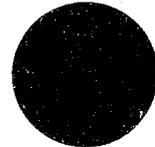


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**Corrections Model**

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## Statement of the Problem

Youth gangs and the problems associated with them have proliferated in correctional institutions over the past two decades. They have increased in juvenile detention centers, jails, correctional institutions, and prisons. Gang youth often maintain close ties with their gangs of origin in their communities. Compared to traditional correctional populations, some young gangs are more organized, manifest greater solidarity, and present greater problems to correctional management. Other youth gangs are less organized, possess less internal solidarity, present equally challenging problems to management because of their violence and criminal behavior. In some correctional settings today, youth gangs are responsible for high levels of contraband activity including drug distribution, a large proportion of prison violence against staff and inmates, and in some instances the coordination of crime between the correction setting and the community (Camp and Camp, 1985, 1988; Regulus, 1982).

Problems of controlling youth gangs in correctional settings differ from those of controlling youth gangs in the community. One reason is that their confinement in the limited space of the correctional setting sometimes contributes to an intensification of collective solidarity and resistance to authority. Another is that gang youth in the institution are in a sense members of the correctional organization itself, albeit as involuntary members. Ordinarily they are not members of larger sanctioned organizations in the community. Gangs in correctional institutions tend to have extensive knowledge of operations and can make stronger claims on the resources of the correctional facility. The correctional organization is consequently more vulnerable to internal disruption and subversion by gangs than are community-based organizations. Furthermore, these problems are more serious or chronic in those institutions with a history of gang problems, usually when the proportion of gang offenders of total inmates is high. In the emerging gang problem institutional context, fewer gangs and gang members are usually present, and their gang behaviors are less problematic.

The community, the correctional institution and the gang problem are closely interconnected. Youth gangs in correctional institutions are, by and large, outgrowths of street based gangs. In some situations, gangs first developed in the correctional setting and later transferred their organization to the community. It is important to recognize that members of youth gangs, despite often receiving enhanced sentences, do not remain in correctional institutions for long. These youth return fairly quickly to their community and often to their prior criminal gang patterns. It is imperative therefore that the correctional institution and the ways it deals with its gang problem be viewed as part of a community-institutional continuum since the basis for the gang problem is still largely in the community.

## Mission, Goals, and Strategies

Corrections provides restrictions on the freedom of offenders. By legal mandate, it incapacitates them and reduces their offending in the community while they are in the facility. Hopefully it also contributes to a reduction in their criminal activity upon re-entry into the community. Four broad often conflicting goals are associated with the correctional mission:

- 1) stable control of the operations of the correctional facility and its programs;
- 2) community safety through the separation of offenders from the community;
- 3) care and development of the physical, social, and mental well being of inmates during their stay in the institution; and
- 4) preparation of inmates for noncriminal behavior on their reentry into the community.

Stable control of operations of the correctional institution and its programs is the most important of these goals. It is the prerequisite for or the means of community protection, provision for inmate well being, and preparation of inmates for reentry into the community. Achievement of stable control of operations and the other correctional goals is contingent on the organization's ability to meet two interrelated challenges. One is the translation of these goals into a set of specific objectives and program designs. The second is that youth gang inmate interests and goals are often in conflict with those of the correctional facility. Strategies to induce or force inmate compliance with organizational goals are necessary to meet these challenges and overcome gang youths' interests. Four specific gang related goals for suppression and intervention should therefore be included in the correctional management agenda:

- 1) prevent and control youth gang violence, other youth gang crimes, and covert gang disruption of facility operations;
- 2) weak youth gang organization and solidarity and substituting conventional alternatives;
- 3) reduce the ability of youth gangs to participate in crimes which transcend the boundaries of the institution into the community; and
- 4) provide assistance to gang member in learning social values and behaviors and developing skills that contribute to the adoption of conventional lifestyles upon their return to the community.

To achieve these specific goals, corrections management should develop a gang suppression and intervention program. Such a program relies on five general strategies: ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE, COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION, OPPORTUNITIES

PROVISION, SOCIAL INTERVENTION, AND SUPPRESSION. This document outlines a model for a general gang suppression and intervention program for a correctional facility. The following discussion is divided into two major sections: a description of basic strategies and their components; and analysis of selected issues in the social control of youth gangs. Also addressed are differences in the application of these strategies and ways to handle gang related issues in chronic and emerging gang problem correctional contexts.

## **Basic Strategies and Components**

### **Organizational Development and Change**

This strategy involves modifying old or creating new policies and procedures as well as developing resources to address gang problems in the institution. Organizational development should begin with information gathering and assessment to determine the scope and characteristics of gang problems within the correctional facility, which should then guide development of specific gang policies, creation of an administrative coordinating mechanism, and staff training and deployment, and resource allocation. Organizational development also involves consultation and planning with the institution's parent agency, juvenile and adult committing authority (courts and judges), and/or juvenile and adult release authorities (parole board).

**Information and Assessment.** An accurate assessment of gang problems in the institution requires answers to several questions including: Are gangs or gang members present in the facility? How many gangs and gang members are there? What specific overt and covert problems, if any, are related to gangs in the facility, e.g., inter gang violent behavior, intimidation of non-gang inmates and staff, recruitment of non gang inmates to gang membership, involvement in contraband and drug trafficking? Is the gang problem new and emerging or chronic and recurrent? In what correctional facility areas and activities do gang problems occur? Is there overt or covert competition between prison authorities and gangs for control of the institution or areas of the facility? Are there ongoing interactions between gang members in the facility and in the community, and what problems and potential problems occur because of those relationships?

Systematic answers to these questions will provide a basis for assessing the effects of gangs in the facility. Evidence and interviews from all units and key personnel should be obtained since no aspect of the correctional operations is immune from gang problems. The characteristics of the problems identified become the basis of or design for design of a program of suppression and intervention. Follow up assessment should chart ongoing changes in the gang situation. Periodic revision of objectives and adjustments in suppression and intervention strategies should be based on these repeated assessments.

A system of gang intelligence and information gathering should

also be initiated to identify ongoing and developing gang activities and problems outside the correctional facility which may affect its internal operations. This knowledge will enhance the institution's ability to anticipate, prevent and control problems proactively rather than relying on a defensive and reactive mode of gang suppression and intervention after the problem has become established. A number of sources of gang intelligence should be relied upon. One is a record of information (logbooks) about gang activities, rumors, developing gang relations, and problems within each residential and program unit. Formal and informal contacts by staff with inmates should be utilized. Selected phone, mail, and inmate visits should also be monitored within the limits prescribed by law.

This system of intelligence should be augmented by the exchange of information with other correctional facilities, parole units, local police, as well as federal authorities. Ideally a special coordinative unit should be established to coordinate and monitor information concerning problems both within and outside the institution, particularly in those states or jurisdictions with chronic gang problem contexts. One issue that must be addressed in the development of inter-agency intelligence is the avoidance of infringement on gang youth due process rights.

For example, provision of certain information by police to correction officials or vice versa about a particular "unreported crime" may present a conflict of interest with their responsibility to protect both the community and rights of accused offenders. Such due process issues and conflict of interests can be reduced with thoughtfulness while serving the collective needs of agencies toward regulation of gangs. (Additional comments on strategies and methods of developing and coordinating intelligence in specific institutions are provided in the discussions below on "administrative coordination" and "community mobilization").

**Gang Policies.** A policy differentiating gang and non gang inmates and their respective patterns of criminal (or social) behavior is advisable, particularly in chronic gang problem contexts. It should, however, not be construed as recognizing the legitimacy of gangs. The criminal gang should be recognized as an illegitimate organization. All personnel in the correctional facility should clearly understand that official recognition of any positive function of the gang gives status to and strengthens gang solidarity while at the same time weakening institutional authority.

Gang specific policies have to be developed and implemented appropriate to the gang problems experienced by individual correctional programs. Where problems are small in scope or just starting, specific gang policies might best be limited to attempts at diverting individual youth from gang involvement through counseling and assistance and by developing non gang activity alternatives for them. In more extreme chronic gang situations, gang-related policies must be formulated to address housing, programming, and discipline arrangements as part of general inmate management within the institution. The following policies may be

appropriate depending on the scope and characteristics of gang problems in specific correctional facilities. The more serious the actual problems, the more formal and specific policies should be.

Classifications of criminal or aberrant behavior should make explicit distinctions between those that are committed for gang and non-gang motivated purposes. Such gang member behavior classifications presume that distinctions will be used to guide correctional intervention with gang-motivated problems and not necessarily with non-gang motivated problem behavior of gang members:

a) Program policies should define specifically the gang behavior which is inappropriate for work, educational and training programs, visitation and communication privileges.

b) Policies prohibiting the display of gang colors, symbols, signing, and graffiti may need to be adopted, particularly when they are the sources of intimidation, assault, or other criminal behavior. Appropriate levels of punishment for infractions must be carefully worked out.

b) Policies should be established to determine whether gang members and non gang members will be housed in the same or different units and or under what possibly different security classifications.

The adoption of gang policies should be based on an informed "cost benefit" assessment which considers potential positive and negative side effects. For example, separating inmates may be appropriate to protect non gang youth from gang intimidation and harassment. But a potential negative effect of this policy might lead to intensified gang activity or the amalgamation of gangs within these segregated housing units or institutions. Whether such a policy is advisable is dependent on consideration of which problem is more severe and which problem can the correctional institution can better manage.

Policies that specify distinctions between gang and non-gang behavior must be "fair." They should meet legal requirements stipulating nondiscriminatory and humane treatment for all inmates. In some instances, gang behavior specific policies might require enabling legislation. Fairly administered policies can contribute to their acceptance by inmates as legitimate means of insuring the well being of all. It should be recognized though that the fairness of policies will not always be acknowledged by gang member inmates who lose status and power as a result of them.

**Administrative coordination.** Establishment of a centralized system of administrative coordination of gang suppression and intervention strategies is a critical component of organizational development. The pattern of administrative authority will differ among facilities based on the scope and seriousness of the gang problems targeted, the physical layout of the facility, and the mix of strategies employed. Nevertheless, centralized gang oversight is required to insure an appropriate balance of strategies as well as consistent responsive decision-making across security, housing, and program units of the institution.

Assessment and centralized intelligence gathering, discussed

earlier, should be nested within this central gang administrative structure. One way to do this is to rely on a facility "gang information coordinator" (or several under a gang program administrator in larger correctional facilities) within the administrative coordinating unit. This individual would be responsible for daily compilation and dissemination of information on gang activities, actual and potential problems within and outside the institution which have implications for the behavior of youth within the facility. The sources of information again would be records of inmate activities, problems, rumors, etc., occurring in housing and program units of the facility, routine and emergency contacts with police, parole, and other community-based agencies, local newspapers, etc. Procedures regarding the use of information for suppression and intervention purposes within the facility should be carefully defined and coordinated.

**Staff training and deployment.** Success in gang suppression and intervention also depends on knowledgeable and experienced staff who are interpersonally effective, that is, who have the ability to establish authoritative rapport, yet communicate with due regard for inmate self-respect and dignity. They should be deployed to manage the most critical gang problems and situations. The most experienced and skilled staff should be assigned to high risk gang locations where gang problems are likely to occur, e.g., at correctional housing, work, school and recreational sites and when inmates are in transit. Training should provide 1) information on gang recognition and gang behavioral patterns, 2) general methods and techniques of gang suppression and intervention, and 3) practice exercises in dealing with gang crises or emergencies. All staff including security, administration, treatment, and other personnel should receive gang awareness and crisis training. Periodic retraining should be routinely provided.

Staff should also be knowledgeable and sensitive to cultural differences among inmates, particularly since gang youth in most jurisdictions are Black and Hispanic. Gangs of southeast Asian and Filipino youths have also developed in some jurisdictions. Both white and minority staff should be able to develop rapport with youth and thereby serve, at least partially, as role models. Cross cultural and minority gang specific content should be provided to prevent misinterpretations of behavior that may or may not be gang specific. Recruitment of a racially and ethnically diverse staff is strongly recommended. It may be necessary to implement innovative recruitment programs to attract qualified minority staff in correctional facilities located in rural areas.

Staff effectiveness increases the longer and better they know the habits and relations among youth under their supervision. Frequent staff changes and the presence of inexperienced personnel do not make for effective social control. Staff interaction with gang members and the way they manage critical gang situations should be evaluated regularly to identify and correct problematic situations and develop both better training and policy procedures.

**Fiscal and State Resources.** Also, it is important to recognize that there are limitations to any development strategy if

resources are lacking. The absence of adequate correctional resources means that the most elementary forms of suppression or warehousing of inmates is likely. While there is some room for significant policy and administrative decision making in the selection and application of strategies even when resources are limited, problems of overcrowded facilities, inadequate layout of housing and physical plant, inadequate work, educational, and recreational resources, and lack of qualified staff may make it almost impossible to prevent or adequately control gang problems.

**Planning with state and other agencies.** Finally, organizational development in the particular correctional facility must be planned with the entire state correctional and justice systems. The director of a specific correctional facility must work closely with the correctional system's central offices to insure that policies are consistent with overall state policy and that maximum resources are forthcoming to support the local facility's goals and objectives. Support of specific facility policies and programs must also be obtained from court, parole, and juvenile and adult release authorities. All three units of the justice system, court, parole, and corrections need to closely coordinate their efforts in regard to particular programs of suppression, supervision, and rehabilitation of gang youth established.

### **Community Mobilization**

This strategy signifies that a network of organizational and program relationships and resources should be established with outside organizations and groups to both support and reinforce the work of the institution as well as that of community agencies and groups in control and rehabilitation of gang youth. The correctional institution and the community should be viewed as a contiguous social environment.

Systematic contact and networking with community agencies contribute to the correctional facility's efforts to: a) protect the community from crime while youth are incarcerated and after their reentry into the community and b) enhance the likelihood that youth will make successful adjustments when they return to the community through positive involvement with representatives of community groups. Parole and community agencies and organizations have vital roles to play in the supervision and rehabilitation of gang youth. Contacts in regard to community education, job training and placement services should be initiated by parole and community agencies while the youth is still in the institution, and prior to release.

A key function of community networking, especially with the police, should be shared intelligence on a continuing basis about related gang problems both in the correctional facility and the community. This could include collaborative case assessment and planning for individual gang members upon entry as well as prior to release from the correctional facility. Such networking could provide timely prevention and control of gang problems. For

example, gang problems in the community can spill over into the correctional facility and vice versa.

Finally, both community organization and organizational development both suggest a role for inmates in the development of a legitimate and productive corrections environment. To the extent feasible and within the limits of a stable and orderly correctional environment, attention should be given to participation by youths and/or their representatives, preferably on an advisory basis, in decisions affecting rules and regulations, development of services and opportunity programs as well as facility improvements. A system of communication between inmates, staff and administration is also required so that consideration is given to inmate grievances and to insure due process for youths. The youths as a principal component of the correctional community must be given appropriate recognition in and some responsibility for the legitimate and productive development of that community.

### **Opportunities Provision**

This strategy emphasizes the development of programs and services of remedial education, training and jobs, both during the gang member's incarceration and during his transition back into the community. Youth gangs may be viewed as an alternative means for status and success that legitimate opportunities in the community did not provide. The provision of legitimate opportunities is therefore essential to correct lost and missed conventional opportunities experienced by gang youth. For younger gang members, 16 and under, opportunities provision should emphasize remedial educational and work awareness programs; for older youth, remedial education or GED, job training, apprenticeship, job referral and career development would be essential.

Although these programs should have immediate relevance for the youth upon release from the correctional institution into the community, they should be designed and managed with long-term utility for inmates in mind. Younger youth returning to academic settings should be assisted with placements in school or vocational programs which best serve their needs. Mainstream placement of gang youth with regular student populations is the ideal. However, when local schools cannot accommodate gang youth who have special needs, alternative schools, community agency GED programs and special work study programs would be the logical alternatives.

Preparation of older gang youth for reentry may be more complex and difficult. Major academic deficiencies have to be overcome. Ingrained gang attitudes have to be changed. Many of these deficiencies and work attitude problems should be targeted even before the youth leaves the institution. Satisfactory job adjustments in the community will be delayed if a suitable program of training and work experiences are not provided in the institution before inmates leave.

## **Social Intervention**

This strategy consists of crisis intervention, counseling, values education, referral, and advocacy to assist gang members with a range of personal, social, and correctional adaptation problems including housing, medical, legal, school and work and relations with other gang and non gang inmates. Core social services are individual, group counseling, and values change training. Each gang youth should undergo an intense assessment of personal values and problem solving ability including learning how to confront neighborhood pressures and inducements to criminal behavior as well as how to make legitimate career plans. Emergency assistance with personal and family problems should also help reduce problems which cause stress and can contribute to adjustment problems in the institution.

**Values Curriculum.** A values curriculum should emphasize accountability of gang youth for their destructive behaviors. One approach would be for gang youth to evaluate their behavior from the vantage point of effects on their family, on the victims and their families. Gang youth tend to ignore or minimize the emotional and economical harm done to victims and families resulting from their behavior. Victims of gang crime, parents and neighbors either of the gang member or victim should be gathered in a series of group discussions at the institution to confront incarcerated gang members directly with the effects of their violent and criminal behavior.

**Counseling.** Counseling should systematically assist the gang youth to confront the "behavioral errors" of his gang and criminal behavior. The counseling program, whether individual or group, should emphasize cognitive (rational) assessment of actual and potential behaviors. It should also be used to engage the youth in structured planning and goal setting for both his institutional stay and subsequent release from the correctional facility. Counseling "hardened" gang youth is a difficult enterprise and requires seasoned workers, preferably with prior experience in gang neighborhoods as well as a keen understanding and willingness to assist such youth. Gang youth are highly skilled at manipulation and intimidation. They can easily coopt or blunt the efforts of counselors.

**Family involvement.** Counseling and other social intervention activities should also bring gang member families and gang youth together particularly when the family can provide positive reinforcement for the youth to reduce his gang involvement. This can include joint youth and family planning for the youths' release from the facility. The worker should pay special attention to the problems of parents and close relatives of gang youth which have negative impact on the youth's behavior. Parents, wives, and children of gang members may themselves require referral for assistance of various kinds.

## Suppression

The multiple purposes of suppression are to: 1) reduce inmate gang violence, intimidation, recruitment, and other criminal activities including drug use, drug selling, and participation in contraband economies; 2) provide for crisis intervention in the case of serious gang incidents; and 3) disrupt the solidarity of gang organization and discourage gang membership in the institution. The three underlying elements of suppression are: prevention to reduce opportunities for gang behavior; control or the application of constraints to stop criminal or illegitimate behaviors in progress; and sanctions or consequences applied for completed negative behavior. Preventive suppression (and intervention) which anticipates problems should be given priority. Control and sanctioning intervention should be relied on when prevention fails.

Many forms of suppression do not require overt coercion. They include oral and written warnings and enhanced and visible supervision. Policy makers and practitioners should understand that frequent or unfair use of, or complete dependence on, coercive suppression has the potential for aggravating rather than suppressing gang behaviors. The use of an appropriate level of suppression or control activity is not a simple matter. Institutional reaction should be taken based on a careful measure of seriousness of gang behavior. Thus, the use of gang symbols, insignia, jewelry, colors, or clothes should not ordinarily be considered as serious a rule infraction as an assault or threat of an assault. However, such gang symbolization itself may produce fear and intimidation, and in fact may lead directly to a gang assault or crime.

Examples of suppression that may serve preventive and control purposes include:

- a) Frequent and irregularly scheduled inspection of gang member living areas or cells;
- b) Enhanced supervision of places with high potential for gang problems;
- c) Housing gang members separately from non gang inmates;
- d) Dispersal of problem gang members among several correctional facilities;
- e) Isolating gang leaders in separate or segregated housing and programs.
- e) Transferring gang leaders from gang problem plagued facilities;

Finally, gang suppression in correctional institutions should encourage the creation of a social climate conducive to conventional behaviors, values, and patterns of thinking. Inmates should accept the moral legitimacy of suppression. This can be fostered through well-articulated policies based on an appropriate mix of strategies of opportunities provision, organizational development, social intervention, and community mobilization. In other words, measures of suppression should be fair and contribute as part of an overall program to normative and conventional

learning by gang members, which is a key purpose of incarceration to begin with.

**Priority of the Strategies.** Our survey of 45 cities and jurisdictions (Spergel, et. al., 1990) found that community mobilization and opportunities provision were the strategies of intervention cited as significantly associated with reported (and actual) reduction of gang problems. The strategies of community mobilization and organizational development and change may be considered equivalent in the institutional setting which is itself a kind of community context.

Strategies of organizational development and opportunities provision should have some priority in correctional settings. Exclusive focus on suppression or controlling behavior can aggravate problem behavior. Organizational development and opportunities provision approaches should be used to improve gang youths institutional adjustment and to facilitate non-criminal adjustments in the community. They serve better than suppression to: a) address the goals and objectives of the institution in relation to the legitimate interests and expressed needs of inmates; b) reduce deprivations associated with involuntary incarceration, and c) result in the provision of program alternatives to gang membership.

### **Issues and Contexts of Gang Control**

In this final section, we identify four sets of issues that influence the mix and priority of program strategies and programs, particularly in chronic and emerging gang problem contexts.

#### **1) Gang and non gang related problem activities of gang members.**

An early distinction should be made as to whether violence and criminal, and other disruptive activities are due to gang activity or problems unrelated to gang function, even when youth involved are gang members. In the first instance gang specific control activities are clearly appropriate. In the second, gang control activities may not be justified. Non gang motivated problems created by gang youth should be generally addressed as though the youth involved were non-gang members. This is not to deny that distinctions between gang and non-gang motivated are at times difficult to make. Nevertheless, we are more concerned with the consequences of exaggeration than denial or narrow perception of the gang problem in the correctional setting. Otherwise, the expectation of gang problems might stimulate such activity. It could contribute to a widening of the net of activities indirectly regarded as gang-related. It could increase stigmatization of certain inmates. Furthermore, time and resources invested in designing and implementing gang specific interventions would probably be wasted.

## **2) Chronic and emergent gang problems.**

Gang problems may be at different stages of development. In some the problems are emerging and less serious while in others they are chronic and more serious. Obviously there are correctional settings where the state of the gang problem lies somewhere in between. Some indicators of emergent versus chronic gang problem contexts include differences in inmate organization and influence the number and size of gangs, the intensity and seriousness of inter gang conflict, and the extent of inmate participation in illegal gang criminal activities. Youth gangs are more likely to have established a base of power, influence, and inmate control in chronic gang problem settings. Programs and tactics to reduce gang influence and power are likely to encounter more resistance in chronic compared to emergent gang problem situations. While a simple strategy of exclusive suppression may not be the answer in either case over the long term, it is likely to be more effective in the short term in the emerging gang context. In both settings a more complex set of strategies should be tried sooner rather than later.

## **3) Imported and indigenous characteristics of gang problems.**

Imported characteristics refer to the attributes which gangs and their members bring with them into the correctional setting from their gang experience or history out in the community or from another correctional institution. Indigenous characteristics refer to attributes of gangs which develop because of factors unique to the particular correctional setting. Whether gang problems originate inside or outside of the correctional facility similar strategies of control are required. However, additional collaborative interventions with community agencies and other correctional facilities may be necessary when gang problems originate or are influenced by problems outside the particular institution.

In the case of the indigenous development of youth gangs greater efforts should be directed to understanding and modifying the internal causes of these problematic behaviors and particular organizational characteristics associated with them, e.g., authority which is too lax or too strict, poorly trained staff, or too few activities to occupy inmate time and energy. Imported and indigenous sources of gang problem may also be interactive and further complicate and entrench the facility's gang problem.

## **4) Age of Youth Gang Members.**

Finally, corrections policies and programs must be designed to address differences in ages or levels of maturity of gang members. Young adult gang members (ages 17 and above) are more likely (but not always) than younger gang members (ages 16 and below) to have: 1) longer and possibly more serious histories of violence; 2) to use gang organization for predatory and exploitative criminal

activity; and 3) to be more sophisticated in their gang crime behavior. Young adult gang members consequently may present a greater challenge to correctional management. More sophisticated suppression opportunities provision and organizational development strategies may be required for this population.

Nevertheless, correctional authorities should be especially alert to the receptiveness of some older youth to rehabilitative interventions and attentive to requests for assistance in leaving the gang. These older youth may be prepared to mature out of the gang, particularly if they have responsibilities toward wives, girl friends, and children. Younger gang members may still be in the process of developing their gang "rep."

The mix of opportunities provision, social intervention, and community organization strategies ought to be different for older and younger gang members. Again, as suggested earlier, there should be greater emphasis on job training and job placement in addition to remedial and GED educational services for older youth and relatively greater emphasis on remedial education and job orientation experiences for younger youth. Different types of counseling or values training may also be necessary. To a large extent these emphases can grow naturally out of the general separation of juveniles and adults in correctional institutions. Most states have laws requiring such separation.

#### **Summary Policies and Programs for Chronic and Emerging Gang Situations**

In chronic gang problem contexts, gangs will have existed for a long time, have a sizeable membership, and through use of violence and intimidation will have developed considerable power and influence over the inmate population and operations of the institution. Central administration objectives should be 1) the reduction of the gang's control over institutional operations and 2) the reduction of gang violence. Each of these objectives should be defined in measurable terms in regard to specific housing or institutional areas to be cleared of gang members and gang influence. A key intelligence activity should be identification of gang leadership, core and fringe members, and their principal methods, locations, and patterns of activity.

A set of meaningful channels of communication with principal gang influentials should be established in conjunction with high levels of suppression. Strong, clear, and fair disciplinary procedures should be implemented and the institution's anti-gang posture communicated through appropriate policies. It is possible that these initial efforts by the institution will be resisted and an escalation of negative gang activity will occur. A related reduction of access to institutional resources should occur. It is likely that some of the more overt forms of criminal or egregious gang activity will be reduced as this occurs, particularly if a strong steady suppressive posture is maintained. A variety of organizational development and suppressive measures will have to interact. The parent correctional agency should be supportive by

permitting transfers of selected gang members out of the facility, if necessary. Certain key gang members should be swiftly prosecuted for their criminal gang activity in the institution. Staff must be prepared to effectively manage the problems they will confront through additional orientation and training, if not staff reorganization or redeployment.

Although suppression plays a central role in initial institutional efforts to deal with chronic gang situations, strategies and programs or opportunity provision, social intervention, and community organization should be integrated with them. Special activities and services should be offered as inmates respond favorably to these new arrangements. Inmates should come to view the changing policies and practices of the institution as fair and benefitting them in the long term, particularly as they permit inmates to pursue conventional and satisfying lifestyles whether in or outside the institution. The restoration of stability and social order in the institution and the reduction of the influence of gangs are contingent on the availability of adequate resources of staff and program as well as intelligent, benign, and strong institutional leadership.

In emerging gang problem contexts, gang problems are relatively recent with little tradition of serious gang crime, complex organization and solidarity. Youth are just learning to be gang members and only moderate degrees of suppression should be used. While gang leaders or influentials should be targeted for sanctions, emphasis should be placed on the development of special program activities, such as extra educational classes, constructive recreational activities, counseling, and the introduction of outside agencies into the life of inmates. Positive alternative activities should be emphasized without treating the gang situation as extremely serious and requiring major institutional change and extreme measures of suppression.

### **Evaluation and Research**

Extensive research is required into the nature of the gang problem in correctional institutions. Special attention should be directed to different organizational responses to similar gang problems that produce different effects. We also need to know more clearly whether certain approaches work better in chronic or emerging gang problem contexts with certain types of gangs and under what conditions of correctional housing, staffing, and programming.

More immediately required is a set of definitions of terms such as gangs, gang members, and gang incidents as used across correctional institutions in different states and the different procedures used by these institutions in dealing with gang youth and gang problems. Description of specific behaviors which indicate a rise or fall of the gang problem should be standardized. Changes in the incidence of gang and non-gang motivated offenses within the institution should be carefully assessed. Finally, the effectiveness of certain institutions should also be measured based

on long-term recidivism rates associated with different institutional policies and programs. It would be important to determine whether similar gang inmates recidivate less after experience in a particular kind of institutional environment than in another.



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