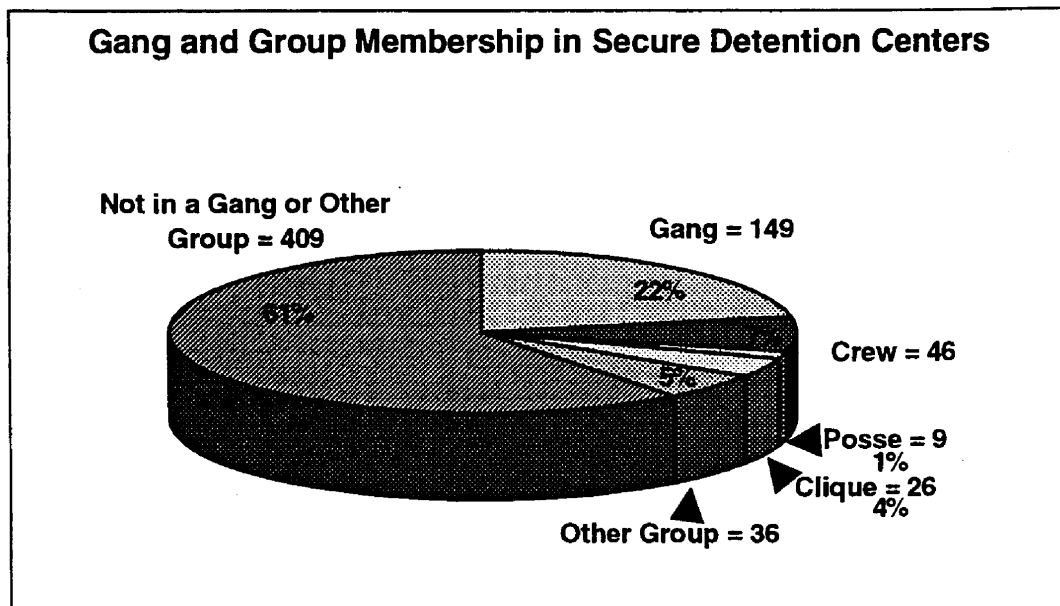
Virginia Commission on Youth graphic/analysis, October 1996.

Gang/Group Members

Twenty-two percent (149) of the juveniles with valid responses said they had joined or been a member of a Virginia based gang. If the respondents reported that they had not been members of a gang, they were then asked if they had been members of any other type of a youth group such as a crew, clique, posse or a mob. An additional 17% (117) reported they had joined or been members of an "Other" type of youth group (Exhibit D). Further analysis of the names provided by the juveniles for gangs versus other groups revealed little difference between the names law enforcement/court service units provided for youth gangs. Therefore, data for self-reported gang members and other groups members were analyzed together for the purposes of providing incarcerated population profiles.

Not surprisingly, the Secure Detention Centers in the more urban areas of Virginia had the greatest presence of self-reported gang/group members within their incarcerated populations. As Table 4 illustrates, the Tidewater Detention Center (37 members) and the Fairfax Detention Center (35 members) had the largest number of members. However, the Northern Virginia Center (Alexandria) had the largest proportion (64%) of their surveyed population report being members of a gang/group.

Exhibit D



Source: Virginia Commission on Youth Graphic/Analysis of HJR 92 Secure Detention Center Surveys, Fall 1996.

Member Demographics

Sixty-three percent (167) of the juveniles who said they had joined a gang/group admitted to currently being in the gang/group at the time of their placement in secure

Table 4

Gang/Group Membership by Facility			
Detention Home	Admitted Virginia Gang Membership	Admitted Membership in "Other" Virginia Group	Not a Reported Gang or "Other" Group Member
Chesterfield	6 (15%)	3 (8%)	30 (77%)
Crater	7 (24%)	7 (24%)	15 (52%)
Fairfax	24 (37%)	11 (17%)	30 (46%)
Henrico	10 (31%)	4 (13%)	18 (56%)
Highlands (Bristol)	1 (14%)	0 (n/a)	6 (86%)
Loudoun	3 (23%)	2 (15%)	8 (62%)
Lynchburg	8 (36%)	5 (23%)	9 (41%)
Newport News	16 (28%)	9 (16%)	33 (57%)
New River Valley	4 (17%)	2 (9%)	17 (74%)
Norfolk	9 (21%)	6 (14%)	28 (65%)
Northern Virginia	14 (43%)	7 (21%)	12 (36%)
Prince William	4 (15%)	4 (15%)	19 (70%)
Rappahannock	5 (15%)	7 (21%)	21 (64%)
Richmond	10 (20%)	10 (20%)	31 (60%)
Roanoke	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	20 (77%)
Shenandoah Valley (Staunton)	6 (16%)	12 (32%)	20 (53%)
Tidewater (Chesapeake)	17 (16%)	20 (18%)	72 (66%)
W.W. Moore (Danville)	2 (7%)	5 (19%)	20 (74%)
STATEWIDE TOTALS	149 (22%)	117 (17%)	409 (61%)

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Virginia Commission on Youth Analysis of HJR 92 Secure Detention Center Surveys, Fall 1996.

detention and 39% (104) reported their committing offense was gang-related. Most juveniles reported that friendship, protection and excitement were the reason they joined the gang/group. Sixty-six percent of the members said they were in middle school when they joined the gang/group.

As Table 5 illustrates, the greatest proportion of the gang/group members are either 16 or 17 years and a majority are African American males. In addition, twenty-nine percent of the members were not actively enrolled in school during Spring 1996. Further examination of the age and school placement data reveals that, of those enrolled in school last Spring, a large number were behind their age appropriate grade placement. The largest proportion of gang/group members were in grades 9 and 10, where the typical age is 14 to 15 years; however, the largest proportion of members were 16 or 17 years, which means that some members are at least one or two years behind their age appropriate grade.

Table 5

**Demographic Profile of
Secure Detention Center Gang/Group Members**

<u>Age</u>		<u>Race</u>	
Age 11-12	6 (2%)	White	69 (26%)
Age 13	11 (5%)	African American	138 (52%)
Age 14	34 (13%)	Hispanic	16 (6%)
Age 15	47 (18%)	Asian	12 (5%)
Age 16	86 (32%)	Other	31 (12%)
Age 17	80 (30%)		
Age 18	2 (1%)	<u>Sex</u>	
Average	15.7 years	Male	229 (86%)
		Female	37 (14%)
<u>Grade in School</u>		<u>Age Joined Gang/Group</u>	
2nd-6th	8 (3%)	10 and Under	23 (7%)
7th	18 (7%)	11 years	14 (5%)
8th	33 (12%)	12 years	58 (22%)
9th	63 (24%)	13 years	61 (23%)
10th	44 (17%)	14 years	56 (21%)
11th	14 (5%)	15 years	31 (12%)
12th	3 (1%)	16-17 years	15 (6%)
Drop-Out	42 (16%)		
Expelled	30 (11%)		

Source: Virginia Commission on Youth Analysis of HJR 92 Secure Detention Center Surveys.

Gang/Group Characteristics

Incarcerated members reported their gangs/groups had specific characteristics; however, in lower relative percentages than was reported by law enforcement and the court service directors. There were only three gang/group characteristics that a majority of juveniles reported their gangs using: graffiti, hand signals, and written symbols. The percentages reported for other characteristics included:

- 74% graffiti,
- 53% hand signals,
- 53% written symbols,
- 49% initiation practices,
- 49% tattoos,
- 46% colors,
- 39% leaders, and
- 37% dress code.

In addition, of the gang/group members who reported their gang had specific turf/territory, half said the territory was marked by graffiti.

A majority of the surveyed members reported their gang/group were involved in the commission of criminal activities. The crimes reported most often by the youth as activities their gangs/groups were involved in included:

- 81% drug sales,
- 80% fights with other gangs,
- 71% aggravated assaults,
- 57% spray paint graffiti,
- 55% motor vehicle theft, and
- 59% vandalism.

There was a slight difference between the perceptions of members for reported criminal activity of gangs versus groups. Higher percentages of gang members reported their gangs were more active in the commission of all crimes presented on the survey, with the exception drug sales, robberies and gun sales.

3. Juvenile Correctional Center Sample Survey

Surveys were administered to 200 juveniles who were committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) for placement in a Juvenile Correctional Center (JCC) from July to September 1996. The surveys were administered by the DJJ treatment staff at the Reception and Diagnostic Center as part of the admissions process. At the conclusion of each interview, these surveys were also rated by the interviewers as valid, suspect or invalid in terms of the information provided.

Gang/Group Members

Ninety-four percent (188) of the JCC surveys were considered valid and used in the analysis. The proportion of JCC youth admitting membership in either a gang or group was significantly less than proportion of secure detention youth admitting membership. The majority of the youth surveyed (81%) reported that they were in neither a gang nor a group and, of the 19% reporting membership, 13% said they were a member of a gang and 6% said they were a member of a crew, clique, posse or mob. The lower proportion of self-reported JCC membership may have been impacted by the fact that, unlike the Secure Detention Center surveys, these surveys were neither voluntary nor confidential. Information was recorded and filed in the juveniles' official records.

Of the 35 juveniles who admitted gang/group membership, 69% said they were still a member of the gang/group at the time of commitment and 43% reported they were middle school age (12-14 years) when they joined. Approximately a third of the members (29%) had family who were in a gang and the average age of these youth when they joined the gang/group was 12.8 years.

Member Demographics

Gang/group member demographics for JCC youth were slightly different from those self-admitted members in Secure Detention Centers. As Table 6 illustrates, most of the members were males. The race profile of the JCC members, however, is very different from the profile of secure detention youth. The majority (54%) of gang/group members were white. In addition, the average age of the JCC members was slightly

higher at 16.1 years than was the average members' age in secure detention. The higher age is in part due to the age restrictions for JCC, where youth must be 14 years of age to be committed.

A majority of the members were enrolled in school during Spring 1996. The largest proportion of juveniles were in the 9th or 10th grade. However, JCC staff identified 60% (21) of the gang/group members as in need of special education services at the Correctional Center. Staff also reported that a majority of the youth (57%) had a history of prior residential treatment or placements. Ninety-one percent of the members reported that friends were a reason they joined the gang/group and 71% said excitement was another reason they joined.

Table 6

Demographic Profile of Juvenile Correctional Center Gang/Group Members			
<u>Age</u>		<u>Race</u>	
Age 14	4 (11%)	White	19 (54%)
Age 15	6 (17%)	African American	13 (37%)
Age 16	11 (31%)	Hispanic	2 (6%)
Age 17	11 (31%)	Asian	1 (3%)
Age 18	3 (9%)	<u>Sex</u>	
Average	16.1 years	Male	28 (80%)
		Female	7 (20%)
<u>Grade in School</u>		<u>Age Joined Gang/Group</u>	
6th and Below	3 (9%)	10 and Under	4 (11%)
7th or 8th	3 (9%)	11 - 12 years	6 (17%)
9th	8 (23%)	13 years	5 (14%)
10th	8 (23%)	14 years	8 (23%)
11th	3 (9%)	15 years	5 (14%)
Drop-Out	4 (11%)	16-17 years	7 (20%)
Other*	6 (17%)		

* Other includes expelled students and those enrolled in General Educational Development Program (GED) or alternative education programs.
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: Virginia Commission on Youth Analysis of HJR 92 Juvenile Correctional Center Surveys, Fall 1996.

On average, gang/group members had extensive criminal records; however, only 9% were sentenced to DJJ as Serious Offenders (§16.1-285.1). JCC members had an average of eight current and/or prior criminal offenses on their record and 31% (11)

had a history of possession and/or brandishing firearms. Almost a third of the members (29%) had, as one of their current committing offenses a violation of aftercare or probation. In addition, 20% had as their most serious offense an assault conviction; 11% had a robbery conviction; and 11%, a burglary conviction.¹¹

Gang Characteristics

A larger proportion of the JCC gang/group members reported the use of organizational characteristics than did the members in Secure Detention Centers. The proportion of JCC members reporting the gang/group characteristics were:

57% written symbols	57% colors
69% hand signs	57% leaders
43% tattoos	46% dress code
69% initiation practices	57% graffiti.

The only gang/group characteristics where a larger proportion of the secure detention population reported usage were tattoos and graffiti, where they reported 49% and 74%. Finally, half the JCC members said their gang/group marks their turf or territory with graffiti.

A majority of the members reported their gang/group were involved in criminal activity. The types of criminal activity reported by the youth was very similar to those reported by law enforcement and the court service unit directors. As Table 7 illustrates, the largest proportion of the youth respondents reported that fights with other gangs were one of the activities conducted by the gang/group. Two-thirds of the members also reported that their gang/group was involved with drug sales.

Table 7

Youth-Reported Gang Crimes	
<i>The following percentage of JCC members reported their gang/group participated in the crimes listed.</i>	
Drug Sales	69%
Aggravated Assault	57%
Fights with Other Gangs	83%
Robbery	63%
Paint Graffiti	63%
Motor Vehicle Theft	66%
Vandalism	60%
Gun Sales	57%

Source: Virginia Commission on Youth Analysis of HJR 92 Juvenile Correctional Center Surveys, Fall 1996.

Localities with Youth Gang/Groups

The JCC members of youth gang/groups were from 23 localities. Of these, eleven were localities that had also been identified by law enforcement or the court

¹¹ 20% includes 3 cases of felony assault and 4 misdemeanor assaults.

service unit directors as having gangs. The jurisdictions identified by the youth and not the statewide surveys include: Henry, Russell, Augusta, Page, Fauquier and Richmond Counties, as well as the Cities of Danville, Lynchburg, Franklin, Petersburg, Chesapeake. Thus, as Exhibit E illustrates, the statewide survey and the JCC sample survey identified a total of 44 Virginia localities as having a youth gang/group presence.

C. LAW ENFORCEMENT STRATEGIES AND CODE PROVISIONS

The current *Code* provisions provide the option to prosecute gang-related crime under mob statutes. Recent modifications of the Juvenile Code provide greater discretion to prosecutors to move to certify a juvenile as an adult with increased penalties. In addition to *Code* sanctions, strategies to effectively prosecute gang-related crime include personnel modifications through vertical prosecution and local ordinances.

Vertical prosecution requires the assignment of a specific prosecutor to handle all phases and subsequent court involvement of a defendant. With the same individual assigned to the case, the prosecution is able to better ensure that all relevant information is brought to bear in trial and sentencing. Communities which have adopted this approach report more effective prosecutorial efforts. However, this approach is personnel-intensive and limits flexibility in case assignments. Prosecutors' offices must assess their current docket assignment system prior to implementing vertical prosecution strategies.

Local ordinances addressing graffiti abatement and juvenile curfews are often a part of a community strategy. Removal of graffiti quickly and at a minimal cost to the taxpayer or private property owner is a high priority for local jurisdictions. Enforcing a curfew law takes significant police resources. It is important as well to providing services to both the juvenile and the parents where chronic curfew violations occur. The study task force heard from the Richmond Police Department on their recent Safe Streets initiative. Funded through a federal grant, this program is pivotal to the local curfew enforcement. Once a juvenile in Richmond is picked up on a curfew violation, the juvenile is taken to a curfew center is staffed by both Social Services and the Police Department. If subsequent violations occur, both the parents and the juvenile work with the Department of Social Services to develop an intervention plan which addresses issues of supervision. This multi-disciplinary approach appears to be effective, but local resources to support the effort are scarce.

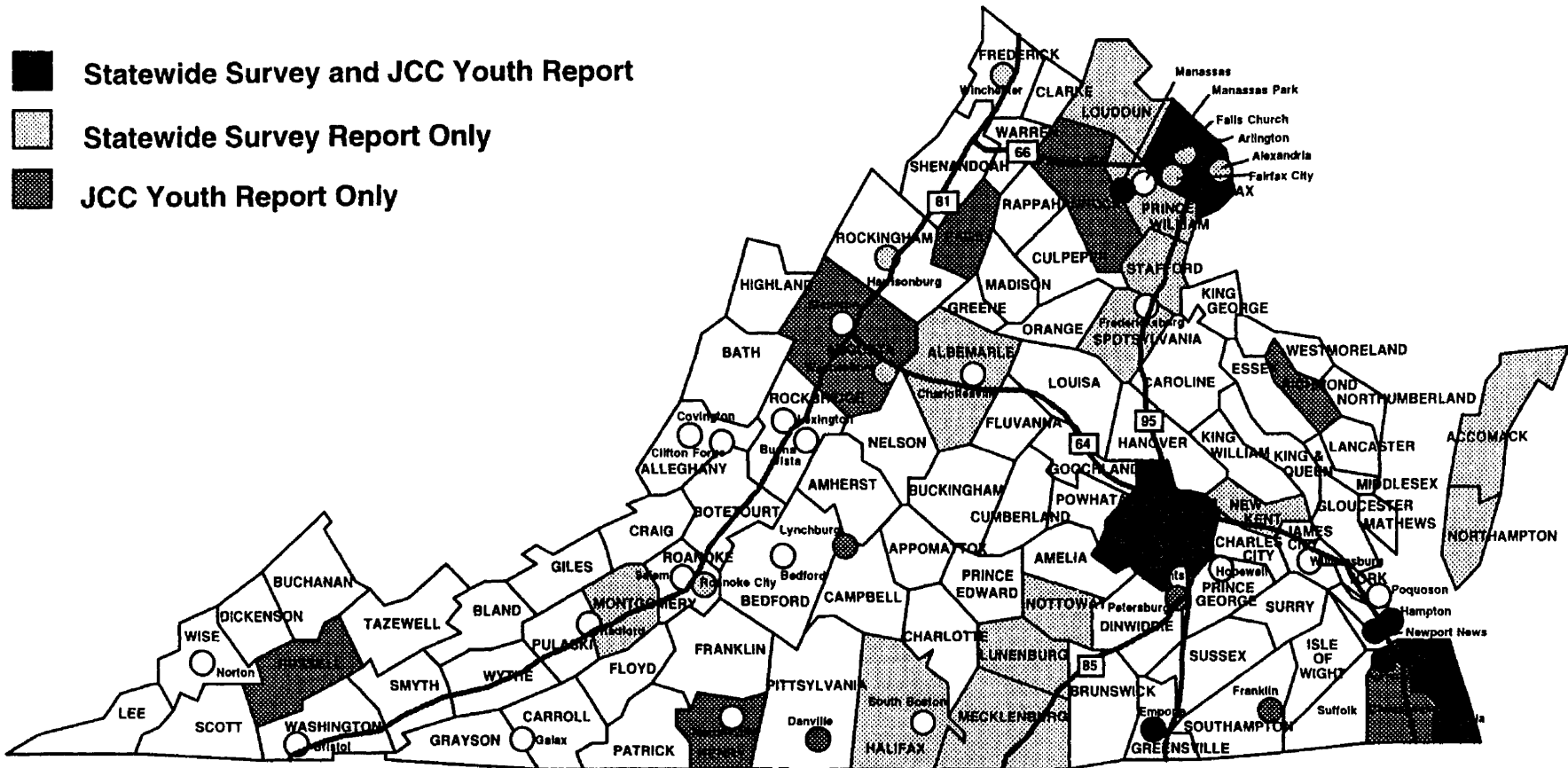
Responses from local law enforcement and Commonwealth's Attorneys' offices to the problem of youth gangs have been varied. The major factor in the local response has been the degree or prevalence of gang violence in a jurisdiction. A second, and equally important factor, has been the degree to which a locality has acknowledged the existence of gang problems and sought to put resources forward to address the issue.

As gang violence has escalated in a locality, some local police departments have implemented specialized gang units to deal with the problem. The survey results

Exhibit E

Virginia Localities with Reported Youth Gangs

Forty-four localities in Virginia were identified by either law enforcement, Juvenile Court Service Unit Directors or Juvenile Correctional Center youth as having youth gangs/groups; 11 (25%) localities were identified by both the statewide survey and the youth.



Source: Virginia Commission on Youth graphic/analysis of HJR 92 Statewide Law Enforcement/Court Service Unit Surveys and Juvenile Correctional Center Sample Surveys, November 1996. Note: Major interstates are shown to track gang presence.

indicate that approximately five percent of local police departments currently have specialized gang units. Fifteen percent of the local law enforcement agencies have developed a definition for "gang member" and three percent of the agencies actually track gang crimes.

Developing a gang crime tracking system has enabled the localities to determine the extent of the problem. Several jurisdictions in Northern Virginia have developed a consortium to develop a gang database in order to track gang crimes across jurisdictional lines, as well as to track the migration of gang members throughout the region. The member law enforcement agencies have been able to work collaboratively on the suppression of gang crimes through the sharing of important criminal information. Definitions of "gang," "gang member," and "gang-related crime" differ from locality to locality, but most definitions have certain common elements which allow for the sharing of important data among jurisdictions. Expanding the database statewide would enable law enforcement agencies to share information on gang members and gang-related crimes throughout the Commonwealth.

Organizing a specialized gang unit allows law enforcement officers to develop expertise in recognizing the special characteristics of a gang-related crime, which is evidence of gang activity. Through these units, strategies can be developed on intervention in gang crimes. Special investigative techniques enhance the successful prosecution of gang-related crimes.

Once a gang-related crime is identified, the prosecution can opt to employ a vertical prosecution strategy: one special prosecutor to follow the case to its completion. The prosecutor who originally brought the case will continue with the case until the trial is completed and there is final disposition of the case and then with every subsequent court appearance. This approach requires significant resources and docket management. Most Commonwealth's Attorneys' offices have not developed such a strategy except on a case-by-case basis. Additional training on gang crimes and reallocation of resources within the office may allow local prosecutors to utilize this strategy.

Another issue that local prosecutors confront in prosecuting gang-related crime is the protection of potential witnesses. Often threats and intimidation make it impossible to find witnesses who are willing to testify. Even those who are subpoenaed against their will may be unwilling, or placed at serious risk, if they do testify. Retaliation by gang members can mean serious bodily harm to the potential witness. Local Commonwealth's Attorneys' offices do not have resources for witness protection or relocation. The State Police have a victim-witness protection program which historically has never been adequately funded. Commonwealth's Attorneys need this resource to enable them to pursue a successful case; without witnesses, they are often unable to successfully prosecute.

The judiciary needs information on gang affiliation in making sentencing decisions. Some court service personnel routinely include information on possible gang membership, whether the crime is gang-related, and other relevant information in

the social history provided to the judge. This is not a standard practice, however. There is no requirement in regulatory standards for such information to be provided, either in a social history or in a pre-sentence report.

Localities have enacted local ordinances which are directed at addressing some of the gang-related activity. The two major local initiatives which have helped curb gang activity have been curfews and graffiti abatement. Each has been effective to a degree, but neither is a panacea for addressing gang-related activity.

Curfew ordinances must be coupled with adequate resources to be effective. These resources include a site to which to bring a juvenile if parents/guardians cannot be contacted, personnel to provide case management for a service referral, if indicated, and adequate court resources to process the case. Care must also be used to ensure that curfew ordinances are drafted to withstand legal challenges. If the ordinances are used only in targeted areas of a community, constitutional issues are raised. Many legal challenges to ordinances have been upheld because of their effect when implemented. Localities need assistance in assessing whether their ordinances are properly drawn and to ensure that resources are provided for the initiative to be successful.

The Department of Motor Vehicles recently completed a statewide study of curfew laws and ordinances in Virginia. Twenty-eight Virginia jurisdictions have enacted some type of curfew ordinance. Forty-six percent of the respondents in jurisdictions with curfew ordinances believed the curfew laws were doing what they were intended to do. However, six percent of the police respondents felt that crime had not been lowered as a result of curfew ordinances. Insufficient resources often make curfews ineffective deterrents. In many localities, the court system is overwhelmed, which results in judges and police not enforcing the curfew laws.

Graffiti is often used as a means of marking gang territory or communicating between gangs. Graffiti abatement is a means of eliminating the unsightly defacement on buildings. Many localities have graffiti abatement ordinances which address public property. Removal of graffiti from public buildings is usually undertaken and funded by the local government. Graffiti on residential or business property presents another problem. The question arises as to who pays for removal on private property. Tax credits or a state resource were suggested. It was also suggested that there be a repository of information on graffiti removal and samples of local ordinances.

Local ordinances on graffiti abatement and curfew laws have helped to address some of the outgrowth of gang activities, but do not adequately address the actual problems leading to the formation of gangs. Law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges all agree that the answer lies in preventing the problem before it reaches their level.

D. COMMUNITY BASED RESPONSES

While each community needs to determine for itself how a task force, network or coalition would organize and function, the development of local leadership which

reflects the diversity of the community is a necessity to respond effectively to youth gangs.

Many communities are unaware of the escalation and serious consequences of youth gangs. Typically, in the early stages of community organizations, there is the perception that the problem is from "outside groups" and is often part of the denial syndrome. Important steps in moving a community beyond denial and fragmentation are to develop a shared vision and create a common framework for action. Conducting a needs assessment can help determine the community's understanding of gangs and the existing and potential problems faced by the community. A needs assessment can also serve to identify gaps in resources and clarify the different agencies and associations' roles in addressing the problem. The entire community, including its youth, must have a sense of ownership of the problems and possible solutions associated with gangs. A needs assessment should include interviews with knowledgeable community members, including law enforcement, school principals and guidance counselors, juvenile court personnel, and ministers. In addition, school surveys are a useful way in which youth can participate in sharing its perceptions. One way to create consensus on what to do about gangs is to survey the viewpoints of the citizens. Clearly, such a task is impossible unless the community is understood to be comprised of small neighborhood units.

Each component of the community has a unique role to play. The roles of various community institutions are described in the following paragraphs.

1. Role of the School

Perhaps no other community resource is more important to involve than the local school system. The nexus between gangs and schools is easily understood, as schools provide a daily meeting place for young people and reinforce their social network among peers. Schools are integral to any form of comprehensive strategy, as gang members attend schools and may use the school setting as a place for recruitment and gang activity. As most schools are part of a neighborhood environment, school grounds may also compose part of the gang's "turf" or territory, which places all faculty and students at risk for violence. If gang recruitment and open affiliation are able to occur on school grounds, threats of extortion and intimidation, as well as actual incidences of violence, are likely to increase. The presence of gangs within a school setting robs those within the school community of a sense of safety and decreases the amount of time available to attend to educational concerns. School involvement in a comprehensive strategy is also important because of the role of schools in the community. The school system is looked to for the provision of educational guidance and socialization process for the community's young people. Teachers are seen as role models and leaders for young people. Many schools provide the hub of educational, recreational and cultural activity in the community.

Recent Virginia research validates the increase of violence in the schools and the probability of youth gang involvement. During the 1993-1994 school year in Virginia, less than 2% of all students enrolled in the public schools were involved in criminal

and/or violent incidents.¹² During the 1993-1994 school year there were 373 firearm violations, 1 shooting victim, 20 stabbing victims and 482 cases of physical assault. The College of William and Mary found in their surveys of students in the Tidewater area that two-thirds of students and faculty had observed one act of violence in the current academic year, with the vast majority of the incidents taking place between students. When asked to explain the characteristics of these incidents, nearly one half of the respondents suggested that the incidents involve groups of young people and that these groups did have a recognizable identity.¹³ (For a summary of the survey results, see Appendix H.)

Once the issue of youth gangs has been identified, the schools must become proactively involved. Many of the roles discussed below are applicable for all three school levels, but the bulk of activity should focus on the middle and high schools. Schools should posture themselves to be partners with community recreational programs and private non profit organizations to offer varied extra curricular activities to all students. These activities should be focused on skill building for the young people and provide them a chance for mastery and opportunities to give back to community. Tutorial services should be linked to recreational organizations throughout the community. Parent education and support should be integrated into school activity. Within the school setting, programs which provide peer mediation and cooperative learning experiences helps prevent students from becoming involved in gangs. While specific curriculum may vary and is an important component, it is equally important that the schools provide real linkages to other parts of the community which work with their students to foster the involvement of the entire community.

2. Role of the Juvenile Court System

The juvenile court system, including intake, probation, prosecution and the judiciary, are vital components of a local comprehensive response to youth gang activity. While the juvenile court system can have a role in preventing youth gang activity and should employ graduated sanctions and rehabilitative programs, its most important contribution is to ensure that there is effective suppression. A message must be sent to the community that youth gangs will not be tolerated and that those juveniles engaged in such activity will receive no special treatment. All parts of the juvenile justice system should push for maximum penalties and levels of supervision. The juvenile court is poised to support prosecution and suppression efforts in the community; however, the court also has a prevention role to play in that they work with those young people who are most at risk for gang involvement due to their existing court involvement for law violating behaviors.

The various components of the juvenile court system need to embrace a zero tolerance of youth gang activity. All parts of the system from intake to judges should apply the most restrictive alternatives possible when dealing with juveniles involved in gang-related crime. There is no need for enhanced penalties, merely the application of

¹² Virginia Department of Education, Reports on Acts of Violence and Substance Abuse, 1995

¹³ Messier, L.P., Ward, T.J., Aday, D.P. Unpublished Study Conducted by the College of William and Mary School of Education and Department of Psychology, 1995.

the existing penalties provided in the *Code* should be sufficient. Whenever possible, intake should charge those involved in a gang-related crime under the assault by mob statute, secure detention should be given to those who are gang involved, and rules of probation should prohibit the association with known gang members.

As in any system approach, communication is essential. Police need to inform intake and probation when they suspect a youth is involved in a gang. Intake and probation need to inform detention staff, prosecutors, and the judge when they are charging a gang member with a criminal offense. Court service unit directors should insure that intake, probation and parole officers receive annual training related to youth gang issues to assist them in identifying gang-related behaviors. They also need to receive training on effective intervention strategies to work with youth who either are at risk of entering a gang or are actively involved in gang activity.

Those communities having an emerging or active youth gang problem should develop a specialized youth gang probation response. This may be a single probation officer or a unit of probation officers that provide intensive supervision to gang members. These probation officers need to be trained experts in all aspects of gang behaviors and work in close collaboration with the schools, police and prosecutors.

3. Role of Private Non Profit, Community-Based Agencies

Small, community based agencies which provide direct service and reflect the ethnic diversity of the neighborhood should be the primary providers of prevention and intervention services. The programs must be staffed with people who have the trust of the parents and the young people of the neighborhood. The hours of operation must fill the gap of time when young people are idle, which requires that programs stay open late in the evening and be available during the weekends. A broad range of daily programs which meet the needs and interest of this population should be offered within the community. Aggressive outreach to recruit the youth into the program, facilitated by referrals from law enforcement, churches, schools and the juvenile justice system, should be established. Program activities to be offered should include cultural enrichment, health and physical education, social recreation, citizenship and leadership development, personal and education development and outdoor education. These programs should also provide linkages to employment opportunities for the older youth, as well as active involvement with the parents. Every program will have its own specific characteristics and may be structured through organized sports, job placement or family activities. Regardless of the means by which the agency engages the children, the programs should offer a neutral environment, safe from turf and territorial divisions in which the participants have an opportunity to experience success in a safe environment.

4. Role of the Faith Community

Churches, mosques and synagogues are key players in the comprehensive strategy. By providing program sites and community volunteers, as well as programming for young people, the faith community must be active players in the coalition. By opening up their facilities to the young people and their families, they can

help meet community needs. Youth pastors can serve as points of referral and a source for program activity ideas. Networking through the congregation expands the employment opportunities for the young people. Of most importance is the provision of spiritual guidance for community members.

5. Role of the Business Community

The business and corporate sector of the community should be involved in the coalition effort. Their interest in providing a safe environment for customers and in ensuring a future workforce should be ample inducements for their involvement. Their participation in the community needs assessment provides additional information which is not uniformly collected. By active participation in graffiti removal, financial support of the private non profit agencies, and provision of job opportunity, their place in the community partnership is essential.

6. Role of the News Media

There is much debate between law enforcement and the news media regarding the media's coverage of gang activity. One view is that, through coverage, media are providing the gangs with the status they crave and therefore serve as promoters of gang activity. The other view suggests that the news media have an important role to play in the public education of the community. Many citizens are understandably concerned that media attention to gangs will desensitize the problem and, through glamorization of gangs, actually may inadvertently promote gang involvement. A model collaborative strategy requires law enforcement and the local media to work out their specific protocols and policies in covering gang incidents.

However, the role of the media should not be restricted to how they cover crime. Representatives of the local media should be approached to participate in the coalition and encouraged to devote attention and coverage to the positive alternative available in the community. Too often the desire for status and notoriety is met only through the committing of crime and the more positive activities of young people go unnoticed. The local media should be encouraged to provide both an educational role and a means for notoriety for the positive activity of youth. Their involvement also affects the view of the citizenry on young people and begins to strengthen a sense of community and hope.

7. Role of Young People

The young people of the community must be included in the development of any comprehensive effort to respond to youth gangs. In many ways, they have the greatest investment in developing a successful strategy to combat gangs. Their perceptions of needs should be assessed as part of the needs assessment; their ideas should be solicited in developing programs; and their suggestions for service needs incorporated into a community design. Opportunities for success and status can be provided through their participation.

8. Role of Civic Leadership

Local government leadership is a major ingredient in a successful strategy. Providing support for the collaborative design and delivery of programs, using their

commitment to bring reluctant players on board, and supporting educational activities move communities from denial to leadership. Local leadership can help reframe the problem from a youth problem to a community problem.

Programs which offer alternative attractions, e.g., success in school or in sports, will reach few hard-core gang members. Few youth deeply immersed in the gang culture can step out all at once. Alternatives must provide security, status, identity, and mobility as inducements to break away from gang involvement. Prevention programs must provide activities which meet these needs before and while young people are considering street life.

Examples of successful approaches are provided below:

Barrios Unidos

In Northern Virginia, a national organization for Hispanic youth called Barrios Unidos ("United Neighborhoods") has developed chapters for at-risk youth. Combining cultural pride, solidarity and help with personal and social problems, the youth-led organization meets many of the needs of a gang, while teaching non-violence.

Adult Protectors

In Northern Texas, youth intervention programs were having a hard time recruiting and retaining appropriate mentors for troubled youth. Instead, agencies began recruiting adults who would simply call or make contact from time to time, sometimes just once a month. The caller would simply ask how things were going and reassert that, if the youth were in trouble, he or she could call the adult for help. By providing an alternative source of security, the program was successful in lowering the number of youth entering gangs.

Youth/Adult Dialogues

For some youth, the only interaction with adults (particularly authority figures) is negative; that is, these youth get called in when they are caught or suspected of doing something wrong. They have few, if any, opportunities to talk with adults when there isn't a crisis or a problem. Structured dialogues to fill this void have been held in many parts of the country, including New York, New Mexico, Ohio and Virginia. Dialogues have been as short as one hour or as long as a series of ten two-hour discussions. They may be convened by community institutions, such as churches, social service centers, recreation centers, and schools, or by individuals. Such talks offer youths status, affirmation, and helpful information. In Northern Virginia, dialogues between community police and gang involved youth have dramatically improved interaction in both crisis and non-crisis situations.

Community Mediation

Where should youth take their concerns? Many young people view adults as the last people to go to for help. Schools and communities throughout Virginia have begun establishing Peer Mediation programs in training youth to help their peers break the spiral of violence, consider alternatives to destructive behavior, and find ways out of gangs.

Boys and Girls Club of Richmond

By working in the community where the at risk young people live and setting clear recruitment goals, the Boys and Girls Club provides alternative recreational and educational services as a gang prevention model. As part of a collaborative network of service providers, selected clubs throughout the City of Richmond have become resource centers for young people and are available during evening and weekend hours.

Children of the Sun

Staffed by people from the community, the program relies on soccer as a means to engage young people and their parents and the community together. Employment and education are provided through a summer jobs training program. An enrichment program focuses on work ethics and values; conflict mediation and tutorial services are provided year round. Services are provided in Norfolk middle schools and are easily accessible for the young people in the community

VIII. Findings and Recommendations

Findings

Growth in the number of reported youth gang activities in Virginia has increased 160% since 1994. Some of this growth may be attributed to increased awareness on the part of criminal justice personnel, yet undoubtedly a portion is attributable to increased youth gang activity. The types of youth gangs reported vary tremendously across the 32 jurisdictions which reported gang activity. Northern Virginia is the setting for numerous ethnic gangs, while Central and Tidewater Virginia report predominantly street gangs. Effective intervention must take the unique jurisdictional and neighborhood differences into account.

Research has found youth gang prevention and intervention activities that take place at the local neighborhood level are the most effective approach. Community-based initiatives which focus on the existence of youth violence and youth gangs and bring together all segments of the community to address the problem are more successful than top-down, state-administered initiatives. The locus of gang intervention must be the small neighborhood units where gangs recruit and provide status and protection to young people.

Recommendation 1

Establish a consortium of universities with experience in working with communities on youth violence. The consortium will provide training and technical assistance to local law enforcement, community organizations, school and court personnel, social services, and other stakeholders to help them assess their needs and strengths in responding to youth gangs and youth violence. The consortium will also help communities develop and evaluate programs designed to reduce youth violence and eradicate youth gangs.

Findings

Youth gangs are successful in communities where they meet young people's needs for status, protection, excitement and a sense of belonging. Interviews with gang/group members in the juvenile correctional centers found that 91% joined a gang because of their friends; 71% joined for excitement. Where social structures fail to meet those needs, youth gangs fill the void. Research has shown that young people from communities with high tolerance for violence, drug usage and illegal activity are more prone to gang recruitment and activity. School failure, limited economic opportunity, and the absence of structured recreational activity support gang growth. In the absence of alternatives, gang membership provides a powerful incentive for young people to feel they have a place in the community. One of the most important components of a youth gang prevention strategy is the provision of recreational and employment opportunities for young people and conflict resolution for all citizens in the community. Many small, community-based agencies staffed with indigenous community members are successful in providing the above-listed services as alternatives to gang involvement. Recruitment strategies for these community-based programs are aggressive and targeted.

Recommendation 2

The university consortium will administer a grant fund program designed to allocate funds to non-profit organizations based in community neighborhoods to provide direct services to youth and their families. Services funded include, but are not limited to, educational and vocational programming, employment assistance, recreational programming and parental support. Emphasis in grant funding will be placed on community, regional and state agency cooperation and coordination of program efforts.

Findings

The gang affiliation of offenders is not routinely ascertained or provided to Secure Detention Centers, court service unit staff, prosecutors or judges across the state. However, 39% of the Secure Detention Center population reported they were members of a gang/group. Of the juvenile court service unit directors surveyed, 66% report they communicate gang involvement to the judge, but only 44% identify gang membership predispositionally. Gang affiliation is not always identified in arrest information or social histories.

Recommendation 3

Amend Section 19.2-390 of the *Code of Virginia* which relates to the Central Criminal Record Exchange (CCRE) to include information on gang affiliation as defined by the Department of State Police guidelines.

Recommendation 4

The Board of the Department of Juvenile Justice should amend its court service unit minimum standards to require social history reports provided for in Section 16.1-273 of the *Code of Virginia* to include an assessment of gang affiliation of

Recommendation 4 (cont.)

any youth who is subject to a dispositional hearing or transfer hearing in juvenile court.

Recommendation 5

The Department of Juvenile Justice should replicate the process used in adult jails to ascertain the alleged offender's gang involvement as part of the admission process in Secure Detention Centers. This entails expanding the information solicited on the face sheet for each juvenile placed in secure detention.

Findings

It is often difficult for criminal justice personnel to recognize youth gangs and understand their structure. This difficulty is explained by the variety of criminal activity in which gangs participate and the fluidity of youth gang organizational structure. Service system professionals have not been adequately trained to recognize youth gangs. This lack of understanding has had a negative impact on the system's ability to identify, intervene, prosecute and sentence gang-related crime. Seventy-six percent of the survey respondents identified additional statewide training on youth gang identification and intervention as necessary to improving their job performance with respect to youth gangs.

Recommendation 6

The Office of the Executive Secretary of the Virginia Supreme Court, in collaboration with the Departments of Criminal Justice Services, Corrections, Education, Juvenile Justice, and State Police, the Commonwealth's Attorneys' Service Council, the Virginia Associations of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police, and the Commission on Public Defenders, develop a training protocol to facilitate the education of relevant personnel on gang-related issues. Training should be provided on a regional, interdisciplinary basis. Funding should be provided for this training initiative.

Recommendation 7

The Department of Criminal Justice Services, in collaboration with the Department of State Police, should develop a training protocol for the investigation and intervention of gangs and their related crime.

Findings

While the primary responsibility for insuring that children are off the streets in the late night/early morning hours lies with parents and guardians, some parents are unable or unwilling to exercise control over their children. In those communities where a significant number of crimes are being committed by juveniles in the late evening and early morning hours, curfew ordinances may provide a useful strategy. Curfew ordinances can assist in diminishing opportunities for youth gangs to operate. Care must be taken that local ordinances are carefully drawn and uniformly implemented to withstand legal challenges. Curfew ordinances must be

Findings (cont.)

coupled with adequate police and support services to avoid inappropriate net widening. Due to the complexity and variations of local curfew ordinances, localities need support in developing effective laws which will not be subjected to court challenges.

Recommendation 8

The Department of Criminal Justice Services should be made responsible for the identification and analysis of local curfew ordinances in use in Virginia. Analysis should include whether ordinances have been subject to or upheld in court challenges. Analysis and development of model ordinances should be disseminated to local units of government. In addition, the Department of Criminal Justice Services should investigate the feasibility of using "599" law enforcement funds to support local curfew enforcement.

Findings

Graffiti is often a signal that gang activity is occurring in the community. Law enforcement agencies with specialized gang units call graffiti the "newspaper of the streets" and monitor its message for what it means regarding gang territory, turf disputes and personal grudges. In addition, graffiti devalues property values and creates fear and concerns for local businesses and residents. While many communities have enacted graffiti abatement ordinances, resources for abatement activities are limited.

Recommendation 9

The Department of Criminal Justice Services should develop a central clearinghouse on strategies for graffiti abatement. The Department should develop funding recommendations to address abatement issues and report to the State Crime Commission in November 1997 with recommendations for the 1998 General Assembly Session.

Findings

Information is a powerful tool in dealing with crime and the perpetrators of crime. Fifteen percent of the law enforcement survey respondents reported their departments had a definition of "gang," and only 5% had specialized gang units. Communities which have developed formalized mechanisms to share gang-related information uniformly report improvements in their gang suppression efforts. Virginia does not have a comprehensive system for the collection and dissemination of information on gang activity. Ninety percent of the law enforcement and court service unit directors survey respondents reported a need for statewide coordination of gang information for local queries. While Northern Virginia is piloting such a data system, the system is in its early stages and has not been replicated. The Secretary of Public Safety is in the process of developing an integrated criminal justice information system. In order to have accurate information to aid criminal justice personnel in intelligence gathering, a computerized data base which captures gang-related information should be implemented.

Recommendation 10

Sufficient funds should be provided to the Department of State Police to develop a statewide data base on gang intelligence and gang-related crime. The Department should work with the Secretary of Public Safety and the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Virginia Supreme Court to develop an integrated criminal justice information system which is compatible with current and planned databases for those agencies that supply or use information for the suppression of gangs.

Findings

Research suggests that the use of vertical prosecution can be effective in the criminal processing of gang crimes. This model requires the same prosecutor handle offenders charged with gang-related crime through the offenders' involvement with the criminal/juvenile justice system. This approach is personnel intensive and often requires the reallocation of resources in Commonwealth's Attorneys' offices. The 1996 General Assembly Session funded an additional 45 Assistant Commonwealth's Attorneys and 10 paralegals for FY 97 and 104 Assistant Commonwealth's Attorneys and 15 paralegals for FY 98 to enhance the prosecution of juvenile offenders. With these additional resources, local prosecutors have the opportunity to evaluate the most effective use of these resources based on the community's analysis of the prevalence of youth gangs and gang-related trials in their jurisdiction.

Recommendation 11

Request the Commonwealth's Attorneys' Services Council to provide training on the use of vertical prosecution in addressing gang crimes.

Findings

Protection of witnesses and victims in gang and drug-related crime is a concern across the Commonwealth. Gangs are successful, partially as a result of their ability to intimidate community members from stepping forward to testify. In order to effectively prosecute persons, the Commonwealth's Attorneys and police require willing witnesses. Threats to the safety of the witnesses and their families, if they do testify, have had a chilling effect, resulting in many cases dropped for prosecution.

Recommendation 12

The Department of State Police should study the current witness protection program for gang-related trials. The study should include an analysis of what resources are currently available and what resources are required to adequately fund the program. The Department should report the results of the study to the State Crime Commission by November, 1997, with legislative and budgetary action for the 1998 General Assembly Session.

IX. Acknowledgments

In addition to the individuals who served on HJR 92 Youth Gang Task Force, the members of the Virginia State Crime Commission and the Commission on Youth extend their appreciation to the following agencies and individuals for their assistance and cooperation on this study:

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**1996 SESSION
ENGROSSED**

966907112

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 92

House Amendments in [] —February 1, 1996

[*Requesting Directing*] the Virginia State Crime Commission [, in communication with the Virginia Commission on Youth,] to study the formation, existence, and growth of youth gangs in Virginia.

Patrons—Almand, Behm, Brickley, Connally, Croshaw, Diamonstein, Hull and Moran

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has experienced an increase in localized, illegal gang-related activities ranging in severity from petty offenses to "drive-by" murders; and

WHEREAS, at least twenty-four gangs are known to operate within the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, some gang-related activity is a by-product of the immigration of gang members from other areas of the country (New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.) where gangs are methodically organized and entrenched; and

WHEREAS, the exact nature and extent of the birth, growth, membership and organization of these gangs is unknown; and

WHEREAS, the issues concerning the type of organization and development of these gangs and the degree to which these gangs contribute to the ever-increasing blight that criminal activity leaves upon our beloved Commonwealth, may require further consideration; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia State Crime Commission [, in communication with the Virginia Commission on Youth,] be directed to study [~~the prevalence, organization, growth, development, and degree of involvement in criminal activities of gangs throughout this Commonwealth, to study the methods and procedures used by other states to deal with their gang problems, to determine how to reduce or eliminate gangs in the Commonwealth, and to develop appropriate recommendations and funding proposals to implement such recommendations.~~

~~The Commission shall be assisted by the agencies, representatives of state and local law enforcement agencies, and the courts of this Commonwealth.~~ the formation, existence, and growth of youth gangs in Virginia. The Virginia State Crime Commission shall (i) examine the prevalence, organization, growth, development, and the degree to which gangs are involved in criminal activities throughout the Commonwealth; (ii) study the methods and procedures used by other states to deal with their gang problems; (iii) determine how to reduce or eliminate gangs in the Commonwealth; and (iv) develop appropriate recommendations and funding proposals to implement such recommendations.

The representatives of state and local law-enforcement agencies and the courts of the Commonwealth shall provide technical assistance to the Commission. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission, upon request.]

The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1997 General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

966907112

HJYZE

2/1/96 19:12

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* providing specialized expertise in addition to that on HJR 92 Task Force



VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LAW ENFORCEMENT SURVEY ON YOUTH GANG ISSUES

The 1996 Session of the Virginia General Assembly enacted House Joint Resolution 92 requesting the Virginia State Crime Commission, in communication with the Virginia Commission on Youth, to conduct a comprehensive study of youth gangs in Virginia. As part of this study, the Commissions are surveying all local law enforcement agencies to collect opinions and information on issues related to organized juvenile criminal activity, presence of youth gangs/groups, and law enforcement's identification, prevention and intervention with gang activities.

Please return the survey by **July 24, 1996**. If you have any questions, contact Nancy Ross or Kim Echelberger at (804) 371-2481. The General Assembly of Virginia, the Virginia State Crime Commission and the Virginia Commission on Youth thank you for your assistance in this important study effort.

STOP.

Please refer to the enclosed glossary prior to answering the questions on this survey.

SECTION 1: COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Do you have the following in your locality?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Graffiti | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Organized Crime | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Open Air Drug Markets | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Ethnic Crime Problem | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Reported Drive By Shootings | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Low Income/Subsidized Housing Area(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Adjacent Interstate Highway(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

2. Does your jurisdiction have recognizable **youth** gangs?

- Yes (If YES, go to 2A.)
- No (If NO, go to SECTION 5.)

2A. If YES, which of the following categories of **youth** gangs are in your community? *(Please check all that apply.)*

Street Gangs
(If you have Street Gangs please complete Section 2.)

Ethnic Gangs (e.g., Asian, Hispanic)
(If you have Ethnic Gangs please complete Section 3.)

Hate Groups

Motorcycle Gangs

Prison Gangs

Other (Please explain.)

SECTION 2: STREET GANGS

Questions 3-8 relate to youth Street Gangs only. If your locality does not have Street Gangs, proceed to Section 3.

3. Can you identify the Street Gangs in your locality?

Yes *(If YES, go to questions 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D and 3E.)*

No *(If NO, go to question 4.)*

3A. Please provide or attach a list of the local Street Gangs by name.

3B. What is the range of member ages in the local youth Street Gangs? *(Please provide the minimum and maximum ages for each gang.)*

3C. How long have there been youth Street Gangs been in your locality? *(Please check one.)*

Prior to 1980

1990 - 1995

1980 - 1985

Within the last year

1985 - 1990

3D. Which of following best describes the age of the majority of the Street Gang members in your locality? *(Please check one.)*

Under 14 years of age

14 -18 years of age

Over 18 years of age

3E. Do you see any of the following types of identifiable characteristics and/or indicators associated with the Street Gangs in your community? *(Please check all that apply.)*

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Colors | <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Signs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tattoos | <input type="checkbox"/> Turf |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graffiti | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ritual Scars | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structured Style of Dress (e.g., Starter Athletic Attire, Shoe Strings, Earrings) | |

4. Do the Street Gangs in your locality have initiation practices?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 4A.)*
- No *(If NO, go to question 5.)*

4A. What are the initiation practices? *(Please explain.)*

5. Can Street Gang members exit the gang voluntarily?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 6.)*
- No *(If NO, go to question 5A.)*

5A. What are the procedures/penalties for members who do exit the Street Gangs? *(Please explain.)*

6. Do the Street Gangs in your locality associate on a regular basis for the purpose of engaging in delinquent or criminal activity?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 6A, 6B, 6C and 6D.)*
- No *(If NO, go to question 7.)*

6A. Which of the following types of criminal activities do the Street Gangs engage in? *(Check all that apply.)*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Violent Crime Against Persons | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Manufacturing/Distribution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Theft | <input type="checkbox"/> Gun Running |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution | <input type="checkbox"/> Victim/Witness Intimidation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extortion | <input type="checkbox"/> Breaking and Entering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gambling | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(Please explain.)</i> | _____ |
| | _____ |

6B. If the Street Gangs in your locality engage in violent crime against persons, to which of the following are they directing their activity? (Check all that apply.)

- Other Youth Gangs Other (Please explain.)
 Citizens _____
 Law Enforcement _____
 Local Businesses

6C. If the Street Gangs in your locality engage in drug manufacturing/distribution, which types of drugs are they trafficking? (Check all that apply.)

- Cocaine Heroin
 Marijuana Other (Please explain.) _____

6D. Do the Street Gangs from your locality travel to other areas in the pursuit of their criminal activities?

- Yes No

7. Do members of the Street Gangs in your locality use weapons in their criminal activities?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 7A.)
 No (If NO, go to question 8.)

7A. If YES, what types of weapons are your officers seeing or confiscating from the Street Gang members in your locality? (Please explain.)

8. Are the local Street Gangs in your area affiliated with Street Gangs in other areas?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 8A and 8B.)
 No (If NO, go to question 9.)

8A. If YES, which of the following are affiliated with your local Street Gangs? (Check all that apply.)

- Other Interstate Gangs Both types of Gangs
 Gangs from other Virginia localities

8B. What localities and/or states are the affiliated gangs from? (Please list.)

9. Do the Street Gangs in your locality use budget hotels/motels as a base for their criminal activities?

- Yes No

10. Do the Street Gangs in your locality use low income housing area(s) as a base for their activities?

Yes (If YES, go to question 10A.)

No (If NO, go to Section 3.)

10A. Which of the following describe the gang members' connection with low income housing areas as a base for their activities? (Please check one.)

The majority of the gang members live in the low income housing areas.

The majority of the gang members live elsewhere.

Both

Other (Please explain.) _____

SECTION 3: ETHNIC GANGS

Questions 11-20 relate to youth Ethnic Gangs only. If your locality does not have youth Ethnic Gangs, proceed to Section 4.

11. Can you identify youth Ethnic Gangs in your locality?

Yes (If YES, go to questions 12, 12A, 12B, 12C, 12D and 12E.)

No (If NO, go to Section 4.)

12. Which of the following types of youth Ethnic Gangs are in your locality? (Check all that apply.)

Asian Gangs

Hispanic Gangs

Jamaican Gangs

Other (Please list.) _____

12A. Please list (or attach a list) the youth Ethnic Gangs by name (e.g., Latin Kings, Dragonfly, Vietnam Crew, Mara Salvatrucha).

12B. What is the range of member ages in the local youth Ethnic Gangs? (Please provide the minimum and maximum ages for each gang.)

12C. Which of following best describes the age of the majority of the Ethnic Gang members in your locality? (Please check one.)

Under 14 years of age

Over 18 years of age

14 -18 years of age

12D. How long have there been youth Ethnic Gangs been in your locality? (Please check one.)

Prior to 1980

1990 - 1995

1980 - 1985

Within the last year

1985 - 1990

12E. Do you see any of the following types of identifiable characteristics and/or indicators associated with the youth Ethnic Gangs in your community? *(Please check all that apply.)*

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Colors | <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Signs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tattoos | <input type="checkbox"/> Turf |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graffiti | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ritual Scars | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structured Style of Dress (e.g., Starter Athletic Attire, Shoe Strings, Earrings) | |

13. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs in your locality have initiation practices?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 13A.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 14.)*

13A. What are the initiation practices? *(Please explain.)*

14. Can youth Ethnic Gang members exit the gang voluntarily?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 15.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 14A.)*

14A. What are the procedures/penalties for members who do exit the youth Ethnic Gangs?
(Please explain.)

15. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs in your locality associate on a regular basis for the purpose of engaging in delinquent or criminal activity?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 15A, 15B, 15C and 15D.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 16.)*

15A. Which of the following types of criminal activities do the youth Ethnic Gangs engage in? *(Check all that apply.)*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Violent Crime Against Persons | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Manufacturing/Distribution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Theft | <input type="checkbox"/> Gun Running |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution | <input type="checkbox"/> Victim/Witness Intimidation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extortion | <input type="checkbox"/> Breaking and Entering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gambling | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(Please explain.)</i> | _____ |
| | _____ |

15B. If the youth Ethnic Gangs in your locality engage in violent crime against persons, to which of the following are they directing their activity? (Check all that apply.)

Other Youth Gangs

Law Enforcement

Citizens

Local Businesses

Other (Please explain.) _____

15C. If the youth Ethnic Gangs in your locality engage in drug manufacturing/distribution, which types of drugs are they trafficking? (Check all that apply.)

Cocaine

Heroin

Marijuana

Other (Please list.) _____

15D. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs from your locality travel to other areas in the pursuit of their criminal activities?

Yes

No

16. Do the officers in your department experience problems with intervention and containment of youth Ethnic Gang activities due to language and/or cultural barriers?

Yes (If YES, go to questions 16A and 16B.)

No (If NO, go to question 17.)

16A. What is the nature of the problems? (Please explain.)

16B. What steps do the officers take to solve the language and/or cultural problems? (Please explain.)

17. Do members of the youth Ethnic Gangs in your locality use weapons in their criminal activities?

Yes (If YES, go to question 17A.)

No (If NO, go to question 18.)

17A. If YES, what types of weapons are your officers seeing, seizing or confiscating from the youth Ethnic Gang members in your locality? (Please explain.)

18. Are the local youth Ethnic Gangs in your area affiliated with youth Ethnic Gangs in other areas?

Yes (If YES, go to questions 18A and 18B.)

No (If NO, go to question 19.)

18A. If YES, which of the following are affiliated with your local Ethnic Gangs? (Check all that apply.)

- Other Interstate Gangs Both types of Gangs
 Gangs from other Virginia localities

18B. What localities and/or states are the affiliated Ethnic Gangs from? (Please list.)

19. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs in your locality use budget hotels/motels as a base for their criminal activities?

- Yes No

20. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs in your locality use low income housing area(s) as a base for their activities?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 20A.)
 No (If NO, go to question Section 4.)

20A. Which of the following describe the Ethnic Gang members' connection with low income housing areas as a base for their activities? (Please check one.)

- The majority of the gang members live in the low income housing areas.
 The majority of the gang members live elsewhere.
 Both
 Other (Please explain.) _____

SECTION 4: FEMALE GANGS AND AUXILIARY MEMBERS

21. Does your locality have independent youth Female Gangs (e.g., Fly Girls, Lady Rascal Gangsters, Boulevard Girls)?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 22, 23 and 24.)
 No (If NO, go to question 25.)

22. What is the range of member ages in the local youth Female Gangs? (Please provide the minimum and maximum ages for each gang.)

22A. Which of following best describes the age of the majority of the Female Gang members in your locality?

- Under 14 years of age
 14 -18 years of age
 Over 18 years of age

23. Do the Female Gangs in your locality associate on a regular basis for the purpose of engaging in delinquent or criminal activity?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 23A, 23B, 23C and 23D.)*
- No *(If NO, go to question 24.)*

23A. Which of the following types of criminal activities do the youth Female Gangs engage in? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Violent Crime Against Persons
- Auto Theft
- Prostitution
- Extortion
- Gambling
- Other *(Please explain.)* _____
- Drug Manufacturing/Distribution
- Gun Running
- Victim/Witness Intimidation
- Breaking and Entering

23B. If the youth Female Gangs in your locality engage in violent crime against persons, toward which of the following are they directing their activity? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Other Youth Gangs
- Citizens
- Other *(Please explain.)* _____
- Law Enforcement
- Local Businesses

23C. If the youth Ethnic Gangs in your locality engage in drug manufacturing/distribution, which types of drugs are they trafficking? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Cocaine
- Marijuana
- Heroin
- Other *(Please list.)* _____

23D. Do the youth Female Gangs from your locality travel to other areas in the pursuit of their criminal activities?

- Yes
- No

24. Do the Female Gangs in your area associate with the male gangs?

- Yes
- No

25. Are there females who are auxiliary (associate) members of youth male Street or Ethnic Gangs in your locality?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 25A.)*
- No *(If NO, go to Section 5.)*

25A. Have the officers in your department seen evidence of acts of violence and exploitation of the female gang associates?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 25B.)*
- No *(If NO, go to Section 5.)*

25B. Which of the following examples of female gang associate exploitation have occurred?
(Check all that apply.)

- Drug and Gun Running
- Sexual Exploitation
- Accessory to Criminal Activities
- Other (Please explain.) _____
- All the Above

SECTION 5: LAW ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

26. Does your department have a definition of a "gang?"

- Yes (If YES, go to question 26A.)
- No (If NO, go to question 27.)

26A. If YES, please provide your department's definition.

27. Did your department keep records on the number of youth "gang-related" crimes in calendar year 1995?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 27A, 27B and 27C.)
- No (If NO, go to question 28.)

27A. How many crimes were "gang-related" in calendar year 1995? (Please provide the number of crimes.)

_____, _____ Felonies
_____, _____ Misdemeanors

27B. Provide examples of the types of crimes that were "gang-related." (Please explain.)

27C. How did your department classify a crime as being "gang-related?" (Please explain.)

28. Does your department have a specialized gang unit?

- Yes
- No

29. Does your department have field files on the gangs?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 29A.)
- No (If NO, go to question 30.)

29A. Are photos of gang members and identifiers (e.g., graffiti, hand signs, clothes) available for sharing and reproduction?

- Yes No

30. Have representatives from your department received training on gang identification, prevention and containment?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 30A, 30B, 30C and 30D.)
 No (If NO, go to question 31.)

30A. Which of the following entities provided the training? (Check all that apply.)

- Local Law Enforcement Officials Federal Law Enforcement Officials
 State Law Enforcement Officials Regional Information Sharing System (R.I.S.S.)
 Other (Please explain.) _____

30B. Is your department's training on gang-related activities an on-going activity?

- Yes No

30C. Did the training help the officers in your department with identifying and addressing potential gang-related problems in your locality?

- Yes No

30D. Is additional statewide training in on gang identification, prevention and containment necessary?

- Yes No

31. Does your department maintain a jail?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 31A and 31B.)
 No (If NO, go to question 32.)

31A. Has your department experienced management problems with the jail as a result of youth gangs in the facility?

- Yes No

31B. Please explain the nature of the management problems resulting from gangs in your facility.

32. Has your department experienced Circuit Court and/or Juvenile Court courtroom security and management issues resulting from gang affiliations?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 32A.)
 No (If NO, go to Section 6.)

32A. Please explain the nature of the security issues resulting from gang affiliations in the courtrooms in your locality.

SECTION 6: LOCAL RESPONSE TO GANGS

33. Does your locality have an ordinance against tagging and graffiti of any kind?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 33B, 33C and 33D.)
 No (If NO, go to question 33A.)

33A. If **NO**, do you think a tagging and graffiti ordinance would be helpful in limiting gang activity?

- Yes No

33B. If **YES**, what is the penalty for perpetrators who violate the tagging and graffiti ordinance? (Please explain.)

33C. Is the tagging and graffiti ordinance enforced and youth prosecuted?

- Yes No

33D. Is the tagging and graffiti ordinance an effective tool in curtailing gang activities in your locality?

- Yes No

34. Does your locality have an ordinance that requires property owners to remove or allow for removal of graffiti/tagging from their property?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 34A.)
 No (If NO, go to question 34B.)

34A. If **YES**, what is the penalty for violations of the ordinance? (Please explain.)

34B. If **NO**, do you think a graffiti removal ordinance would be helpful in limiting gang activity?

- Yes No

35. Does your locality have an ordinance that requires spray paint be kept under lock and key?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 35A.)
 No (If NO, go to question 35B.)

35A. If **YES**, what is the penalty for violations of the spray paint lock and key ordinance? (Please explain.)

35B. If **NO**, do you think a spray paint lock and key ordinance would be helpful in limiting gang activity?

Yes

No

36. Does your locality have a curfew ordinance?

Yes (If YES, go to questions 36B, 36C and 36D.)

No (If NO, go to question 36A.)

36A. If **NO**, do you think a curfew ordinance would be helpful in limiting gang activity?

Yes

No

36B. If **YES**, what is the penalty for violations of the curfew ordinance? (Please explain.)

36C. Is the curfew ordinance enforced and youth prosecuted?

Yes

No

36D. Is the curfew ordinance an effective tool in curtailing gang activities in your locality?

Yes

No

37. Should there be statewide coordinating of gang information for local query (i.e., a clearinghouse of information)?

Yes

No

38. What strategic efforts does your department use to *prevent* the growth of gangs in your locality (e.g., P.A.L. Program, SHOCAP, presentations to schools and/or community groups)? (Please explain and attach additional sheets as necessary.)

39. What strategic efforts does your department use to *combat and contain* the problem of gangs (e.g., community policing, surveillance, gang files)? (Please explain and attach additional sheets as necessary.)

40. What can the General Assembly do to help localities deal with gang activity? (Please explain.)



VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

COURT SERVICE UNIT DIRECTORS' SURVEY ON YOUTH GANG ISSUES

The 1996 Session of the Virginia General Assembly enacted House Joint Resolution 92 requesting the Virginia State Crime Commission, in communication with the Virginia Commission on Youth, to conduct a comprehensive study of youth gangs in Virginia. As part of this study, the Commissions are surveying all Court Service Unit Directors to collect opinions and information on issues related to organized criminal activity by juvenile gangs, presence of youth gangs/groups, and community identification, prevention and intervention with gang activities.

Please return the survey by **August 9, 1996**. If you have any questions, contact Nancy Ross or Kim Echelberger at (804) 371-2481. The General Assembly of Virginia, the Virginia State Crime Commission and the Virginia Commission on Youth thank you for your assistance in this important study effort.

 **STOP.**

Please refer to the enclosed glossary prior to answering the questions on this survey.

SECTION 1: COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Do you have the following in any of the localities in your court district?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Graffiti | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Organized Crime | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Open Air Drug Markets | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Ethnic Crime Problem | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Reported Drive By Shootings | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Low Income/Subsidized Housing Area(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Adjacent Interstate Highway(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

2. Do localities in your court district have recognizable **youth** gangs?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 2A and 2B.)
- No (If NO, go to SECTION 6.)

2A. If YES, which jurisdictions within the court district have gangs? *(Please list all localities.)*

2B. Which of the following categories of **youth** gangs are in your court district? *(Please check all that apply.)*

Street Gangs

(If you have youth Street Gangs please complete Section 2.)

Ethnic Gangs (e.g., Asian, Hispanic)

(If you have youth Ethnic Gangs please complete Section 3.)

Hate Groups (e.g., Skinheads, Neo-nazis, Anarchists)

(If you have youth Hate Groups please complete Section 4.)

Motorcycle Gangs

Prison/Juvenile Correctional Center Gangs

Other *(Please explain.)*

SECTION 2: YOUTH STREET GANGS

Questions 3-8 relate to youth Street Gangs only. If your court district does not have Street Gangs, proceed to Section 3.

3. Can you identify the Street Gangs in your court district?

Yes

(If YES, go to questions 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D and 3E.)

No

(If NO, go to question 4.)

3A. For each locality in your district, please provide or attach a list of the local Street Gangs by name.

3B. What is the range of member ages in the local youth Street Gangs? *(Please provide the minimum and maximum ages for each gang.)*

3C. How long have there been youth Street Gangs been in your court district? *(Please check one.)*

Prior to 1980

1990 - 1995

1980 - 1985

Within the last year

1985 - 1990

3D. Which of following best describes the age of the majority of the Street Gang members in the gangs in your court district? *(Please check one.)*

- Under 14 years of age Over 18 years of age
 14 -18 years of age

3E. Do you see any of the following types of identifiable characteristics and/or indicators associated with the Street Gangs in your community? *(Please check all that apply.)*

- Specific Colors Hand Signs
 Tattoos Turf
 Graffiti Leadership
 Ritual Scars
 Structured Style of Dress (e.g., Starter Athletic Attire, Shoe Strings, Earrings)

4. Do Street Gangs in your court district have initiation practices?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 4A.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 5.)*

4A. What are the initiation practices? *(Please explain.)*

5. Can Street Gang members exit the gang voluntarily?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 6.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 5A.)*

5A. What are the procedures/penalties for members who do exit the Street Gangs? *(Please explain.)*

6. Do the Street Gangs in your court district associate on a regular basis for the purpose of engaging in delinquent or criminal activity?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 6A, 6B, and 6C.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 7.)*

6A. Which of the following types of criminal activities do the Street Gangs engage in? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Violent Crime Against Persons Drug Manufacturing/Distribution
 Auto Theft Gun Running
 Prostitution Victim/Witness Intimidation
 Extortion Breaking and Entering
 Gambling
 Other *(Please explain.)* _____

6B. If the Street Gangs in your district engage in violent crime against persons, to which of the following are they directing their activity? (Check all that apply.)

Other Youth Gangs

Other (Please explain.)

Citizens

Law Enforcement

Local Businesses

6C. If the Street Gangs in your district engage in drug manufacturing/distribution, which types of drugs are they trafficking? (Check all that apply.)

Cocaine

Heroin

Marijuana

Other (Please explain.)

7. Do members of the Street Gangs in your court district use weapons in their criminal activities?

Yes

No

8. Are the local Street Gangs in your area affiliated with Street Gangs in other areas?

Yes (If YES, go to questions 8A and 8B.)

No (If NO, go to question 9.)

8A. Which of the following are affiliated with your local Street Gangs? (Check all that apply.)

Other Interstate Gangs

Both Types of Gangs

Gangs from other Virginia Localities

8B. What localities and/or states are the affiliated gangs from? (Please list.)

9. Do the Street Gangs in your court district use budget hotels/motels as a base for their criminal activities?

Yes

No

10. Do the Street Gangs in your court district use low income/subsidized housing area(s) as a base for their activities?

Yes (If YES, go to question 10A.)

No (If NO, go to Section 3.)

10A. Which of the following describe the gang members' connection with low income/subsidized housing areas as a base for their activities? (Please check one.)

The majority of the gang members live in the low income housing areas.

The majority of the gang members live elsewhere.

Both

Other (Please explain.)

SECTION 3: YOUTH ETHNIC GANGS

Questions 11-20 relate to youth Ethnic Gangs only. If your court district does not have youth Ethnic Gangs, proceed to Section 4.

11. Can you identify youth Ethnic Gangs in your court district?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 12 through 20.)*
- No *(If NO, go to Section 4.)*

12. Which of the following types of youth Ethnic Gangs are in your district? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Asian Gangs
- Hispanic Gangs
- Jamaican Gangs
- Other *(Please list.)* _____

12A. For each locality in your district, please list (or attach a list) the youth Ethnic Gangs by name (e.g., Latin Kings, Dragonfly, Vietnam Crew, Mara Salvatrucha).

12B. What is the range of member ages in the local youth Ethnic Gangs? *(Please provide the minimum and maximum ages for each gang.)*

12C. Which of following best describes the age of the majority of the Ethnic Gang members in your court? *(Please check one.)*

- Under 14 years of age
- 14 -18 years of age
- Over 18 years of age

12D. How long have there been youth Ethnic Gangs been in your court district? *(Please check one.)*

- Prior to 1980
- 1980 - 1985
- 1985 - 1990
- 1990 - 1995
- Within the last year

12E. Do you see any of the following types of identifiable characteristics and/or indicators associated with the youth Ethnic Gangs in your court district? *(Please check all that apply.)*

- Specific Colors
- Tattoos
- Graffiti
- Ritual Scars
- Structured Style of Dress (e.g., Starter Athletic Attire, Shoe Strings, Earrings)
- Hand Signs
- Turf
- Leadership

13. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs in your court district have initiation practices?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 13A.)
 No (If NO, go to question 14.)

13A. What are the initiation practices? (Please explain.)

14. Can youth Ethnic Gang members exit the gang voluntarily?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 15.)
 No (If NO, go to question 14A.)
 Don't Know (If you don't know, go to question 15.)

14A. What are the procedures/penalties for members who do exit the youth Ethnic Gangs? (Please explain.)

15. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs in your court district associate on a regular basis for the purpose of engaging in delinquent or criminal activity?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 15A, 15B, 15C and 15D.)
 No (If NO, go to question 16.)

15A. Which of the following types of criminal activities do the youth Ethnic Gangs engage in? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Violent Crime Against Persons | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Manufacturing/Distribution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Theft | <input type="checkbox"/> Gun Running |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution | <input type="checkbox"/> Victim/Witness Intimidation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extortion | <input type="checkbox"/> Breaking and Entering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gambling | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please explain.) _____ | |
| _____ | |

15B. If the youth Ethnic Gangs in your court district engage in violent crime against persons, to which of the following are they directing their activity? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Youth Gangs | <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Citizens | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Businesses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please explain.) _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

15C. If the youth Ethnic Gangs in your court district engage in drug manufacturing/distribution, which types of drugs are they trafficking? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cocaine | <input type="checkbox"/> Heroin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marijuana | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please list.) _____ |

15D. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs from your court district travel to other areas in the pursuit of their criminal activities?

- Yes No

16. Do the probation officers in your officers experience problems with intervention and containment of youth Ethnic Gang activities due to language and/or cultural barriers?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 16A and 16B.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 17.)*

16A. What is the nature of the problems? *(Please explain.)*

16B. What steps do the officers take to solve the language and/or cultural problems? *(Please explain.)*

17. Do members of the youth Ethnic Gangs in your court district use weapons in their criminal activities?

- Yes No

18. Are the local youth Ethnic Gangs in your area affiliated with youth Ethnic Gangs in other areas?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 18A and 18B.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 19.)*

18A. If YES, which of the following are affiliated with your local Ethnic Gangs? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Other Interstate Gangs Both Types of Gangs
 Gangs from other Virginia Localities

18B. What localities and/or states are the affiliated Ethnic Gangs from? *(Please list.)*

19. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs in your court district use budget hotels/motels as a base for their criminal activities?

- Yes No

20. Do the youth Ethnic Gangs in your district use low income/subsidized housing area(s) as a base for their activities?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 20A.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question Section 4.)*

20A. Which of the following describe the Ethnic Gang members' connection with low income/ subsidized housing areas as a base for their activities? *(Please check one.)*

- The majority of the gang members live in the low income housing areas.
- The majority of the gang members live elsewhere.
- Both
- Other *(Please explain.)* _____

SECTION 4: YOUTH HATE GROUPS

Questions 21-29 relate to youth Hate Groups only. If your court district does not have youth Hate Groups, proceed to Section 5.

21. Can you identify youth Hate Groups in your court district?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 22 through 30.)*
- No *(If NO, go to Section 5.)*

22. Which of the following types of youth Hate Groups are in your district? *(Check all that apply.)*

- Asian Gangs
- Hispanic Gangs
- Jamaican Gangs
- Other *(Please list.)* _____

22A. For each locality in your district, please list (or attach a list) the youth Hate Groups by group name and jurisdiction.

22B. What is the range of member ages in the local youth Hate Groups? *(Please provide the minimum and maximum ages for each gang.)*

22C. Which of following best describes the age of the majority of the Hate Group members in your court? *(Please check one.)*

- Under 14 years of age
- 14 -18 years of age
- Over 18 years of age

22D. How long have there been youth Ethnic Gangs been in your court district? *(Please check one.)*

- Prior to 1980
- 1980 - 1985
- 1985 - 1990
- 1990 - 1995
- Within the last year

22E. Do you see any of the following types of identifiable characteristics and/or indicators associated with the youth Hate Groups in your court district? *(Please check all that apply.)*

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Colors | <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Signs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tattoos | <input type="checkbox"/> Turf |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Graffiti | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ritual Scars | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structured Style of Dress (e.g., Starter Athletic Attire, Shoe Strings, Earrings) | |

23. Do the youth Hate Groups in your court district have initiation practices?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 23A.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 24.)*

23A. What are the initiation practices? *(Please explain.)*

24. Can youth Hate Groups members exit the gang voluntarily?

- Yes *(If YES, go to question 25.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 24A.)*
 Don't Know *(If you don't know, go to question 25.)*

24A. What are the procedures/penalties for members who do exit the youth Hate Groups?
(Please explain.)

25. Do the youth Hate Groups in your court district associate on a regular basis for the purpose of engaging in delinquent or criminal activity?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 25A, 25B, 25C and 25D.)*
 No *(If NO, go to question 26.)*

25A. Which of the following types of criminal activities do the youth Hate Groups engage in? *(Check all that apply.)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Violent Crime Against Persons | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Manufacturing/Distribution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Theft | <input type="checkbox"/> Gun Running |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution | <input type="checkbox"/> Victim/Witness Intimidation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extortion | <input type="checkbox"/> Breaking and Entering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gambling | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(Please explain.)</i> _____
_____ | |

25B. If the youth Hate Groups in your court district engage in violent crime against persons, to which of the following are they directing their activity? (Check all that apply.)

- Other Youth Gangs Law Enforcement
 Citizens Local Businesses
 Other (Please explain.) _____

25C. If the youth Hate Groups in your court district engage in drug manufacturing/distribution, which types of drugs are they trafficking? (Check all that apply.)

- Cocaine Heroin
 Marijuana Other (Please list.) _____

25D. Do the youth Hate Groups from your court district travel to other areas in the pursuit of their criminal activities?

- Yes No

26. Do members of the youth Hate Groups in your court district use weapons in their criminal activities?

- Yes No

27. Are the local youth Hate Groups in your area affiliated with youth Hate Groups in other areas?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 27A and 27B.)
 No (If NO, go to question 28.)

27A. If YES, which of the following are affiliated with your local Hate Groups? (Check all that apply.)

- Other Interstate Groups Both Types of Hate Groups
 Groups from other Virginia Localities

27B. What localities and/or states are the affiliated Hate Groups from? (Please list.)

28. Do the youth Hate Groups in your court district use budget hotels/motels as a base for their criminal activities?

- Yes No

29. Do the youth Hate Groups in your district use low income/subsidized housing area(s) as a base for their criminal activities?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 29A.)
 No (If NO, go to question Section 5.)

29A. Which of the following describe the youth Hate Group members' connection with low income/subsidized housing areas as a base for their activities? *(Please check one.)*

- The majority of the group members live in the low income housing areas.
- The majority of the group members live elsewhere.
- Both
- Other *(Please explain.)* _____

SECTION 5: FEMALE GANGS AND AUXILIARY MEMBERS

30. Does your court district have independent youth Female Gangs (e.g., Fly Girls, Lady Rascal Gangsters, Boulevard Girls)?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 31, 32 and 33.)*
- No *(If NO, go to question 34.)*

31. What is the range of member ages in the local youth Female Gangs? *(Please provide the minimum and maximum ages for each gang.)*

31A. Which of following best describes the age of the majority of the Female Gang members in your court district?

- Under 14 years of age
- 14 -18 years of age
- Over 18 years of age

32. Do the Female Gangs in your court district associate on a regular basis for the purpose of engaging in delinquent or criminal activity?

- Yes *(If YES, go to questions 32A, 32B, 32C and 32D.)*
- No *(If NO, go to question 33.)*

32A. Which of the following types of criminal activities do the youth Female Gangs engage in? *(Check all that apply.)*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Violent Crime Against Persons | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Manufacturing/Distribution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Theft | <input type="checkbox"/> Gun Running |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prostitution | <input type="checkbox"/> Victim/Witness Intimidation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extortion | <input type="checkbox"/> Breaking and Entering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gambling | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(Please explain.)</i> _____ | |

32B. If the youth Female Gangs in your district engage in violent crime against persons, toward which of the following are they directing their activity? (Check all that apply.)

- Other Youth Gangs
- Law Enforcement
- Citizens
- Local Businesses
- Other (Please explain.) _____

32C. If the youth Female Gangs in your district engage in drug manufacturing/distribution, which types of drugs are they trafficking? (Check all that apply.)

- Cocaine
- Heroin
- Marijuana
- Other (Please list.) _____

32D. Do the youth Female Gangs from your district travel to other areas in the pursuit of their criminal activities?

- Yes
- No

33. Do the Female Gangs in your area associate with the male gangs?

- Yes
- No

34. Are there females who are auxiliary (associate) members of youth male Street or Ethnic Gangs in your district?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 34A.)
- No (If NO, go to Section 6.)

34A. Have the probation officers in your office seen evidence of acts of violence and exploitation of the female gang associates?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 34B.)
- No (If NO, go to Section 6.)

34B. Which of the following examples of female gang associate exploitation have occurred? (Check all that apply.)

- Drug and Gun Running
- Sexual Exploitation
- Accessory to Criminal Activities
- Other (Please explain.) _____
- All the Above

SECTION 6: COURT SERVICE UNIT PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

35. Does your office regularly communicate youth gang involvement to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Judges in your district when juveniles are brought before the court?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 35A.)
- No (If NO, go to question 35B.)

35A. If YES, what is the nature of the communication? *(Please explain.)*

35B. If NO, why is gang involvement not communicated on a regular basis to the judiciary?
(Please explain.)

36. Does the court service unit identify gang members predispositionally for potential placement in secure detention?

Yes *(If YES, go to question 36A.)*

No *(If NO, go to question 37.)*

36A. If YES, do juveniles' gang identifications routinely impact the decision to place juveniles predispositionally in secure detention?

Yes

No

37. Are gang-involved delinquent offenses routinely prosecuted in your district?

Yes *(If YES, go to question 37A.)*

No *(If NO, go to question 38.)*

37A. Do the prosecutors in your district use the mob-related statues (*Code of Virginia*, Article 2, §18.2-38 et.seq.) to prosecute youth involved in gang-related criminal activities?

Yes

No

38. Does your court service unit have juveniles on probation who are gang members?

Yes *(If YES, go to questions 38A, 38B and 38C.)*

No *(If NO, go to question 39.)*

38A. If YES, does the court service unit regularly address gang activity in the rules of probation?

Yes

No

38B. Please provide examples of the types of restrictions that are routinely incorporated in gang members' rules of probation. *(Please explain.)*

38C. Does the Juvenile Court in your district enforce violations of the rules of probation dealing with gang activity restrictions?

Yes

No

39. Should the Department of Juvenile Justice minimum standards be amended to require that gang identification and involvement be included in social histories?

Yes

No

40. Does your court service unit collaborate with law enforcement and the Commonwealth's Attorneys' office(s) concerning gang activities in your district?

Yes (If YES, go to question 40A.)

No (If NO, go to question 41.)

40A. If YES, what is the nature of this collaboration (i.e., scheduled meetings, sharing of information)? (Please explain.)

41. Does your office regularly and formally share information on gang activities with the local schools in your district?

Yes (If YES, go to questions 41A, 41B and 41C.)

No (If NO, go to question 42.)

41A. If YES, what is the nature of this collaboration (i.e., scheduled meetings, sharing of information)? (Please explain.)

41B. Are you aware of specific programs/services that the schools have implemented to deal with gang involvement by students?

Yes

No

41C. Please provide the names of the programs/services and a brief description of each. (Attach additional sheets or information if necessary.)

42. Are you aware of the Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program to help seventh-graders avoid the gang mystique?

Yes (If YES, go to questions 42A and 42B.)

No (If NO, go to question 43.)

42A. Do your local schools use the program?

Yes

No

42B. Does your court service unit use the program?

Yes

No

43. Are there other agencies in your court district with which your unit shares gang information on a formal and regular basis?

- Yes (If YES, go to questions 43A and 43B.)
 No (If NO, go to question 44.)

43A. Please provide the names of the other agencies.

43B. What of information does your unit routinely share with the other agencies?

44. Does gang activity in your court district affect the operations, management and security of the Juvenile Court?

- Yes No

45. Are there court service unit administered programs/services that work to positively intervene in youths' gang involvement?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 45A.)
 No (If NO, go to question 46.)

45A. Please provide the names of the programs/services and a brief description of each.
(Attach additional sheets or information if necessary.)

46. Are there other local community-based programs/services that work positively to intervene in youths' gang involvement?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 46A.)
 No (If NO, go to question 47.)

46A. Please provide the names of the community-based programs/services and a brief description of each. (Attach additional sheets or information if necessary.)

47. Are there specific types of court service unit or community-based programs/services that you have found do **not** work to positively intervene in juvenile gang involvement?

- Yes (If YES, go to question 47A.)
 No (If NO, go to question 48.)

47A. Please provide examples of the types of programs/services that do not work to positively intervene in gang activity. *(Attach additional sheets or information if necessary.)*

48. Does your court service unit have a definition of a "gang?"

Yes *(If YES, go to question 48A.)*

No *(If NO, go to question 49.)*

48A. If YES, please provide your unit's definition.

49. Should there be statewide coordinating of gang information for local query (i.e., a clearinghouse of information)?

Yes

No

50. What strategic efforts does your court service unit use to prevent the growth of gangs in your court district (e.g., P.A.L. Program, SHOCAP, presentations to schools and/or community groups)? *(Please explain and attach additional sheets as necessary.)*

51. What can the General Assembly do to help localities deal with gang activity? *(Please explain and attach additional sheets as necessary.)*

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED SURVEY BY AUGUST 9, 1996 TO:

Kim Echelberger, Legislative Research Analyst

Virginia Commission on Youth

Suite 517B, General Assembly Building

910 Capitol Street

Richmond, Virginia 23219-0406

Phone: 804-371-2481

FAX: 804-371-0574

Youth Questionnaires

Notes

This appendix contains the youth questionnaire and interviewer instructions used for the survey of youth in both secure detention centers and Juvenile Correctional Centers (JCCs).

In addition, specific demographic information was included from the Client Profile Data Base for those juveniles committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). The Client Profile information which was collected and analyzed for the HJR 92 study is included as the last page of this appendix.

14. What races are included? (Circle all that apply.)

B W H Asian Amer Indian Other

15. Does the gang have any of the following identifiers? (Check all that apply.)

Leaders Hand signals Initiation rites
 Signs Tattoos Other distinctive markings
 Dress code Burns
 Hair Colors Specify: _____

16. Does your gang have specific territory/turf?
If YES, do they mark it with graffiti?

Y N
Y N

17. Does your gang sometimes engage in any of the following? (Check all that apply.)

Selling drugs Stealing cars
 Selling guns Extortion
 Robberies B&E's
 Fights with other gangs Vandalism
 Spray painting graffiti Prostitution
 Beating people up (specific groups) Other: _____

18. Have you ever been convicted of an offense that was gang related?

Y N

19. What is the main reason you joined a gang?

20. Which of the following contributed to your joining a gang? (Check all that apply.)

Friendship Protection Excitement
 Peer Pressure Be important (status) Other, specify: _____
 Money (financial gain) Access to drugs/alcohol _____

21. Can you leave the gang if you choose?

Y N

22. Have any of the following members of your family been members of any gang?
(Check all that apply.)

Mother Father Sibling Stepparent Parent's boy/girlfriend
 Other: _____

Date of Interview: _____ Interviewer: _____

Interviewer's interpretation of participant's honesty (check one):
 Valid survey
 Suspect
 Invalid survey

Circle any items above you consider definitely invalid.

HJR 92 JUVENILE CORRECTIONAL CENTERS
YOUTH GANG QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS

- | ITEM | INSTRUCTIONS |
|------|---|
| 1. | Record age in years. |
| 2. | Record city if youth lives in a city (e.g., Richmond) and county if youth does not live in a city (e.g., Henrico). |
| 3. | If English is not the youth's first language note this on the form. |
| 4. | Record country if not USA. |
| 5. | Was the youth in school the last semester they could have been in school. If yes, what grade? If no, did the youth quit going on his/her own? (versus being expelled, if expelled check no). |
| 6. | Read item as is - use term "gang". |
| 6a. | Read item as is but add such as: Crew, Clique, Posse. Circle one or note some other type of group if identified. We are not interested in youth groups with no criminal involvement (e.g., Boy Scouts, etc.). |
| 7. | Are you still an "official" member. |
| 8. | Record age in years. |
| 9. | Record name - have youth spell it if necessary. |
| 10. | Record years or year gang first started (e.g., 1990). |
| 11. | If youth does not know specific number - ask approximately. |
| 12. | Make sure item can be converted to numbers if youth gives percentages. If youth gives numbers that do not add up to previous item, make inquiry. |
| 13. | Record ages in years. Have youth approximate if he/she does not know how old or young the extremes are. |
| 14. | We are interested in the racial composition of gangs (e.g., all white, black, mixed, etc.). Circle all races that apply. |

15. Read list of identifiers and use examples:

- Leaders - Officers, specific roles for members, etc.
- Signs - any type design, symbol, etc. specific to gang
- Dress Code - earrings, shoe laces, brand of clothing, style, etc.
- Hair - specific type of cut
- Hand Signals - Specific greetings, hand shakes, etc.
- Tattoos - Specific to gang
- Burns - Specific to gang
- Colors - color of clothing, hats, bandannas, markings, etc.
- Initiation rights - specific procedure for joining, "jump in", etc.
- Other - specify

16. Does the gang control any specific area, e.g., school, neighborhood, street corner, etc. Do they mark it with gang specific graffiti.

17. Read the list of offenses but be sure to indicate that you are asking about the gang and not whether the interviewee has done any of these things.

If the person says yes to beating people up, ask if their is a specific group (e.g., gays, etc.) and record on form.

If the person says yes to other, specify.

18. This could be any conviction, current or prior.

19. Ask question as is and record summary of response (e.g., status in community, self protection, etc.).

20. Read list and check all that apply. Explain as necessary (e.g., protection - personal safety in community). Do not hesitate to probe and fit reason into one of the categories (e.g., all my friend were members - either friendship or peer pressure).

21. Can youth officially leave or quit the gang.

22. Check all that apply and specify for other.

Date and sign form. Only rate validity if youth was a member of a gang or other type of youth group that engages in criminal conduct. If you think youth was being honest, check valid. If you suspect youth was less than honest on some items, check suspect. If youth was clearly distorting items or exaggerating, check invalid. Note any items you think are particularly invalid.

**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA
HJR 92 GANG SURVEY**

Name: _____ Race: _____ Sex: _____ D.O.B. ____/____/____

Court Service Unit: _____ Number of Offenses: _____ 16.1-285.1: Y N

C1: _____ C2: _____ C3: _____ C4: _____ C5: _____ C6: _____

C7: _____ C8: _____ C9: _____

P1: _____ P2: _____ P3: _____ P4: _____ P5: _____ P6: _____

P7: _____ P8: _____ P9: _____ P10: _____ P11: _____ P12: _____

P13: _____ P14: _____ P15: _____

History of possession of or brandishing a firearm: Y N

Level of most serious current offense: _____ Level of most serious prior offense: _____

Level of chronicity: _____ Age at commitment: _____

Last grade placement: _____ Identified for special education: Y N

School attendance: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 School adjustment: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Living situation at time of commitment: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Prior residential treatment/placement: Y N Prior individual therapy: Y N

Prior family therapy: Y N Prior group therapy: Y N

Prior substance abuse treatment: Y N Previous psychotropic medication: Y N

Age at first community intervention: _____ Age at first adjudication: _____

Sexual victimization: 0 1 2 3 Physical victimization: 0 1 2 3

Degree of substance abuse: 0 1 2 3 Full scale IQ: _____

Susceptible to negative peer influence: Y N Security placement: Y N

Juvenile correctional center: Beaumont Hanover Barrett Bon Air NBJCC Oak Ridge

Final LOS: _____ To _____

DEFINITION OF "YOUTH GANG"

The following definitions represent information provided in response to the HJR 92 survey of the Commonwealth's Chiefs of Police, Sheriffs, and Court Service Unit directors.

Chiefs of Police	
Arlington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Have at least five members. ◆ Have a unique name or an identifiable leadership. ◆ Have distinguishable marks or symbols or have a structured dress style. ◆ Claim a geographic territory. ◆ Associate on a continuous and/or regular basis. ◆ Engage in delinquent and/or criminal behavior or activity.
Augusta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A gang is an organized group, with a recognizable leader, whose activities are either criminal or, at the very least, threatening to the community. ◆ A gang is a group of people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and engage in violence and unlawful activity.
Chesterfield	<p>A gang is defined as a group of three or more individuals that meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Have a unique name or an identifiable leadership. ◆ Have distinguishable marks or symbols. ◆ Have structured dress style. ◆ Claim a geographic, economic or criminal enterprise turf/territory. ◆ Associate on a continuous and/or regular basis. ◆ Engage in delinquent and/or criminal behavior.
Chilhowie	Same as your definition from the glossary.*
Clover	A group of organized males or females that hang out or ride together.
Dumfries	Two or more people coming together to commit a criminal act.
Emporia	Loose association of individuals with similar racial or other characteristics, having a defined geographic area and assembling/ associating for illegal purposes.
Fairfax City	Three or more people coming together for the purpose of committing delinquent acts.
Fairfax County	<p>A gang is defined as a group of people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and who engage in criminal activity and follow one or more of the listed criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Have a common name or ◆ Structured dress style or ◆ Common symbol or ◆ Frequently congregate and claim a geographic location or ◆ Associate on a regular or continuous basis.
Newport News	Any ongoing organization, association in fact, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its substantial activities the commission of criminal activity, and whose members individually or collectively engage in, or have engaged in, a pattern of criminal activity or delinquency.

Chiefs of Police (cont.)

Norfolk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consists of three or more persons. ◆ Has an identifiable organization and leadership. ◆ Employs identifiable signs and symbols as forms of identification and recognition. ◆ Participates in criminal activity as a group on a continued basis.
Onancock	A gang is any group of people whose common purpose is to be involved in criminal behavior or activity.
Prince William	A gang is a group of two or more people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and engage in acts detrimental to the public welfare; who obstruct justice or engage in (or have engaged in) criminal activity, either individually or collectively, and who create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation within the community.
Vienna	<p>A gang is defined as a group of people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and who engage in criminal activity and follow one or more of the listed criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Have a common name ◆ Structured dress style ◆ Common symbol ◆ Frequently congregate and claim a geographic location ◆ Associate on a regular or continuous basis.
Virginia Beach	Any group of two or more subjects gathered together on a continual basis for the purpose of committing antisocial or criminal behavior.
Winchester	Any group that forms for the purpose of criminal activity or requires prospective members to be assaulted by other members or wear certain clothing (colors) to join.

Sheriffs

Fairfax	<p>A group of people who form an allegiance for a common purpose, who engage in criminal activity, and who follow one or more of the listed criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Common name ◆ Structured dress style ◆ Common symbol ◆ Frequently congregate and claim a geographic location, or associate on a regular/continuous basis.
Arlington	A gang is a group of people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and commit violent, unlawful, or criminal activities.
Clarke	Very much the same as your glossary sheet.*
Halifax	An organized group with territories or turf and colors who deal in criminal activities.

Sheriffs (cont.)

Spotsylvania	Group that stays in a specific area, may have colors or signs and engage in criminal activity.
Stafford	A group of two or more people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and engage in acts detrimental to the public's welfare; who obstruct justice or engage in (or have engaged in) criminal activity, either individually or collectively; and who create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation within the community.

Court Service Unit Directors

Alexandria	18th District	A youth gang is a group of juveniles engaged in some type of criminal activity and whose primary purpose for existence is symbolic or communal rather than economically driven.
Leesburg	20A District	A youth gang is a self-formed association of peers, bound together by mutual interests, with identifiable leadership, well-developed lines of authority and other organizational features, who act in concert to achieve a specific purpose which generally includes the conduct of illegal activity and control over a particular territory, facility, or type of enterprise.
Norfolk	4th District	Youth who hang together and commit or conspire to commit crimes together on a continuous (more than once) basis.
Rocky Mount	22nd District	Gang--youth who identify themselves as a group by a name or a symbol and engage in recurrent criminal activity. Gang characteristics may include one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured style of dress • Hand signals • Claim a geographic territory or turf • Identifiable leadership • Regular or continuous association, and • Initiation practices

* Glossary definition provided as part of the survey:

Gang - youth who identify themselves as a group by a name or a symbol and engage in recurrent criminal activity. Gang characteristics may include one or more of the following:

- structured style of dress,
- hand signals,
- claim a geographic territory or turf,
- identifiable leadership,
- regular or continuous association, and
- initiation practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY FROM HJR 92 SURVEY REpondENTS

The following recommendations were provided by the Commonwealth's Chiefs of Police, Sheriffs, and Court Service Unit directors as a part of the survey response to the HJR 92 survey.

What can the General Assembly do to help localities deal with gang activity?

Chiefs of Police

Funding for training, computerized on-line tracking, graffiti removal.

Push for community education.

Enhanced penalties for gang related criminal activity.

Maintain statewide gang file.

State training.

Money to allow specialized training concerning gangs.

Money to allow the hiring of additional officers to combat the problem created by the existence of gangs.

Legislation passed to address gang recruitment as well as gang initiations.

Make assault by mob more than a Class 1 Misdemeanor if it can be proved the assault was gang related.

Put more schools on and make them available in all areas.

Pass a law that requires the courts that deal with gang members involved in gang type activity to hand down decisions and verdicts that have real teeth if they are found guilty.

The courts should make punishment hard enough that most gang types not want to go back through the courts again.

Get tough & stay tough.

Schools and juvenile court judges need to be stricter in sentencing when a member is brought before them.

Ordinances should be implemented for all cities which state strict penalties for graffiti and other gang related activities.

Gang seminars which focus only on gangs should be more available & frequent.

Have the D.A.R.E. Officers put more emphasis on gangs when going to schools and parent groups.

Pass more stringent laws.

Legislation that make being part of street gang and participating in illegal gang activity a violation of state statutes. States of Louisiana, Florida and California have this type legislation and each could be used as a model.

Strengthen Juvenile Laws. Enact laws with substantial consequences, give Juvenile Judges more authority in sentencing.

Stop treating young criminals as wayward children in need of counseling, i.e., treat young criminals as such, repeat offenders, etc. Treat wayward children as such. Separate the two categories and treat accordingly.

Improve the Juvenile Court System

Stay focused and involved with gang activity. Give the localities stringent legislation to fight gangs. I feel that all localities need to have a curfew ordinance for juveniles.

This ordinance could help deter juvenile crime and gang activity in local jurisdictions which have not been infiltrated with heavy gang violence or juvenile crime.

In larger cities a statewide curfew would help, especially for juvenile gangs. It would also help if the Assembly passed some laws to declare gangs being illegal if they were not registered with the State Police. There are a number of things that could be done but it would apply mainly to metro areas of the State.

Chiefs of Police (cont.)

Programs to prevent at a early age. More officers in school. Put some form of punishment back in schools for teacher to use. Someone has to teach morals to our youth. They don't go to church and parents can't teach what they don't know themselves.

More camps or homes for at risk kids. Y.A.L.E. is a good program. We need funds to build programs in both rural and urban areas. Stronger boot camps for young gang members.

Get with Federal Government and pass a gang law for crossing State lines to start a gang unit. This may cut down on new groups. Drugs are a big part of gangs. More drug programs for early school age groups-K to 5th.

Come up with a State law requiring youths to be at home by 10:00 P.M., or require parents to be responsible for their child's actions. Make punishment fit the law.

Draft law with mandatory jail sentences in all cases of conviction.

- Create new laws to better enforce juvenile gang activities
- Recognize the problem
- Create prevention and outreach programs
- Tougher laws, with penalties

Issue hard line no tolerance laws and make sure they are enforced.

Encourage J&D courts to issue penalties that are severe enough to deter.

Authorize the taking of photos of known juvenile gang members. Authorize the exchange of photos between law enforcement agencies.

Legislate stiffer penalties to all offenders.

Revamp a Juvenile Justice System that was created in 1950's when a serious offense was Grand Larceny Auto. Now 15 year olds are distributing drugs, committing weapon-related crimes, and serious Juvenile Offenses are continuing to rise nationwide, laws and the manner in which they are administered must be put in step with the problem.

Support State & Local authorities with additional manpower & funds. Work on the school level with more programs and education.

The General Assembly can help localities deal with gang activity by enhancing the Multi-Jurisdictional Grand Jury powers to include the investigation of gangs and gang related activity.

The following definition may be helpful in defining a "Gang." The Mobile Police Department listed three definitions for identifying gang members.

- 1) A gang is an organized group, with a recognizable leader, whose activities are either criminal, or at the very least threatening to the community.
- 2) A street gang can be described as a group of individuals who may or may not claim control over a certain territory in the community, and engage, (either individually, or collectively) in violence and unlawful criminal activity.
- 3) A gang is a group of people who form an allegiance for a common purpose, and engage in violence, and unlawful/criminal activity.

Nothing

Additional "Local" Juvenile Detention facilities.

Establish a statewide definition of "youth gang" that is realistic

Need stronger laws.

Continue the reform of existing juvenile justice system to allow identification and appropriate punishment of youthful career criminals.

Implement legislation to make illegal the active association with a defined street gang whose purpose is to promote delinquency or otherwise commit illegal acts.

Implement a Statewide curfew with penalties in excess of that imposed by local jurisdictions.

Revise codes to address mob assaults.

Invite a small cross section of Law Enforcement personnel to a planning session. Group should be small lots 10 to 20 so a good share of information will flow. The G.A. should be careful about "How we define a Gang" terms & def. seem to stay forever.

The G.A. should consider higher fines and penalties for subjects that participate in group crimes, i.e., 2 or 3 assaulting a person, more than 2 taking part in a B & E or robbery, etc.

General Assembly can establish more laws in dealing with Juveniles whereas the OFFICERS have more power with dealing with younger gang members.

Enact a statewide curfew law for juveniles. Budget more money for state grants to allow localities to deal with Youth Gangs in their area.

Chiefs of Police (cont.)

1. Appropriate money to establish and support a state-wide data base on all types of gangs.
2. Establish a Federal type Rico Law(s) for the Commonwealth.
3. Appropriate money to establish grants so the local jurisdictions that have gang problems can purchase the necessary gang intelligence collection equipment: computers, file servers, software, photo scanners, photography equipment.
4. Direct a committee to research and report on the various gang prevention programs running across the country.

Continue the awareness of a growing problem of our community. Continue the support towards law enforcement while they develop techniques to combat gangs.

- (1) provide grant funding for any program that offers alternatives to the "streets"
- (2) longer incarceration for those convicted of violent "street crimes"
- (3) "year-round" schooling
- (4) a system that allows for the immediate detention of juveniles regardless of the hour
- (5) allow for all correctional facilities to hold juveniles.

Make the Juvenile laws better and stronger.

More parental involvement is needed. Any initiative to bring about parental responsibility for their children's actions would go a long way to lessening gang problems overall.

The Juvenile Court system needs to met out harsher penalties to gang violators, as a whole. The focus needs to be put on personal responsibility and accountability for one's actions. Too many gang members know the current juvenile justice system, and how to avoid paying the consequences of their actions/activities.

As with any problem of this nature, training is essential. More training programs for law enforcement in the area of gang activity would be time and money well spent.

In the schools, gang-resistance training should be implemented at an early level and reinforced throughout grades 1-12. The appeal of gang membership seems to draw many young children into emulating older gang members, and must be curtailed.

Provide more training and maxi funds available for smaller departments to obtain to combat gang activity.

Provide funding to establish special task force units to deal with gang activity in jurisdictions that need assistance.

Sheriffs

Update Laws - provide funding to fight this type of unlawful activity.

Continue to monitor the problem and use intelligence from affected agencies to develop and institute programs when they are identified. A proactive versus reactive approach is suggested.

Provided more deputies on the street, such as Cops Grants and others.

(A.) Some weekends showing of State Police visibility in community should cut down and out drug activity on corners, in front of businesses, and around churches.

(B.) Most City Police Depts do not have all a lot of manpower to maintain control in community of 49,000 people.

Much needed police visibility is needed and should be shown both day and night in Petersburg community as a whole.

Give rural Sheriff's offices additional manpower to handle the situation.

Provide financial support for statewide information sharing network.

- 1) increase funding to localities to combat drug activity
- 2). adjust the ratio of officers to citizens down to 1 to 1500
- 3) understand that rural counties are not exempt from gang activity
- 4) increase the penalties for gang-related criminal activity

Enhance the working relationships with Sheriff's office and Law Enforcement throughout the Commonwealth relating to gangs.

Sheriffs (cont.)

For those communities that have a gang problem they should free moneys that are available to these communities to combat the problem. These gangs and their leaders need to be identified and pressure put on them to keep them in check along with their activities.

- 1) Narrow & intensify the penalties/laws pertaining to gangs.
- 2) Upgrade laws dealing w/ intimidation
- 3) Upgrade low-income Housing Regulations.

More manpower on the street. Sheriff's Offices should have a minimum of 1 deputy per 1500 population, with adequate personnel court services to serve court papers and keep the Law Enforcement deputies doing Law Enforcement.

Identify and define what a gang member is. Identify and define what constitutes a gang
Have enhanced punishment for gang members when they commit crimes.

Due to our rural location, we haven't experienced any gang activities.

Support family oriented legislation.

Deal swiftly & firmly with the criminal element which is influencing our good kids!

Put your criminals in jail, separate the disruptive & unruly kids from the good kids in our school systems i.e. reform schools, work camps, etc.

Stop throwing money into a system that has miserably failed. I know-- for at least 29 years since I've been in police work it has failed. And there's more!

Education, Training, Funding for manpower in the Local Departments.

Clearinghouse as suggested in question 37.

More specialized training.

Include training in basic police academy.

Stop the Comp. Board from cutting budgets while the General Assembly constantly passes legislation requiring more out of police agencies.

1. money for more personnel
2. set up a statewide data base to keep gang activity and members and have it available to all jurisdictions
3. to have more training in this area

More training for Local Law Enforcement, more update material for officers to study.

Provide training to local law enforcement, and provide grant money for personnel and programs.

Continue to pass tough Juvenile Laws. Treat them like adults.

None

We do not have experience with gang activity.

Court Service Unit Directors

Strengthen Community Policing and number of Probation/Parole Officials

Education in schools and communities for Law Enforcement Personnel

Promote 3 Tier Approach

- 1). Prevention
- 2). Intervention
- 3). Suppression

Allow localities to decide where they need to focus their effort.

Appropriations for additional juvenile probation and parole officers

Appropriate additional funds for C.S.A. funds

Surveillance officers to assist probation/parole

Develop funding for "Street Gang Busters"

Provide funds to develop a gang task force in the localities that appear to have gangs in their community. Emphasis should be placed on the results of that task force.

Provide funding for specialized positions to work with gang members. Provide training to Court Service Units and other agencies that do not have identified gangs for development of appropriate services and interventions.

Listen to Court Service Unit Directors who are having this problem in their locality.

Court Service Units (cont.)

1) Support early childhood intervention efforts that would eliminate the causes of gang formation (and/or of other delinquent behavior).

2)..Continue to support crime control act initiatives.

3)..Support real evaluation of programs that attempt to reduce delinquent behavior.

Support more interagency information sharing and programs which address the gang problem in a comprehensive way, i.e. education, recreation, employment peer support groups, probation.

Appropriate money for programs and training.

Encourage comprehensive community approaches to gang activity through information or special funding.

Recommend and perhaps legislate a mechanism for regional sharing of information to include CSU, School Law Enforcement

Toughen laws against adults who recruit juveniles into gangs.

Enforce laws regarding sexual exploitation of minors and statutory rape.

Alternative educational programs

INS Coordination (report in documented gang felons)

Early intervention (grades 3-4-5)

Secondarily; gun control

Legislate appropriate funding in areas of the state where the problem exists.

Assist to create a data based that all CSU have access to concerning gang activity. This should be the same data base that local law enforcement uses.

This office does not have a lot of experience working with gangs and does not have any suggestions at this time.

Due to lack of identifiable groups - no recommendations at the time.

Unknown

Provide funding to place trained staff on the street to deal with gang members and their families on a face to face basis. More recreational facilities and trained staff to provide safe areas of escape from gang involvement would be beneficial tot he neighborhood.

Provide funding for additional structured recreation, vocational education/training--(Both designed to increase self-esteem, competency and sense of affiliation--and police interdiction.

Difficult to answer as this CSU has minimal gang activity which has been directly tied to delinquent activity resulting in charges being filed.

Identification

Uncertain, as we have no experience with gang activity.

The police departments have desired a better communication linked with the CSU.

Agencies Identifying Youth Gangs in Virginia

Survey respondents reported youth gang presence in 32 localities.

LOCALITY	POLICE REPORT	SHERIFF REPORT	CSU REPORT
ACCOMACK			√
ALBEMARLE COUNTY		√	
ALEXANDRIA	√		√
ARLINGTON COUNTY	√	√	√
CHESTERFIELD COUNTY	√		
EMPORIA CITY	√		
FAIRFAX CITY	√		√
FAIRFAX COUNTY ¹	√	√	√
FALLS CHURCH CITY			√
HALIFAX COUNTY	√	√	√
HAMPTON CITY			√
HARRISONBURG CITY			√
HENRICO COUNTY	√	√	
LOUDOUN COUNTY		√	
LUNENBURG COUNTY ²	√	√	
MANASSAS CITY	√		√
MECKLENBURG COUNTY ³	√		√
MONTGOMERY COUNTY			√
NEW KENT COUNTY		√	
NEWPORT NEWS CITY	√		√
NORFOLK CITY	√		√
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY			√
NOTTOWAY COUNTY		√	
PORTSMOUTH CITY	√		√
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY ⁴	√		√
RICHMOND CITY	√		√
ROANOKE CITY			√
SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY		√	
STAFFORD COUNTY		√	
VIRGINIA BEACH	√		√
WAYNESBORO CITY	√		
WINCHESTER CITY	√		

Source: Virginia Commission on Youth Analysis of HJR 92 Surveys, October 1996.

¹ Includes Fairfax County, Vienna and Herndon Police Depts.

² Kenbridge Police Dept.

³ Includes Clarksville and South Hill Police Dept.

⁴ Includes Prince William County Police Dept. and Dumfries Police Dept.

Appendix G

GANG TYPOLOGY BY REGION

Northern Virginia Gang Activity

- 148 Youth Gangs were reported active in Northern Virginia.
- 16 (11%) were Virginia or multi-state based Organized Crime Groups with juvenile members/branches of operation.

REGION	Street Gangs	Ethnic Gangs	“Other” Gangs	TOTAL
Multi-Jurisdictional Northern VA Gangs	5	27	0	32
Multi-Jurisdictional Out-of-State Gangs	4	12	0	16
Female Gangs/ Auxillary Gangs	2	10	0	12
Localized Northern VA Gangs	44	39	5	88
TOTAL	55 (37%)	88 (60%)	5 (3%)	148*

* Percentages do not total 100% due to rounding.

Gangs Reported Active in Localities

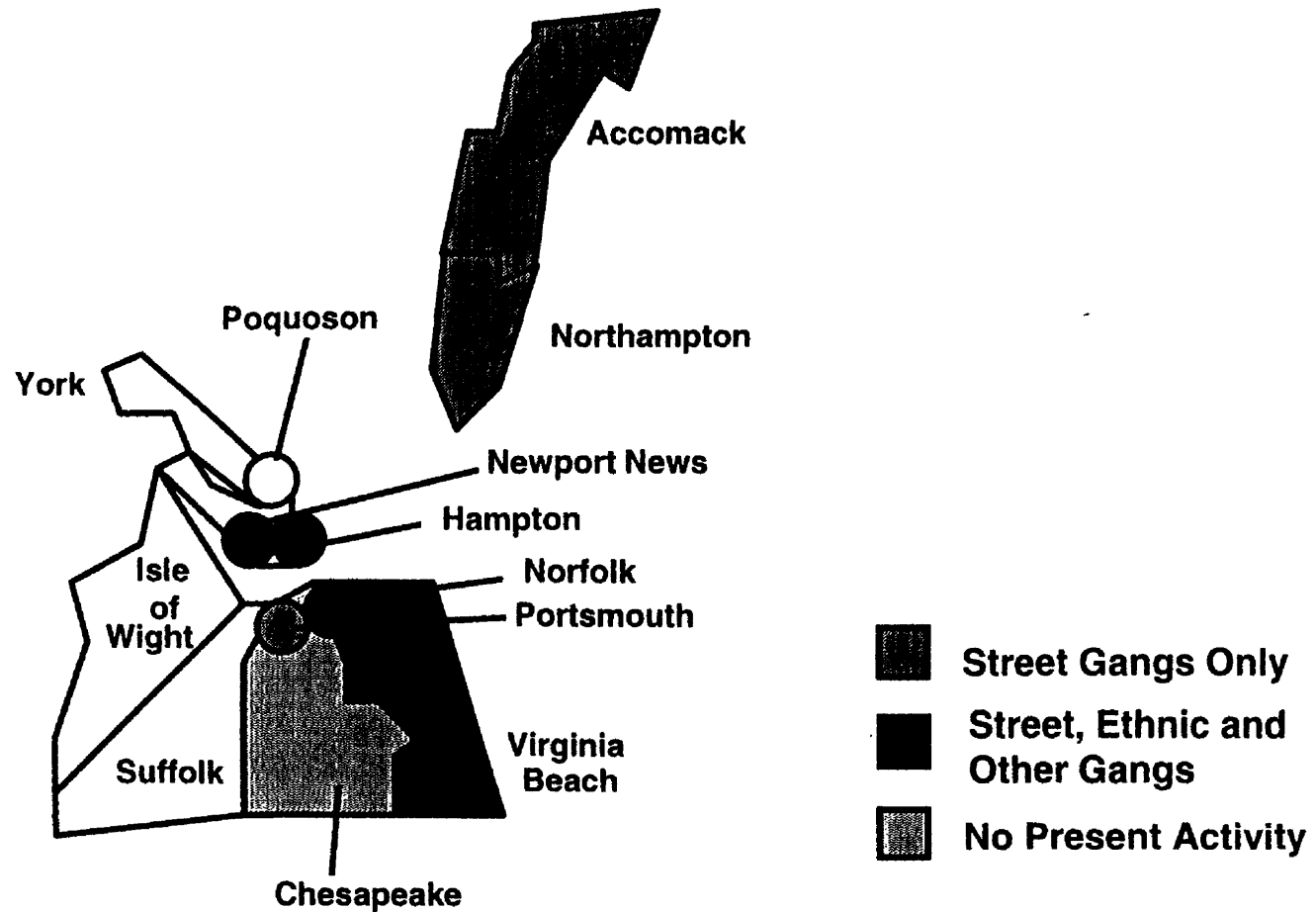
- The following number of gangs were reported by either law enforcement or the Court Service Units as active in Northern Virginia localities*:

<i>Alexandria</i>	20
<i>Arlington</i>	14
<i>Fairfax City/County</i>	74 ^(x)
<i>Falls Church</i>	18
<i>Harrisonburg</i>	2
<i>Loudoun</i>	5
<i>Manassas</i>	6
<i>Prince William</i>	20
<i>Stafford</i>	6
<i>Winchester</i>	8

(x) Includes 12 organized crime groups with juvenile (youth) members.

*Includes both gangs based in locality and those active in criminal acts in the locality.

Youth Gangs in Tidewater Virginia Localities



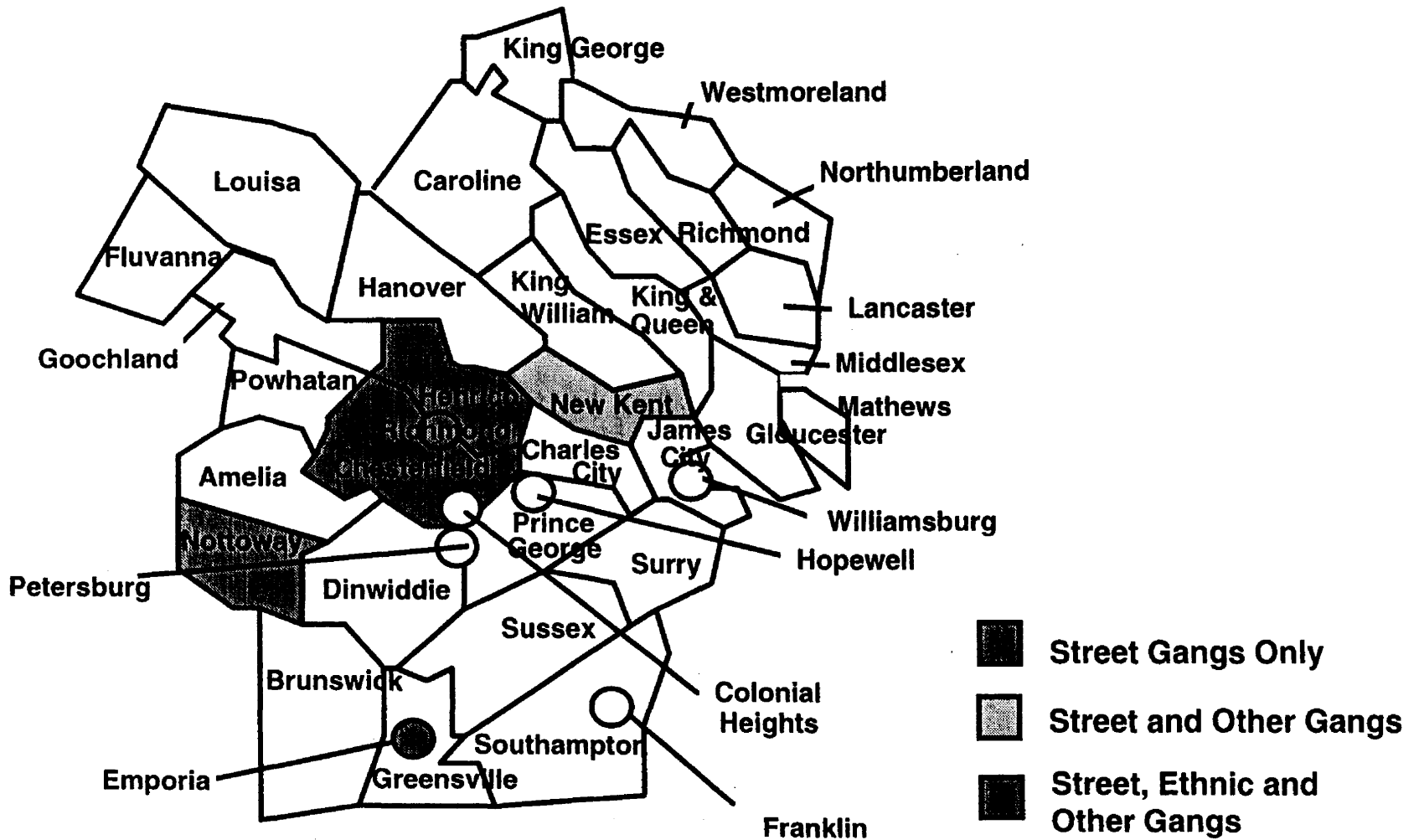
“Other” gangs include hate groups, prison gangs and/or motorcycle gangs.

Tidewater Virginia Gang Activity

- 81 Youth Gangs were reported active in Tidewater Virginia.
- The majority of the Tidewater gangs (85%) were Street Gangs.
- Portsmouth respondents reported that Youth Gangs were beginning to form in the City; however, they did not yet have formal names.

REGION	Street Gangs	Ethnic Gangs	“Other” Gangs	TOTAL
Accomack/Northampton	3	0	0	3
Hampton	9	0	1	10
Newport News	15	2	1	18
Norfolk	37	2	0	39
Virginia Beach	5	5	1	11
TOTAL	69	9	3	81

Youth Gangs in Central Virginia Localities



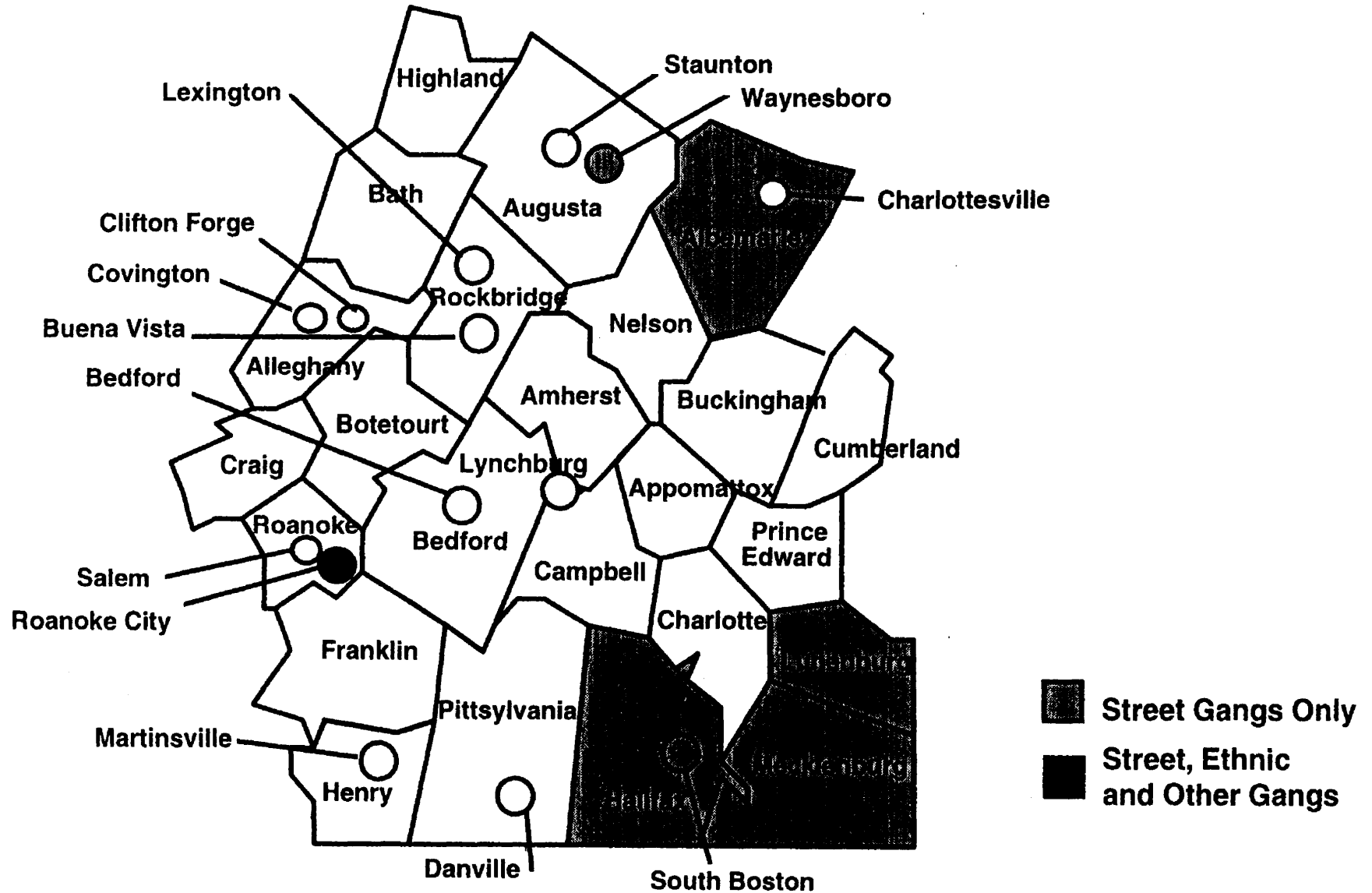
“Other” gangs include hate groups, prison gangs and/or motorcycle gangs.

Central Virginia Gang Activity

- 16 Youth Gangs were reported active in Central Virginia.
- The majority of the Central Virginia gangs (10) were from the City of Richmond.

REGION	Street Gangs	Ethnic Gangs	“Other” Gangs	TOTAL
Richmond City	8	2	0	10
Chesterfield County	1	2	0	3
Henrico County	0	1	0	1
Nottoway County	1	0	0	1
Emporia	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	11	5	0	16

Youth Gangs in Piedmont Virginia Localities



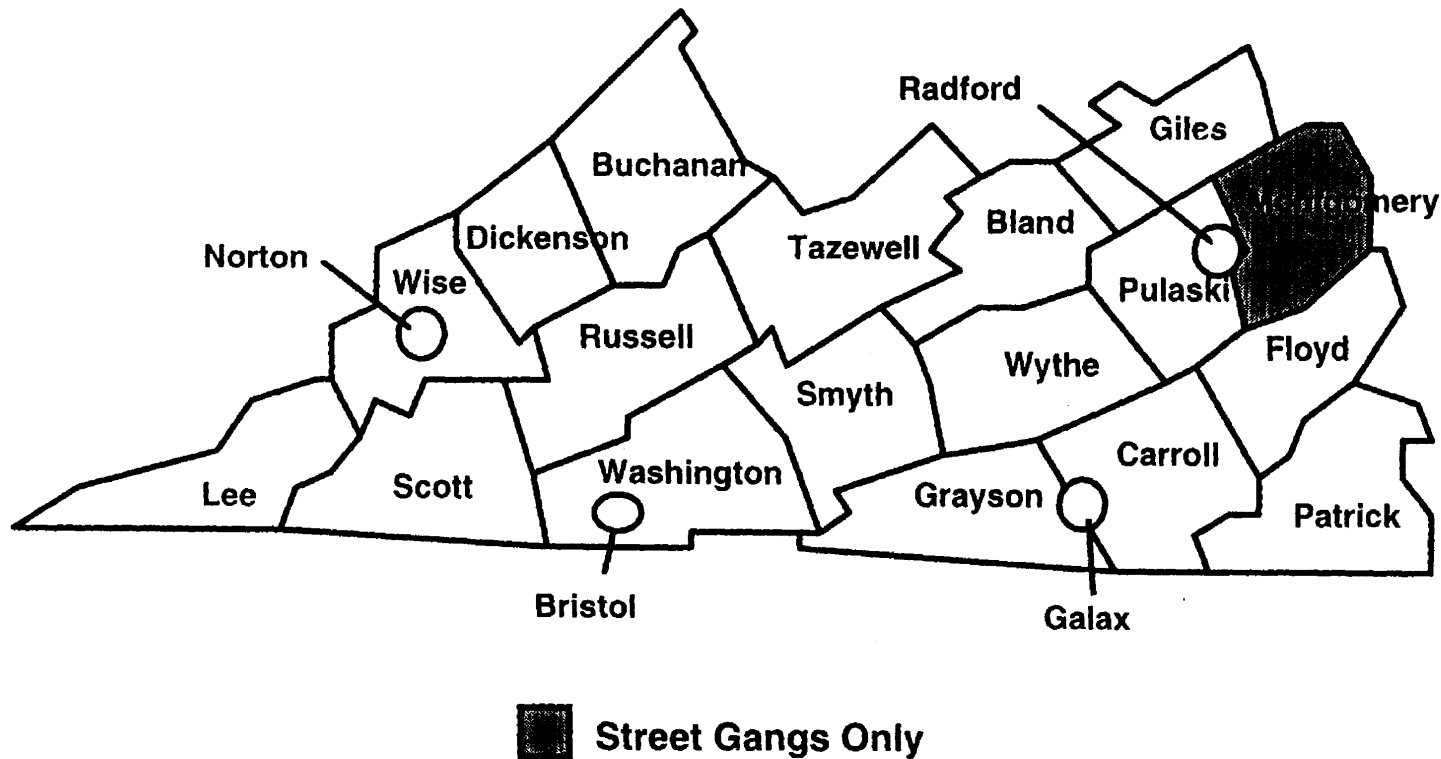
"Other" gangs include hate groups, prison gangs and/or motorcycle gangs.

Piedmont Virginia Gang Activity

- 16 Youth Gangs were reported active in Piedmont Virginia.
- Roanoke City respondents reported that Street Gangs were beginning to form in the City; however, they did not yet have formal names.

REGION	Street Gangs	Ethnic Gangs	“Other” Gangs	TOTAL
Halifax/South Boston	4	0	0	4
Lunenburg	1	1	0	2
Mecklenburg	4	0	0	4
Roanoke City	0	0	1	1
Waynesboro	3	0	0	3
TOTAL	12	1	1	14

Youth Gangs in Western Virginia Localities



- Only one locality in Western Virginia - Montgomery County - reported the presence of a youth gang.

**A Survey of School Violence and Potentially Violent Groups
in the Peninsula-Tidewater Area of Virginia**

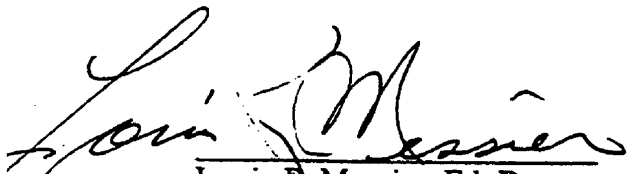
Background

This research was conducted in an effort to describe the nature and distribution of school violence and potentially violent youth groups in Peninsula-Tidewater school divisions. The study was developed from an educational-sociological perspective, and its results will be used to prepare professional educators and sociologists. Knowledge of adolescent violence and group behavior is crucial for training those who will become regular and special education teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, administrators, ancillary personnel, and criminal justice professionals.

Procedure

The survey instrument was developed and pilot tested by the authors with assistance of selected police, prosecutorial and educational staff. Additionally, several school groups participated in a pilot study to validate the survey form and procedure. With approval of superintendents and principals in each locality, we have collected data from eight school divisions from Richmond to Norfolk. These data sources are confidential and all respondents remain anonymous; no individual school is identified in any report.

The sample consists of 15% of each school division's total population taken from randomly selected intermediate and high schools. The authors distributed, collected and analyzed completed survey forms from each participating site. The following pages provide a descriptive analysis of over 5000 valid survey responses.



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1. From your point of view, how safe is your school?

- Survey results indicated that a preponderance of respondents believed that their school was safe, as evidenced by 85.2% of responses in the safe ranges with 12.7 % of these in the very safe range. Relatively few respondents (9.6%) questioned the safety of their school, and just 5.2% rated their school as "not safe."

2. Do teachers feel safe in your school?

- A clear majority of survey participants (86.3%) believed that teachers feel safe in their school. One in five respondents, in fact, suggested that teachers feel "very safe." A definite minority of survey participants (13.8 %) believed that teachers question their safety or do not feel safe.

3. Do students feel safe in your school?

- With regard to perceived student feelings, 81.9% of the survey participants endorsed responses ranging from safe to very safe; however, the incidence of "very safe" ratings for perceived students' feelings dropped to nearly half (11.9%) that for "very safe" ratings regarding perceived teachers' feelings. Additionally, a very slight increase was noted in the frequency of responses suggesting that students question their security or do not feel safe (18.1%).

4. Were you in this school two years ago?

- Approximately one-half (47%) of survey respondents were in their current school two years ago.

(Note: Items 5 through 7 were answered only by those survey participants who were in their respective schools two years ago.)

5. Do you feel as safe in school today as you did two years ago?

- Nearly two-thirds of this group indicated that they felt as safe as they did two years ago. Just over one-third (36.7%) felt less safe.

6. Do most teachers feel as safe in school today as they did two years ago?

- The breakdown of responses for this item (perceived feelings of teachers over time) was nearly equivalent to the above item involving feelings of individual respondents over the last two years. Over two-thirds (67.4%) endorsed responses suggestive of comparable or favorable feelings of teachers over the last two years. One third (32.6%) believed that teachers perceive more of a threat to their safety at the present time.

7. Do most students feel as safe in school today as they did two years ago?

- Consistent with comparisons of individual and perceived teachers' feelings over the last two years, this group of respondents perceived a decrease in the level of students' sense of safety. Over one-third (34.8%) of respondents believed that students do not feel as

safe as they did two years ago. Slightly less than two-thirds (65.2%) of the responses suggested that students continue to feel as safe as they did two years ago.

8. Have you personally observed any violent incidents in the current academic year?

- During the current academic year, a clear majority of respondents (72.4%) had personally observed at least one incident of violence. The remaining 27.6% of the respondent group denied observing such incidents.

(Note: Items 9 through 11 were completed only by those respondents who answered affirmatively on Item 8.)

9. Please mark all of the types of violent acts you observed in the current academic year.

- Less than half (42.9%) of the respondents reported observing intimidating gestures and aggressive stares. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents recalled witnessing verbal threats (62.8%), fist fights (63.1%), and pushing/shoving (64.2%) during the current academic year. Fights with weapons were observed by approximately one in ten (12.1%) respondents.

10. Where did the violent incidents that you saw take place?

- Two-thirds of the respondents reported witnessing violent acts in the school hallway, and half of the group reported witnessing violence in the school lunchroom. Bearing witness to violent incidents in classrooms was reported by 37.3% of the group. Endorsement of the following school locations of violent acts ranged from 20% to 29.2%: gym/locker room, restroom, school yard, and bus. Incidents occurring in the parking lot were reported by fourteen percent of the respondents. Six percent of the group also indicated that they had witnessed violent incidents in other locations on the school grounds.
- Respondents were also questioned with regard to observation of violent behavior taking place off school property. One in four respondents (25.1%) noted that they had witnessed violence in a residential area. Shopping malls were cited by 17.7% of the respondents. Movie theaters, restaurants, and other locations were each endorsed by fewer than one in ten individuals.

11. Who was involved in the violent incident(s) you observed?

- The vast majority (87.5%) of incidents reported took place between students only. Approximately one in ten respondents reported that incidents involved students and teachers. One third of one percent of the observed incidents involved teachers only.

(Note: Items 12 through 16 were answered only by those survey participants who had been at their present school for at least two years.)

12. Students' morale has declined noticeably during the past two years.
 - The most frequently endorsed response (42.9%) was neutral. Just over one-third of the respondents (36.8%) agreed with the above statement. One in five respondents (20.2%) disagreed with the statement.
 13. Teachers' morale has declined noticeably during the past two years.
 - Once again, the most frequently endorsed response (42.3%) was neutral. Remaining responses were evenly divided in agreement with the statement (30%) and disagreement with the statement (27.1%).
 14. Foul (profane, abusive) language has NOT increased noticeably during the past two years.
 - Responses indicate that over two-thirds (67.7%) of the respondents believe that an increase in foul language has occurred. Neutral responses were endorsed by 13.2% of the respondents. Approximately one-fifth (19.1%) of the respondents do not believe that an increase in foul language has occurred.
 15. Verbal threats have increased noticeably during the past two years.
 - One half of the respondents were decidedly in agreement with the statement that verbal threats have increased. Neutral responses and those in disagreement were each endorsed by approximately one-quarter of the respondents (26.9% and 22.9%, respectively).
 16. Talking back or arguing with school personnel has increased noticeably during the past two years.
 - At least three out of five respondents (62.7%) agreed that talking back and arguing has increased. Fewer than one in five respondents endorsed the neutral response (18.3%) or responded in disagreement with the stem statement (19%).
 17. Do violent incidents in your school involve a group or groups of youngsters?
 - One-half of the survey participants indicated that a group or groups of individuals were "sometimes" involved in violent incidents. Slightly less than thirty percent of the participants believe that groups were never involved in violent incidents in their schools. A decided minority of participants (approximately five percent) feel that groups are always involved, while approximately fifteen percent feel that groups are usually involved.
- (Note: Items 18 through 24 were answered by the 70% of survey participants who had endorsed ratings of "sometimes, usually, or always" on Item 17.)
18. Please indicate the name, age group, gender, group size, and racial composition of each group.
 - Name: One-half of the respondents were able to report at least one known name of a group involved in violent incidents.

- Age: The most frequently cited ages of group members were 13-15 (37.5%) and 16 and up (37.5%). Approximately eight percent of respondents believed group members were between 10 and 12 years of age. Seventeen percent were unable to state age ranges of group members.
 - Gender: Nearly one-half (47.7%) of the groups were comprised of all males. Forty percent included both males and females. Female groups were identified by 12.2% of the respondents.
 - Group size: The majority of respondents believed that group size was limited to ten or fewer members (20.6% for 6-10, 39% for 3-5). Only 13.6% believed that the groups included eleven or more members. It should be noted that slightly over one quarter of the respondents (26.7%) were unable to estimate group size.
 - Race: One-half of the respondents reported that the groups were mainly comprised of African-American individuals. Slightly over one-quarter (27.5%) of the respondents indicated that group membership was not race specific. Predominantly white groups were reported by 17.3% of respondents. Fewer than one percent of respondents reported knowledge of Hispanic or Asian groups. Three percent of survey respondents did not know the racial composition of observed groups.
19. Does the group (or do groups) involved have any recognizable identity?
- Nearly one-half of the respondents (46.3%) suggested that the groups do have a recognizable identity. Forty-one to forty-three percent of the respondents cited the following identifiers: name, ethnic or racial composition, neighborhood, and family income. Thirty-eight percent of respondents identified drug use as a common bond among group members, while thirty-two percent identified occupational similarities. Other, nonspecified, identifiers were reported by thirty-eight percent of respondents.
20. Does the group (or do groups) have any of the following characteristics?
- The most frequently endorsed characteristic, selected by nearly one-half (47.2%) of the respondents, was that the group (or groups) have recognized leader(s). Similar hair styles and dress styles sported by group members were reported by 44% of the respondents. Following closely behind adoption of particular hair and clothing styles was the respondents' perception that the groups have involvement in criminal activity, including the sale of drugs. Such activity was reported by 43.2% of the respondent pool for this item series. The following characteristics of groups involved in violent incidents were endorsed by 36.4% to 41.1% of the respondents: involvement in economic enterprise (36.4%), hand signals (38.2%), graffiti (39.2%), sign(s) or symbol(s) (39.8%), geographic territory (40.2%), and "colors" (41.1%).
21. Does the group (or do the groups) have some apparent purpose?
- Approximately one-half of the respondents (48.2%) suggested that the purpose of known groups is to start fights. "Hanging out" was reported by 45.9% of the respondents. The protection of fellow members and the sale of drugs each received 41.9% of respondent endorsements. Forty percent of respondents reported that the groups involved were primarily in existence for the purpose of using drugs. Money making emphasis was indicated by approximately 37% of the respondents.

22. What kind(s) of group-related activities have you seen?

- Nearly one-half (49.4%) of the respondents indicated that groups were observed engaging in teasing and taunting behaviors, and 47.5% indicated that group members were observed projecting aggressive stares. Sexual harassment (46.1%) and fighting (45.9%) received similarly frequent citations. Robbery by force and retaliation by force were activities reported by 38.8 % and 39.1% of the survey respondents, respectively. Turf-related conflicts were reportedly observed by just over one-third (35.8%) of the respondents. Other, nonspecified, activities were reported by 39.8% of the respondents.

23. How do people become "members" of the group(s)?

- Slightly less than half (47.7%) of the respondents believed that individuals were invited by existing group members to "join" the group(s). Membership which is "required" by race or neighborhood residence and membership obtained through initiation were cited by forty percent of the respondents. Other, nonspecified, means of securing group membership were reported by 43.7% of the survey respondents.

24. Where does this group (or, do these groups) operate?

- One-half of the respondents felt that the group(s) operated only in school or at school events. Forty-five percent indicated that operations took place only in some neighborhoods. Broad-based operation of groups was also reported. City-wide activity was cited by 40.6% of the respondents, Peninsula-wide activity by 37%, and statewide activity by 40.4%. "Other" locations were reported by 43.9% of the respondents.

25. Below is a list of behaviors that you may have observed during the past year. Please indicate the number of times you have observed such behaviors, if at all, and then indicate the number of those you believe were gang-related and the number that were not gang related.

- The most frequently endorsed behavior observed one to two times was the use of a knife or gun or some other thing (like a club) to get something from a person (74.5%). The remaining one-quarter of the respondents reported having witnessed three or more of such incidents. Similar proportions were noted in response to the item inquiring about a student hurting someone badly enough to need bandages or a doctor; 71.7% had witnessed this one to two times with 28.2% having witnessed such an occurrence three or more times. Students arguing or fighting with a parent was observed one to five times by 70.4% of the respondents and six or more times by 29.4% of respondents.
- Approximately two-thirds of the respondents (63.2% -) reported observing the following behaviors one to two times: student hitting an instructor, students in one group of friends fighting against a different group of friends, student taking something worth under \$50, and a student taking something worth over \$50. The remaining approximate one-third of the respondents (32% - 36.7%) reported having witnessed such behavior three or more times.

- Increased frequency of the following behaviors was evidenced by 43% to 47% of respondents having witnessed these incidents three or more times: student involvement in a serious fight at school, damaging school property on purpose, and student involvement with police because of something he or she did. Fifty-three to fifty-seven percent of survey participants reported having witnessed such behaviors one to two times.

26. What is your school status?

- The survey participant pool was composed of middle school students, high school students and teachers. Of the traditional middle school students, 11.1% were in the sixth grade, 14.2% in the seventh grade, and 18% in the eighth grade. The breakdown of high school students was as follows: ninth grade - 11.2%, tenth grade - 12.%, eleventh grade - 11.1%, and twelfth grade - 11.3%. Teachers comprised 9.3% of the survey sample.

27. Are you?

- Survey participants included 42.3% males and 57.6% females.

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