

# ADDRESSING GANG PREVENTION

Hmm, Are we developing a “Gang” Problem?

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- **When:** Tuesday, March 16, 2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- **Description:**
  - ▣ During this session, Program Directors will have an opportunity to discuss what may or may not indicate a gang issue and what are strategies for grantee response. Project Directors from Santa Fe and Santa Maria Valley SSHS will share their experiences as small urban/rural communities, with assessing local gang conditions and developing a gang intervention. Participants will have an opportunity to dialog on their perceived gang issues, and determine a strategy to understand and respond to the perceived gang presence in their own communities.

# Session Objectives:

- At the end of this session:
  - ▣ Grantees will have an opportunity to raise questions and share about their experience with gang prevention
  - ▣ Grantees will identify, through discussion, how to use data to improve gang prevention strategies
  - ▣ The National Center will have a summary of the work of SSHS grantees in assessing their gang issues and developing a community response.

# Agenda

- **Opening – Welcome (5 min.)**
- **Santa Fe Public School's Gang issues (10 min.)**
- **Questions from the Group (15 min.)**
- **Presentation (15 min.)**
  - ▣ **Tita Gervers, Project Director, Santa Fe SSHS**
- **Facilitated Discussion (20 min.)**
- **Wrap Up (10 min.)**

# PD's Presentations will Highlight:

- the conditions that prompted a review of youth violence issues
- data on youth gang involvement, perception of safety, experience with victimization & bullying, etc.
- the community response to the youth violence issues raised from the data
- lessons learned from the process
- future plans and remaining questions

# Questions from the Group

- Gangs that are drug related – trafficking (transient) vs. community based
- School staff don't talk about or address gang issues
  - Let's identify the gangs or potential gang youth (those who are actually in the gang and those who are just 'trying it out')
  - Who 'owns' the gang issue – law enforcement? schools? The community?
- What's the approach for a bigger, district-wide approach (provide additional supports/programs – restorative justice, continuing education in specialized education programs, life skills)
- When or where are gangs not being “controlled”? What role does the school setting play in being a “safe place” for youth?
- Engaging parents & communities in gang prevention/intervention (OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang strategy doesn't note how to apply it in context – what does it look like? PIES – prevention/intervention/enforcement/suppression; keeping the issue on the table front & center)
- Using school based strategies/programs – working with community assets/strengths via youth workers, agencies)
- What interventions can we use for “wanna-be's” and youth who have greater pulls/pushes to gangs?

# Gang Prevention Questions for Discussion :

## □ Data collection & analysis

- What indicators has your community examined that may reflect a possible gang issue? What data has been collected for SSHS that may indicate such? (What is the data you're examining? How was it collected? What data is available from law enforcement & others, and does data from different sources corroborate one another? What indicators do your police department use to say a crime is gang related?)
- How has it been analyzed – has it been disaggregated & along what dimensions?
- What of the data was confirmation or a surprise? (What did you learn or confirm with the data collected?)

## □ Interpretation

- What youth issues does the data raise? (What does this data mean?)
- What other issues should be addressed as part of our efforts? To what degree to issues such as bullying affect gang presence? A lack of adult supports or boundaries/expectations (developmental assets)?

## □ Selecting Interventions

- Given your data, what is the proposed response?
- Who (SSHS partners) should be part of this discussion & effort?
- What EBPs address your community needs? At which levels (pre-school, elementary, middle, high school)? What other community initiatives support gang prevention/intervention? Do these initiatives relate to SSHS? If so how?
- How can we utilize the comprehensive approach as suggested by OJJDP models?
- What's the next stage of our response? (assess if reaching intensive or target population, what is long term response, etc.)

# Lessons Learned:

- Gangs are socially justified group behaviors—how do we flip this perspective to make these NOT socially justified behaviors?
- Focus on strengths of youth
- No one is off the hook
- No one can do this work alone
- Provide a blanket of services for ALL youth, with additional services to youth in need of additional services (universal, indicated, targeted)
- Educate people on the issues AND identify supports & services
- PIES