



Tacoma Gang Project

Fact Sheet 2011

Purpose

The purpose of the Tacoma Gang Project is to reduce and prevent gang violence through prevention, intervention and suppression efforts. The goal for 2011 is to complete a comprehensive gang assessment for the City of Tacoma that closely follows the Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) comprehensive gang model (www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Comprehensive-Gang-Model).

This assessment should create a better understanding of how gang crime is impacting the local community, and the factors related to Tacoma's gang problems. The assessment will provide information so that we, in the City of Tacoma, can better create gang mitigation strategies and system solutions.

Project Objectives

1. Identify the top indicators (e.g. truancy) that are predictors for gang activity later in life and identify the top risk factors facing Tacoma youth.
2. Identify potential factors contributing to gang problems, including gang activity and gang joining.
3. Identify target populations for prevention, intervention and suppression efforts.
4. Identify the most serious and prevalent gang-related problems, where they exist, and what communities they effect.
5. Identify and prioritize various organizational or systems issues that must be addressed to have long-term effect on the problem.
6. Identify current efforts from government, community groups, non-profit organizations, private group, and other organizations that address gangs and gang-involved youth.
7. Identify local community groups, organizations, non-profits, and other organizations that can help attract additional expertise, support or funding for the implementation of this project.
8. Increase the ability of the City and its partners to address disproportionate minority contact (DMC) to determine if there is a correlation between DMC and gang activity in Tacoma.

Once the assessment is concluded, the next step will be to develop an implementation plan.

Executive Steering Committee

In addition to the Tacoma City Council, the Executive Steering Committee for this assessment includes other policy makers from the following sectors of the city: the Tacoma School District; the Tacoma Police Department; the Tacoma Human Rights and Human Services Department; the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma; the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation; State Department of Social and Health Services/Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration; the Puyallup Tribe; the Northwest Leadership Foundation; and Pierce County Superior Court.

Community Steering Committee

Another group, the Community Steering Committee, provides the direct community engagement and participation. It is made up of key leaders in the community who grant assistance in gathering data, reviewing preliminary analysis, discussing barriers to the project and communicating the progress of the project to the community at large.

Timeline of Events:

Spring 2010	The Public Safety Human Services & Education (PSHSE) Council Committee reviewed the City’s history of gang violence and identified the gang assessment as a critical piece for the City’s approach to gang mitigation. The Committee then identified community partners and discussed successful gang strategies.
Summer 2010	The Council authorized Council Contingency Funds to pay for the gang assessment. City staff forms an internal strategic team to support the project. This effort is led by the department of Human Rights and Human Services (HRHS).
Fall 2010	An Executive Steering Committee was formed with Council Member Victoria Woodards as Chair. Council Member Joe Lonergan is also on the Executive Steering Committee. This body will ensure the community is engaged and will provide policy direction for the assessment project. Committee composition is described below.
Winter 2010	The Executive Steering Committee met to discuss the gang situation in Tacoma and to verify the qualifications for a Research Partner. A Research Partner is recommended by the OJJDP model.
January 2011	National Gang Center representative, Michelle Arciaga, came to Tacoma to provide her expertise. She also gained an understanding of the work Tacoma is doing and hopes to accomplish. Her visit also marked the Kick-off of the 2011 Tacoma Gang Project. She met with the Executive Steering Committee and a major stakeholder group of 51 individuals representing 27 community organizations.
April 2011	The City contracted with Executive Interface LLC (see bio below) as the research partner for the Gang Assessment.
June 2011 thru November 2011	A Community Steering Committee will be formalized and begin meeting once a month to discuss data collection and analysis. Data collection formats will include: Surveys, focus groups, interviews and existing data tools (i.e., Tacoma Public School’s Healthy Youth Survey). This information will be used to complete the City’s Comprehensive Gang Assessment to lay a solid foundation that will improve organizational coordination and responses. The assessment will drive the strategies that the City will implement in the areas of prevention, intervention, suppression and systems change. The final step is to identify key findings that address the specific programmatic and system gaps identified in the assessment that must be closed in order to create a strong continuum of prevention, intervention, suppression and re-entry supports for gang-involved, and at-risk, youth.

Relationship with the National Gang Center

The City has developed a strong working relationship with the National Gang Center and will be utilizing their expertise through technical assistance, overall process guidance and planning.

How to stay informed:

We have set up a web site where project updates and related information are posted. You can also see gang assessments from other cities. www.cityoftacoma.org/2011tacomagangproject

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Research Partner Bio

Executive Interface (ExecInt), LLC is owned and operated by Mr. Edward D. Clark, and brings a lifetime of experience in security assistance and managing the business of training along with eight solid years of national success in the Security Industry. ExecInt provides in-depth and detailed analysis and assessments of threats and hazards in a community. They also provide data analysis to assist in implementing mitigation strategies to manage the risk these threats pose.