

# **Understand and Responding to Gangs in the New Millenium**

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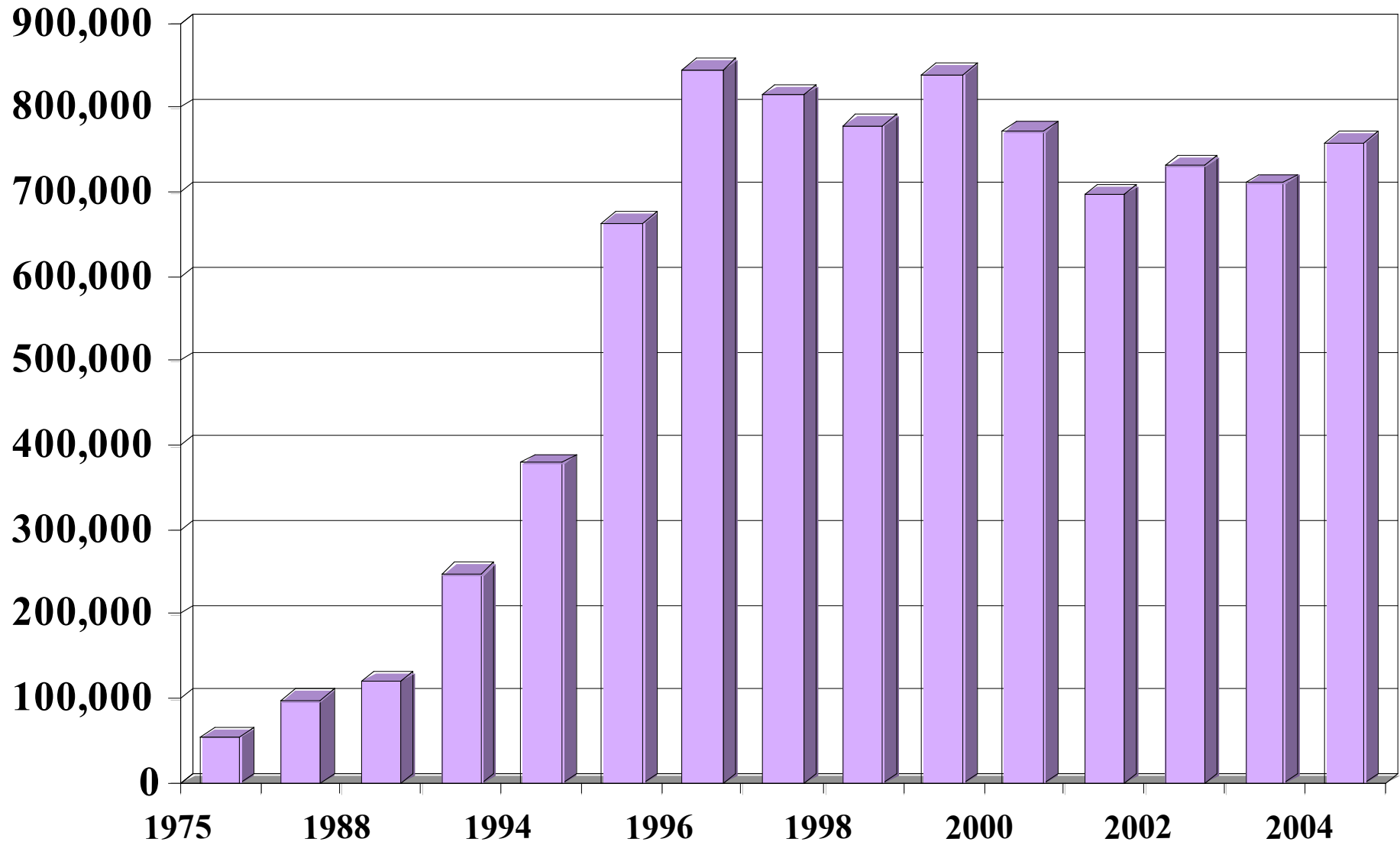
Ready, Fire, Aim.....



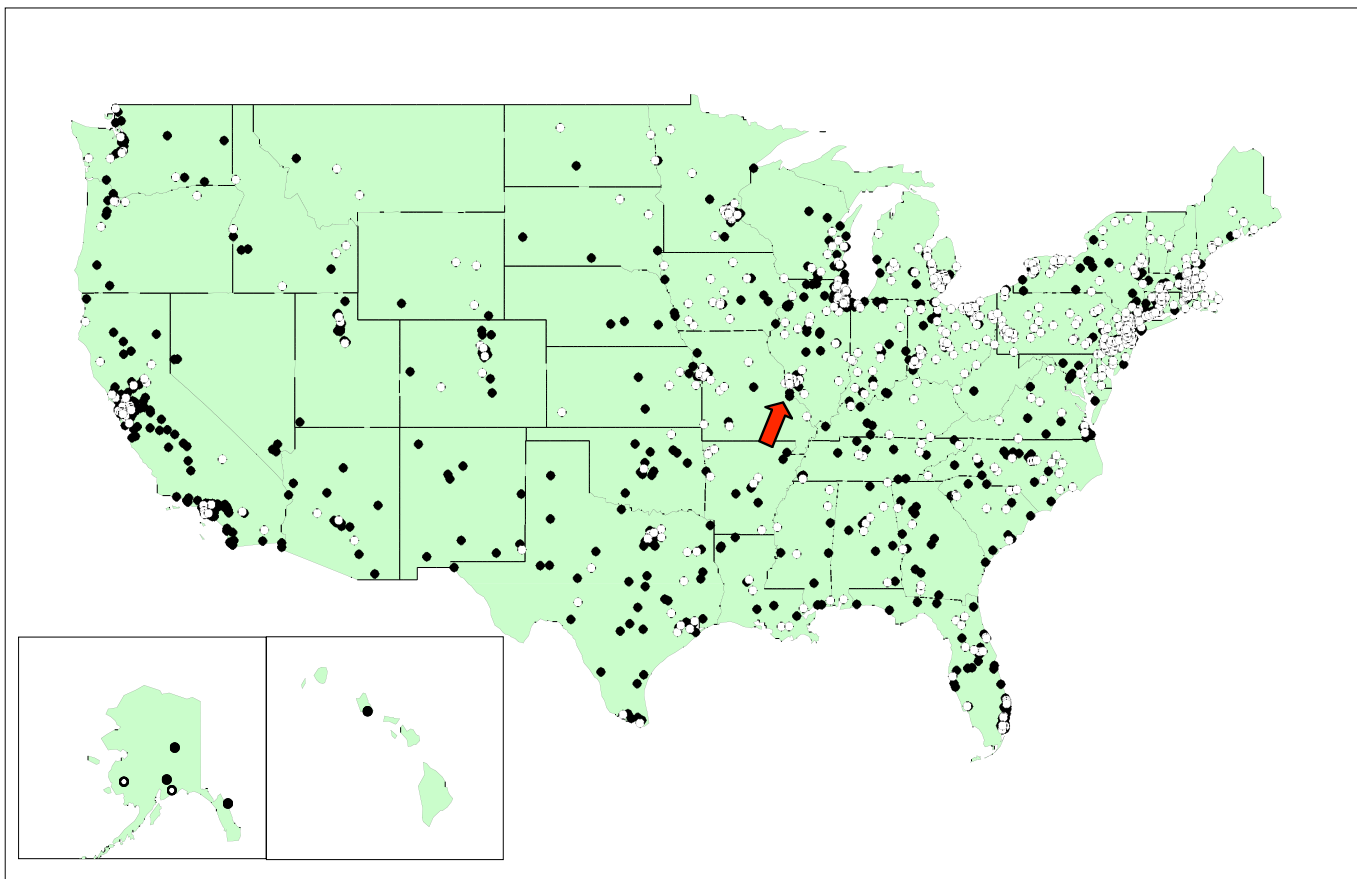
LODGING  
NEXT RIGHT

State Prison

## Estimated Number of Gang Members Based on Reports by City and County Law Enforcement, 1975 -2004



*Gang and Nongang Cities Year 2000 National Youth Gang Survey*



● Yes      ○ No

# Characteristics of Gang Definitions

Group characteristics.

Symbols of membership.

Persistence of membership.

Self-identification.

Criminal involvement.

# Characteristics of Gang Members

Is this the face of the gang problem in Coral Gables?





# Is this the Port St. Lucie gang problem?

"By all accounts, these guys grew up in bad neighborhoods. They got into the military and overcame their situations. They were successful, yet they maintained their ties and gang activity." —SCOT THOMASSON, U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

## Troops do double duty in gangs

### One soldier allegedly helped buy and sell drugs, shipped guns

BY FRANK MAIN  
Crime Reporter

Army soldiers who belong to the Gangster Disciples have robbed people to raise money for the gang, orchestrated drug and gun deals, and even killed two people after gang members were kicked out of a bar.

About a dozen soldiers at bases in Texas and Colorado have been sentenced to prison over the last decade as a result of federal investigations into criminal activity they carried out for the Chicago-based gang.

They highlight the danger of soldiers maintaining gang affiliations.

"It is a continuing problem, sure. It's ongoing," said Scot Thomasson, a supervisor with the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives who investigated dope dealing and gun trafficking involving Fort Carson, Colo., soldiers.

Earlier this month, a Wisconsin National Guard sergeant serving in Iraq provided the Chicago Sun-Times with photos he recently took of gang graffiti on military equipment and buildings throughout Iraq.

### Assault rifles seized

Other civilian and military investigators warned that gang membership in the Army appears to be rising as more recruits ignore applicants' criminal backgrounds and



Army Sgt. Jeffrey Stoleson took these photos of gang graffiti on U.S. equipment in Iraq.

**SICK SOLDIERS:** Mentally ill forced into combat, report says. **Page 25.**

Porter maintained his gang contacts in the Chicago area and his ties to noncommissioned officers at Fort Carson, near Colorado Springs.

In 1996, the feds targeted a gun-and-drug operation involving Porter and 25 other Gangster Disciples, including Gerald Ivey — an active-duty sergeant at Fort Carson — as well as other soldiers and civilians, officials said.

Ivey was a medic who served in Operation Desert Storm, said

They'd purchase marijuana for about \$300 a pound in Texas and sell it for \$1,200 a pound in Gary, Ind., which was Ivey's hometown.

Ivey also shipped guns back to Gary. He acted as an illegal "straw purchaser," using his military ID to buy weapons at a Colorado gun store called Dragon Arms, prosecutors said.

ATF agents seized five sawed-off shotguns, three assault rifles and other guns from the gang. Ivey bought other guns that were later used in crimes in Chicago and Gary and were found in crack houses, Thomasson said. Ivey and

40-member faction of the Gangster Disciples — many of whom were soldiers.

Chicago Police Lt. Robert Stasch was invited to Fort Hood to testify as an expert witness in the trial against Billings. She was sentenced to 27 years of confinement.

Hired through his private consulting firm, Law Enforcement Training Consultants, Stasch identified Billings' tattoos of a pitchfork and a six-pointed star as GD symbols. He led Army investigators to GD graffiti in a culvert near the entrance to the base. And he explained gang literature found in Billings' home.

"She claimed it was like a social club, like the Elks or Moose Lodge, and she called it 'Growth & Development,'" Stasch said. "I told them they were Gangster Disciples."

### Convicted of battery

In July 1997, Billings allegedly ordered a hit on a club owner after she and other gang members were thrown out. She felt the club was the gang's "turf," prosecutors said. Two Fort Hood soldiers in the Gangster Disciples bungled the job, killing two of the club's employees but not the owner.

Those soldiers admitted to being the gunmen and testified against Billings. But Billings claimed she simply ordered the men to rough up the owner. She was acquitted of murder but found guilty of battery.

She also was convicted for her role in the robbery of a \$15,000 Cartier watch and \$2,500 in cash in August 1997.

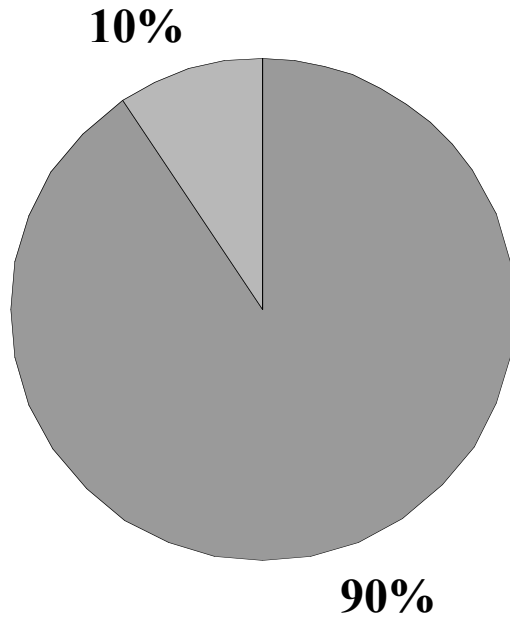
"No member was to act on behalf of the gang without her approval," according to one government filing.



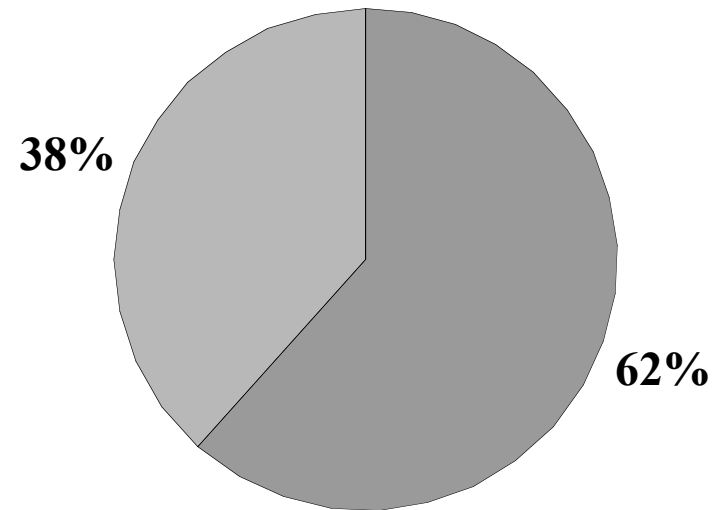
Army to relocate members of the 4th Infantry Division from Fort Hood to Fort Carson, Colo., in 2004.

# Gender of U.S. Gang Members

Law Enforcement Data



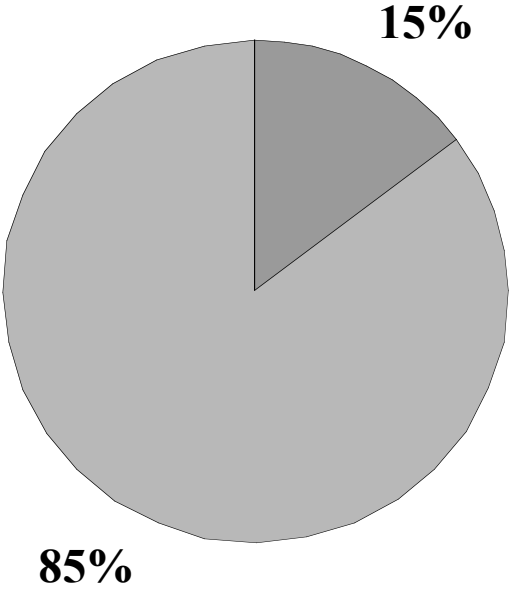
Survey Data



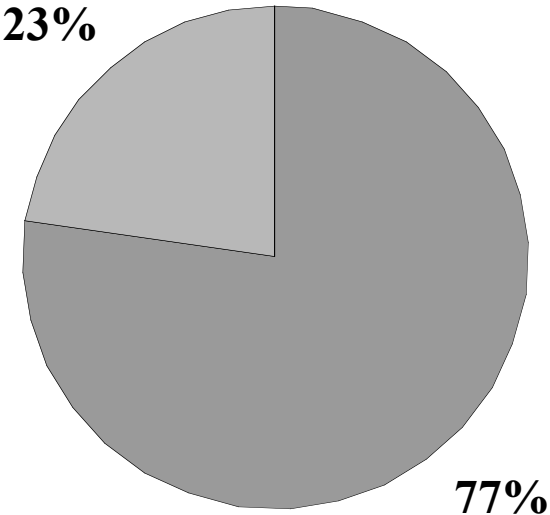
Data Sources: NYGC 1996 Survey, Esbensen & Winfree (1998)

# Age of U.S. Gang Members

Law Enforcement Data



Survey Data



Data Sources: NYGC 1996 Survey, Esbensen & Winfree (1998)

# Characteristics of Gang Behavior

What do we need to know to create successful gang Prevention, Intervention, Suppression and Re-entry strategies?

**Community** characteristics, assets, and deficits.

Gang **member** characteristics – race/ethnicity, age, gender, siblings, family structure, neighborhood, education.

**Gang** Characteristics – turf, age of the gang, initiation rites, exit rites, link to prison gangs, hanging out.

Gang **Organizational** Characteristics – rules, roles, leaders, meetings, handling of money.

Gang **Activities** – crime and non-crime.

Gang **Crime** – involvement in gang versus non-gang crime, drugs, guns,

# Organizational Structures of Gangs

## Corporate

Super Gangs  
National Presence  
Older Members  
Long life of the Gang  
Prison involvement  
Profit motives dominate

## Cells

Purposive  
Small  
Focused  
Specialists  
Isolated  
Criminal events

## Episodic Groups

Local Gangs  
Cafeteria offending  
Younger members  
Non purposive  
Hanging out  
Cafeteria style crime

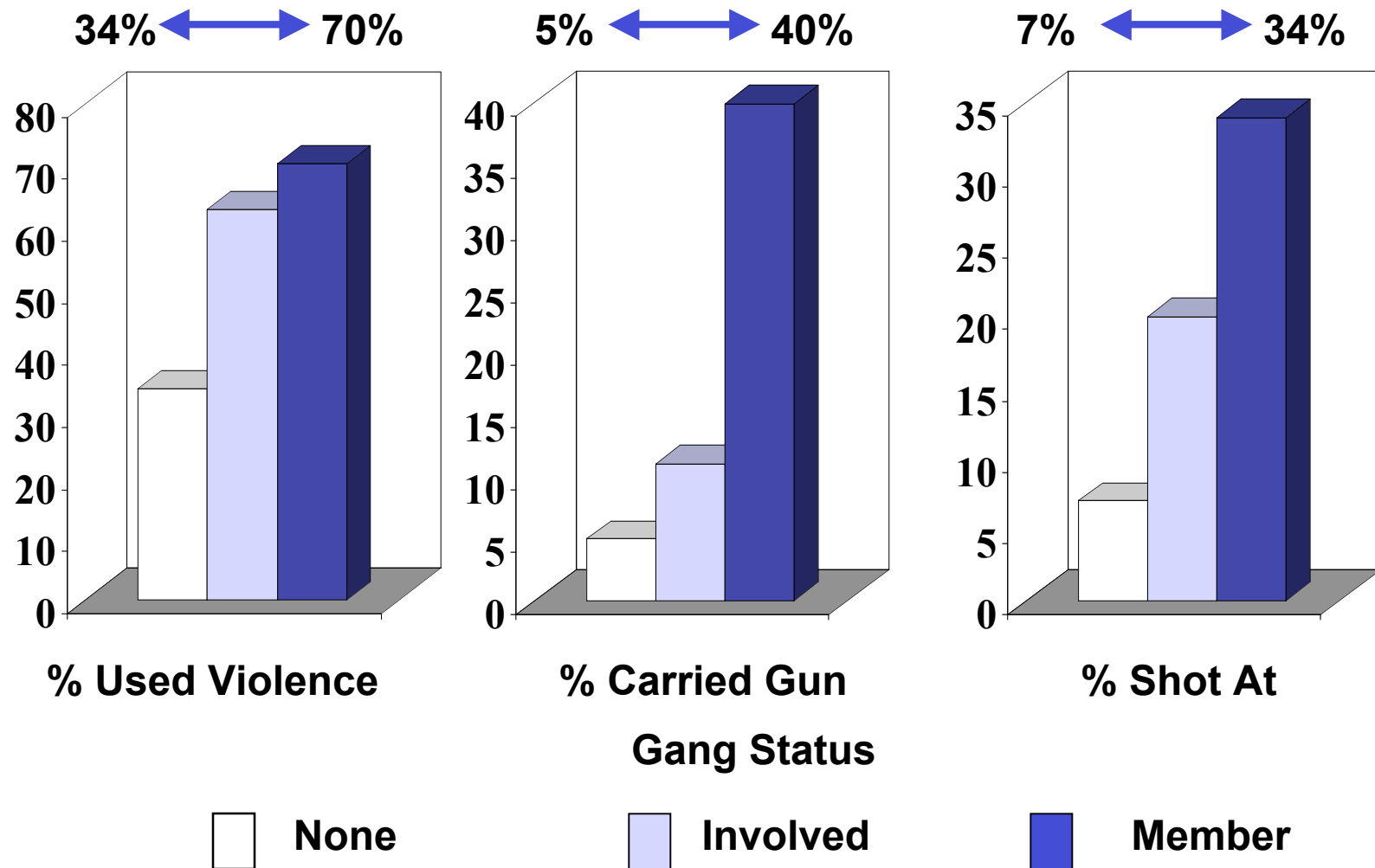
How are gang members organized in your community? What is your source of information about their organizational structure?

What are the implications for **understanding** gangs? Human Smuggling? Terrorism? Drug Smuggling?

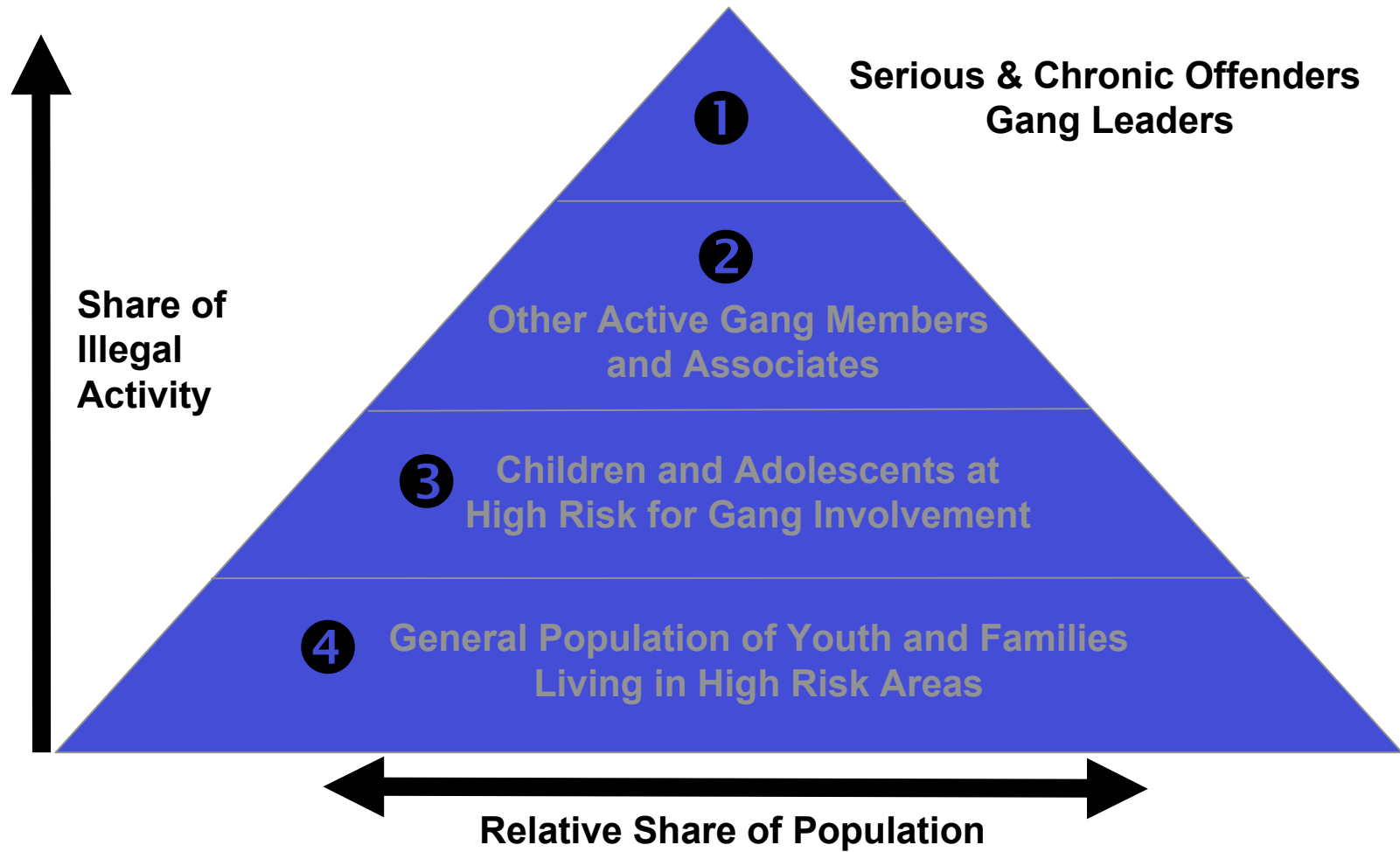
What are the implications for **responding** to gangs by law enforcement, the community, social services and NGOs for each type?

# Why are we interested in gangs rather than just delinquency?

## Gang Status & Self-Reported Delinquency, St. Louis STG Study

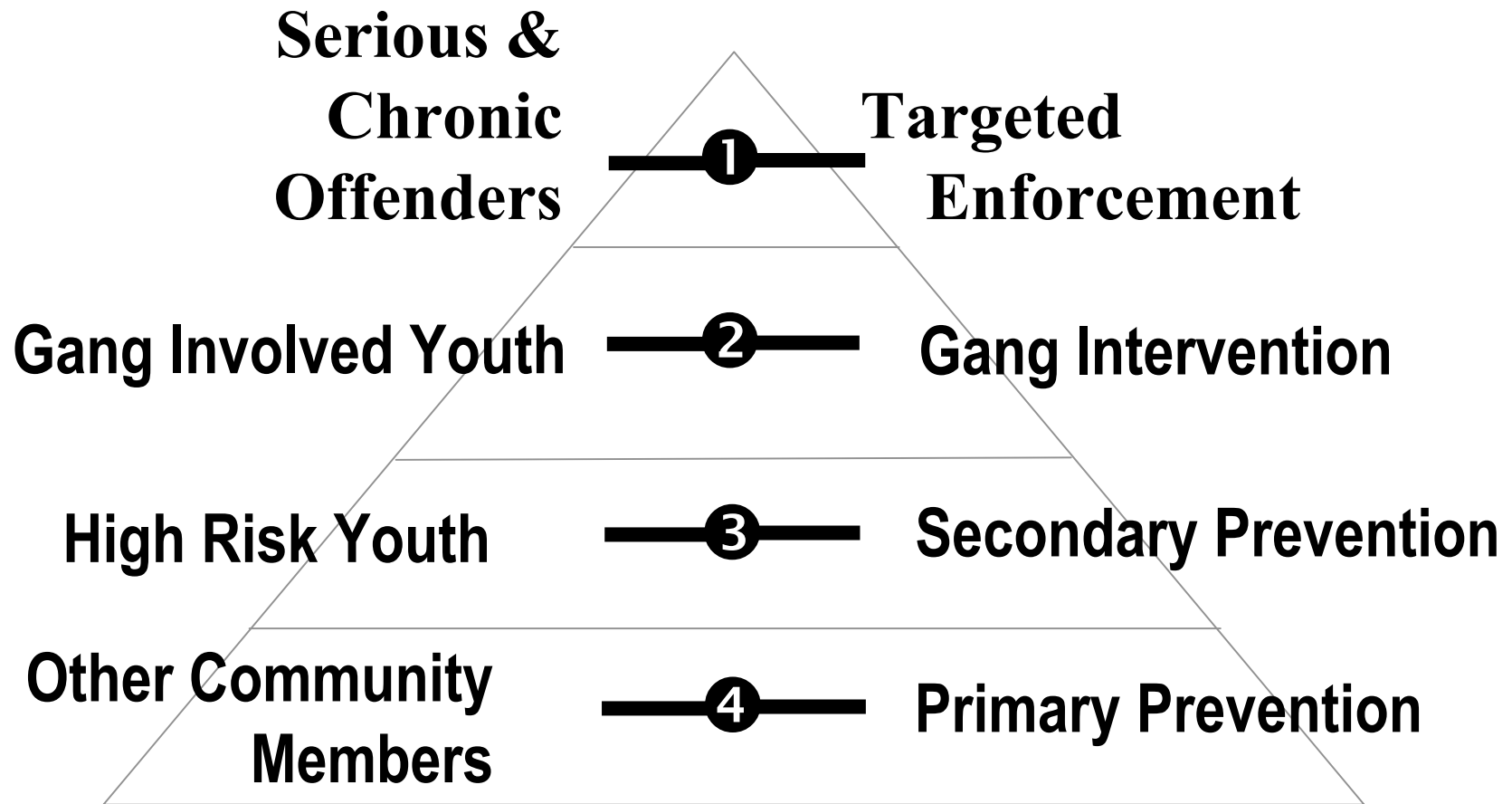


# Who is “involved”?





# Focusing Anti-Gang Strategies



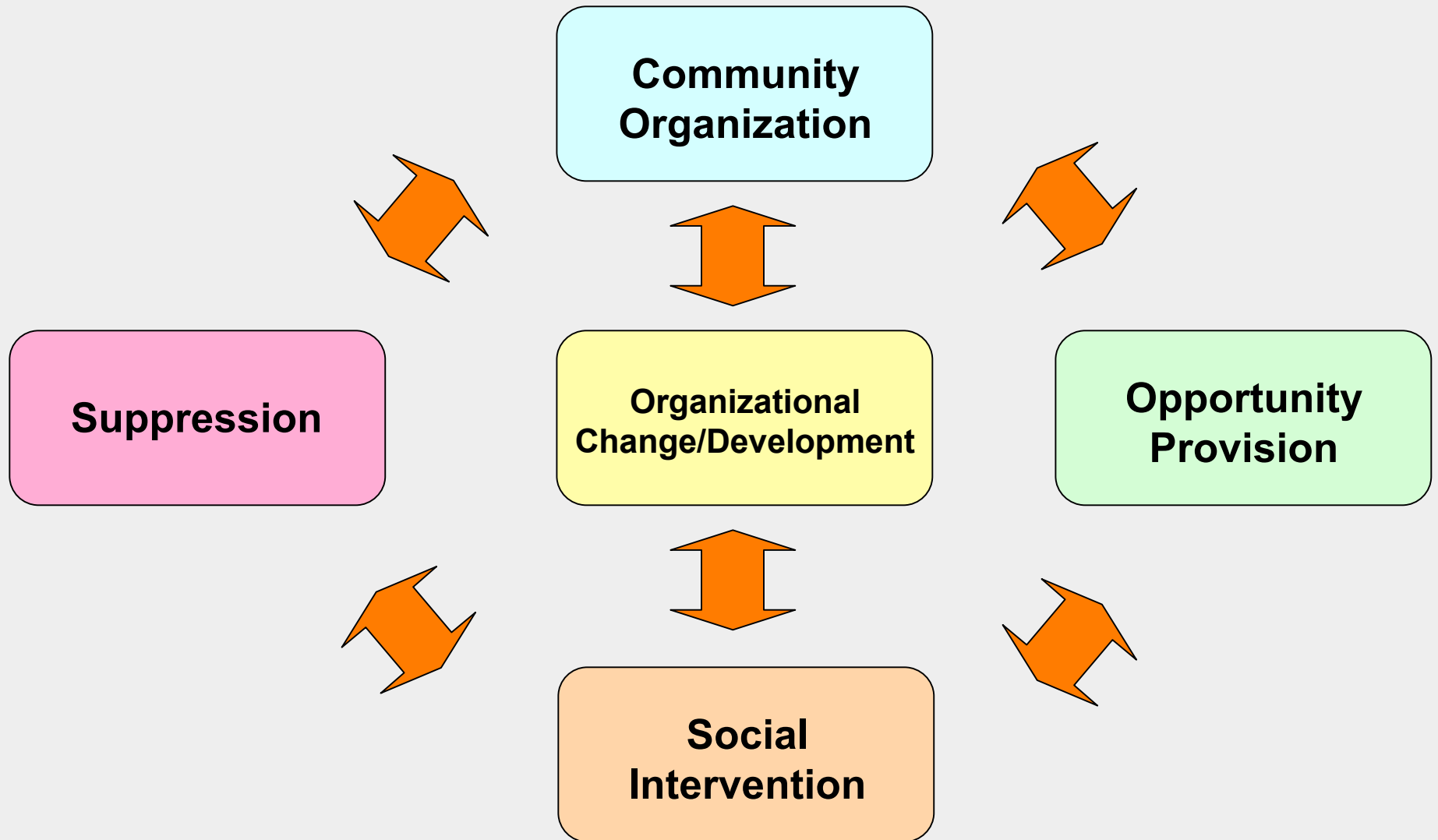
# Responding to Gangs

## Community Guide to Helping America's Youth

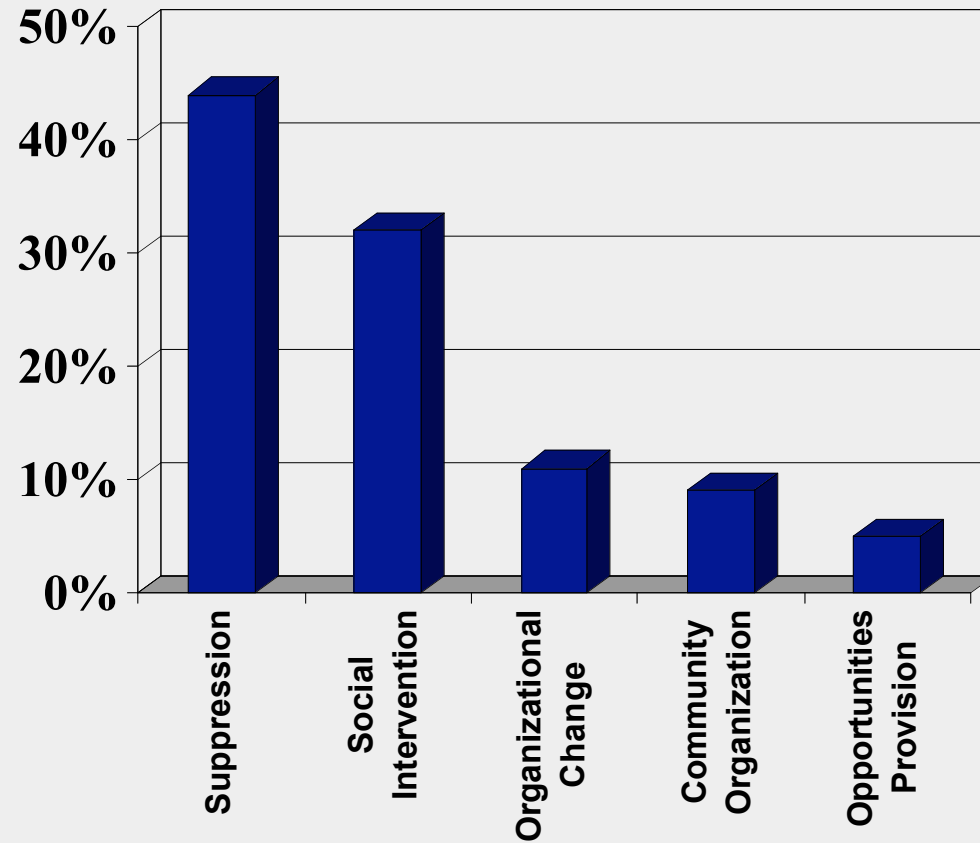
at

[www.helpingamericasyouth.gov](http://www.helpingamericasyouth.gov)

# Five Strategies for Responding to Gangs

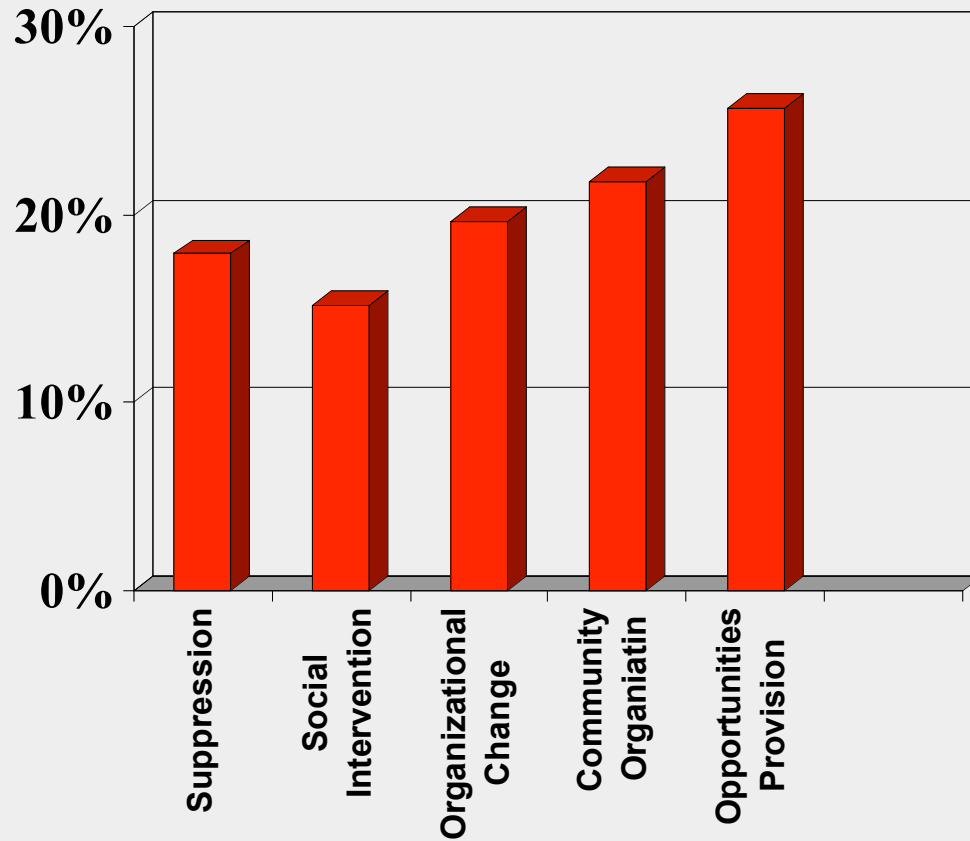


Five Strategies for Responding to Gangs  
Levels of Application as Primary Strategy  
1988 National Youth Gang Survey



Computed from ICPSR Data Base

Five Strategies for Responding to Gangs  
Perceived Effectiveness Ratings  
1988 National Youth Gang Survey



Computed from ICPSR Data Base

# The Basics of a Response to Gangs

1. Diagnose the problem

Gangs? Delinquency?  
Violence? Drugs?

2. Does the response match the  
problem?

3. Is the dose big enough? Can it be  
delivered? (implementation )

4. Can the response be sustained?

# Prevention

## Helping America's Youth website

1. Community Organization
2. Improving Conditions
3. Creating Opportunities
4. Early Childhood Programs “School Readiness”
5. School-Based Programs (GREAT)
6. After School Activities
7. Operation Nightlight
8. Consent to Search Programs
9. Weed and Seed (link to existing resources)

# Intervention:

## Levers, Pro-Social Involvement and Alternatives

1. Outreach Workers
2. Crisis Intervention
3. Boys and Girls Clubs
4. Improving Conditions
5. Violence-Free Zones
6. Gang Summits and Truces
7. Emergency Room Interventions
8. Victim Programs
9. Evening Reporting Centers
10. Notification Meetings

[http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/Offender Notification Meetings.pdf](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/Offender%20Notification%20Meetings.pdf)

1. Gang Members in Custody
  - Prison
  - Jail
  - Detention



# Suppression

## 1. Prosecution

Vertical Prosecution

PSN and Case Review

[http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/Gun\\_Proseotion\\_Case\\_Screening.p](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/Gun_Proseotion_Case_Screening.p)

## 2. Police

Directed Patrol – Intelligence Led Policing

Gun Focused Policing

Surveillance of Gang Members

Worst of the Worst

. [http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/Most\\_Violent\\_Offender\\_Lists.pdf](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pdf/Most_Violent_Offender_Lists.pdf)

“Supportive Roles”

## 3. Intelligence, Mapping and Tracking Systems

CALGANG

Real time incident maps

# **The Really Hard Stuff**

T  
Implementation

Timing

Coordination

Sustaining Success

Why is it important to understand gangs?

What errors does it lead us to make for policy, practice and programming if we misunderstand gangs?

Who suffers from such a misunderstanding?

Police.

Youth.

Youth Workers.

Society.

Gang members.

Family members.

Community.

Civic culture.

The St. Louis Safe Futures Experience.



Gangbuster?

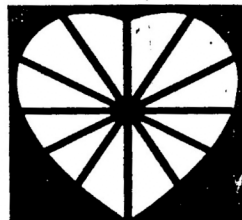






**Archbishop  
Rigali . . .**

**Welcome!**



**CATHOLIC  
CHARITIES  
OF SAINT LOUIS**

**Sixty-two programs & agencies helping people in need  
in the St. Louis Archdiocese.**