

Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention



A Resource Guide for Project Safe Neighborhoods



About Project Safe Neighborhoods

Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide commitment to reduce gun crime in America by networking existing local programs that target gun crime and providing these programs with additional tools necessary to be successful. Over \$1.5 billion has been committed to this effort since PSN's inception in 2001. This funding has been used to hire new federal and state prosecutors, support investigators, provide training, distribute gun lock safety kits, deter juvenile gun crime, and develop and promote community outreach efforts as well as to support other gun violence reduction strategies.

Visit www.psn.gov for more information about this initiative and other PSN-related resources.

About Institute for Law and Justice

The Institute for Law and Justice (ILJ) serves as a community engagement technical assistance partner for Project Safe Neighborhoods, helping U.S. Attorneys increase the active participation of community members in their PSN Task Forces. ILJ offers this resource guide to help PSN Task Forces reach out to youth and get them involved in local gang prevention efforts.

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The guide was written by Marti Kovener with research support by Callie Long and Maggie Miller, Institute for Law and Justice, April 2009.



Introduction

In 2006, Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), the Department of Justice’s nationwide program to reduce gun crime in America, expanded to include new and enhanced anti-gang efforts in response to the nation’s heightened gang problem. Gangs have infiltrated every stratum of life in America, from large cities to suburban and rural areas, and the Department of Justice has been diligent in stepping up efforts to combat violence based on a twofold strategy. The first approach is the prioritization of prevention programs that provide America’s youth and offenders returning to the community opportunities to avoid and resist gang involvement; the second focuses on the guarantee of robust enforcement policies when gang-related violence does occur. This resource guide, *Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention*, developed by the Institute for Law and Justice, is a direct result of the first strategic approach—to combat gang violence by focusing on prevention—and serves as a tool for introducing real, on-the-ground programs and techniques for engaging one of the most vulnerable and promising populations in our country: our youth.

The focus of this guide, a positive youth development approach, offers a new paradigm in which to examine the problem of youth involvement in gangs; one which centers on helping youth develop their strengths and abilities. We acknowledge that this is a new approach for PSN and that there are other validated approaches to examining the problem of youth gang involvement, including the public health model which focuses on treating deficits in the lives of youth, directly targeting risk factors for gang involvement. However, this guide is not meant to be a comprehensive overview of all successful and validated approaches, but merely a snapshot of one unique approach. There are many practical strategies discussed in the guide detailing various methods for empowering youth; however, one in particular reflects a central theme throughout the tenure of the PSN program. Specifically, by mobilizing the community to engage and empower its youth, the community takes interest, responsibility, and ownership of the safety of the community, which creates a deeper investment in the community by its residents. One major lesson we have learned through the numerous PSN projects and initiatives over the years is that a key to long-term success in preventing and combating crime is to allow and encourage community members to be a part of the solution by serving as full partners with law enforcement in the battle to keep the streets safe from violence.

There are numerous programs from around the country highlighted in the guide that have successfully applied the principles discussed above. These programs and initiatives are a testament to the fact that these principles do work in deterring youth from gang activities. By focusing on empowering and strengthening our youth, we can look towards a brighter, safer future free of gang-related crime and violence across the nation. It is our hope that other jurisdictions gain not only inspiration, but the practical tools to develop and expand their own programs based on these exemplary models as well as the articulated approaches in this guide.

Bureau of Justice Assistance, April, 2009

Background

Youth Killed in Crossfire. Gangs Terrorizing Neighborhoods. Guns in the Hands of Children. Headlines like these reveal the dangers our nation's youth face every day, often at the hands of other youth. Criminal justice, education, and public health systems have all recognized the imperative to prevent youth from joining gangs and from being victimized by gang and gun violence. One way for PSN, the U.S. Department of Justice's anti-gun crime initiative, to continue to effectively address gun crime and gang violence in America's neighborhoods is for PSN stakeholders to reach out to youth in a meaningful way to engage them in prevention and intervention efforts.

Youth age 12-18 who live in PSN focus areas face multiple social, economic, and educational challenges in their daily lives—challenges that make them susceptible to criminal behavior and gang involvement. For example, youth who live in neighborhoods where marijuana is readily

Strategies to engage youth must recognize young people as experts, expose them to leadership roles, and create positive peer groups.

available and where neighborhood youth are frequently in trouble are more than three times more likely to join a gang compared with other youth, and low academic achievement and attachment to school make youth between two and three times more likely to join a gang.¹ In addition, four specific community conditions, often found in PSN focus areas, increase the likelihood that youth will join gangs: absence of appropriate adult supervision; too much free time not consumed by other pro-social activities; limited access to appealing conventional jobs; and a place to congregate—usually a well-defined neighborhood.²

Strategies to engage youth in gang prevention must address these challenges and provide youth with positive interactions that are imperative in making prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts most effective.³ The most successful prevention strategies recognize young people as experts, expose them to leadership roles, and create positive peer groups for them.

The Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention Resource Guide was created by the Institute for Law and Justice to give PSN Task Forces hands-on models and tools to engage youth in meaningful ways to address gang violence. The programs and strategies highlighted in the resource guide have shown success in helping youth (with guidance and support from responsible adults) to determine how best to influence their peers and work together to address gang violence.

For additional information about these programs and strategies, visit ILJ's online toolkit, Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention, at www.engageyouth-ILJ.org. The toolkit provides

- Detailed program examples
- Implementation steps to follow in replicating these programs and strategies
- Youth-developed gang prevention and awareness tools
- Information about getting technical assistance on implementation

The Comprehensive Gang Model

Overreliance on one strategy or another is unlikely to produce fundamental changes in the scope and severity of a community's gang problem.⁴ A balance of prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies and programs is likely to be far more effective.⁵ For example, the Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program (<http://www.great-online.org/>) might offer youth prevention, while an Intervention Team⁶ works with active gang members and a Gang Suppression Unit targets the most violent gangs and gang members.


The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) offers an important resource in the Comprehensive Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression Model,⁷ a flexible framework to help communities develop and organize a continuum of programs and strategies. Resource materials to assist in developing an action plan to implement the Comprehensive Gang Model are also available.⁸ The National Youth Gang Center (NYGC) has developed an assessment protocol that any community can use to assess its gang problem and start developing a comprehensive, communitywide plan of gang prevention, intervention, and suppression.⁹ Information on promising and effective gang programs and strategies that address specific risk factors among various age groups is also available at the NYGC Web site in the Gang Strategic Planning Tool (<http://www.iir.com/nygc/tool/>).

OJJDP supports research, evaluation, training and technical assistance, and demonstration programs aimed at eliminating youth gangs. Since the 1980s, OJJDP has funded the development of and evaluated community-based anti-gang programs that coordinate prevention, intervention, and enforcement strategies. Through the National Youth Gang Center, OJJDP has expanded knowledge about youth gangs and effective responses to them by conducting the annual National Youth Gang Survey and by providing training materials, curricula, and technical assistance on community gang problem assessment, multidisciplinary gang intervention, and comprehensive community responses to gangs.

Youth Engagement and Leadership Development – What You Need to Know

Criminal justice professionals involved in PSN around the country have long acknowledged that it is impossible to “arrest our way out of the problem” of youth involvement in gangs. They have developed initiatives such as Police Athletic Leagues and Drug Education for Youth camps to engage youth and help them develop life and leadership skills. These programs offer positive activities as a way to help inoculate youth against the dangers of gang violence.

To be most effective, gang prevention programs should be rooted in the practice of positive youth development, which acknowledges that all youth go through developmental stages as they mature, and tries to help them go through these stages in a positive way by developing their skills and assets. These skills and assets serve as protective factors in violence prevention—that is, as youth develop internal and external strengths, they are less likely to fall prey to gangs and violence. They also experience many other benefits, including decreased alcohol use¹⁰ and use of marijuana and other drugs¹¹, and lower rates of drop-out¹², sexual activity and pregnancy¹³, and depression¹⁴.



Adolescents are more likely to develop and implement violence prevention interventions when working with and for their peers.

Instead of focusing on the deficits or problems of a particular group of youth—access to drugs and guns, anti-social peer groups, or lack of parental or school attachment, to name a few, positive youth development programs instead help youth develop strengths or assets such as positive adult relationships, engagement in school, positive peer influences, and resistance to anti-social peers and activities.

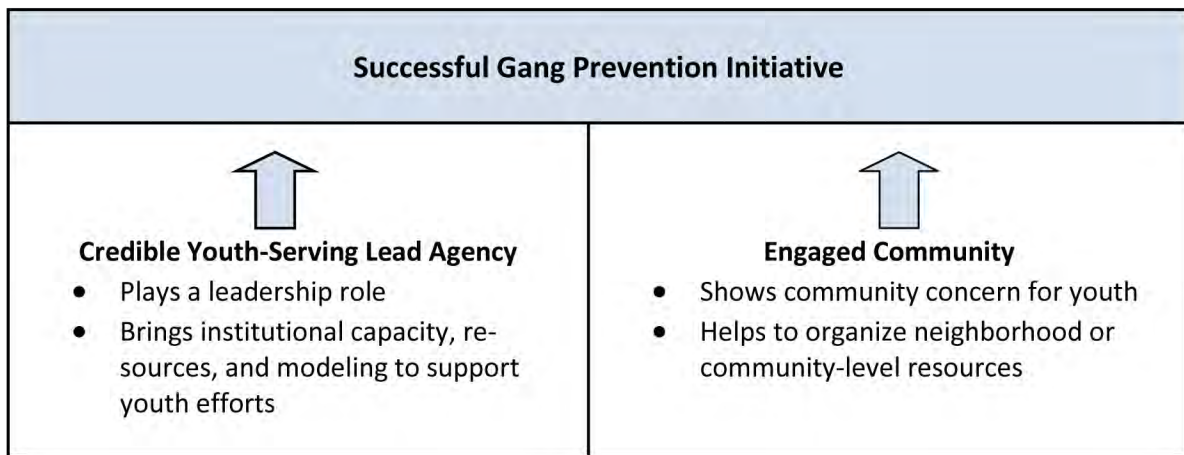
Several specific strategies help to promote positive youth development in the context of violence prevention activities.¹⁵ These include

- Recognize young people as experts on the needs of their communities; empower them to become change agents; and give them the opportunity to engage in non-violent activities.
- Expose youth to leadership roles in order to increase protective factors that promote non-violent behavior and decrease risk factors for violent behavior.

- Focus on adolescents, who are at a life stage in which their peer group has a greater influence than adults, and in which they are more likely to engage in collaborative decision-making and action if their peers are involved.
- Develop peer group activities, as adolescents are more likely to develop and implement interventions when working with and for their peers to create a violence prevention movement.

Using these strategies can make all the difference in helping youth to both develop and participate in successful gang prevention programs. Their success also depends on the leadership of a credible youth serving agency and engaged community members, who provide a foundation of support, ensure program quality, and encourage and sustain youth involvement (see exhibit 1, below).¹⁶ The characteristics of credible youth serving agencies and engaged communities are explained more fully below.

Exhibit 1 Structural Supports for Youth Gang Prevention Initiative



The most successful PSN youth engagement efforts include partnerships with youth serving organizations and communities that demonstrate the specific qualities and characteristics shown above. The following discussion is offered as a guide in identifying appropriate agencies and communities to work with in partnership with PSN.

Defining Community Engagement

Community engagement strategies are used to work collaboratively with groups of people who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interests, or similar situations with respect to issues affecting their well-being.

In the context of PSN, this process has to involve **working with community members to address social conditions in the community as a means to prevent violence**. It is important to understand that community engagement is a two way street—in order to get the community invested in working to address gang crime and violence, the PSN approach needs to be developed and refined collaboratively with the community so that it reflects the community's own concerns and priorities.

Qualities of a Youth Serving Agency Leader

Community-based youth serving organizations that will play a leadership role in a youth engagement initiative should demonstrate as many of these characteristics as possible:

- ✓ Passion for empowering and nurturing youth
- ✓ Physical location in the community being focused on
- ✓ Strong and competent leadership that is representative of the community
- ✓ Commitment to youth development principles and experience with youth engagement and mobilization
- ✓ Understanding of youth violence and gang issues, as well as other economic, social, and cultural issues that impact youth in the community
- ✓ Strong partnerships and referral networks with other community organizations, including schools, GED programs, vocational training programs, employers, health services, substance abuse and mental health services, and others
- ✓ Financial and administrative capacity to secure and appropriately manage grant and other funding

Characteristics of an Engaged Community There are several specific ways that engaged or mobilized community members relate to their community,¹⁷ which can be applied within the context of PSN. Consider the degree to which community members demonstrate the following characteristics:


- ✓ Are aware, in a detailed and realistic way, of their individual and collective vulnerability to gun and gang crime and violence
- ✓ Are motivated to do something about this crime and violence
- ✓ Take action within their capabilities, applying their own strengths and investing their own resources—including time, materials, money, or whatever else they have to contribute
- ✓ Participate in decision-making on what actions to take, evaluate the results, and take responsibility for both success and failure
- ✓ Seek outside assistance and cooperation as necessary

Benefits of Community Engagement for Project Safe Neighborhoods PSN Task Forces around the country have been able to realize several other benefits as a result of engaging and mobilizing communities to work with PSN:¹⁸

- Participation and leadership from a wide variety of community and neighborhood organizations, residents, schools, faith and business leaders, and foundations
- Promotion of PSN anti-gun and gang prevention messages within other community programs, activities, and awareness campaigns
- Community members who view law enforcement and criminal justice professionals as allies
- Community members who play a proactive role in reporting crime and working with law enforcement to address community conditions that promote gang crime and other violence
- Wider base of support and sustainability for anti-gun and gang prevention initiatives, including support from foundations and local businesses

Youth Leadership Another factor to consider in engaging and involving youth in PSN is the degree to which youth will provide leadership. There is a continuum of roles that youth can play,¹⁹ as shown in Exhibit 2. Moving to the right on the continuum provides a glimpse into more sophisticated approaches to youth engagement and leadership development, but there is no right or wrong place to be. The place where a program or initiative falls on the continuum will be the result of many things, including community and youth levels of readiness and engagement, the skill and comfort level of adult allies, and resources available.

Exhibit 2 Youth Leadership Continuum

Youth as Clients	Youth Participation	Youth Involvement	Youth Driven	Youth Led
				
Youth are “served” by adults and have no input into program decision-making	Youth input into program decision-making is occasionally solicited by adults	Youth provide regular input into program decision-making	Youth have substantive, meaningful roles in leadership positions, governance and programming	Youth fill all major leadership roles with appropriate support from adult allies

This framework can be used as a planning tool to define the leadership role youth will play in a specific initiative or program (consider the gang prevention public awareness campaign example on the next page). A youth leadership planning worksheet based on this framework can be downloaded from the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit .

Example: Gang Prevention Public Awareness Campaign				
Youth as Clients	Youth Participation	Youth Involvement	Youth Driven	Youth Led
Adults create campaign, focusing on youth gang issues	Adults hold a focus group with youth before creating campaign	Adults hold continuous focus groups, soliciting feedback on campaign as it is developed	Adults partner with youth in an organization to create campaign, working with key youth leaders	Youth envision the campaign and implement it, with support from adults as requested

Applying Youth Development and Engagement Principles to Project Safe Neighborhoods

These principles will provide a solid foundation for a successful PSN youth engagement effort. They are embedded in many of the approaches and strategies described in the following pages of this resource guide. These strategies that follow are provided to help PSN Task Forces understand how other communities have successfully engaged youth in gang and gun crime prevention.

From Theory to Practice: Youth Engaged in Gang Prevention Initiatives

Communities around the nation have developed a variety of initiatives to mobilize youth to help prevent gang violence and crime in their own communities. The initiatives, strategies, and models described below were selected because of their potential to be replicated by PSN Task Forces. Many of them were sponsored and funded by PSN, and at a minimum all work collaboratively with PSN in their district.

ILJ will offer technical assistance to PSN Task Forces on the replication of these initiatives, using a Strategic Action Planning model that includes assessment of local needs and customized training and support. More information on technical assistance can be found at the end of this guide.

Resource tools specific to each program or strategy in the guide have been developed in a variety of formats to assist PSN Task Forces in replication. Many of these tools are described below, and can be downloaded from the online Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit at www.engageyouth-ILJ.org. New tools and programs will be added to the toolkit on an ongoing basis.

School Based Programs



The **Computer Assisted Debate (CAD)** program reaches out to youth in public housing communities where gangs are prevalent and teaches them life and leadership skills through the art of debate. CAD provides a challenging and engaging academic experience, using incentive-based learning, life skills training, and computer-based research to supplement materials available in students' school libraries or communities. CAD students participate in after-school programming twice per week, in tournaments against other schools in metro Atlanta each month, and in public debates in their communities twice per year. A two week summer program is also provided.

Georgia State University and Emory University, the program's sponsors, have documented that CAD members show improved overall school performance, increased computer proficiency, enhanced communication and research skills, and enhanced interest in pursuing higher educational opportunities. Most importantly, participation in the program results in significant increases in reading level and decreases in school disciplinary referrals, and youth learn to use verbal assertiveness to resolve conflicts instead of physical aggression. CAD is funded in part by PSN in the Northern District of Georgia, and has been replicated in Miami, Florida and Milwaukee, Wisconsin through private funding.

For more information, visit the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit for resource tools including a series of **videos**: The Benefits of Debate, What is Debate, and A Sample Debate; as well as a detailed Evidence Starter Packet. Technical assistance on replication is also available, and includes detailed **implementation guides** including a Policy Debate Manual, Curriculum Guide, and Administrative Manual.



Peers Organized to Support Student Excellence, under the leadership of its founder, Ossco Bolton, offers a model for reaching out to youth in neighborhoods with high levels of gang activity. Funded by PSN and the local school district to serve youth in Kansas City, Missouri, Peers Organized to Support Student Excellence (POSSE) provides school-based gang prevention and offers guidance, mentoring, and support as a “positive gang for youth.” Since its inception in 1995 POSSE has touched the lives of 3,500 youth, helping them deal with the trauma they have experienced in their lives, build life skills, and become leaders. POSSE currently operates in five schools and has over 850 active members who take part in leadership activities that support PSN, such as door-to-door campaigns, community awareness and neighborhood restoration projects, and Drug Education for Youth (DEFY) presentations. They also teach gang and violence prevention to younger children in elementary school settings.



An evaluation of POSSE is currently being designed, and early evidence of success includes the fact that 80 percent of youth stay engaged in the program for the duration of their school years, including over summer breaks. The leadership skills they develop through POSSE can be seen in their advocacy for youth issues with city and school officials, the leadership roles they take on within the organization, and in their positive relationships with law enforcement mentors and supporters.



For more information visit the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit for resource tools including a **video** created by POSSE youth called Message to the Leaders, which features interviews with Kansas City youth about the changes they would like to see in their community. **Implementation materials** are also available, including an overview of the program, program principles, and implementation steps. Technical Assistance on replication is also available.

Youth Outreach Programs



The **Kansas City, Missouri, Urban Peace and Justice Summit** was convened by POSSE (Peers Organized to Support Student Excellence) in 2007 to bring together youth and young adults age 15-25 that were considered “high risk” because of their affiliation with a gang, clique, or block. The summit provided youth with an opportunity to address the violence in their communities in a proactive way and connected them with important local resources for support in living healthy and productive lives.

It also created an opportunity to forge partnerships between organizations, businesses, government agencies, community members, and foundations with the means and interest to help youth and young adults prevent and avoid gang and gun violence.

Activities at the summit included a youth speak out, workshops, resource fair, and a venue for attendees to perform positive rap music they had created individually and through a local youth-led outreach called Town Movement. Since the summit, Town Movement and POSSE have produced a CD called Message to the Youth, which offers rap songs with positive messages and hope. POSSE and Town Movement are using this CD as a way to raise awareness and funds for their



organizations, and POSSE staff are helping youth leaders of Town Movement realize their goal of becoming a youth mentoring organization using the medium of rap music.

For more information visit the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit for resource tools including a 10-minute **video** about the summit. Technical assistance on replication is also available.

Charlotte, North Carolina Forum on Youth Gangs and Violence

Youth from the PSN-sponsored Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) were engaged in the design, organization, and facilitation of Charlotte's first and second annual youth-led forums on Youth Gangs and Youth Violence, held in 2007 and 2008. Youth from neighborhoods with chronic gang and gun violence were invited to attend. YLA youth led workshop discussions on young children and gang awareness, relationship building, messages about gangs in movies, and alternatives to gangs. They also helped other youth to express themselves in rap sessions and through performances of spoken word, rap music, art, and stepping. Youth leaders also facilitated games that challenged youth to think about alternatives to gang involvement, such as conflict resolution role plays, team and relationship building exercises, and gang resistance training.

In a post-forum reflection session, YLA youth talked about how it felt to lead other youth to make positive choices, what they learned from the experience, and what they would do differently in terms of organization and running the forum. Participant evaluations overwhelmingly supported additional opportunities for youth to speak out and take action on gang issues.



For more information visit the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit for resource tools including a **podcast** on the second annual forum held in May 2008, as well as **sample work plans** and a **sample funding proposal** to implement the youth-led summit. Technical Assistance on replication is also available.

Rap Against Violence reaches into the homes, hearts, and minds of central Florida communities to create a word of mouth epidemic against gangs and gun violence. Sponsored



under Operation Cease-Fire by the 18th Judicial Circuit State Attorney's Office in the Middle District of Florida, Rap Against Violence invites youth to record original rap songs that speak out against gun crime and gang violence. The theme of the second annual contest held in 2008 was *Develop Not Destroy* and challenged hip hop artists as well as community members to "Step Up and Speak Out" against gun violence and the culture of witness intimidation.

Over 300 youth have entered the contests so far, and more than 5,000 youth have been engaged through presentations at their schools. The ten winning songs from each year's contest are recorded on a CD, over 15,000 copies of which have been distributed to youth at schools, youth centers, and events throughout central Florida. Each song is also featured in a 60 second PSA that is aired on local radio and TV stations.

For more information, visit the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit for resource tools including **volume one and volume two CDs** produced through the contests, and an **implementation manual** with sample contracts, radio and TV ads, a PSA, and funding applications. Technical Assistance on replication is also available.

Leadership Development



Through the **Talented Tenth Leadership** program based in Chattanooga, Tennessee, highly skilled youth consultants teach leadership skills to other youth. With the assistance of the program's adult CEO, youth consultants conduct leadership forums for youth who are involved in youth-serving organizations or have been identified by adult mentors or supporters to participate in the forum.

Through three days of interactive exercises and activities, youth learn strategies to influence their peers and community. They also develop a community-based project to address gang and gun violence in their neighborhood or city. Talented Tenth youth consultants are available to provide technical assistance and support to youth as they implement these projects. Examples of past projects include development of a comic book for youth about gang violence and a crime prevention plan for a specific neighborhood. One goal of Talented Tenth is to empower youth to reach out to other young people and continue to create agents of change. To accomplish this, youth who participate in the forum are encouraged to train other youth in their communities.



In addition to on-site technical assistance and training on youth leadership principles, there are many Talented Tenth resource tools available. For more information, visit the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit for tools including an informational **video** and leadership development **training guides**.

Youth Awareness Initiatives



It's not Snitchin' is a persuasive public service announcement (PSA) developed by young people in Washington DC's Youth in Action program. Youth in Action is run by the non profit organization Peaceoholics, which is funded by PSN. The PSA highlights the responsibility that youth have to protect their community by reporting crime. Youth producers enlisted Anwan Glover (also known as "Big G", a well known local actor who appeared on the cable television show *The Wire*) to make a cameo appearance in the PSA.

The 30-second **video** can be downloaded from the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit to use locally or as creative inspiration for local youth to create their own gang awareness messages.



Sembrando Paz (Sowing Peace) is a violence prevention project sponsored by PSN and operated by Alianza Para un Puerto Rico sin Drogas (Alliance for a Drug Free Puerto Rico). The program offers youth a variety of prevention activities as well as vocational training. Youth in the program created a series of video montages in which they acted out the consequences of making the wrong choices regarding gangs, guns, and drugs. The video montages are now used in other teen workshops as a way to facilitate discussion about these choices and their consequences.



The 90 second **video** can be downloaded from the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit (with English subtitles).

Youth Speak Up in Phoenix, Arizona was created to train and educate at-risk youth in school or community settings to reduce and prevent gun violence. Youth learn that they can decrease violence by speaking up about threats of weapon-related violence, and learn about gun laws, bystander responsibility, and options to get help in potentially violent situations.

The curriculum for the training was developed under PSN by its community outreach partner Arizonans for Gun Safety (AzGS), and has been modified and improved with funding from Catholic Healthcare West Community grants. AzGS partners with two local youth serving organizations that have assisted with curriculum development and provide trainers who can connect with youth audiences. AzGS also partners with a hospital-based program working with young gunshot survivors to recruit survivors to serve as speakers in the program.

The curriculum has been offered to 600 youth since 2006 and has been taught in 20 schools. Educational posters are distributed in the schools, especially while the program is being taught. A survey of youth who go through the program is being conducted to learn about youth involvement in gun violence.

For more information, visit the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit for resource tools including Youth Speak Up **promotional posters**, the class-based **curriculum**, and pre-and post-**surveys**, as well as Information about other prevention campaigns and programs. Technical assistance on replication is also available.



Specialized Training



Several training programs are also available to help PSN stakeholders gain knowledge and build skills in working with youth. These trainings are all dynamic and interactive, and can be customized for different audiences. They are described below. Contact Marti Kovener at ILJ to request training: 703-684-5300 or marti.kovener@ilj.org.

Giving Youth a Voice: Basic Principles of Youth Engagement and Leadership Development

is an introductory level training designed to give criminal justice professionals enough information about youth development and youth engagement principles to be able to assess their current efforts to reach out and engage youth, refine current strategies, or begin to develop new strategies.

Trainer(s): Institute for Law and Justice consultants
Duration: 2 hours

Youth as Leaders is a workshop presented entirely by youth, which helps adults explore the psychological barriers to leadership faced by youth as well as ways that they can help young people learn to influence their peers and community.

Trainer(s): Talented Tenth Leadership program youth consultants
Duration: 2 hours

Understanding and Engaging Youth through Hip Hop Culture

examines the role that rap music plays in the lives of youth, focusing on the challenges of communicating with youth who identify with hip hop culture and values. The presentation helps participants understand how to use hip hop music and culture as a learning tool, and as a way to engage youth and inspire them to pursue their dreams.



Hip-Hop to Success uses examples in hip-hop to teach youth the importance of education, perseverance, excellence, skill-building and goal setting. Character education is taught by showing the importance of personal accountability and responsibility.

Trainer(s): Shawn Jackson, The Jaxsun Group
Duration: 2 hours

These resource tools and others may be found in ILJ's online multimedia toolkit at www.engageyouth-ILJ.org. Visit the toolkit to find and download:

- Examples of exercises, activities, and discussion guides for youth activities
- Resource tools in many different formats
- Information about how to request technical assistance on the implementation or replication of the programs described in this guide

Additional Resources

Bureau of Justice Assistance
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/

Project Safe Neighborhoods
www.psn.gov

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/>

National Youth Gang Center
<http://www.iir.com/nygc/>



Technical Assistance on Engaging Youth in PSN Gang Prevention

The goal of this technical assistance initiative is to promote youth engagement in Project Safe Neighborhoods and its gang prevention and intervention efforts. PSN stakeholders can learn how to empower local youth to develop strategies to address gang violence and gun crime in their communities.

About ILJ The Institute for Law and Justice serves as a community engagement technical assistance partner for Project Safe Neighborhoods, helping U.S. Attorneys to increase the active participation of youth and community members in their PSN gang prevention efforts.

Technical Assistance Approach In addition to the information ILJ has disseminated in this resource guide and the Engaging Youth in Gang Prevention toolkit, ILJ’s technical assistance (TA) approach includes:

- On-site information and training on youth engagement principles and concepts
- On-site TA on planning for replication or development of new strategies to engage youth in gang prevention
- Additional assistance as necessary to assist in replication or implementation of youth engagement strategies

ILJ will use a Strategic Action Planning model to deliver TA under this initiative. The following components, shown in Exhibit 3 on the next page, will be included:

Planning

- Interviews with PSN Coordinator and key stakeholders in district or focus area to assess training and TA needs
- Research on community assets, including local youth serving organizations
- Development of a TA plan (in collaboration with the PSN task force)
- Assistance in identifying appropriate stakeholders and a venue for on-site TA

Implementation

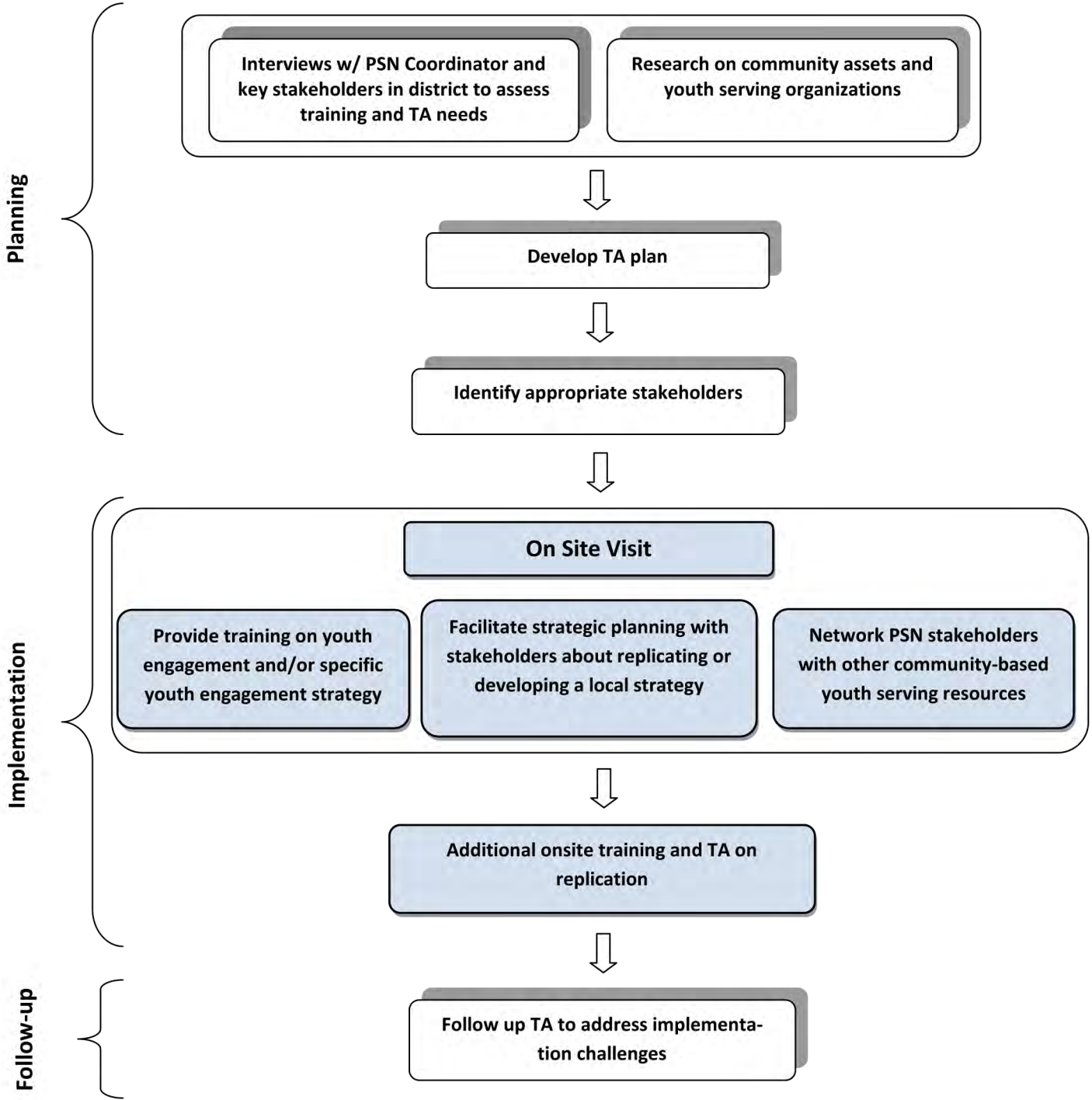
- On-site visit to:
 - Provide training on youth engagement and/or a specific youth engagement strategy
 - Facilitate strategic planning with stakeholders about replicating a particular model or strategy or developing a local strategy
 - Network PSN stakeholders with other community-based youth serving resources
- Additional on-site training and TA on replication of strategy selected

Follow Up

- Follow up TA to address implementation challenges

Contact ILJ to Request Training and TA: marti.kovener@ilj.org 703.684.5300

Exhibit 3 Strategic Action Planning Model of Technical Assistance



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Notes
