Multnomah County
Comprehensive Gang Assessment

A collaborative project sponsored by

The Multnomah County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council

June 30, 2014

This Page Intentionally Left Blank

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments ..... **vii**
Acronyms and Abbreviations ..... **viii**

Executive Summary ..... **ES 1**
Key Findings ..... ES 1
Data Summaries ..... ES 3
County Demographics ..... ES 3
Service Needs ..... ES 5
The Schools ..... ES 6
Gang-Related Crime ..... ES 7
Where are gang-related crimes occurring? ..... ES 8
Impacts on Victims ..... ES 9
Community Perceptions ..... ES 10
Community Resources Data ..... ES 16
Conclusion ..... ES 18
Voices of People Impacted by Gangs ..... ES 18

Chapter 1: Introduction **1**
Purpose 1
A Collaborative Process 1
Background 2
Taking a Public Health Perspective 3
About the OJJDP Model 4
Overview of Our Approach 6
General Approach 6
Tailoring the OJJDP Model 7
Defining Key Terms 7
Project Timing 9
Project Organization 9
Data Collection Processes 11
Quantitative Data Collection 11
Qualitative Data Collection 11
Community Resource Inventory 14
Data Quality and Limitations 15

Chapter 2: Community Demographics Data **17**
Question 1: What are Multnomah County's characteristics, and have they changed over time? 17
Observations 17
Discussion 18
Data Sources 21
Multnomah County Census Trends Summary 22
Question 2: What are Multnomah County's service needs and how have they changed? 34
Observations 34
Discussion 34
Data Sources 35
Question 3: What are our school system's characteristics and needs? 39
Observations 39
Discussion 39
Data Sources 40

Chapter 3: Law Enforcement Data **44**
Issue Brief: Who Is Tracking Our Gangs? 44
Question 4: What gangs are active in Multnomah County? 46
Observations 46
Discussion 46
Data Sources 46
Active Gangs and Subsets in Multnomah County (listed in alphabetical order) 47
Question 5: What types of crimes are gang members committing? 48
Observations 48
Discussion 48
Data Sources 50
Question 6: Where are gang crimes occurring? 50
Observations 50
Discussion 51
Data Sources 52
Question 7: What is the impact of gang crimes on victims? 58
Observations 58
Discussion 58
Data Sources 60
State Findings: Summary Table 60
National Findings: Summary Table 61

Chapter 4: Community Perceptions Data 65
General Observations of Community Perceptions Data 65
Data Sources 67
Question 8: Do community leaders perceive a gang problem? If so, what is the problem? Are they prepared to respond? 67
Observations of Community Leader Data 67
Question 9: How do community residents perceive the gang problem? What do community residents believe should be done? 68
Observations of Community Resident Data 68
Youth Summit Attendees 69
Observations of Youth Summit Data 70
Question 10: How do youth workers and youth-serving agencies perceive the problem? What issues are contributing to the area's gang problems? What solutions might be available? 70
Observations 70
Question 11: Do parents of gang-affiliated youth perceive their children to be involved in or at risk of involvement in gangs? Why? What should be done? 71
Observations of Parent/Family Data 72
Question 12: What about students and school staff? 73
School Staff Respondents 73
Student Respondents 73
Question 13: Who is involved in gangs? 76
Demographic Data on Gang Members Who Were Interviewed 76
Responses from Focus Groups and Youth and Family Survey 81

Chapter 5: Community Resources 85
Question 14: How has the community responded to gang activity? 85
Observations on Community Resources Data 85
Data Sources 85

Appendices

Appendix 1: Local Public Safety Coordinating Council Youth and Gang Violence Steering Committee Membership A1
Appendix 2: Multnomah County Existing Gang-related Initiatives A3
Appendix 3: Multnomah County Census Trends A5
Appendix 4: Multnomah County School Districts Exclusionary Discipline A10
Appendix 5: Profile of High Risk Youth: Multnomah County Safe Streets A16
Appendix 6: Community Leader Survey Tool and Data A18
Appendix 7: Community Resident Survey Tool and Data A57

Appendix 8: Multnomah County Youth Commission: Youth Summit Against Violence Survey Tool and Data A99
Appendix 9: Youth-Serving Agency Survey Tool and Data A104
Appendix 10: Parent and Family Survey Tool and Data A120
Appendix 11: School Staff and Student Survey Tools and Data A135
Appendix 12: Gang Member Interview Tools and Data A202
Appendix 13: Gang-Involved Individual & Affiliated Focus Group Survey Tool, Data, and Focus Group Themes A279
Appendix 14: Community Resources Data Collection Process and Gang Responsive Program Data A306

Figures

Figure 1: Key Terms 8
Figure 2: Project Structure 9
Figure 3:U.S. Census Trends Summary 22
Figure 4: Population Density Map 24
Figure 5: Density of People of Color per Acre 25
Figure 6: Populations of Color, Rate of Change 26
Figure 7: Population Age 0-17 (Density by Acre) 27
Figure 8: Percent Children of Color Age 0-17 28
Figure 9: Median Home Value 29
Figure 10: Median Household Income 30
Figure 11: Voter Registration 31
Figure 12: Educational Attainment 32
Figure 13: Percent Free & Reduced Lunch 33
Figure 14: Homelessness 36
Figure 15: Adult A&D Outpatient & Residential Utilization 36
Figure 16: Low Birth Weight Births 37
Figure 17: Vital Stats Teen Birth Data 38
Figure 19: Multnomah County School District Enrollment 41
Figure 20: Multnomah County School District Enrollment by Race 41
Figure 18: Multnomah County Change in Enrollment 41
Figure 21: Multnomah County High School Drop Out Rates 42
Figure 22: Multnomah County Exclusionary Discipline RRI 42
Figure 23: Trend of Disciplinary Action by Race 43
Figure 24: Multnomah County DA Gang Unit Cases 48
Figure 25: Safe Street Youth: Race 49
Figure 26: Safe Streets Youth: Gender 49

Figure 27: Safe Streets Youth: Risk Level 50
Figure 28: Safe Streets Youth: Charges 50
Figure 29: Preliminary Reported Index Crimes 52
Figure 30: Density of Reported Incidents: Part 1 Violent Crime 53
Figure 31: PPB Gang Activity Heat Map 54
Figure 32: Density of Reported Incidents of Non-DV Assault 55
Figure 33: Density of Shots Fired Calls 56
Figure 34: Reported Incidents Flagged as Gang Activity 57
Figure 35: Impact of Gang Crime on Victims 59
Figure 36: Oregon Victims' Needs Assessment 60
Figure 37: NCVS Summary Table 61
Figure 38: Victimization by Gender 62
Figure 39: Rates of Victimization 62
Figure 40: Victimization by Age 62
Figure 41: Emotional Impact of Victimization 63
Figure 42: Help Sought by Victims 63
Figure 43: Reasons for Not Reporting Victimization 64
Figure 44: Youth Summit: Age 69
Figure 45: Youth Summit: Ethnicity 69
Figure 46: School Staff: Trends in Gang Activity 73
Figure 47: Students: Gangs at School 74
Figure 48: Students: Gang Activity at Schools 75
Figure 49: Students: Why Join a Gang? 75
Figure 50: Gang-Involved Youth: Age 76
Figure 51: Gang-Involved Youth: Race 76
Figure 52: Gang-Involved Youth: Witnessing Gang Activity 77
Figure 53: Gang-Involved Youth: Witnessing Events in the Community 78
Figure 54: Gang-Involved Youth: Gang Causes 79
Figure 56: Gang-Involved Youth: Adults Engaging in Behaviors 80
Figure 55: Gang-Involved Youth: Reasons to Leave a Gang 80
Figure 57: Gang-Involved Youth: Police Treatment 81
Figure 58: Parent Survey: Gang Causes 82
Figure 59: Parent Survey: Types of Gang Problems 82
Figure 60: Parent Survey: Is There a Gang Problem? 82
Figure 61: Parent Survey: Gang Responses 83
Figure 62: Programs Experienced Serving Gang-Involved Individuals 86
Figure 63: Gang-Specific Programs 86

Figure 64: Gang-Specific Program Strategies 87
Figure 65: Gang-Responsive Program Strategies 87
Figure 69: All Programs: Full? 88
Figure 66: Age of Youth Served 88
Figure 67: Gang-responsive: Adults vs Youth 88
Figure 68: All Programs: Adults vs Youth 88
Figure 70: Gang-Specific Programs: Full? 89
Figure 71: All Programs: Funding Sources 89
Figure 72: Gang-Specific Programs: Funding Sources 89
Figure 73: Community Resources Map 90
Figure 74: Distribution of Youth Resources 2009 91

Acknowledgments

Coordinating Committee

Kimberly Bernard, Department of Community Justice
Antoinette Edwards, Y&GVSC Co-Chair, City of Portland
Tracey Freeman, Department of Community Justice
Mary Geelan, Department of Community Justice
Christina McMahan, Department of Community Justice
Kory Murphy, Department of County Management
Erika Prueitt, Department of Community Justice
Kirsten Snowden, District Attorney's Office
Abbey Stamp, Local Public Safety Coordinating Council
Rebecca Stavenjord, Health Department
Rod Underhill, Y&GVSC Co-Chair, District Attorney
Joe Walsh, City of Gresham

Project Leads and Staff

Department of Community Justice (DCJ)
- **Kimberly Bernard, Manager, Research and Planning Team (Project Lead)**
- **Mary Geelan, Juvenile Court Improvement Coordinator (Project Lead)**
- Ellen Churchill, Senior Data Analyst
- David Schwager, Data Analyst
- Liang Wu, Senior Data Analyst
- Benjamin J. Marcus, Data Technician

Department of County Assets
- Benjamin Harper, Development Analyst, (Mapping)

Multnomah County Health Department Community Capacitation Center
- **Rebecca Stavenjord, STRYVE Project Director (Project Lead)**
- Valerie Salazar, Community Health Worker
- Dondrae "Choo" Fair, Community Health Worker

Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC)
- **Abbey Stamp, Executive Director (Project Lead)**
- Lauren Brown, Senior Data Analyst
- Christina Youssi, Executive Assistant

Multi-Agency Quantitative Workgroup Contributors
- Kim Bernard, DCJ
- Lauren Brown, LPSCC
- Mary Geelan, DCJ
- Robert Jackson, Portland Police Bureau (PPB)
- Shea Marshman, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
- Greg Stewart, PPB

Contracted Project Coordination and Report Preparation
- Lore Joplin Consulting, www.lorejoplin.com
- Ann Sihler, Technical Writing, www.annsihler.com

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AHR	All Hands Raised
CCFC	Commission on Children, Families and Community
CHW	Community Health Worker
DCHS	Department of County Human Services
DCJ	Department of Community Justice
DOC	Department of Corrections
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GET	Gang Enforcement Team
IRB	Institutional Review Board
JJIS	Juvenile Justice Information System
JCC	Juvenile Court Counselor
LEP	Leadership and Entrepreneurship
LPSCC	Local Public Safety Coordinating Council
MCSO	Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
OJJDP	Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention
OYA	Oregon Youth Authority
POIC	Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center
PPB	Portland Police Bureau
PPS	Portland Public Schools
PULSE	Greater Portland PULSE
RRI	Relative Rate Index
SACSI	Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiatives
SSD	Student Services Director
STRYVE	Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere
Y&GVSC	Youth and Gang Violence Subcommittee of LPSCC

Executive Summary

This report summarizes key data collected for the *Multnomah County Comprehensive Gang Assessment,* which was initiated in January 2014 by the Multnomah County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC) Executive Committee. The assessment was completed by following guidance from the federal Office for Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), which has developed a three-phase model[1]for developing a comprehensive, coordinated approach to reducing and preventing youth gang violence. The three phases are:

1. Determine the types and levels of youth gang activity, gang crime patterns, community perceptions about youth gangs and gang activity, and service gaps.
2. Design appropriate responses.
3. Implement those responses.

This report represents the culmination of the first phase: defining the problem of youth gangs in the community. Once the problem and its potential causes and contributing factors are understood, the OJJDP model recommends implementing strategies that involve not just gang youth but also their families and various community institutions that play a role in people's transition from adolescence to productive members of society.

A Youth Serving Agency Survey respondent said: "We need both prevention and intervention strategies to help address the gang issues."

[1]National Gang Center. OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model. Accessed at: http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Comprehensive-Gang-Model/About

The process of completing this assessment truly was a community endeavor—one that involved the work, resources, and data of multiple public agencies and community organizations. In addition, more than 1,000 community members shared their perspectives through focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and surveys; we have included quotes from respondents throughout the report. As recommended by the OJJDP model, we designed our data collection to answer key questions about (1) community demographics, (2) law enforcement, (3) perceptions of students, school staff, and community members, and (4) community resources. We have organized the report in the same manner.

A Parent & Family Survey respondent said: "Latino and black boys are targeted by gangs and also are underserved by schools."

Highlights are presented here, but for a full description of how the assessment was conducted and to view the collected data, see the *Multnomah County Comprehensive Gang Assessment* (June 2014). We also encourage you to read "Voices of People Impacted by Gangs" that begins on page ES18.

Key Findings

Key Findings Regarding Data Limitations

- We were unable to fully answer some important questions about gangs and gang activity in Multnomah County, in part because public safety agencies have lacked a centralized method for identifying and tracking gang-related events and

A gang-involved individual said: "My education came to a halt and disappeared. I gave up on education when I wasn't able to balance it out with the gang and hustling life that I was so heavily devoted to."

individuals. Questions that currently remain unanswered include how many gang-involved individuals are active in Multnomah County, how many gangs consist primarily of youth versus adults, what crimes are being committed by gangs, and when and where gang crimes are being committed. Where possible we used proxy measures to respond to some of these questions. Knowing that we are unable to fully answer these questions is valuable in itself, as is the exploration of why this is the case.

- Analyzing data on trends can be complicated, especially crime trends. Although we note many trends that have occurred over time in crime data, it is important to recognize that changes in this type of data can be caused not only by actual changes in the number of occurrences, but also by shifts in factors such as policy, funding, and staffing.

- We recognize that there are limitations with race and ethnicity data included from the U.S. Census but have included that information here to illustrate out-migration patterns. These limitations are described in *Communities of Color in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile*[2] and include issues such as grouping and undercounting populations.

Key Findings Regarding Demographics and Crime

- Census data indicate an overall increase in income levels and educational attainment across Multnomah County. However, these increases are not distributed evenly. They are focused mainly in the central Southeast, Northeast, and Southwest areas of Portland.

- There is a notable out-migration of people of color from North and Northeast Portland to neighborhoods in East Portland and Gresham.

- Overall, crime in Multnomah County has decreased in recent years. This decrease masks a shift in criminal activity from North/Northeast Portland to neighborhoods in Southeast Portland, East Portland, and Gresham.

- These same neighborhoods are overrepresented in terms of low income, unemployment, low voter registration, low educational attainment, use of public assistance, and rates of low birth weight and teen pregnancy.

Key Findings Regarding Schools

A gang-involved individual said: "We need mentors who get it."

- School dropout rates are highest in the Reynolds School District, which is aligned with the high-need neighborhoods.

- African-American students are 3.2 times as likely as white students to be expelled in Multnomah County. The relative rate varies by district, but the Portland Public School District has the highest rate (4.4), followed by Parkrose (2.9) and Reynolds (2.8).

Key Findings Regarding Community Perceptions

- Most gang-involved individuals who were interviewed (83% of them) indicated that they had been suspended or expelled from school at some point. Of those, 60% identified the reason as "fighting."

- Family member involvement in gangs highly correlates with gang involvement, both in the perceptions of gang-involved

[2] Curry-Stevens, A., Cross-Hemmer, A., & Coalition of Communities of Color (2010). Communities of Color in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile. Portland, OR: Portland State University

A Community Leader Survey respondent said: "The gang problem in Portland is mostly just one of media frenzy. Yes, some gangs do exist. No, they're not running rampant and wrecking Portland."

interviewees (89% of them) and of community residents, community leaders, etc.

- Most gang-involved interviewees (60%) indicated they have children, and almost all (96%) indicated that they would not want their children to be involved in gangs.
- When asked what the top reasons are for leaving a gang, 74% of gang-involved interviewees indicated "becoming a parent," 65% indicated family responsibilities (e.g., taking care of children, sick relatives, and employment), 58% indicated getting married, and 54% indicated advice/pressure from a family member.
- Most survey respondents and interviewees believe that the top reasons for joining a gang are poverty/money and having a friend or family member in a gang.
- Employment, activities/programs, and mentors were identified as top methods of reducing gang activity.
- Survey respondents identified violence, drug crimes, and fear as the top impacts of gangs on the community.

Key Findings Regarding Community Resources

Community programs specifically designed to serve gang-involved youth are few in Multnomah County. There are, however, a larger number of programs that self-identify as serving gang-involved youth as part of their general population. Most of the gang-specific programs are funded locally.

Most programs that focus specifically on gang-involved individuals indicated that they focus on intervention, while programs that serve gang-involved youth as part of their general population indicated a focus on both intervention and secondary prevention. Very few programs included in the survey focus on primary prevention.

The mapping data we were able to gather indicated that over the last five years these programs have grown increasingly dispersed, moving from a concentration in downtown Portland and North/Northeast Portland to a more even distribution across the county, including a concentration in the Rockwood area of Gresham.

Data Summaries

The following sections summarize data that are described more fully in the *Multnomah County Comprehensive Gang Assessment* (June 2014), which provides more complete information and explains some of the nuances involved in interpreting the data.

County Demographics

A gang-involved individual said: "I came from a poverty house, for me it was survival."

Demographics in Multnomah County changed between 2005 and 2012, with countywide increases in educational attainment and income levels and an overall decrease in crime. Taken at face value, these trends seem positive. However, they actually mask troubling changes taking place in specific neighborhoods that face a range of social problems, including lower educational attainment and incomes, higher school expulsion rates, and increased unemployment, use of public assistance, and crime.

Between 2005 and 2012, the population of Multnomah County grew significantly—by 15 percent. Currently, county residents are predominantly White and non-Hispanic. Hispanic, Asian-American, and African-American residents represent 11%, 8%, and 7%of the population, respectively. Overall the county's racial make-up remained roughly the same from 2005 to 2012, although there has been a general pattern of movement out of inner Northeast and Southeast Portland to neighborhoods east of Interstate 205.

A Community Resident Survey respondent said: "The area I walk is safe and has been for years. The two shootings are a direct result of the low income housing."

People 24 years or younger constitute the largest age group in the county, and their numbers have increased since 2005 (although their proportion of the total county population has declined). Children ages 17 and younger are concentrated along the county's western boundary and in neighborhoods east of I-205, including Wood Village, Troutdale, and parts of Gresham. Children of color tend to be concentrated in North Portland, in neighborhoods north of I-84 and just west of I-205, and in areas east of I-205.

Many residents of the county (32%) fall into the lowest income bracket, of $15,000 each year or less, with 17% in the $15,000 to $30,000 bracket. The proportion of county residents in the different income brackets did not change dramatically from 2005 to 2012. The greatest increase can be seen in people in the $60,000 to $100,000 income bracket; these people grew both in absolute numbers (from 44,831 to 73,158) and as a percentage of the county population (from 7% to 10%). The neighborhoods with the lowest median household income ($13,699 to $20,000) include OldTown; Portsmouth and Cully in North/Northeast Portland; Powelhurst/Gilbert, Centennial, and Glenfair in Southeast and East Portland; and Rockwood, Centennial, North Gresham, Wood Village, Powell Valley, Northeast Gresham, and Mt. Hood in Gresham.

Between 2005 and 2012 the unemployment rate in the county rose from 4% to 6%, an increase of 16,800 people. In Gresham and Troutdale, the number of people receiving public assistance more than tripled.

Median home values are highest in the West Hills and Arnold Creek areas and lowest in North Portland, along the I-205 corridor, and east of I-205 through Gresham, Wood Village, and Troutdale. Patterns of median household income are similar. An additional, indirect measure of income is the percentage of children receiving free or reduced-cost lunches in school. This varies by school, but the highest densities of students on free/reduced lunch are in North Portland, along the I-205 corridor (Lents and Powellhurst/Gilbert), and east of I-205 (Glenfair, Rockwood, and North Gresham).

Educational attainment in the county has increased since 2005. The number of residents who have attended college or received a bachelor's or master's degree has grown, and there are fewer residents who lack a high school diploma. However, there is a noticeable lack of distribution of educational attainment across the county. For example, in a majority of the neighborhoods in West Portland and inner Southeast Portland, fewer than 26% of the residents have only a high school diploma, GED, alternative school graduation, or lower level of educational achievement. In contrast, in many areas of I-205, such as Powellhurst/Gilbert, Mill Park, Glenfair, Rockwood, Centennial, Powell Valley, and North Gresham, this is the case for 56% to 64% of the residents.

The highest concentrations of voter registrations are found along Highway 26, in the Arnold Creek neighborhood south of I-5, and in several neighborhoods in inner Southeast and Northeast Portland, such as Mount Tabor, Hosford-Abernathy, Irvington, and Beaumont-Wilshire. The lowest rates are north of Columbia Slough and in various neighborhoods from I-205 east into Gresham and Wood Village.

In 2010, U.S. Census tracts with the highest population densities (Northwest, Sunnyside, Creston-Kenilworth, King, and the western portion of Gresham-Rockwood) also had high densities of people of color. However, these were not the only Census tracts that had high concentrations of people of color. People of color also lived in high

A gang-involved individual said: "Generations in jail or dead, no one is telling me what values to have."

densities in North Portland, the neighborhoods directly west of Interstate 205, areas east of Interstate 205, and in Wood Village and Gresham North Central.

A Community Leader Survey respondent said: "When I hear 'gang' I see a calendar from 1980. We need to think in new ways!!!"

Census data from 2000 and 2010 indicate changes in where people of color live in the county. The highest rates of loss have been in the Overlook neighborhood in North Portland, many of the neighborhoods just east of Interstate 5, and the Rose City Park and Roseway/Madison South area immediately north of Interstate 84. Areas that have seen the greatest increases in the number of people of color include outlying areas (e.g., the western portion of the county west of Forest Park/Northwest Heights), neighborhoods north of Interstate 84 from the Troutdale Airport to the west (Wilkes and Fairview), and various neighborhoods in and around Gresham (Kelly Creek, Powellhurst-Gilbert, and Pleasant Valley). A general pattern of movement out of inner Northeast and Southeast Portland to neighborhoods east of Interstate 205 is clear.

Rockwood and Portsmouth have the highest density of children (i.e., people 0 to 17 years old). Areas with similar but somewhat lower densities of children include Irvington, Grant Park, and Roseway/Madison South in Northeast Portland; Creston/Kenilworth and Lents in Southeast Portland; and most of East Portland (Glenfair, Centennial, Hazelwood, Mill Park, and Powellhurst/Gilbert). Children of color tend to be concentrated in North Portland; along the I-5 corridor north of downtown Portland; in the neighborhoods just west of I-205; in the Parkrose and Reynolds school districts; and in much of Gresham, including Rockwood and Wood Village. In many of these areas, the density of children of color is three times that of the density in neighborhoods such as Laurelhurst or Southwest Hills.

Service Needs

The data collected for this assessment provided information on four multifaceted social issues—low-birth weight babies, births to teenage mothers, homelessness, and the use of County-funded alcohol and drug treatment services—that contribute to the local need for human services. Low birth weight, in particular, is a complex phenomenon that is correlated with a host of socioeconomic indicators of disadvantage, including low educational attainment,[3] unemployment, and low income.[4] In fact, for all but the very youngest mothers, there seems to be a negative effect on birth weight simply from living in low-income areas, regardless of the mother's individual circumstances.[5] Once babies are born with a low birth weight, they are at risk of a variety of immediate and sometimes life-threatening health problems, as well as chronic medical conditions later in life (e.g., high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease).

A Community Leader Survey respondent said: "This is not law enforcement's responsibility alone. We need a coordinated approach to prevent violence and gangs."

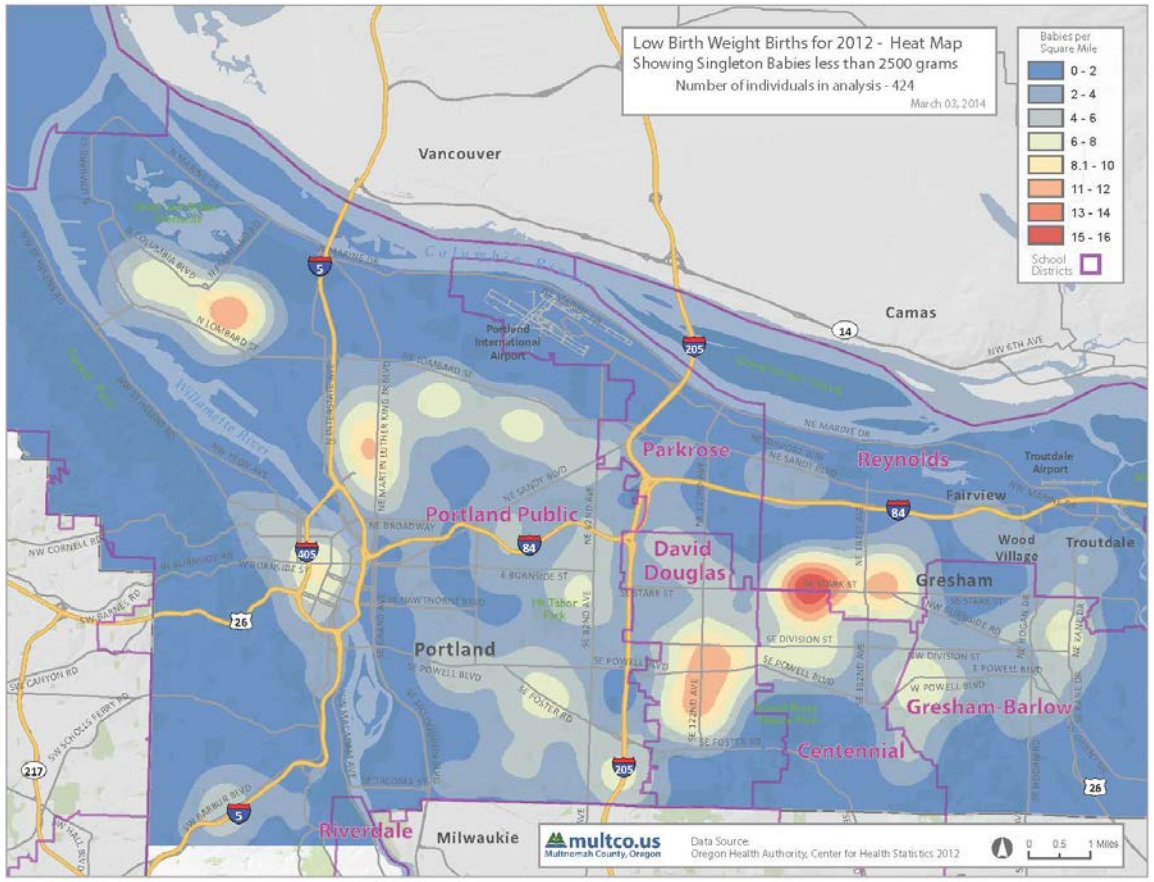
The highest densities of low-birth weight babies are in St. Johns (particularly in the Portsmouth neighborhood), the Boise-Eliot neighborhood in inner Northeast Portland, and two pockets in east Multnomah County (in the David Douglas and Centennial school districts). The East County locations

[3] M. Hack, D.J. Flannery, M. Schluchter, L. Cartar, E. Borawski, and N. Klein. "Outcomes in Young Adulthood for Very-Low-Birth-Weight Infants." *The New England Journal of Medicine*. January 17, 2002. Volume 346, Number 3. Available at http://www.couveuseouders.nl/data/files/hack_nejm_2002%5b1%5d.pdf.

[4] L.C. Messer, J.S. Kaufman, N. Doel, A. Herring, and B.A. Laraia. "Violent Crime Exposure Classification and Adverse Birth Outcomes: A Geographically-Defined Cohort Study." *International Journal of Health Geographics.* 2006, 5:22. Available at http://www.ij-healthgeographics.com/content/5/1/22.

[5] C. Dibbn, M. Sigala, and A. Macfarlane. "Area Deprivation, Individual Factors, and Low Birth Weight in England: Is there Evidence of an 'Area Effect'?" *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.* December 2006; 601(12): 1053-1059. Available at http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2465519/.

coincide with areas of high free/reduced lunch rates. Teen birth rates are high in the same areas as low-birth weight babies, with the addition of the Cully and Roseway/Madison South area, north/northeast Gresham, Gresham-Rockwood, and the Parkrose Heights/Hazelwood/Russell portion of east Multnomah County. The greatest density of teen births is in the David Douglas and Reynolds school districts.



We had access to only a limited amount of data on homelessness and substance abuse treatment for this assessment, and it is unclear whether changes in the latter were the result of shifts in policy, funding, need, or utilization. Rates of homelessness in Multnomah County varied somewhat from 2010 through 2013 but tend to be significantly higher than in the surrounding counties, or in the greater Portland region. In 2013 Multnomah County funded nearly 92,000 alcohol and drug residential treatment bed days; this represents a 10% decrease from 2011. Utilization of County-funded outpatient treatment slots has remained relatively stable in recent years, with 6,559 slots used in 2009 and 6,639 in 2013.

A gang-involved individual said: "Not a lot of adults invested in my education…school was like a job, nobody wanted to go."

The Schools

Multnomah County has nine school districts, including the Multnomah County Educational Service District (ESD), and almost 90 different schools for high school-aged students. Enrollment across the districts has been fairly stable since 2012. For the 2013-2014 school year, Portland had the largest enrollment (47,111), followed by Gresham-Barlow (12,180), Reynolds (11,691), and David Douglas (10,946).

A School Staff Survey respondent said: "Some of the students are poor and they think [gangs are] their ticket to money and excitement. Maybe they don't think they have other options."

Racial representation varies among the school districts. Corbett and Riverdale students are mostly white (86% and 88%, respectively). The districts with the highest percentages of African-American students are Multnomah ESD (22%) and Parkrose (12%). Reynolds has the highest percentage of Hispanic/Latino students (39%), which is slightly more than the percentage of white students. In the Centennial, David-Douglas, and Gresham-Barlow districts, Hispanic/Latino students represent approximately 25% of enrollment.

From 2010 through 2013, more African-American students were the subject of disciplinary actions than were students of other races:

- Across all Multnomah County school districts, 18.13% of African-American students were expelled during the 2012-2013 school year. This compares to 5.68% of white students.
- The relative rate index (RRI)[6] indicates that African-American students are expelled at more than triple (3.2) the rate of white students. American Indian/Alaskan Native students follow, with a rate of double (2.0) that of white students.
- The RRI for expulsion has increased since 2009-2010 for all categories of students of color except Asian-American students.

The racial disparity between African-American students and other students is evident within each individual school district and throughout Multnomah County as a whole.

[6]For a discussion of relative rate index, please see http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/dmcdb/asp/whatis.asp.

The racial group with the lowest proportion of disciplinary actions was Asian-American students.

The drop-out rate varies across districts, with the highest rate at the Reynolds School District (5.4% compared to the state average of 4% for the 2012-2013 school year). All the other districts' drop-out rates were at or below the state average (in some cases substantially lower, as with the Corbett [0.9%] and Riverdale [0.4%] school districts).

Gang-Related Crime

Multnomah County lacks a centralized method for identifying and tracking gang-related events and individuals, which makes it difficult to answer some of the questions posed in the OJJDP Gang Assessment Model, such as how many gang members are active in Multnomah County and how many gang-related crimes have been committed. For most of the questions regarding gang-related crime, we used violent crime as a proxy.

A Community Resident Survey respondent said: "I have lived in Powellhurst/Gilbert since 1977. I feel safer now that I did when I first moved here. I am the neighbor watch."

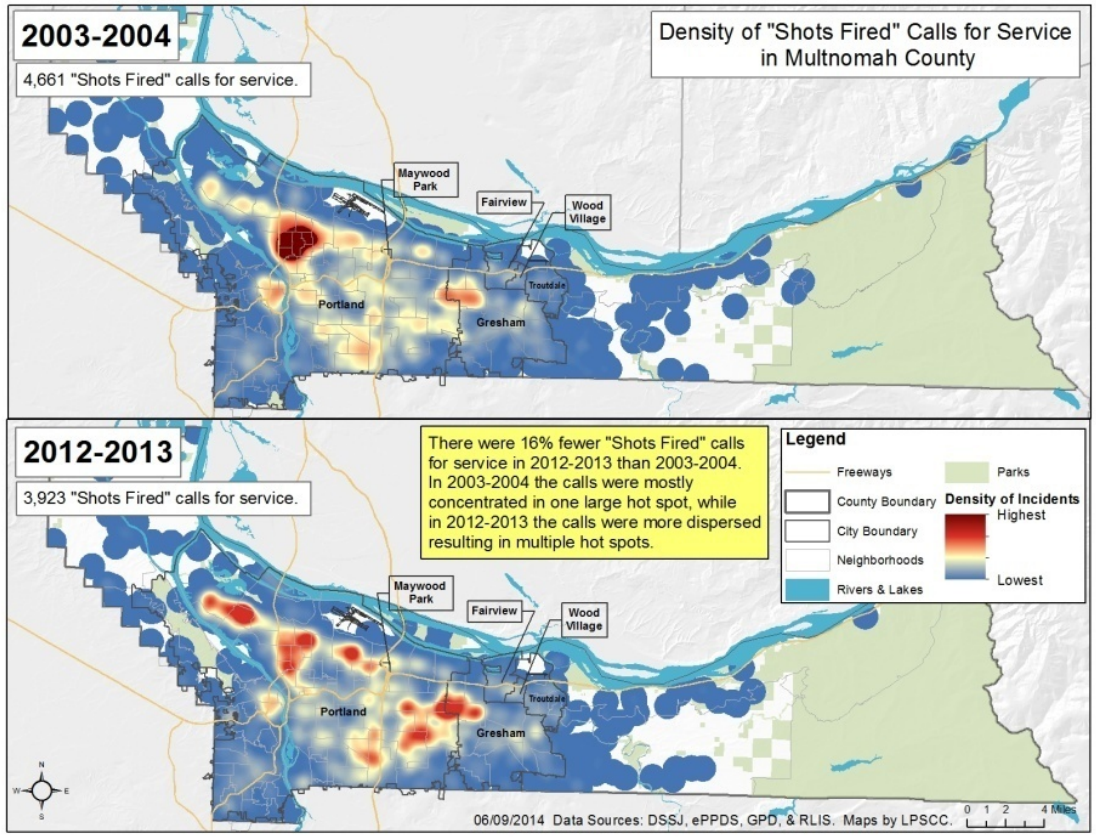
Despite the data limitations around gang-specific crimes, we were able to meet with multiple law enforcement groups to identify a list of at least 133 active gangs in Multnomah County that are known to local law enforcement and outreach workers. Some of the gangs identified are smaller splinter groups that are related to larger gangs. However, because alliances between gangs often change, each gang identified as active was retained as a separate group on the list.

The other gang-specific data we were able to collect were cases reviewed and issued by the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office's Gang Unit. From 2012 to 2013, this unit issued 41% fewer gang-related felony cases (from 253 cases to 149) but 100% more gang-related misdemeanor cases (from 51 to 102). Most, if not all, of

the increase in gang-related misdemeanor cases is attributable to additional staff funded through a federal grant.

We also collected data from the Safe Streets Project, which is a joint effort of local law enforcement, the Juvenile Services Division, Oregon Youth Authority, and the District Attorney's Office to identify youth who have been involved in serious person-to-person and/or firearms-related crimes. The list of "Safe Street youth" includes approximately 139 youth who are between 12 to 22 years old (average age 16.9 years). The average age of first criminal referral among these youth is 13.3 years, and youth averaged 5.5 referrals per individual. Almost half of these youth have been assessed as being at high risk of future delinquency. Most (85%) are male, and 77% are youth of color. The most common charges for which these youth were adjudicated are assault(30 youth charged, or 21.6%), robbery (28 youth, or 20.1%), burglary (25 youth, or 18%), and unlawful possession of a firearm (19 youth, or 13.7%).

A Community Leader Survey respondent said: "My brother joined a gang after our father was incarcerated…he is now serving time in [prison]"



Where are gang-related crimes occurring?

Recent efforts by public safety agencies to promote the use of a "gang flag" have produced one of the first snapshots of where gang-related crimes are occurring in Multnomah County. The time period is limited, but the map clearly indicates that gang activity appears to be concentrated in the Rockwood neighborhood in Gresham, the Humboldt and King neighborhoods in Northeast Portland, and the downtown/OldTown/Chinatown neighborhoods of Portland.

Aggravated assaults and shooting calls historically have been used as proxy measures for gang violence. Countywide, reported incidents of non-domestic-violence-related aggravated assault decreased by 24% from 2003-2004 to 2012-2013. However, reports increased (>8%) in some areas, including Rockwood. Between 2003-2004 and 2012-2013, the pattern of reported incidents changed as follows:

- Shifted away from North/Northeast Portland
- Remained steady in downtown/Old Town/Chinatown
- Remained steady in the Powellhurst-Gilbert area
- Shifted into Glenfair and Rockwood

Countywide, "shots fired" calls decreased 16% from 2003-2004 and 2012-2013. During that time the spatial pattern of "shots fired" changed, from being highly concentrated in a single area of North/Northeast Portland (i.e., mainly the Humboldt, Boise, King, and Vernon neighborhoods) to being dispersed into more, smaller, and less intense clusters.

The overall level of reported Part 1 Violent Crime in Multnomah County increased by 1% from 2011 to 2013, but in the Rockwood neighborhood, rates increased by 62%. Maps for these two years show the same total amount of crime, but in 2013 more of that crime was concentrated in Rockwood.

A Community Leader Survey respondent said: "I don't see much gang activity and think the whole issue is much overblown."

Impacts on Victims

Data from the 2012 *Oregon Crime Victim's Needs Assessment* and the *2012 National Crime Victimization Survey* (NCVS) were used to describe the impact of crime on victims. Although Oregon's report does not specifically refer to victims of gang violence, it does include information on victims of assaults that are not related to domestic violence. The NCVS includes data related to gang-related victimization.

The *Oregon Crime Victim's Needs Assessment* indicates that crime victims' highest unmet service needs were emergency financial assistance, victim/offender mediation, and getting information about or help with processing restitution. The most commonly identified barriers to receiving services were not being aware of services, feeling afraid, not being able to afford services, and the service not being available. Victims of non-domestic-violence assault indicated a low level of satisfaction with the criminal justice system (2.38 on a scale of 1= very dissatisfied to 4=very satisfied). Immigrants and racial or ethnic minorities are among the most underserved crime victims. These populations reported not feeling comfortable approaching the criminal justice system.

The NCVS did not include Oregon in its survey, but it did include data on victims of gang crime. The report indicates that, nationally, the majority of gang victims (65%) are men. Gang victims are 1.35 times more likely to be male than are victims of other crimes. People of color are 1.31 times more likely to be gang victims than they are to be victims of other crimes. Victimization by gang members tends to occur more commonly among young people than among adults.

The most frequently cited emotional impact of gang crimes on victims was anger. Victims of gangs were 1.27 times more likely to be angry as a result of their crime than are other crime victims. More than half of gang victims experienced anxiety/worry (69%), feeling unsafe (69%), vulnerability (52%), feeling violated (57%), and feeling mistrust (64%).

Very few crime victims seek help, and victims of gang crimes are even less likely to do so. Only 12% of victims of gang crimes report seeking professional help for feelings experienced as a victim. Almost all gang victims (99.4%) indicate that they have never received assistance from victim services agencies. Almost one-quarter of gang victims reported seeking medical help for problems they experienced as a victim.

More than half of gang victims (53.9%) did not report their victimization to the police. This rate is similar to that for other victims (57%), although victims of gang crimes were 4.4 times more likely than other victims to say that they did not report the crime because "police are biased." The odds that gang victims did not report crimes out of a fear of reprisal were 2.6 times greater than for other victims.

Community Perceptions

The collection of qualitative data regarding community perceptions of gang-related crime was a community effort. The process was led by the Multnomah County Health Department's Community Capacitation Center and was conducted through online and hard copy surveys, one-on-one interviews, and facilitated focus groups. Students from LEP Charter School coordinated the process of tailoring and disseminating the student and school staff surveys. More than 200 students, 150 community residents, and 100 community leaders took the surveys. More than 80 gang-involved individuals participated in one-on-one interviews. Additional respondents representing youth-serving agencies, parents and family members of gang-affiliated youth, and school staff participated in surveys (43, 25, and seven people, respectively). In addition, more than 200 youth, adult policymakers, and community leaders completed an abbreviated survey at the Multnomah Youth Commission's Annual Youth Summit Against Violence on April 5, 2014. A total of nine focus groups with gang-affiliated parents, family members, and individuals were conducted at seven different locations.

A Community Leader Survey respondent said: "Be an engaged, compassionate and caring community member. Advocate for equity & structural equality."

Respondents disagreed about whether gangs are present at school or in the community:

- 25% of students said yes
- 40% of teachers said yes
- 80% of community residents and community leaders said yes
- 90% of parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth said yes.

Violent crime and fear consistently ranked high as gang-related problems identified by community leaders, community residents, and parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth. Gang-involved individuals ranked inter-gang violence, alcohol use, and drug crimes as the top three gang-related problems.

Top Six Gang-related Problems in the Community, According to …

… Community Leaders	… Community Residents	… Parents/ Families of Gang-Affiliated Youth	…Gang-involved Individuals
1. Violent crime	1. Drug crimes	1. Violent crime	1. Gang to gang confrontations
2. Fear	2. Fear	2. Fear	2. Alcohol use
3. Family disruption	3. Violent crime	3. Weapons crimes	3. Drug crimes
4. School disruption	4. Weapons crimes	4. Drug crimes	4. Weapons crimes
5. Weapons crimes	5. Public nuisance	5. Vandalism/graffiti	5. Robbery
6. Drug crimes	6. Fighting	6. Property crimes	6. Assault/Battery

- Community leaders cited family and school disruption as top gang-related problems in the community more frequently than did any other survey respondents.
- Community residents did not identify vandalism/graffiti as a top gang-related problem, even though both students and school staff described graffiti as their main indicator of gang presence.
- Among most respondents, poverty and having a friend or family member in a gang were the most common explanations for why a young person would join a gang.
- Community residents, parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth, and gang-involved youth identified "gang members moving in from other areas" as a top reason for joining a gang.

A gang-involved individual said: "I don't want my kids to see or do the same [as I've done]. It's unsafe, you die, or you will end up in jail."

Top Six Reasons Young People Join Gangs, According to …

… Students Who Say They're in a Gang	… Community Leaders	… Community Residents	…Parents/ Families of Gang-Affiliated Youth	…Gang-involved Individuals
1. Money 2. Fun 3. Respect 4. Protection 5. Family member is in a gang 6. Fit in better	1. Poverty 2. Friend/family member is in a gang 3. Feel loved or belong 4. Family problems 5. Lack of activities 6. School problems	1. Poverty 2. Friend/family member is in a gang 3. Gang members move in from other areas 4. Lack of activities 5. Feel loved or belong 6. Family problems	1. Friend/family member is in a gang 2. Poverty 3. Gang members move in from other places 4. Family problems 5. Lack of activities 6. Boredom	1. Friend/family member is in a gang 2. Poverty 3. Family problems 4. Not feeling accepted 5. Gang members move in from other places 6. Lack of activities

- Jobs or job training, mentoring, and recreational programming/activities ranked high as strategies for reducing gang activity.
- Parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth named "more parental involvement" as the top strategy for reducing gang activity.
- Community residents and parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth would like to see more police presence or protection as a way of preventing gang membership and gang activity.

A gang-involved individual said: "My dad, brother, aunty, and mother are in gangs."

Top Six Things That Should Be Done to Reduce Gang Activity (in Order), According to …

… Community Leaders	… Community Residents	… Parents/Families of Gang-Affiliated Youth	…Gang-involved Individuals
1. Jobs/job training 2. Mentoring 3. Recreation programs 4. School programs 5. More parental involvement 6. Tutoring	1. Jobs/job provision 2. Mentoring 3. Quality education and educational success 4. Child and youth programming 5. Health services 6. More police protection	1. More parental involvement 2. Jobs/job training 3. School programs 4. Recreation programs 5. Mentoring 6. More police presence	1. Recreation programs / activities 2. Mentoring 3. Jobs/job training

Community Leaders

Approximately 100 community leaders took the survey, which was distributed and completed both electronically and in hard copy. Community leaders who took the survey primarily represent non-profit organizations and city or county government. One-third are managers or supervisors, while 24% are directly involved in service delivery. More women than men took the survey (55% vs. 38%), and 70% of the respondents are white. Almost two-thirds (62%) of the community leader respondents are between 40 and 64 years of age, and another 23% are 30 to 39 years old. Most commonly, respondents have worked in their field for more than 20 years. At least 40% have had personal experience with a gang member, often in a professional capacity.

A gang-involved individual said: "I would like to do any work that is available for me to do when I'm back in the community."

The organizations that community leaders represent partner with many other types of organizations in addressing gang activity: non-profit organizations, law enforcement, youth-serving organizations, city or county government, faith-based communities, state government, local business, and the media. The organizations work in every part of the county, with the greatest focus being in Gresham and the Rockwood/Rosewood area.

Observations

- A total of 80% of the community leaders believe that gangs are a problem in the community.
- According to community leaders, the most common problems that gangs cause are (in order) violent crime, fear, family disruption, school disruption, weapons crimes, drug crimes, vandalism/graffiti, property crimes, and public nuisances. Additionally, five community members specifically mentioned human trafficking or gang-related prostitution as a top problem caused by gangs.
- Community leaders cited poverty, a friend or family member being in a gang, wanting to feel loved or have a sense of belonging, and family problems as the main reasons people join gangs.
- The top strategies that community leaders suggested for reducing the gang problem were (in order) jobs/job training, mentoring, recreation programs, school programs, and more parental involvement.
- Community leaders gave mixed reports as to whether they are satisfied with the current response to gangs (by law enforcement, social service agencies, schools, etc.). While 35% are somewhat satisfied, 57% are somewhat or very unsatisfied.

Community Residents

A Community Leader Survey respondent said: "More focus needs to be on families. . . gang [involved] families are inherently dysfunctional."

More than 150 community residents took the survey, which was distributed and completed both electronically and in hard copy. Community resident respondents were mostly white (80%) and female (57%). In terms of marital status, 40% of them are married, 30% never married, and 21% divorced; the rest are separated or widowed. It was most common that community residents were in the 50- to 64-year-old age bracket (35% of respondents). Thirty-five percent of the respondents had completed a college degree.

Observations

- More than half (65%) of the community residents said they do not feel safer in their community than they did two years ago. Their top concerns about their community are (in order) drug dealing, burglary/robbery, gang activity, graffiti, vandalism, and unemployment.
- Most residents (80%) think that there are gangs in their community, and that gang activity has stayed about the same during the past year (60% of respondents); 35% think it has increased, and 6% think it has decreased.
- Community residents consider drug crimes, fear, violent crime, weapons crimes, and public nuisances as the top problems caused by gangs in their community. They identify these items as gang-related problems less frequently than do the parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth.

A gang-involved individual said: "Gangs destroy families and it's so stupid to join because it's killing for nothing."

- Community residents cited the following as the top causes of gang activity (in order): poverty, a friend or family member is in a gang, gang members move in from other

areas, a lack of activities, wanting to feel loved or have a sense of belonging, family problems, boredom, and wanting power.

- The top strategies that community residents suggested for reducing the gang problem were jobs/job provision, mentoring, quality education and educational success, child and youth programming, health services, more police protection, programs/recreation, and quality housing.

- Community residents consider the family to be the entity that is most responsible for dealing with gangs, followed by (in order) the police, school, and court/criminal justice system. Also cited were service providers, the church, community residents, community centers, neighborhood associations, and the health department.

Youth Summit Attendees

More than 200 youth, adult policymakers, and community leaders attending the Multnomah Youth Summit answered a subset of the questions that constituted the other qualitative surveys summarized in this report. Respondents varied greatly in age, although many fell in the 13-15 and 16-17 age groups (21% and 22% of respondents, respectively). More than 50% of the adult respondents were white; the racial composition of the younger respondents was much more varied, with less than 30% of them being white. Female respondents outnumbered male respondents. Most respondents came from Southeast, Northeast, and North Portland.

A gang-involved individual said: "It made some people feel unsafe -back in the day gangs was really bad. It's still out there but it not as bad. I guess it's where you are in life."

Observations

- Both adult respondents and youth respondents (ages 21 and under) see violent crime and fear as the top problems that gangs cause in their community. Youth additionally identified fighting and drug crimes as top problems, while adults identified family disruption and weapons crimes. Some youth (<10%) said that gangs are not a problem in the community, while no adults offered this response.

A gang-involved individual said: "Kids in my community can't be kids for fear of violence."

- Adults and youth both attribute gang activity largely to a desire for love/belonging, the experience of poverty, and having a friend or family member in a gang. But youth also identified protection/power and family problems as major reasons (and identified these latter factors more commonly than did the adults).

- Mentoring and jobs/job training rated high among both adults and youth as ways to reduce the gang problem. Adults also frequently mentioned more parental involvement, while youth frequently mentioned recreation programs. Both adults and youth see mentoring and quality education and educational opportunities as important in preventing gang activity.

Youth Workers and Youth-serving Agencies

A total of 43 people who represent agencies that serve youth took the survey. The survey was distributed electronically, and all participants completed the survey online. Just under half of these respondents (48%) believe that gang activity is increasing among the youth serve, 40% think it is staying about the same, and 10% think it is decreasing.

Parents of Gang-Affiliated Youth

A total of 25 parents and family members of gang-affiliated youth took the survey.

Observations

- Almost all (90%) of the parent/family respondents believe that gangs are a problem in their community, as evidenced by (in

order) violent crime, fear, weapons crimes, drug crimes, vandalism/graffiti, and property crimes. Between 55% and 85% of the parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth cited these feelings or activities as indicators of gang activity.

- Compared to community leaders, more parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth see gang-related problems in the community and think something should be done to reduce gang activity.
- Less than half of the parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth see gangs as contributing to school or family disruption or causing a public nuisance.
- Parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth consider the main causes of gang activity to be (in order) a friend or family member is in a gang, poverty, family problems, gang members moving to the community from other places, a lack of activities, boredom, protection, school problems, a desire to feel loved or have a sense of belonging, wanting power, or being labeled by the police.

A gang-involved individual said: "Gangs stop kids from going on with their education"

- Top strategies that parents/family members of gang-affiliated youth cited for reducing the gang problem are (in order) more parental involvement, jobs/job training, school programs, and recreation programs.
- While 30% of the parents/family members think that their own children are at risk of gang membership, 45% of them do not think their children are at risk.

School Staff

Seven school staff members—all of them from the Leadership and Entrepreneurship (LEP) Charter High School—completed the survey, in hard copy.

Observations

- While 40% of the school staff respondents said that there is not a gang problem at their school, 30% of the school staff members think that there is a problem, based on their observation of graffiti in and around the school.
- School staff do not think that gang activity is increasing. Instead, two-thirds of them (66%) believe that gang activity is decreasing, while the rest (33%) believe it is staying about the same.
- School staff gave quite varied responses about when and where gang activity takes place, the types of problems gang members cause in and around school (other than graffiti), and issues that contribute to gang activity. There was no clear pattern among these responses.

Students

More than 200 students, from four different alternative schools (LEP, POIC East, POIC North, and Alpha), took the survey. Most of the students (72%) were 16 to 18 years old. The ratio of males to females among students taking the survey was 54% to 43%. More than half of the students (52%) identified as white, 39% identified as African American, and 16% identified as Latino, Hispanic, or Spanish. Some students (18%) said they speak Spanish at home. Three-quarters of the students (75%) live in a home with their mother. For 40% of the students, a father is present in the home.

Academically, 55% of the student respondents said they get mostly Bs and Cs in school. Between 33% and 41% of them described themselves as "sometimes" enjoying school and feeling valued there.

Observations

- Most of the students (75% or more) usually feel safe at school, going to and from school, and in their neighborhood. However,

about 10% of them rarely or never feel safe at school, and 15% do not feel safe in their neighborhood.

- Most of the students reported that their best friends have not engaged in risky behaviors. For students who said that their friends have engaged in risky behaviors, all four of their best friends have done so. The most common risky behaviors among best friends are:
    - selling illegal drugs
    - being sexually active
    - drinking alcohol regularly
    - stealing

- Much less common among best friends are:
    - being suspended from school
    - dropping out
    - carrying a weapon to school
    - being arrested
    - being a member of a gang

- Half the students (52%) said they do not know if there are gangs in their school. The rest are almost evenly split between believing that there are gangs (24%) and that there aren't (26%).

Gang-Involved Individuals

A total of 80 gang-involved individuals participated in one-on-one in-person interviews conducted by community health workers from the Multnomah County Health Department and staff from Oregon Youth Authority and the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office. The purpose of the interviews was not to obtain information about criminal activity but to learn from individuals who have direct, lived experience with gangs. To explore what gangs mean to them and what they recommend be done to reduce gang membership and criminal activity in our communities. In keeping with the public health approach of this assessment, we conducted the interviews with the assumption that, in spite of the negative behaviors associated with gangs, gangs meet needs for youth who are experiencing high levels of risk in their lives and are seeking a sense of trust, relationship, and caring they are having difficulty finding in more pro-social ways.

A gang-involved individual said: "Have the big homies get involved in positive events."

At the time of the interviews, most of the interviewees (75%) were living in the community, and 25% were in a correctional institution. Male interviewees significantly outnumbered females (82% to 18%), and the largest age group represented was 18 to 25 years (45% of the interviewees). A total of 92% of the interviewees were people of color, with African Americans and Hispanics constituting the largest racial/ethnic groups (58% and 19% of respondents, respectively). For 11% of the interviewees, Spanish is the language they use most often at home.

Observations—Family, Work, and School

- Most interviewees (74%) have never been married. A total of 48 interviewees—60%—indicated that they have children.

- Most interviewees (89%) indicated that a family member has been involved in gangs, but 96% said they would not want their own children to be gang members.

- Two-thirds of the interviewees (53 of them) said they are not currently employed.

- Statistics regarding school experience are as follows:
    - 32% of the interviewees are currently attending school.
    - 53% dropped out of school at some point.
    - 83% were suspending or expelled from school at some point. Of those, 60% indicated that they were expelled for fighting.
    - 70% expressed interest in returning to school. Of those, more than half (52%) are interested in attending college.

A gang-involved individual said: "We need more educational opportunities, more job opportunities, and more after school events- too much unstructured time.

- During the last year, a number of interviewees have frequently witnessed gang-related activities—including violence—at school. The most commonly observed gang-related activities were gang members being on school grounds, gang members selling drugs, fights between members of different gangs, and gang intimidation.

Observations—Community Safety, Community Problems, and Witnessing Violence

- Roughly two-thirds of the interviewees (51 of them, or 64%) said that there are areas in their community where they feel targeted or in danger when walking.
- Approximately one-third of the interviewees (27 of them, or 36%) described the following as problems in their community:
  - Alcohol use—a "very serious" problem
  - Gang-to-gang confrontations—a "serious" problem
- Twenty-nine interviewees (39%) described vandalism/graffiti as a "small" problem in their community.
- Interviewees had witnessed various types of gang activities, including violence, during the past year. Frequently observed activities included the following:
  - Gang members selling drugs—witnessed by 25 interviewees (34%) more than 26 times in the past year
  - Fights between members of different gangs—witnessed by 19 interviewees (26%) more than 26 times in the past year.
- Less frequently observed were drive-by shootings and fights between members of their own gangs:
  - 30 interviewees (42%) had not witnessed any drive-by shootings in the past year.
  - 22 interviewees (31%) interviewees had not witnessed any fights between members of their own gang.

Observations—Gangs and the Community

- When describing how gangs affect their community, 33% of interviewees said that gangs reduce community safety, and 43% described gangs as having a generally negative effect on the community:
- Interviewees identified the following as the top three causes of gang problems in their communities:
  1. Family or friends in gangs (68%)
  2. Poverty (61%)
  3. Family problems (44%)

Community Resources Data

Multnomah County has a rich array of services available to youth and their families. Using several local resource inventories, we identified 469 programs in the Multnomah County area that provide services to youth and family; these programs are administered by 151 different nonprofit or governmental organizations.[7] Survey emails were sent to all of these programs requesting additional information about their services. Of those surveyed, 260 (55%) responded with detailed information. The analysis that follows is based on information self-reported by agencies and includes data only from the 260 agencies that responded to our request for detailed information about their programs.

"We need more involvement and less talk. Peer mentorship and education."

Although Multnomah County offers

[7] District 2 / Gang Violence Task Force – Services Inventory, Service Programs for Youth & Gang Violence in Multnomah County – Youth & Gang Violence Steering Committee, Street Roots Rose City Resource Guide – Youth Services, Gresham's 5 Core Strategies List , Oregon Mentors

A Community Leader Survey respondent said: "[we need] sustained commitment to engage the voices of individuals and families who have been affected by gangs and gang activity"

many services for youth and their families, only 22 programs (5%) specifically focus on serving gang members. We refer to these programs as gang-specific programs.

Data	Number/Percent
Total number of programs identified	469
Programs that responded to survey	260 (55%)

There also are programs that do not focus solely on serving gang members, but whose staff have experience working with gang-involved youth. This is the case for 56% of the programs that provided information about their staff. Approximately one-third of all of the programs that responded conduct a risk assessment that includes information about gang involvement. Programs that identify themselves as being "focused on gang members," have staff who were "experienced serving gang members," or "conduct risk assessments including gang involvement" are identified as gang-responsive programs. The gang-responsive programs implement a range of strategies, from primary prevention to re-entry, with secondary prevention and intervention being the most common types of strategies. Among gang-specific programs, there was more focus on suppression and re-entry.

The programs included in the inventory provide services to young people of a variety of ages, from birth into adulthood. However, the highest number of programs target middle and high school-aged youth. Gang-responsive programs are much more likely to focus on children and youth than other programs are.

Nearly 75% of all the programs that responded indicated that they are not currently "full." Another 13% explained that the fullness of the program varies based on such factors as the time of year, number of staff, and funding sources. Among gang-specific programs, even fewer programs indicated that they are "full." However, it is important to note that many services provided by law enforcement and criminal justice agencies are unable to cap the number of people who they serve. Therefore, such programs would never be considered "full."

Programs generally rely on diverse funding sources:

- 37% receive private funding (such as donations, local family/private foundations, national private foundations).
- 56% receive local funding (such as school districts, cities, county general funds).
- 38% receive state funding (such as State General fund, Oregon Health Plan).
- 33% receive federal funding (such as grants, Medicaid).

Gang-specific programs rely primarily on local and state funding. Only one gang-specific program indicated that it receives funding from private sources, and only one program indicated that it receives federal funding to support it program. Multnomah County and the City of Portland are the largest funders of gang-specific services.

A gang-involved individual said: "[Positive people in my life] include my parole officer, teacher, and counselor."

Comparing geographically mapped programs from 2009 to 2014 indicates that the distribution of services has shifted slightly, with services in East Portland and the Gresham area being much more prevalent in 2014.

Conclusion

This assessment does not provide recommendations for solutions to gang-related activity in the community. It simply explores the current status of that activity and provides a platform for moving into Phase 2 of the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: Implementation Planning.

"Make sure our voices are heard"

By completing this assessment, Multnomah County has embarked on an important initiative. Exploring the current state of gang-related crime and the community's perception of these issues has provided a rich trove of data. It has also initiated new partnerships with community members who are personally impacted by these issues. It is incumbent upon the LPSCC partners to ensure that Phase 2 of this process continues the momentum generated during Phase 1 by further exploring the valuable data, and by respecting the input of and the relationships developed with participating community members.

Voices of People Impacted by Gangs

This section includes personal stories from people affected by gangs. We sincerely thank them for their willingness to share their stories in this report and we are hopeful that their words help carry this effort forward.

Sang says …

"I had my first realization of gangs and gang activity for as long as I can remember. Various members of my family did not shy away from it when I was around. On top of that, being born and raised in East Oakland, California, did not help me to think otherwise. At the time, among other things, the location of where I lived was poverty stricken, gang infested, and riddled with drugs. Living where I lived, I took in a lot about my surroundings at a very young age. Because of my inexperience and lack of exposure to anything outside the negative subculture of my neighborhood, I did not know anything different. It was all a part of my daily life, and life in general, for that matter.

"I grew up in an apartment complex that was occupied by my mother, newborn brother, grandma, aunt, and usually someone who would board a room to help us bear the rent. Below us lived my extended family members. Most of the time there would be no one home because the majority of my family members were working multiple jobs with long hours just to make ends meet. So a lot of my days were spent playing on the streets with the neighborhood kids. When I wasn't playing with the neighborhood kids, my time would be engrossed in witnessing the illicit activities of the people around me. By the age of six, I was heavily influenced by wayward family members and the environment. I began to adopt the ideals of what aligned with the gang culture. Being so young and naïve, and constantly exposed to the gang subculture, it eventually became a part of me. I noticed this when I started modeling the behaviors little by little.

"After moving to Portland, Oregon, at the age of eight, and through many failed attempts to properly assimilate to the culture outside of gang and criminal activities, I sought for a place of belonging. It wasn't until the age of thirteen that I started to engross in everything my earlier family members and childhood environment exposed me to. Shortly thereafter, I was initiated into a gang that a number of my family members associated with. My gang involvement led me to become further familiar with guns, drugs, and violence. Soon I witnessed the power of life and death that guns and drugs had over the people around me. I had seen many people lose their life due to gang life and drug activities, some of them I cared for.

"My involvement with gangs and hustling impacted me in all aspects of life. There was a point where I distanced myself from my own family and would rather be with my newly adopted gang family. I justified my actions through the reasoning that my gang family were the only ones who understood me. Consequently, my own biological family wouldn't want me around and made no secret about it. I was shamed for all of the negative things I was doing. My own mother didn't know what to do with me. Every time she looked at me, I could see the hurt and helplessness in her eyes. Yet

time and time again, I ignored her cries. Deep down I knew I was starting to lose the people and things I truly cared about.

"My education came to a halt and disappeared. I gave up on education when I wasn't able to balance it out with the gang and hustling life that I was so heavily devoted to. I withdrew from school in the 9th grade, my freshman year. I cut myself short of an education, the gateway to a successful life. Not going to school, and running the streets instead, soon caused me to run in with the law more frequently. In and out of jail I went, over and over again. I was causing harm to the community in ways that I would've never thought. It affected everyone within it: family, friends, neighbors, the public, and people I cared about. Then it seemed like everybody alienated themselves from me. I was feeling out of place and unwanted when I had no one to turn to, especially when I needed guidance.

"All my life I chose to do wrong, so that was what I searched for comfort. I turned to drugs to help fill the void, which momentarily subsided the feelings of loneliness and despair, but only to surface when the effects of the drugs wore off. As a result, I numbed myself with drugs every time the feelings rose again. My attitude towards everything in life was negative. I was careless and gave little to no regard to the life of others. It spiraled down from there as I started to lose interest on the activities of my daily life. Nothing I was doing satisfied me anymore.

"Then, when I was arrested for my committed offense, what was left of freedom vanished and captivity tightened its grips on me. I was stripped away from everything, only to be left alone in a cold cell. Countless days and nights I sat thinking, 'Where did I go wrong?'

"Through painful reflection, I soon realized that it was time for a change. The lifestyle that I was leading wasn't worth what I put everybody and myself through. None of it was worth the hurt that I inflicted upon my loved ones, people within the community, and myself. Instead of feeling pity for myself, I empowered myself to make changes that were based on sound morals, beliefs, and reasoning. I saw this as an opportunity for a new beginning. I knew it was my chance to get it right.

"Through the support of family, friends, and mentors, I was taught to value each breath of life and what it really means to be free: being able to make your own decisions, valuing human connection, doing things for the greater good, and setting a positive example for those around you. I was able to rid myself from gangs when I realized that I had a choice.

"Now that I think about it, I don't think the gang lifestyle had a powerful hold on me as much as the hold I had on the lifestyle. What it took for me was reflection, realization, and recalibration. It took courage and strength to breakaway. In some cases, more than one can do for themselves. That's why I am grateful to have people to help me along the way.

"I feel that, with the right support and relentless tries, we can break the power gangs have over people's lives. Sometimes the person may be afraid to speak up, to find out what is on the other side, which they would never know any better to be able to do better. However, we as a community must give that person a helping chance with room to grow. We must help by being persistent, but not overbearing. If it wasn't for the people in my life to help me recognize and hone my potential, I would've thought that gang life was all there is. I was in prison before I ever stepped foot inside of a prison. However, self-empowerment gave me the fortitude to break the prison of my own mind. Once I did that, everything in my past no longer dictated my future. Doors of opportunities started opening up. I was the sole driver of my own destiny, and I could finally see it. I owe it all to the people who helped me to the path of transformation.

"As I reflect on this, I am currently in my seventh year of incarceration. It is fair for me to say that I have never felt freer than I do today. I do not try to hide my past. In actuality, my past serves as a reminder on how vital it is to recognize the power I have over my own choices. Through my daily interactions and life's work, I hope to be a testament of someone who broke free of gangs and gang activity by breaking free from the prison of my own mind."

⇒ Sang is 24 years old and has been serving a 12 ½-year prison sentence in the Oregon Department of Corrections since he was 17 years old. He will be due for release in 2018. He has made great use of his time by earning a Bachelor's degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice and speaking about his incarceration to at-risk youth and youth in juvenile detention. He plans to pursue an

education in law and public administration upon his release and hopes to influence policies on juvenile rights and juvenile justice.

Lucy says …

In June 2011 I was awakened by pounding on my door. I answered the door, and it was my brother and my sister telling me that my one and only son had been shot and was dead. I could not believe it, not my son, he was not a gang member, and he did not bother anyone. I had just spoken to him a few hours ago. He had just gotten off work and told me he was going to his nephew's 21st birthday party and that his three kids were at his house waiting for him to come back (as he had decided that he was going to keep them permanently).I don't understand how this happened. Then I went to the scène of the shooting and they would not let me see my baby.

"It has been three years since my son was killed, and still the murderers have not been held accountable. I wake up in the middle of the night and I hear the pounding on my door like it was yesterday. There were two witnesses who were in the van with my son when he was shot down by cowards in his back. His nephew was also there. So we know the names of the two killers responsible for his death, but due to this crazy notion about snitching and fear of what the gangs will do, no one is willing to speak. I have personally called the mothers of these witnesses and they insist on denying that their sons were there.

"What is it going to take to make people realize this is OUR problem, not just mine? Does it have to happen to your child? I never thought my son would get killed. He was not into gangs. But guess what it happened to me? Enough is enough! Community, wake up! We need to re-educate our youth and ourselves on what snitching is. Snitching is not when you see someone cold-bloodedly shoot and kill someone. That is wrong and there is no way you can justify it. Please speak up so we can take our community back and make it safe again. The silence is killing US!!!"

Noah says …

"During my adolescence years I struggled both behaviorally and academically. I was constantly getting into trouble and quickly fell in with the wrong crowd. This crowd I hung around with was a street gang that infested my neighborhood. I found acceptance with this group and looked up to the older members as role models. My focus on school was lost when I was initiated at the age of 12.For roughly five years, my life was filled with violence and self-destructive behavior. I knew what I was doing was wrong, but couldn't see any way out.

"People reached out to me by trying to show me my potential. I was told of the bright future I could have, but I didn't feel the claims were true. My ears fell deaf to their voices, and I continued down the road to nowhere. My struggle reached a new height in 2009. My family split up, I fell deeper into the gang life, and I soon began to mask my problems with the heavy use of alcohol and marijuana.

"During this point in my life I felt hopeless. I vented this feeling through anger. I wanted to get back at the people who hurt me. I was tired of everything, tired of living. Nothing mattered to me anymore. This same year I ended up committing a serious crime. I was robbed during a drug deal and sought revenge. I turned myself in the same night. I was done running from my problems and ready to face the consequences. I was taken to a juvenile detention center in Portland. It was my first time ever in jail. Never before had I felt so alone. While sitting in my cell I made a decision that was long overdue. I decided to leave the gang life in my past.

"This decision was one of the hardest and easiest I have ever made. It was easy because I hated the endless cycle of hurt it brought. It was hard because it was how I identified myself. My whole social group was affiliated, and if I left I faced the consequence of being beat down and ostracized. I chose life.

"At seventeen years old I was sentenced to 7 ½ years under Oregon's Measure 11. I was sick to my stomach, but ready to change and use the time as a growing experience. Fortunately I was able to come to a youth correctional facility where a larger amount of opportunities were available.

"During my sentence I have found my way back to education, and realized that the intelligence I had could be put to good use. The skills I used when I sold drugs could be used for entrepreneurship. My knack for recruitment could be used for community organizing. My love for reading could be used with textbooks filled with new information about the world, about life.

"I graduated from high school with a 3.5 GPA and enrolled in college immediately after. After graduating with another 3.5 GPA from Lane Community College I was able to move on to OSU in pursuit of my Bachelor's degrees in Human Development and Sustainability. I have been blessed with positive influences and mentors that have helped guide me towards a new path. I owe it to them and myself to reach the high amount of potential I have always carried inside."

Brenda says …

"When will it stop? The killing, stabbings, and disrespectfulness? These are children killing other children and whoever gets in their way. My son was gunned down like an animal and left to die in his vehicle. Why did this have to happen? As of this day 15 years ago the answers are still not there, nor are the murderers in custody (PRISON) for committing this crime. Not only have they caused unbearable pain to me but to his sister, his daughters, and his son. We live with this daily. There is no peace for us, especially his children, who are having to grow up without their dad. He was a great father, a loving brother and son. I know that to some people it has been a long time since this tragedy happened, but to me (his mother) it seems as if it were yesterday. A mother never forgets her child.

"I still remember the police coming to my job with this horrible news. It was like someone snatched my heart out. I remember falling to the floor screaming for God to help me. You see, I had just buried my daughter who had passed of cancer 10 months prior to this happening. I struggle with meeting and trusting new people, not knowing if they have connections to the person or persons who murdered my child. I am the mother of four children with three of them being deceased; I also lost a son who was 14 years old to a drowning accident.

"I have a lot of weight on my heart, and not knowing if and when my son's murderers will ever be caught makes my pain even more devastating. Kids killing kids has to stop! When a gun is fired and the bullet leaves the chamber, it says the end."

Stephen says …

"I would be a fool if I didn't acknowledge the impact that gangs had on me, my family, and the community at large. In my 22 years I have had time to reflect on my past and in this retrospect I have seen how gang life and activities have negatively influenced a whole generation of adolescents, causing a generation of juvenile delinquents. I am now an advocate for reducing gang violence due to the trauma that it can cause and the ripple effects that trickle down society's back. The only way that I know how to do this is by sharing my story—my story of how a gang participated in changing my life. This is what the gang meant to me.

"I was a foster kid. I entered foster care at the age of six years young, leaving my mother and sister behind, leaving Northeast Portland behind and all the negative stigmas it carries—or so I thought. Moving to Southeast Portland was a rough transition for me as a boy, but it was a good separation from my family. You see, the men in my family are rooted in gang affiliation, and if I were to stay in that environment I would have easily been rooted into it as well. Instead I was distanced, and for some years the gang didn't even register in my cognition because I was never really around it.

"The thing that happens, though, to 97% of foster children is a sense of loneliness. Yes, this loneliness happened to me, and I wanted to find something to connect with. Human connection is a necessity and it is crazy what lengths people will go to attain it. Luckily for me I didn't have to do anything outlandish to be involved in a gang. All I had to do was accept it—accept it and want it, because that is what the men in my family did. Since I wanted that connection with my family that I never received because of the consequences (or gifts) of a foster home, I chose a way that I could be connected, and at the time I wanted it.

"To say that the gang life was an easy overnight decision and change would be fabricating. In fact, it was a slow and long process because I was still a young boy who was trying to decide what kind of man I was going to become. Middle school was when the change began. I started wearing the color red a lot more to get accustomed to it. It's kind of funny because my favorite color was always blue. I would never have admitted it, but I was upset that I had to not wear that color anymore (or as much) to signify my

alliance. The color red became my first act of defiance, and my foster mother, a good Christian lady, started to notice and hassle me about it.

"The Southeast area I lived in did not have much black-on-black gang violence. This was more of the Mexican gang area, and so for a while the rivalry side to being 'affiliated' never really made its mark on me.It was something cool and rebellious, like all of the music I listened to that just reinforced gang and crime as being the socially acceptable thing to do.I had more problems at home than I did in the streets of Southeast Portland with gang stuff, and it eventually led to my foster mother kicking me out of the house (which was a good home) because she couldn't 'control' me or my actions or reactions.

"It wasn't until high school when I really started to see gangs in general for what they really were. Weapons were never a necessity until this point, when I realized people were now getting hurt. I was used to fist fights and even enjoyed a few now and again, but when I seen gangs shooting at each other my sense of safety was temporarily changed into panic. I didn't want to be a casualty for something that I didn't really understand or die before I really lived and believed in something. This panic changed quickly when I bought my first gun. I felt a sense of protection, a sense of security, a sense of power that I never had before. From the people I knew that died, to the many encounters of rival gang members, I finally made up my mind that I was going to go all in with this 'banging shit' and fulfill my duty to my 'family.' Fortunately and unfortunately, shortly after I made this big decision that would have surely got me killed, I committed a robbery and was sentenced to 7 ½years of incarceration. I believe this sentence saved my life when it comes to gang life because I knew that I made the wrong decision and it wouldn't have gave me a future. However, in the beginning I did not believe that the sentence was a blessing in disguise. Neither did my gang 'affiliation' just up and die out. I met more gang members in jail, and the first couple of years was a test of who was tougher, what gang was harder, fights, intimidation, and mental survival. I established myself with the Bloods and it took me years to get this stigma off of myself.

"It took a lot of strength to disassociate with the gang life, but the constant reminder of the people who were fighting, playing a role, and not mentally growing (the worst part) was what I used as my separation. I learned that I wanted to be somebody in life and I wanted to make an impacting difference, and I knew that the gang scene would always hold me back and hinder my future options. This is why I decided I would pursue a different life for myself, along with all of the killing and pain I was seeing over the years from gang violence on the news. I did not want to be a part of it anymore so, I quit.

"Though I can say that the gang experience is quite negative and detrimental, I would be lying if I didn't say it didn't teach me anything. Gang members that make it out have a number of skills and characteristics that can be used in positive everyday life or working environments. Skills like loyalty, organization, teamwork, hard work, and perseverance can be accredited to the roles that the gang life had on me. I can now use these skills in my life and in my career and in my attempts at keeping adolescents from making the decisions I made. That is what the gang meant to me."

Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose

In January 2014, the Multnomah County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC) Executive Committee voted to conduct an assessment of gang activity across Multnomah County. We chose to base the assessment on the process outlined in Phase I of the federal Office for Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP) Comprehensive Gang Model.[1] LPSCC had several purposes in choosing to pursue the OJJDP model:

- Define the problem of gang and youth violence in the community
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of prevention and services targeted to gang-impacted individuals
- Build increased cross-agency and community understanding and collaboration
- Position the jurisdiction for federal and state funding opportunities, some of which require that communities complete the OJJDP comprehensive gang model planning process

A Collaborative Process

This effort is in line with LPSCC's long history of collaborating across agencies and with our community stakeholders. In fact, a Juvenile Justice Planning process, which was conducted by the County in the mid-1990s, was one of the local processes that helped inform the development of the OJJDP model. That collaborative environment is core to the mission and values of both the City of Portland and Multnomah County, the major sponsors of this initiative. The City lists inclusion, shared power, and relationships (with government and community partners) among its top values,[2] while the County Health Department lists partnerships to improve the health of our communities and assisting our communities in addressing underlying factors that affect good health among its values.[3] The County's Department of Community Justice also identifies collaborative relationships as one of its primary values.[4]

Our work on this project has been in line with these values and has truly been a community endeavor. More than 1,000 community members shared their perspective through focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and surveys. Through the STRYVE Coalition, a group of community health workers assisted in tailoring the interview and survey tools to reflect a more strength-based perspective. Students at the Leadership and Entrepreneurship (LEP) charter school helped to tailor and disseminate the school-based surveys to more than 200 participants. More than 200 youth and adults attending the Multnomah County Youth Violence Prevention Summit responded to survey questions. And many agencies shared their data, assisted with developing data maps, and provided staff time to develop this report. We want to applaud all those who worked to complete this project within a very short timeline and to profusely thank those that provided input. **More importantly, we want to ensure that the voices that speak throughout this report are heard, have the opportunity to help shape next steps, and receive recognition for their willingness to participate.**

[1] National Gang Center. OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model. Accessed at: http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Comprehensive-Gang-Model/About

[2] https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/29128

[3] https://multco.us/health/about-health-department/vision-mission-values-and-goals

[4] https://multco.us/file/19462/download

Background

LPSCC's Youth and Gang Violence Subcommittee (Y&GVSC) acted as the steering committee for this effort. The two co-chairs of that committee—Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill and Antoinette Edwards, Director of the City of Portland's Youth Violence Prevention Office—provided leadership to the project, as did the committee members. The committee itself was expanded specifically for the purpose of this project, which was funded mostly through the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice (Appendix 1). In addition, substantial in-kind contributions of staff time were provided by the Multnomah County Health Department's Community Capacitation Center, LPSCC, and the City of Portland.

This report reviews data from throughout Multnomah County. Throughout this report we refer to the county as encompassing all of the jurisdictions, agencies, and community partners that exist within the boundaries of Multnomah County, including the cities of Portland, Gresham, Fairview, Troutdale, Wood Village and Corbett.

This is not Multnomah County's first foray into exploring the local gang issue; in fact, the County has been engaged in efforts to explore and address this issue for many years. The list below provides an illustration of the existing rich array of initiatives, coalitions, and other coordinating bodies focused on addressing gang violence through prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies (see Appendix 2 for more detailed information on these initiatives).

- All Hands Raised Partnership (multiple collaboratives)
- Black Male Achievement Initiative
- Coalition of Communities of Color
- Community Healing Initiative (CHI)
- Court Bench Probation Mentoring Program
- Crossover Youth Practice Model
- CSEC (Commercially Sexually Exploited Children) Steering Committee
- Defending Childhood Initiative
- EMGET (East Metro Gang Enforcement Team)
- Gang Violence Task Force
- GET (Gang Enforcement Team)
- GIFT (Gang Impacted Family Team)
- Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC)
  - Juvenile Justice Council (JJC)
  - Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Subcommittee
  - Youth & Gang Violence Subcommittee
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Multnomah Youth Commission (MYC)
  - Youth Against Violence Committee
  - Gang & Police Violence Subcommittee
  - Youth Summit Against Violence
- RENEW (Rosewood/Rockwood Enrichment Neighborhood Enforcement Workgroup)
- Rockwood Pathways Project
- Rosewood Initiative
- STRYVE (Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere)
- SUN Service System Coordinating Council
- Youth Development Council

In 2011, the LPSCC executive committee approved an *Action Plan to Reduce Youth and Gang Violence*[5] that, among other things, strengthened the role of the Y&GVSC in addressing a comprehensive approach to youth and gang violence. Additional action steps from that report included completing the OJJDP assessment (i.e., this report), ensuring the active engagement of those communities in Multnomah County that are directly and disproportionately affected by youth and gang violence, and requiring the development and

[5] Multnomah County LPSCC *Action Plan to Reduce Youth and Gang Violence: Ensuring Effective Coordination, Oversight, Community Engagement, and Measurable Outcomes*. January 2011.https://multco.us/file/30362/download

implementation of measurable outcomes for all youth and gang violence reduction strategies in Multnomah County.

In November 2013, the Oregon Youth Development Council published its report Youth and Gangs: Prioritization of Funding for Youth Gang Prevention and Intervention Services.6 This report highlights increased gang activity occurring in Gresham, as well as the efforts to address gang issues across Multnomah County. The Council's recommendations for establishing a statewide funding model include the requirement that communities use the strategies outlined in the OJJDP comprehensive gang model. The report states as follows:

> *"By utilizing the data-gathering component of the Comprehensive Gang Model, elevated risk factors that lead to gang involvement will be identified. Communities are then tasked with identifying and targeting those youth most susceptible to risk factors leading to gang involvement. The communities' data will show who is involved in gang-related activity and the history of the gangs, including how many there are, what gender, age group, ethnicity, whether or not the youth is learning disabled, having poor grades, and family dynamics. The data gathered will describe the types of crimes the individuals are committing, when and where the crimes are taking place, and factors contributing to reasons why the criminal activity is happening, such as lack of community youth activities."*

Taking a Public Health Perspective

It was important to the project team members that the gang assessment work be supportive of the community's values and recognize root causes of violence. Therefore, with support and guidance from the County's Health Department, we have taken a public health approach to completing the OJJDP model. By focusing on the best available evidence and welcoming both environmental and contextual data from community residents, we hope in the assessment to highlight the voices of those most affected by violence. As defined by the World Health Organization, a public health approach to violence prevention seeks to:

> *"improve the health and safety of all individuals by addressing underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or a perpetrator of violence and consists of four steps:*
>
> 1. *"To define the problem through the systematic collection of information about the magnitude, scope, characteristics and consequences of violence.*
> 2. *"To establish why violence occurs using research to determine the causes and correlates of violence, the factors that increase or decrease the risk for violence, and the factors that could be modified through interventions.*
> 3. *"To find out what works to prevent violence by designing, implementing and evaluating interventions.*
> 4. *"To implement effective and promising interventions in a wide range of settings. The effects of these interventions on risk factors and the target outcome should be monitored, and their impact and cost-effectiveness should be evaluated.*
>
> *"By definition, public health aims to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people. Programs for the primary prevention of violence based on the public health approach are designed to expose a broad segment of a population to prevention measures and to reduce and prevent violence at a population-level."*[7]

[6] http://cms.oregon.egov.com/gov/docs/OEIB/gangs.pdf

[7] World Health Organization's Violence Prevention Alliance, *The Public Health Approach*. Accessed at http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/public_health/en/

As part of the public health approach to completing this assessment, project team members shared a commitment to considering the effects of trauma and exposure to violence. Exposure to violence, whether as a victim or witness often, is associated with long-term physical, psychological, and emotional harm. Additionally, children exposed to violence are at a higher risk of engaging in criminal behavior later in life and becoming part of a cycle of violence. Project team members used a trauma-informed approach in developing and delivering data collection tools, As we move into implementation planning, our commitment to this trauma-informed practice stands and will include additional supports for participants and professional development for partners who are delivering services in our communities.

About the OJJDP Model

This assessment was based on the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Comprehensive Gang Assessment Model, which was originally published in 2009 to aid communities in developing a comprehensive, coordinated approach to reducing and preventing youth gang violence. The OJJDP model draws on the work of national gang expert Dr. Irving Spergel, of the University of Chicago, in developing strategies that are considered best practices in addressing the problem of gang violence by youth. The model focuses on individuals rather than gangs, and specifically on people ages 21 and younger. This means that the model does not address motorcycle gangs, prison gangs, ideological gangs, hate groups, or other groups that consist mainly of adults. By using the OJJDP model to address its youth gang problem, Multnomah County is following in the footsteps of many U.S. jurisdictions that have used the OJJDP model to (1) determine the types and levels of youth gang activity, gang crime patterns, community perceptions, and service gaps, and (2) design and implement appropriate responses.

In the past, youth gang activity has been attributed to social disorganization, low socio-economic class, or poverty. However, the OJJDP model holds that none of these theories, by itself, adequately explains the scope or nature of young people's involvement in gangs and the crimes they commit. Instead, the model takes a more nuanced view—that it is the combination of social disorganization, a lack of legitimate opportunity, and the presence of alternative, criminal opportunities that lays the foundation for youth gangs. Given this multi-faceted view, it should be no surprise that the model identifies strategies that involve not just gang youth but also their families and the various community institutions that play a role in young people's transition from adolescence to productive members of society.

The model prescribes five core strategies:

- **Community mobilization:** Involving residents (including former gang youth, community groups, and agencies) and coordinating resources, programs, and staff.
- **Providing opportunities**: Developing a variety of specific educational, training, and employment programs targeted at gang-involved youth.
- **Social intervention:** Reaching out to gang-involved youth and their families and connecting them with needed services
- **Suppression:** Formal and informal control, including close supervision of gang-involved youth by criminal justice agencies, community organizations, and schools
- **Organizational change and development:** Developing and implementing changes in policies and procedures to better use resources to address the youth gang problem.

A key idea of the OJJDP model is to implement these strategies in a focused, coordinated manner, based on a thorough understanding of the nature, scope, and dynamics of the problem. Because gang problems differ both between and within communities (Howell 1998[8]), the first step in the process is to conduct a comprehensive

[8] Howell, J.C. (1998). Youth Gangs: An Overview. Juvenile Justice Bulletin. Youth Gang Series. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

assessment of the current gang problem in the community, to identify its potential causes and contributing factors. A properly conducted assessment will do the following:

- Identify the most serious and prevalent gang-related problems.
- Determine potential factors contributing to gang problems.
- Identify target group(s) for prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts.
- Shape community mobilization efforts and identify community members who should be involved.
- Identify various organizational or systems issues that must be addressed to have a long-term effect on the problem.
- Identify current efforts to address gangs and gang-involved youth.

Once the youth gang problem has been fully described (via the assessment), the jurisdiction designs a strategic plan to reduce and prevent youth gang violence and then implements the plan. Thus, the OJJDP is a three-phase process:

Phase	Purpose/Activities
Phase 1: Assessment	⇒ Provide the community with a thorough understanding of the nature, scope, and dynamics of the problem ⇒ Collect and interpret the data ⇒ Prepare the assessment report
Phase 2: Implementation Planning	Use the data from the assessment to: ⇒ Clarify and prioritize gang-related problems ⇒ Develop measurable goals ⇒ Identify activities designed to achieve those goals
Phase 3: Implementation	⇒ Develop an administrative structure to support and sustain implementation, coordinate logistics and information sharing, and implement an evaluation and sustainability plan ⇒ Balance activities focused on prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry ⇒ Develop an intervention team that integrates a team-based case management protocol, and a street outreach program

This comprehensive gang assessment report for Multnomah County represents the culmination of Phase 1 of the process. As recommended by the model, this report was designed to answer the following key questions:

Community Demographic Data

1. What are the community's characteristics? Have they changed over time?
2. Have the community's service needs changed?
3. What are the overall characteristics of each school district? Have they changed over time? What are the overall characteristics of each school?

Law Enforcement Data

4. What gangs are active? How many members are in each gang? What are their ages, races, and genders?
5. What crimes are gangs/gang members committing? Who is committing gang crimes? How has this changed over time?
6. Where/when are gang crimes being committed? How has this changed over time?
7. What is the impact of gang crimes on victims?

Community and School Perceptions Data

8. Do community leaders perceive a gang problem? If so, what is the problem? Are they prepared to respond?
9. How do community residents perceive the gang problem? What do community residents believe should be done?
10. How do youth workers and youth-serving agencies perceive the problem? What issues are contributing to the area's gang problems? What solutions might be available?

11. Do parents perceive their children to be involved in or at risk of involved in gangs? Why? What should be done?
12. How do students and school staff perceive the gang problem? What should be done?
    a. What delinquent behaviors are students involved in?
    b. What are the characteristics of students involved in gangs?
    c. What issues seem to be contributing to student gang involvement or risk for gang involvement?
    d. What risk and protective factors are affecting local youth? What are in-school youths' perceptions about gangs?
13. How to gang-involved individuals perceive the gang problem?
    a. Who is involved in gangs?
    b. What crimes are gang youth committing?
    c. Why did youth join a gang? Why would they leave?
    d. What factors are contributing to the gang problem?

Community Resources Data

14. How has the community responded to gang activity?
    a. What services are being provided to gang members
    b. What strategies are in place to prevent, intervene, and suppress gang activity?
    c. Do service providers conduct risk assessments that include gang membership?

We were unable to fully answer some important questions about gangs and gang activity in Multnomah County, in part because public safety agencies have lacked a centralized method for identifying and tracking gang-related events and individuals. (For more on this topic, see Chapter 3, Question #5: What types of crimes are gang members committing?) Questions that at this point remain unanswered include how many gang-involved individuals are active in Multnomah County, how many gangs consist primarily of youth versus adults, what crimes are being committed by gangs, and when and where gang crimes are being committed. Where possible we have used proxy measures of violent crime data to respond to some of these questions. However, knowing that we are unable to fully answer these questions is valuable in itself, as is the exploration of why this is the case. Where appropriate, this report discusses why certain questions cannot currently be answered, so that the steering committee can consider whether improving the data should be a focus for implementation planning.

Overview of Our Approach

General Approach

Briefly, to complete the comprehensive gang assessment for Multnomah County, we did the following:

- Assembled representatives of relevant agencies and organizations into (1) a steering committee that provided overall direction, (2) a coordinating committee that provided more day-to-day management and guidance, (3) a project lead team, and (4) a set of multi-agency workgroups that collected the assessment data.
- Collected and interpreted both quantitative and qualitative data, as recommended by the OJJDP. The data fell into four general categories—community demographics, law enforcement, community and school perceptions, and community resources—and included the experiences of service providers as well as the views of youth, parents, and community residents.
- Prepared this assessment report, which summarizes findings and positions the County to develop and implement a strategic plan to address its youth gang problem.

In conducting the comprehensive assessment, we followed a guidance document[9] (OJJDP 2009) published by the OJJDP. This national assessment guide recommends data collection processes; provides specific tools, such as surveys; and lists questions that each type of data is intended to answer. By identifying the scope and depth of the local youth gang problem, this comprehensive assessment provides the basic information needed to develop a strategic plan.

Tailoring the OJJDP Model

In conducting this assessment, the LPSCC partnered with multiple agencies, including the Multnomah County Health Department, which encouraged us to take a public health approach to completing the OJJDP model. This approach to violence prevention seeks to improve the health and safety of all individuals by addressing underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or a perpetrator of violence. In part because of this approach to understanding the youth gang problem in Multnomah County, we made several adjustments to the tools and processes recommended by the OJJDP model:

- We increased the focus on primary prevention, revised the survey, focus group, and interview tools to be more strengths-based, and used the assessment as an opportunity to build trust with the community.
- The Multnomah County Health Department took the lead in collecting the qualitative data. The Department engaged community health workers to conduct the focus groups and interviews and to support survey completion across the community. The community health workers on this project are individuals who have a direct, lived connection with communities that are adversely affected by violence. Consequently, they were able to build authentic trust and relationships with communities that have had previous negative experiences with systems. Using these community health workers to collect qualitative data allowed us to more fully connect with, involve, and capture the perspectives of those who have been personally affected by youth and gang violence.
- We adjusted the OJJDP survey tools to be more strengths-based, to reduce the possibility of gang-impacted interviewees incriminating themselves or being re-traumatized, and to focus on involving community members who can assist in developing solutions during the implementation planning phase of this project.
- We took steps during all data collection activities to protect the privacy of individuals sharing information. No names or identifying information was gathered during the interviews or focus groups.
- We expanded the focus group process to (1) include the voices of young people and those who reside within correctional institutions, (2) ask about exposure to violence and trauma in families, schools, and communities, and (3) allow time to debrief or reflect, in the event that questions triggered intense emotions or memories.

These adjustments largely addressed concerns that arose as Multnomah County began reviewing the model. The modifications had the added benefit of allowing us to be more inclusive and to partner with a wide range of community-based organizations and groups that deliver services to gang-impacted individuals and their families.

Defining Key Terms

Public safety and social service agencies have their own internal procedures and data systems, and their own definitions and understandings of terminology in their fields. Some of these definitions differ from one organization to the next. With this comprehensive gang assessment being such a multi-disciplinary,

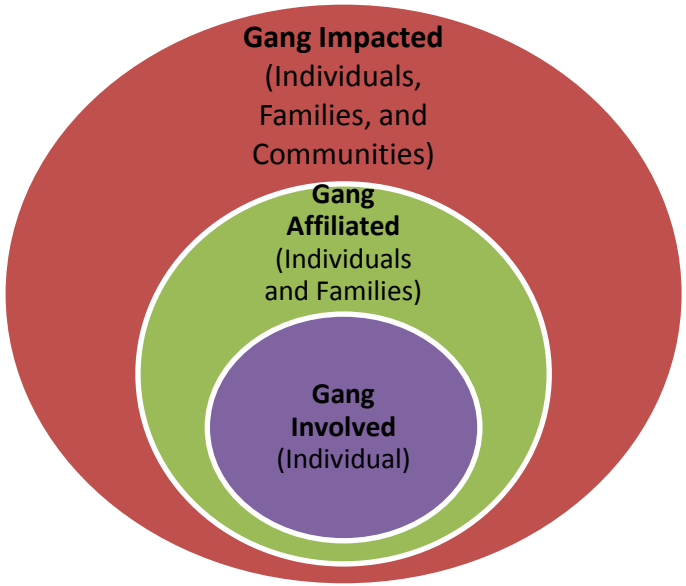
[9] Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2009). *OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem.* May 2009.

multi-agency project, it was important that there be agreement early on on the definitions of key terms, such as "gang" and "gang member." Accordingly, the coordinating committee and Y&GVSC approved definitions of the following terms for use during the assessment (Figure 1):

- **Gang:** The following criteria are widely accepted among researchers for classifying groups as gangs:[10]
  - The group has three or more members.
  - Members share an identity that typically is linked to a name and often other symbols.
  - Members view themselves as a gang, and they are recognized by others as a gang.
  - The group has some permanence and a degree of organization.
  - The group is involved in an elevated level of criminal activity.[11]
- **Gang involved:** An individual who directly or indirectly participates in gang activity.
- **Gang affiliated:** An individual who associates with gang-involved individuals through family or social networks but does not directly participate in gang activity. These individuals may be involved in prevention, peace-making, and/or intervention.
- **Gang impacted:** An individual, family or community whose quality of life is affected by gang activity.

[10]Decker and Curry, 2003; Esbensen et al., 2001; Klein, 1995b;Miller, 1992; Spergel, 1995)
[11]Accessed at http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/About/FAQ#q1

Figure 1: Key Terms



In addition, because this assessment was designed to align with the Y&GVSC's four-pronged strategy of primary and secondary prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry, the Y&GVSC reviewed and developed definitions for these strategies:

- **Primary prevention (community and system):** Strategies that strengthen community capacity to address root causes of violence before it occurs by coordinating multi-sector partnerships that impact risk and protective factors for exposure to violence.
- **Secondary prevention (individual and family level):** Strategies that focus on individuals and families experiencing multiple risk factors, who demonstrate behaviors that have come to the attention of the community, schools, or law enforcement.
- **Intervention:** Strategies that involve community-based stakeholders, law enforcement, and the juvenile/criminal

justice system in connecting gang-impacted individuals, their families, and their communities with needed services.

- **Suppression:** Strategies that involve law enforcement, the juvenile/criminal justice system, and community-based stakeholders in supervising and monitoring gang-involved individuals and interrupting gang-related criminal activities.
- **Reentry:** Strategies that maximize healthy reintegration into families and communities, after an individual has been in detention, a youth correctional facility, jail, or prison.

People working on this assessment have attempted to be as consistent as possible in the use of these terms, both in this report and in the data collection process. However, the data themselves may have been tracked and compiled by organizations using different definitions. This issue is discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 5.

Project Timing

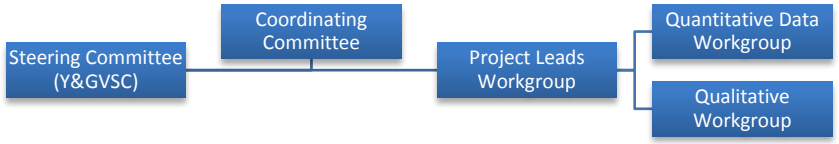
We conducted this assessment between January and June of 2014. Given the compressed timeframe, we collected and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data concurrently, rather than sequentially.

The following sections summarize the data collection methodology and any data-related issues that emerged during the process.

Project Organization

We followed the OJJDP model in establishing a project organizational structure that included a steering committee, a coordinating committee, and several workgroups (Figure 2). Final data were compiled and summarized by Lore Joplin Consulting, a private consulting firm that provides technical assistance to public agencies on juvenile justice and adult criminal justice policy and practice.

Figure 2: Project Structure



Steering Committee

The assessment was sponsored by the LPCC's Y&GVSC, which acted as the project steering committee. This committee provided overall leadership for the project. For example, the steering committee developed a consensus on definitions of the four key strategies that frame the assessment, as well as definitions used to collect gang crime data. Steering committee members facilitated access to data and other resources, and provided some personnel and information needed to complete the technical work.

The steering committee's membership was diverse and represented key policy and administrative leaders of agencies and community organizations concerned with the youth gang problem, as well as other, more informal, community leaders, in accordance with the OJJDP model. The steering committee met monthly from February through June of 2014. A full listing of members of the steering

committee is included in Appendix 1. Members represented the following:

- Law enforcement
- Mayor's Office
- County Executive Office
- Probation
- Parole
- Prosecution
- Courts
- Schools
- Youth and family agencies
- Business leaders
- Faith community
- Employment
- Grass-roots representatives
- Housing
- Neighborhood associations
- Federal and state agencies
- Public Health

Coordinating Committee

A coordinating committee met weekly by phone and monthly for in-person meetings. The purpose of this group was to problem-solve challenges faced by the project leads and workgroups (i.e., to address issues related to resources, data sharing, etc.), to provide guidance and direction regarding specific questions that arose during data collection, and to coordinate logistics for steering committee meetings. The coordinating committee consisted of the following members:

Kim Bernard	Mult. Co. Dept. of Community Justice
Antoinette Edwards	City of Portland, Y&GVSC Co-Chair
Tracey Freeman	Mult. Co. Dept. of Community Justice
Mary Geelan	Mult. Co. Dept. of Community Justice
Christina McMahan	Mult. Co. Dept. of Community Justice
Kory Murphy	Mult. Co. Dept of County Management
Erika Preuitt	Mult. Co. Dept. of Community Justice
Kirsten Snowden	Mult. Co. DA's Office
Abbey Stamp	LPSCC
Rebecca Stavenjord	Mult. Co. Health Department
Rod Underhill	Mult. Co. DA's Office, Y&GVSC Co-Chair
Joe Walsh	City of Gresham

Project Leads Workgroup

A project leads workgroup consisting of Kim Bernard, Mary Geelan, Abbey Stamp, Rebecca Stavenjord, and Christina Youssi designed and implemented the data collection plan. These leads worked in partnership with representatives of other agencies and a multi-agency quantitative data workgroup to identify and collect data that would help answer the research questions posed by the OJJDP model.

Project Resources

Multiple agencies contributed substantial amounts of resources to complete the assessment:

Agency	Contribution
LPSCC	⇒ Staffing for administrative support for meeting minutes and scheduling ⇒ Data collection support
Multnomah County Department of Community Justice	⇒ Funding for contracted project coordinator ⇒ Staffing for quantitative project lead and research staff ⇒ Staffing for community resources data collection ⇒ Funding for incentives (gift cards and food) for participants in the interviews with gang-involved individuals and parent/family member focus groups[12]
Multnomah County Health Department, Community Capacitation Center	⇒ Staffing for qualitative project lead ⇒ Staffing for two community health workers to conduct data collection (interviews, focus groups, and surveys) and data entry
City of Portland Office of Youth Violence Prevention	⇒ Funding for focus group participant incentives (gift cards) and food

[12] Interviews and focus groups were confidential and anonymous; participants were instructed to refrain from including any names or identifying information.

Data Collection Processes

This assessment is based on both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data such as the number of arrests or the demographic breakdown of the community provided information about trends and the volume of incidents. The qualitative data, which were collected via written and online surveys, in-person, one-on-one interviews, and focus groups, also were important. They offered perceptions that were not reflected in the quantitative data.

Because collecting new data can be time consuming and expensive, we used existing data sets whenever possible. This included data sets from sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau; various state, county, and local agencies; law enforcement; and the Oregon Department of Education. The existing data sets varied considerably in terms of geographical coverage, target population, and definitions of key terms.

The following subsections summarize the general processes we used to collect quantitative and qualitative data, to describe any noteworthy issues or challenges, and to explain how we addressed those issues or challenges.

Quantitative Data Collection

We based our collection of quantitative data on questions posed in the OJJDP model. Multiple agencies agreed to share quantitative data to inform the assessment. These data varied in type of content (juvenile vs. adult, for example), level of detail, and geographical coverage; they existed in multiple forms; and they sometimes relied on quite different definitions of key terms. For example, the Gresham Police Department has not historically included a gang membership field in its database, while the Portland Police Bureau database does indicate gang membership but defines the term quite narrowly, based on a definition approved by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Differences such as these are themselves informative and can point to possible gaps and focus areas for the implementation planning phase of this project.

We reached out to the following organizations to obtain the quantitative data we needed:

- All Hands Raised
- Coalition for a Livable Future
- Greater Portland Pulse
- Gresham Police Department
- Multnomah County Department of Community Justice
- Multnomah County Department of County Human Services
- Multnomah County District Attorney's Office
- Multnomah County Health Department
- Multnomah County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC)
- Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
- Oregon Department of Education
- Oregon Youth Authority
- Portland Police Bureau
- STRYVE Coalition (Multnomah County Health Department)
- U.S. Census Bureau

Qualitative Data Collection

Multnomah County Health Department took the lead in collecting the qualitative data, using electronic and hard copy surveys, in-person interviews, and focus groups. Early in the data collection process we had concerns about the tone of the interview tool and surveys, and the possibility of interviewees incriminating themselves or being re-traumatized during the interviews.[13] We consulted the National Gang Center regarding these issues, along with sample sizes, the assessment timeline, and the overall scope of the qualitative analysis; we then adjusted our assessment procedures and tools accordingly (as described below). During this consultation the National Gang Center emphasized the voluntary, anonymous nature of the interviews and the importance of including self-

[13]Interestingly, the National Gang Center indicated that Multnomah County was the first jurisdiction to raise the issue of possible trauma or self-incrimination in the interviews.

reported data from gang members in the assessment. In the end, we made substantive changes to the processes and tools recommended by the OJJDP model so as to align with a more strengths-based, public health approach to assessing youth gang activity in Multnomah County. Perceptions about gang-related activity were reported at a community or school level, not at an individual level. No names or specific, identifying information was gathered.

Additionally, building on the work of the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES),[14] members of the qualitative data workgroup consulted with the Defending Childhood Initiative regarding violence interviewees had experienced and how it had affected their lives. This preparation facilitated conversation during the interviews about negative experiences related to disconnection from school, unemployment, and reliance on drugs and alcohol, as well as the intersections of gang violence with other forms of violence.

We also encountered several practical issues in collecting qualitative data that required additional consideration or resources. For example, with the help of community partners, we translated the electronic surveys into Spanish. A bilingual and bicultural community health worker was engaged to conduct Spanish-speaking focus groups. Additional community health workers were engaged to reach out to gang-involved individuals who were willing to contribute to the conversation about preventing criminal gang activity. Partners on the coordinating committee paid for incentives (such as gift cards and food) to encourage diverse participation, and the outreach design ensured a racial/ethnic balance among participants by conducting outreach to a wide range of community organizations and collaborative initiatives. Collection and analysis of the qualitative data required coding and data entry, which were performed by county staff.

[14] http://acestudy.org/

Electronic Surveys of Students

The OJJDP model recommends surveying a large number of youth (100) at each middle and high school within the selected jurisdiction using a 176-question written survey. With Multnomah County having six large and two smaller school districts (approximately 90,000 middle and high school students), that would yield between 1,500 and 3,000 surveys. The labor involved in surveying this many students would be extensive, especially given the short timeline for data collection. We also expected logistical challenges in working out separate agreements with the different district offices to gain access to the students. We decided instead to survey students at alternative schools, with which the County already has existing relationships. We met with Portland Public Schools' research team to discuss the school survey and gained the support of Student Services Directors from Multnomah County school districts to discuss conducting the survey in local alternative schools.

In the end, four alternative schools (Alpha High School in Gresham, POIC North, POIC East, and LEP) participated in the survey, and we collected a 229 completed student surveys. In addition, seven staff members from Leadership and Entrepreneurship (LEP) Charter High School participated in the school staff survey. To protect privacy, all surveys were conducted anonymously on paper copy and manually entered into the online survey tool by Multnomah County staff.

To facilitate completion of the school surveys, we engaged students from LEP Charter High School, which had asked to participate in a gang-related project. LEP students reviewed the survey and made some adjustments, such as reducing the number of questions. The students developed a corresponding cover letter and information packet that went to the alternative school principals. Completed surveys were hand delivered to project leads, and the data were entered by County staff.

Additional data on young people's perceptions were collected outside school, at a weekend Youth Against Violence Summit sponsored by the Multnomah County Youth Commission. At the

summit, more than 200 adults and youth completed a four-question survey for the assessment using hand-held devices that were calibrated according to the respondents' age group.

Interviews with Gang-involved Individuals

Planning for the interviews with gang-involved individuals received special attention because the interviews are the primary component of the assessment process that gives a dedicated voice to gang members. In addition, data from interviews with gang-involved individuals supplemented law enforcement data, which were limited in their ability to fully explore gang activity. Thus, the interview data were important in fully understanding the scope of local gang-related activity, its frequency in the communities it most impacts, and its causes.

The OJJDP interview protocol for gang-involved individuals is six pages long, was perceived as very deficit-based, and had questions that could be considered self-incriminating or re-traumatizing for interviewees. We discussed this issue with the National Gang Center, members of the county's STRYVE Coalition (many of whom have direct, lived experience with gangs and gang-affiliated individuals), and community health workers who are trained in trauma-informed practices. We also spoke with a criminal justice professor at Portland State University about procedures for collecting data without infringing on privacy. Based on these consultations, we revised some of the questions to make the interview tool more engaging and strengths-based, and we ensured that interviewers had training on confidentiality, secondary trauma, and procedures for appropriate referrals.

Community health workers (or facility staff, in the case of detained individuals) conducted one-on-one interviews with 80 gang-involved individuals. (The OJJDP model recommends a sample size of at least 50.) Interviewers used a snowball technique (i.e., word of mouth) to identify interviewees and contacted key organizations, such as Oregon Youth Authority (OYA), to conduct interviews. Interviewees included youth detained at OYA facilities and adult inmates at Multnomah County Jail facilities who self-identified as gang members. To protect the interviewees' privacy, no names or personal information was recorded during the interviews.

Interviewees were reminded that all questions were voluntary. Interview responses were coded and entered into a database for analysis.

Focus Groups with Gang-involved Youth and their Families

We conducted a total of nine focus groups in Portland and Gresham:

- Helensview School (one group)
- Oregon Youth Authority, MacLaren facility (two groups)
- Latino Network (one group)
- Multnomah County Department of Community Justice, Adult Probation (one group)
- Multnomah County Department of Community Justice Juvenile Detention, Donald E. Long Facility (two groups)
- Oregon Department of Corrections, Columbia River Correctional Institution (one group)
- Rosewood Initiative (one group)

Each focus group had eight to 12 participants, and all community participants received incentives of $20 Fred Meyer gift cards and food, such as pizza. Focus group participants within detention facilities received food in exchange for their participation and gift cards in their property bags (available to them upon release). Focus group participants were recruited by multiple agencies, including the agencies that hosted the groups.

As with the one-on-one interviews, the focus group tool was revised to include questions about exposure to violence and trauma in families, schools, and communities. No names or personal information was recorded for the focus groups. Time was built into the process to allow for debriefing or reflection, in case questions triggered intense emotions or memories.

Surveys of Community Leaders, Community Residents, and Youth-Serving Agencies

Three different surveys of community leaders, community residents, and youth-serving agencies were provided electronically and via hard copy, with Spanish language versions available. Unfortunately, the time needed to conduct the translation process for the Spanish language versions limited the amount of time that was available for data collection; therefore, only a few surveys were completed by monolingual Spanish-speaking residents. Many participants did indicate that they speak Spanish at home.. The project's coordinating committee and the LPSCC YG&VSC assisted in disseminating the survey instruments and also completed the survey themselves. Hard copies of the survey were distributed at community meetings, including the Gang Violence Task Force and Self Enhancement Inc.'s (SEI) afterschool program.

Approximately 105 surveys were completed by community leaders, 158 by community residents, and 43 by youth-serving agencies.

Youth and Family Survey

We created a survey tool for youth and families based on the first several questions of the focus group guide. In an attempt to gather additional information from youth and families, these questions were disseminated electronically as well as via hard copy during the focus groups. Data were entered separately to assist with analysis (as a whole set or disaggregated according to collection methods).

Community Resource Inventory

We compiled an inventory of local programs that can or do provide services to gang-involved individuals or those at high risk of being involved in gangs. We identified these programs by consulting the following:

- 211info, a nonprofit organization that provides information and referrals to social service agencies in Oregon and southwest Washington
- Multnomah County District 2/Gang Violence Task Force – Services Inventory, an inventory of gang-related services developed by Multnomah County District 2 Commissioner Loretta Smith's staff.
- Service Programs for Youth & Gang Violence in Multnomah County – LPSCC Youth & Gang Violence Steering Committee. This list of programs was developed through a LPSCC survey conducted with Y&GVSC members.
- The "Youth Services" section of the *Street Roots Rose City Resource* guide. Published by Street Roots (a nonprofit that advocates for the rights of the homeless), the guide is a directory of services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty in Multnomah and Washington counties.
- City of Gresham provider listing– A list of programs providing services, with a particular focus on those providing services in the Gresham area.
- Oregon Mentors, a nonprofit organization that provides services and staff to youth mentoring programs throughout Oregon and southwest Washington.

Using these sources, we identified approximately 475 programs that provide services in the county. We reached out by email to all of these organizations, requesting more detailed service and capacity information. A total of 260 agencies responded to our information request answered the following questions:

- Dosage of services
- Program capacity
- Is the program currently full? If so, how long is the wait for services?
- Does the program focus on gang members?
- Is the program experienced at serving gang members?
- If risk assessments are conducted, do they include information about gang membership?

Of those agencies that responded, 22 reported that they focus specifically on individuals who are gang-involved, and 77 additional programs reported having experience working with gang-involved individuals and/or conducting an assessment that included gang issues. For purposes of this report, these two types of programs were grouped together and are described as "gang-responsive." Their programs are categorized based on type of service—primary prevention, secondary prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry.

All place-based services and those that were identified as gang-responsive were mapped to illustrate where services are located. The programs identified as gang responsive are listed in Appendix 14. The full list of identified programs is too long to include in this report but is accessible through LPSCC's web site www.multco.us/lpscc.

Data Quality and Limitations

Despite the short timeline for this project, we have collected a large amount of very rich data. This report is intended to present the data in an objective manner and set the stage for the County to shift into Phase 2 of the OJJDP model: implementation planning. Recognizing the time constraints for Phase 1, we recommend that the analysis of these data not stop here. Many community members have provided valuable input that should be reviewed in more detail to inform future and peripheral efforts and initiatives.

As we were collecting the data, we recognized multiple challenges and limitations to the process:

Regarding the Qualitative Data:

- Generally speaking, the more respondents there are to a survey (especially as a percentage of the total number of people in the group being surveyed), the more reliable the responses are. For this assessment, students, community residents, and community leaders provided the most responses, and youth-serving agencies, parents and family members of gang-affiliated youth, and school staff provided the fewest. However, responses from the lowest-responding groups should not be disregarded. Parents and family members, in particular, offer unique and valuable perspectives, based on the nature of their relationship with young people and the immediacy of their experience.
- We had limited control with respect to how some surveys and interviews were conducted. Health Department staff provided an overview to all partners who assisted with dissemination of hard copy surveys, but many surveys were completed electronically. Students distributed surveys at LEP, and Health Department staff distributed surveys at the other schools. At the non-LEP schools, Health Department staff visited classrooms (with assistance from school staff), provided an overview, and distributed the survey in each classroom. Some interviews with gang-involved incarcerated or detained individuals were conducted by facility staff. Although we believe that everyone who conducted interviews and surveys respected the need for confidentiality and ensured a safe environment for responding, we cannot guarantee that this was the case. Modifications were made to the interview tool to decrease the risk of self-incrimination and elevated trauma. We believe these changes increased people's willingness to participate.
- Given the challenges of accessing an experienced translator, Spanish language surveys were not available until late in the data collection process. This limited the number of surveys of Spanish-speaking individuals we were able to include in the data summaries.

Regarding the Quantitative Data:

- We recognize that there are limitations with the U.S. Census data's race and ethnicity counts, but we have included that information here to illustrate out-migration patterns. These limitations are described in *Communities of Color in Multnomah*

County: An Unsettling Profile[15] and include issues such as grouping and undercounting populations.

- Data regarding County-funded alcohol and drug treatment utilization were provided by Multnomah County's Department of Community Justice and Department of County Human Services. However, some data are missing, so it is difficult to review trends over time. In addition, the variability in rates may be a function of changes in funding or referral procedures, rather than actual changes in addiction rates.
- The OJJDP model focuses specifically on people ages 21 and younger, meaning that it does not address motorcycle gangs, prison gangs, ideological gangs, hate groups, or other groups that consist mainly of adults. Yet the data we have on the gangs that are operating within Multnomah County do not distinguish between youth and non-youth gangs. Thus, it is likely that the list of gangs presented in this assessment includes, at a minimum, some ideological gangs or hate groups that consist mostly of adults.
- Analyzing the data on crime trends is especially complicated. We note many trends that have occurred over time in crime data. It is important to recognize that changes in this type of data can be caused not only by actual changes in the number of occurrences, but also by changes in factors such as policy, funding, and staffing. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) lists some issues that should be considered when reviewing crime data, stating that "historically, the causes and origins of crime have been the subjects of investigation by many disciplines." The FBI specifically mentions the following as factors that are known to affect the volume and type of crime occurring from place to place:
  - Population density and degree of urbanization
  - Variations in composition of the population, particularly youth concentration
  - Stability of the population with respect to residents' mobility, commuting patterns, and transient factors
  - Modes of transportation and the highway system
  - Economic conditions, including median income, poverty level, and job availability
  - Cultural factors and educational, recreational, and religious characteristics
  - Family conditions with respect to divorce and family cohesiveness
  - Climate
  - Effective strength of law enforcement agencies
  - Administrative and investigative emphases of law enforcement
  - Policies of other components of the criminal justice system (i.e., prosecutorial, judicial, correctional, and probational)
  - Citizens' attitudes toward crime; crime reporting practices of the citizenry[16]

[15] Curry-Stevens, A., Cross-Hemmer, A., & Coalition of Communities of Color (2010). *Communities of Color in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile*. Portland, OR: Portland State University

[16] http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2010/crime-in-the-u.s.-2010/caution-against-ranking