

## **Youth Gang Violence Prevention in Boston Ten Years after the Boston Miracle**

At the height of the national youth gun violence epidemic in 1996, the city of Boston became famous for implementing a strategy that was given credit by many for reducing the youth homicide rate to zero, and keeping it there for several years. The strategy was called Operation Cease Fire and was coordinated by a working group consisting of representatives from the Boston Police Department, Probation, the District Attorney and U.S. Attorney's office, many other criminal justice agencies, social service agencies, ministers from neighborhood churches (known as the TenPoint Coalition) and researchers from the Kennedy School of Government. The key elements of Cease Fire included:

- Regular working group meetings that were used to analyze data on gang violence and develop plans for reducing it;
- Announcements and publicizing of the Cease Fire, and plans to enforce it;
- Enhanced enforcement by all agencies against gangs found to have violated the Cease Fire;
- Mobilization of community support for the strategy, particularly by the TenPoint Coalition, that regularly walked the neighborhoods;
- Mobilization of community services for youth who desired to give up their gang activities.

Boston differs from LA in that gangs are much less of a presence (1400 total gang members), smaller in size (25-70), and the city has many more resources to deal with them. The TenPoint Coalition was formed by ministers from small neighborhood churches and was initially very critical of the police. ***It took them awhile to learn that not all police were insensitive to their local problems, and that some could be trusted and worked with.*** The Boston Gun Project depended a lot on personal relationships and trust at the working level to get things done. In addition to its planning and analysis functions, the Working Group served as a forum to hold members accountable for their performance.

In the years that have passed since Cease Fire was implemented, there has been considerable debate as to how much of Boston's decline in youth homicides was due to the project. Political leaders, police officials and David Kennedy, who led the Kennedy School team, have been the strongest supporters of the program. Kennedy also points to positive outcomes from a number of replications of the project that took place with Justice Department support. Those who claim that Cease Fire only accounted for a part of the decline include Debra Prothrow Stith, other public health and social service practitioners, and Anthony Braga, another of the Kennedy School participants. They point out that many other violence prevention efforts had been launched in the years preceding Cease Fire, that the decline was underway 2 years before Cease Fire was implemented, and that that many other cities experienced similar declines.

The success of Cease Fire was so widely acclaimed in the years following its implementation that a flood of visitors from other cities flocked to Boston to learn more about the project and key participants were in constant demand to talk about the program at professional meetings. Not surprisingly, all of this attention put a strain on personal relationships. Some felt they were not getting enough credit or that others were claiming too much. As the homicide rate remained at

record low levels, interest among Boston officials in supporting the program began to taper off and key individuals moved on to assume other responsibilities. Most notably, Lt. Gary French, the police official who had chaired the Working Group, moved out of the Gang Unit to work on sex crimes and David Kennedy moved to New York. Also, the funding that had been available for prevention and social service programs was greatly reduced.

By 2004 Boston's homicide was on the rise – up to 68 compared to 44 in the previous year. In 2005 there were 75 homicides. All of the increase was in youth homicides. Gary French moved back to the Gang Unit and with the Commissioner's approval reconvened the Working Group and the TenPoint Ministers went back to walking their neighborhoods.

The causes of recent gang homicides appeared to have changed. In the 1990s youth homicides had appeared to be business related – drug deals gone bad or one gang encroaching on another's turf. Recent homicides appeared to result from individual beefs – “you disrespected me or one of mine. I have to get even with you.”

The reconvened Working Group began meeting on a regular weekly basis at Police Headquarters, chaired by Lt. French. Many of the members were the same ones who had participated in Cease Fire. The new strategy that has been adopted by the Working Group is trying to broker truces between the gangs that are in conflict. On the day of our arrival (Nov. 5, 2006) the Boston Globe ran a story that provided some of the details about a truce that had been in place since being arranged by the group over the summer.

The police have their own intelligence to indicate which gang rivalries are reaching a point of violence. The city's gang street workers are used to make the arrangements for the truce meeting with gangs. Negotiations were initiated by telling each gang that their rivals were interested in making a peace, although was not initially the case. Each gang was allowed to indicate what they wanted out of the truce and who, from their rival gang, they would have to see at the truce meeting in order to know it was for real.

On the day of the meeting the leaders from each gang were met in their home territory, patted down for weapons and cell phones, and transported by van to a neutral location, the Library of the Kennedy School for the first truce. The truce mediators had posted a set of rules to govern discussions and behavior at the meeting. A visible police presence, seen through glass windows, was provided outside the room. The truce negotiations took no more than 15 minutes to complete and then it was on to eating pizza and drinking cokes. The youth all seemed to be relieved by the process. It gives them an excuse for not continuing the violence.

After a truce has been negotiated there is a concerted effort to maintain the peace. ***Gang members are given the cell phone numbers of ministers and street workers with whom they can check out rumors.*** Working Group members will go out of their way to help gang kids who are abiding by their agreements. This includes such things as helping them to get city-funded summer jobs or getting prosecutors to go easy on them on unrelated cases. At the time they were negotiating the first truce the police knew that there were big cases being developed against many of the leaders who ended up at the peace table. This confirmed for the police that they had the right people at the table. Six months later most of them are off the street and doing time.

The information for the story in the Globe was not released by the Working Group but by higher-ranking officers in the PD or City Hall. The Working Group would just as soon keep their operations below the radar and not draw publicity. They feel that all those who need to know about the truces are being informed. They are not now interested in the kind of national attention that Cease Fire drew in the past.

Some of the interesting points to come out of our meeting with three TenPoint ministers were how they got started and their connections with city hall. They initially tried to reach out to gang kids at funerals. It took a while before they were ready to work with the police. Given their success in the past, now the Mayor will call in the faith community every three months or so and compare data on where recent shootings have occurred and the location of their churches. The ministers are expected to help control things in their neighborhoods.

Dr. Ulric Johnson is the founder of Teens Against Gang Violence and currently runs a program at Springfield College in Charlestown. When he formed TAGV he had just been hired to develop and run a prevention program at a community center where drug sales was the major problem. ***TAG-V was the result, a multi-generational gang with colors that required parent participation.*** Johnson believes that the media and culture reinforce the public's addiction to violence. He also feels that kids want to belong to some group and that gang membership is natural. The issue is who controls the gang.

The primary lessons for LA from the Boston experience appear to be:

- With more resources at your disposal you can take a more nuanced approach to gang violence, balancing the threat of enforcement with the offer of valued resources and opportunities.
- Forming relationships with churches and other service providers can increase community acceptance of enforcement efforts.
- Police and street workers have to work together to further peace negotiations.
- At the community level, all relationships are personal.
- An effective Working Group and personal relationships can overcome organizational roadblocks.

## NOTES ON BOSTON SITE VISIT

### Sessions:

1. Anthony Braga, Kennedy School of Government
2. Lt. Det. Gary French, Boston Police Department
3. Ulric Johnson, Springfield College
4. TenPoint Coalition
  - Chris Sumner, Executive Director
  - Rev. Matt Gibson
  - Rev. Jeffrey Brown

This trip included visits with key participants in the Boston Operation Cease Fire. That project brought together Law Enforcement, City personnel, service providers and academic to work with youths who were involved with local gangs. The results of this effort became known as the Boston Miracle because of their success at curbing gang violence.

A key moment in their formation of the service network was a stabbing at the funeral for another gang member. The Mayor seized on the occasion to push clergy, service providers, and other to coordinate their services and focus on that particular population—what they found was that, while many of them provided services to the same individuals, there was no coordination of those services. Clergy's response was the TenPoints Strategy.

'Governance' was not a significant issue; the program was led by the Boston Police Department, who had the ability to call together community members they felt could be key to the project's success. The model was based on opening lines of communications with the different targeted gangs. City "Street Workers", along with clergy and social service providers, were responsible for letting gang members know that any retaliation to recent violence would result in heavy police crackdown on other activities, particularly their drug trade. However, the Street Workers would also let the gang members know about the availability of support services, anywhere from counseling to job training and placement. As a result, gang violence dropped from approximately 40 homicides in 1996 to only five in 1999.

According to Braga, key elements of the project included their success at compiling a network of capacities, or variety of service providers who could respond to a variety of needs presented by the targeted individuals, and a balance of sanctions (suppression) and providers. In his words, they worked to develop ways to 'tax' bad behaviors. Lt. French, however, felt that the service side of the formula was lacking, which influenced the ultimate increase in violence.

When the program was implemented, there were about 40 Street Workers from a variety of backgrounds employed by the City. While some were former gang members, individuals with serious records were not hired. Currently, they are working with the City's 40+ gangs, whose combined membership is estimated at about 1400 members.

According to French, the police had all the information that they needed related to gang violence. What they were more interested in was reducing the violence to ease pressure on their own need to respond to retaliation violence. He also noted that Probation Officers helped bring influential gang

members to the table by negotiating debts, that is, they could get fees, fines and other penalties against individuals waived in exchange for their participation.

A key component of the project was the “10 Points Coalition”, a network of black clergy, who assisted in creating the service providers network and conducting outreach to gang members. The Coalition began in response to escalating youth violence in the early 1990’s. The clergy also could be critical of law enforcement, while at the same time building relationships with them. Through the project’s early years, membership was primarily black and Protestant. Recently, efforts have been made to include Catholic and Muslim leaders.

While the project was effective, it did not include attempts to address long-term structural issues. For instance, the program did not include the schools as an active partner, however the school police were involved.

Also according to Braga, the Cease Fire broke down when Lt. French left his post with the Boston P. D.’s Youth Violence Strike Force. Subsequent leadership of that unit became more concerned with arrests than reducing violence. Gang crime statistics were low at that point, and their focus shifted to re-entry programs. The Street Workers were also reassigned to community centers and schools. Interestingly, since that time, the number of homicides and other violence crime has increased significantly.

The clergy saw the breakdown of the project a bit differently. In their minds, once the violent statistics went down, the City diverted their attention to other issues and began focusing services primarily on teens. As well, there was no new leadership, particularly once Lt. French left his post.

#### Homicide Statistics:

1999: 5

2003: 40+

2004: 68

2005: 75

Only recently has the group begun involving hard-core former gang members. One significant sample involves a former ‘shot-caller’ who, in partnership with the Clergy and others, has helped to establish a truce between two of the City’s main rivals. Important attributes that have contributed to the success of that truce include his relationships with those neighborhoods and ability to communicate in street terms with gang members. He and clergy members constantly conduct shuttle diplomacy between both sets, to keep an active dialogue and settle issues as they arise.

In conjunction with the truce, a unique form of cooperation sprang from an example of non-communication. Several members of the targeted sets were arrested in sweeps of the housing projects where they lived a couple days before they were to meet with their rivals. Members of the Working Group needed to get those individuals released, at least long enough to attend the meeting. Boston PD, backed by the clergy and others, managed to secure those releases, leading to successful negotiations.

## Notes on Chicago Site Visit

Billie Weiss and I recently visited Chicago to learn more about their violence prevention initiatives. Together, we visited with staff of the Chicago CeaseFire, Dr. Irving Spergel from the University of Chicago and the Illinois Violence Prevention Initiative. Each had important information to benefit the current study for the City of Los Angeles.

### Chicago CeaseFire

Chicago CeaseFire has operated in and around Chicago since 2000. The program includes several community-focused components, including:

- Community Mobilization
- Public Education
- Faith-based Networking
- Violence Interrupters,
- Outreach, and
- Police Relations

The program is very targeted to specifically selected “Beats” within police districts. There are 27 operational locations in the City, and another 5 in other communities (East St. Louis, Maywood, North Chicago, Rockford and Aurora.) There are 25 Districts throughout the City, and nine to fifteen Beats per District.

Staffing for the project falls into two primary categories, Outreach Workers and Violence Interrupters. Currently, there are 50 Outreach Workers and 26 Violence Interrupters. Both groups generally mimic the ethnicity of the communities they serve. Both also tend to have participated in the gang lifestyle, and most have criminal records. It is estimated that 70% of the Outreach Workers are ex-offenders, mostly felonies and many serious/violent offenders. For the Violence Interrupters, it is more like 99%. However, neither group can employ individuals who have histories of domestic violence or crimes that involve minors. Both groups will hire individuals who are actively on Probation or Parole.

The Outreach Workers focus on individual behavior, acting in part as Case Managers; engaging, mobilizing and educating the broader community; and interacting with Law Enforcement. Staff work in teams. Typically, each team includes a Violence Prevention Coordinator, Outreach Supervisor and up to three Outreach Workers. While the Coordinator deals with the community at large, the others focus on the gang members and their families. The Outreach Workers are employed by nonprofit community partners located in the targeted areas. The Violence Interrupters, on the other hand, are employed by CeaseFire specifically to mediate violence between gangs.

The nature of gangs have been changing in Chicago. Make-up continues to include African-American, Mexican and Puerto Ricans. However, all three seem to be drifting from highly structured units to more fragmented associations. This characteristic has made it more difficult to outreach to the gang members.

It is estimated that there are 120 gangs in the City, although estimates on membership range from 70,000 to 200,000. Gangs are considered to be responsible for about 80% of the homicides annually.

There is no significant increase in the role of girls, although there is a rise in the number of fights on school grounds that involve young women.

The program has strong ties to religious institutions. Many churches serve as Safe Havens—for which some receive compensation. Others participate in community events, particularly responses to shootings.

Schools do not have a strong relationship with CeaseFire. Outreach Workers do try to get youths back in school, and will accompany the students to various counseling or related meetings. Otherwise, the Outreach Workers do not have a significant presence on school ground.

Publicly, staff do not work closely with Chicago PD. However, as there is a strong focus on preventing the next crime—the retaliation—program staff can provide street information about potential shootings or other crimes that can work to mitigate a potential act. Police often inform program staff about where they intend to apply pressure to the gang members. This pressure, often termed “Just Cause” when it follows the shooting of a child or fellow officer, includes intensive targeting of gang members for any minor infraction. Also, the Police will often combat gang violence by making it difficult for a particular gang to continue operating underground businesses. The nature and location of these businesses are sometimes provided by Outreach Workers.

The program’s annual budget is around \$8 million. The budget per community, which usually includes one or two targeted Beats, is about \$250,000. There are generally one or two gangs per Beat. While the focus is on the Beats, they recognize that the work often engages youths in neighboring areas.

The community components range from general events, public education campaigns and mobilizing events within 72 hours of a homicide. Emphasis is placed on making sizeable public showings following these shootings. Staff also pass out anti-violence materials at these events. A unique aspect of the Outreach Workers is to advertise their phone numbers for people who can report a potential shooting. Potential callers include those who think they may be targeted, those who think they might be directed to do the shooting, other gang members who want to preempt the shooting, or community members who may have access to this information.

The program includes interventions at hospitals. Shooting victims, it is held, are more open to the thought of changing their lifestyle, particularly in the moments immediately following their being shot. This is also a good time to dissuade the victim from considering retaliation. At the same time, the Violence Interrupters will work with the victim’s fellow gang members. It is held that the best potential clients are those who have been shot.

The program is almost exclusively working in the intervention realm, as opposed to prevention. The latter, particularly with the schools, is not included because it would take away from the resources that are available to work with the gang members directly.

When selecting new target areas, general guidelines are followed, but can vary for a number of reasons. High levels of homicides is the primary indicator, although local support and often political considerations also are factors. As well, the order in which the various components are brought on line will depend on the local priorities. Funding, as well as existing networks and/or service providers, may take a part in determining whether each component is implemented up front. For instance, the community mobilizing is a difficult component because many residents may often be afraid to participate.

The Outreach Workers are typically full-time. The Project sets ranges for salaries and benefits, although ultimately the compensation is determined by the local partner. The Violence Interrupters, by comparison, are contracted through CeaseFire, for part-time work. By all accounts, the Interrupters do much more work for what they are compensated.

Coordination is maintained through a series of meetings. For instance, the Coordinators meet monthly, while the Supervisors and Violence Interrupters have separate weekly meetings.

A unique aspect of the project are the Violence Interruptions, or the number of times that the Interrupters kept violence from occurring. For 2005, there were 250 cases of Violence Interruptions, when Interrupters mediated potential violence. It is anticipated that the same number will be recorded this year. Drugs are behind much of the gang violence in the Chicago area. While the Violence Interrupters do not engage in mediating drug disputes, they do encourage the gangs to resolve their differences of face serious crackdowns by Chicago PD.

While the staff are not in the schools, the project has partnered with the Chicago School District to support a form of Safe Passage, based on parent participation. Typically, there is a high police presence around the schools at dismissal. Project staff also bring together the students from different schools to meet and interact.

Community Policing came up a couple of times. While overall it was felt that Chicago did not have a good record of community policing—primarily based on the experiences of senior command—it nonetheless provided some support to the work that CeaseFire staff are providing the targeted communities. Generally, the police do interact with other community programs and promote a network of services for the youths and their families.

Chicago PD also have Gang Details in each District. As noted, there is little public interaction between the two—as the Police are focused on making arrests. There are regular meetings between program staff and command staff, and some participation in officer training. However, there is a need to formalize relations with line staff. There is also a concern that the Police is mimicking the work of CeaseFire, particularly in establishing a Clergy Network to saturate scenes and conduct other forms of outreach.

Other community organizations are also copying the CeaseFire activities, but in those cases, the actions are seen as expanding the level of services, rather than competing or attempting to replace CeaseFire.

Reporting of gang violence is different from local policies. For instance, what is reported as gang-related is what locally is considered gang-motivated, that is, violence conducted to support the gang. Our gang-related is reported for what it is, e.g., drug-related, domestic violence, or other personal violence. Nonetheless, there are still enhancements based on crimes that are gang-related and/or include use of a gun (Extenuating Circumstances).

The role of the Violence Interrupters in mediating violence has increased, because the gangs are decentralizing, youngsters are coming into positions of power, and new sets are emerging. As mentioned, there are usually only a handful of gangs in a targeted area. Therefore, the Interrupters are constantly mediating between these sets, as compared to creating larger understandings across several areas.

There is a well-established system for collecting the work of project staff, and comparing it to outcomes. Report forms include:

- Homicide Shooting Responses
- Community Activities
- Conflict Mediations (primarily for the Interrupters)
- Shooting Incident Review, and Volunteer Activity Form

These reports are then collected on a Monthly Report.

An Intake Form, along with the Treatment Plan Outreach-Case Notes and File Review Forms are used as a form of Case Management for program clients who receive intensive individual treatments. Each Outreach Worker is expected to maintain a caseload of 25 to 20 clients, and have at least one contact weekly with each. These contacts are not always clinical, that is, they do not all focus on status of the Treatment Plan, but are mostly used to keep in touch and make themselves available to the clients. The caseload was higher, but was reduced because the Outreach Workers complained that the time commitments for case management kept them from other facets of the work.

Initially, the Project did more reporting, but since the State became the major fiscal source, the amount of reporting has declined. However, Project leadership recognizes the value of data analysis, and particularly of measuring outcomes, so activities by area are routinely compared to gang activities (homicides) in those areas. These measures are also compared to comparable areas and the City as a whole.

#### Little Village Project

In addition to staff of Chicago CeaseFire, time was also spent with Dr. Irving Spergel at the University of Chicago. Dr. Spergel was involved in the Little Village Project, one of the first attempts to create a systematic approach to managing gang violence. The program has since been used in the design of several projects nation-wide, under the direction of the US Department of Justice.

The Little Village model included both intervention and suppression. The project was designed to complement Community Policing, but never really did. Nonetheless, officers were able to establish

relationships with key leaders, supported by the activities of the Street Workers. The program included Probation Officers as active partners. In part, the program was weakened because the assigned officers were young, not long out of the Academy, and so not very experienced. Also, the Street Workers were unreliable at first, until the staff stabilized.

There were several commonalities identified at Little Village and the other national sites. First, gangs are decentralized and becoming more so, making prevention difficult. Mediation also had limited impact because of this characteristic. A noticeable predictor of recidivism was whether the individual (primarily male) entered into a serious relationship. Apparently, the relationship reflected a stabilizing in the individual's life. A complementary characteristic was age—it seems that most gang members ultimately aged-out of the lifestyle. Helping kids return to school didn't help, but getting them to reduce their drug use did. Finally, there was consistent findings that gang violence occurs in specific areas, not across entire communities.

A significant issue was that Law Enforcement was to run the program but didn't. Lack of support from upper leadership kept the program localized. Still, the participating officers were able to establish rapport with the youths and their families and a number of service referrals did occur via the Youth Workers.

Overall, the Little Village project measured a 40% decline in gang violence, and a 60% decline among targeted youths. Community surveys tended to complement these findings, that is, where residents felt more secure, Police data reflected declines in violence.

According to Spergel, they never attempted to eliminate the gang problem, only to reduce the violence. The biggest change seemed to be at the individual level. Group changes was accomplished mostly through Street Workers helping Police to control the gangs.

Findings also suggest that the peace process benefits from involving a wide network at the community level, including Law Enforcement, service providers, families, businesses, Clergy and others. Lots of times, it proved difficult to get gang members and their families actively involved because of other pressures, including low wages, domestic violence, teenage pregnancies, and a constant struggle over providing the bare necessities to the family.

#### Illinois Violence Prevention Initiative

Finally, we met with Barbara Shaw of the Illinois Violence Prevention Initiative. This program of the State is designed to promote healthy lifestyle, and thereby lessening a reliance on violence, by providing appropriate treatments at all ages.

A primary guideline for determining the appropriateness of specific treatments is relative brain development. Programs link both social and emotional health to childhood developmental stages. As a result, the State has adopted social and emotional learning standards. New York has recently adopted similar standards. Illinois is now institutionalizing teacher training in the role of these standards.

In addition to exploring a variety of way to fund youth programs, the IVPI is also involved in helping agencies understand how to evaluate their own programs.

## Report on Chicago Site Visit

Day one was spent with the Chicago CeaseFire Project (CCF): a gang intervention project. We first met with Norman Kerr, Director of CeaseFire, who gave us an overall view of the program; the ongoing evaluation and we had a general discussion. We had lunch with Gary, Candace, and Norm, two of the police officers involved in the program from one of the reporting districts. The officer is a Crime Analyst from the 9<sup>th</sup> District. We also met with two Outreach Workers, attended a meeting of the project Outreach Workers, met with the Project Evaluator, learned about the hospital project, and spent time with the hospital coordinator, and two violence interrupters. In the evening we went to the site of a recent shooting and participated in a candlelight vigil, and to one of the district sites.

My comments are as follows. The CeaseFire Project itself follows the recommendations of Spergel's findings on intervention with some exceptions. It is something that with sufficient support would work in LA as part of a comprehensive prevention, intervention strategy. It is supported primarily by state funding with little city funding. The annual budget for the project is currently \$8,000,000. In addition, CCF has received funding from the State Health Department, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and other private foundations. Also, the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority funds the project in the amount of \$250,000 - \$300,000 per year for data collection and in house evaluation activities. There are about 15 in house staff housed at the headquarters site. Currently, Gary believes that the program is under funded. In addition to the 19 sites currently operating in 1 to 2 CPD beats, there are 9 sites outside of the city. The program began six years ago, in response to the shooting deaths, particularly those of "innocent bystanders." Gary estimates that Chicago needs about 300 Outreach Workers and Violence Interrupters, and they currently have 50 intervention workers. Each site regardless of size receives approximately \$450,000 annually to conduct the program. Funds are used to hire Outreach Workers and a coordinator, and to pay for church or other facility use for midnight basketball etc.

Outreach is to 70% male clients. The Outreach Workers and Violence Interrupters mirror the community population. 70% of the Outreach Workers are ex-felons, and 99% of the Violence Interrupters are ex-felons. Hiring is done by interviewing panels. Schools are seeing an increase in on-campus violence but the CCF philosophy is to let the schools deal with their own problems. Ideally each site should have one Violence Prevention Coordinator, or manager, one Outreach Supervisor, three Outreach Workers and several Violence Interrupters. We received copies of their data collection forms, and looked at the evaluation measures they are using which are primarily process with the addition of the police data which is picked up weekly by the evaluator from each site.

CCF is run out of the University of Chicago, School of Public Health, manages the program. CCF acts as a pass through to CBO's who hire the Outreach Workers who act as liaisons in the individual projects with the community coalition formed in each project. The violence interrupters are all part-time, without benefits and hired by the University. Salaries for the Outreach Workers include medical, vacation and other benefits, with money from the Illinois Department of Corrections. The Outreach Workers in concert with the violence interrupters are essentially case managers and try to provide through the community network the needs of the

client. Such as: job training, jobs, high school graduation or GED completion. Also the project makes connections and arrangements for housing, mental health services, court accompaniment, probation requirements, anger management, and drug treatment, etc. Domestic violence counseling and child abuse prevention services are provided as needed along with other services through the community network or coalition. Each Outreach Worker has approximately fifteen clients. Many of the clients are re-entering the community from prison. The violence interrupters are hired at approximately 15 hours for 15 to 20 hours per week. The two that we spoke with indicated that they work full time sometimes more and mentioned an hourly rate of something like \$6. This may be the reason that the rumors about unfair wages being paid. Although the two violence interrupters that I spoke with found the work rewarding and attributed their own success in staying out of the “life” to the work they were doing. The violence interrupters do receive training, but the two we met were very much still street people, with the knowledge to talk to the current gang members.

CCF estimates that there about 25 gangs under two nations, with 150,000 gang members. Similarly to LA there are varying estimates on the number of gangs, sets, cliques, and members and there is not an official estimate. It is estimated that 90% of the murders in Chicago are gang related. The program is looking at providing technical assistance to other locations contemplating programs. Currently they are: Baltimore, Irvington, and Newark. There are five components of the program at each site. They are: 1) Street Outreach, 2) Clergy, 3) Community, 3) Materials, 4) Police. The theory is that the five components working in concert change community norms, provide on the spot alternatives to violence, and thus aids in changing the risk perception, which then produces less of the violent behavior.

Although the Chicago PD at the administrative and Captains level in the beats seems to be supportive, CCF still deals with similar problems as those in LA with the rank and file not always being cooperative with program and particularly with the violence interrupters, who have been arrested on several occasions. The suggestion is that training will be provided on the CCF program at the academy to reduce this ongoing phenomenon.

At the outreach meetings a discussion centered on 24-hour hotlines for the clients to reach the workers or for others to contact the project if they felt that they were in danger of being shot or harmed. This discussion was very reminiscent of the of the CYGS methodology.

In addition, CCF has just begun a hospital outreach program very similar to Youth Alive or Teens on Target in Los Angeles, in which Outreach Workers go to the hospital to talk to victims, their families and their homies to reduce the likelihood of retaliation and to try to get the victim into the project as a client.

CCF has monthly steering committee meetings. Each project must have a monthly community meeting, there are a weekly coordinators meeting, and a weekly violence interrupters meeting. The most common age of clients at program entry is 17-25 years of age, but they have clients as young as 13 and some are older. The Outreach Workers work with the PD and other CBO’s, there is cops and parents component. They work with faith leaders, and with the ATF. There are approximately 40,000 Police Officers in Chicago. The program is currently being audited by the State.

They would like to form a national partnership, hold an annual meeting and work with 4-6 sites in an intensive way. Gary and Candace believe that there's going to be funding to do this, in other cities. They told me whom they are working with in each of the cities. The responsible partners are primarily: the Mayor's Office, the Health Departments, and Universities.

The evening event that we attended was a candle light vigil. However the gang members who were at the site did not interact with the CeaseFire staff at all or participate in the prayer led by the clergy. The gang members were very angry and very loaded and so we really didn't observe the working between the project and the gang.

On day two we had two meetings with Irv Spergel at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and with Barbara Shaw of the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority.

Meeting with Irv Spergel. He primarily talked about the Little Village Project, which has been testing the Spergel model. The project workers include 2 cops, 3 probation workers, 5 gang leaders; The LE officers are the same ethnicity as the gang members. This project involves approximately 200 kids 17-25 years of age, but some are as young as 14-16. In addition to the Little Village Project, the model is being tested in five locations, including Riverside, CA; Mesa, AZ; and three Texas locations. Spergel believes that prevention doesn't work with kids in gangs. 15-17 year olds are most vulnerable to the gang life style; he believes that mediation doesn't work, and that girlfriends are generally a positive influence in getting boys out of gangs. Girl gang members come in later and leave earlier than boys. He thinks that younger gang members benefit more from counseling. He thinks the model has been successful in reducing serious violence and drugs. As an evaluation tool, police records have been made available so that they can look at arrest records. A primary finding is that the youth workers should not show themselves with the PD. One of the evaluation tools they used were community surveys, they surveyed 100 residents and two points in time, and based success on community perception of the level of community and gang violence. He sees the biggest change at the individual level, and at schools. The model educates cops, kids, schools and the community about how to stop violence. The most crucial factor for success according to Spergel is "real community involvement" and understanding each other's approach. Parents are problematic, because they often do not recognize the involvement of their own children.

Meeting with Barbara Shaw at the Illinois State Health Department in Chicago. I believe that this meeting provided the greatest number of practical suggestions for Los Angeles. In addition, to the violence prevention authority which primarily provides funding for violence prevention activities within the state, an Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership has been formed with the leadership from the VP Authority. In addition the Department of Mental Health, and the statewide office of Education are part of the partnership. A statewide act was passed and charged with developing a plan to provide comprehensive prevention and intervention for mental health promotion for children from birth through age 18. In addition the partnership has developed state standards for mental health services and promotion for children in Illinois. The partnership has been able to provide funding to the schools so that they can implement the recommendations; The IVP has also attracted funds for grants to schools to encourage their participation in the activities required by the Children's Mental Health Plan. Barbara mentioned

that with the opportunity to link Violence Prevention to mental health in LA we might be able to acquire funding from the mental health funding recently being made available at the state level. They have involved pediatricians in mental health screening for children, and are working on acquiring new DSM coding for childhood mental/and emotional diagnoses, which will provide reimbursement for diagnosis and treatment of such disorders in children.

The Illinois Attorney General and the Head of the State Health Department chair the VP authority. A state license plate was created which provides approximately \$600,000 per year, since the start of the license plates 10 years ago the fund has raised \$7 million. While Barbara stated that the IVPA license plates opened doors for VP activities, what is more important is that it institutionalized their mission and the inter-disciplinary nature of doing effective prevention and intervention. The majority of their funding is from general funds, and a grant from the “Safe to Learn” initiative which provided, \$14 million a year for 3 years. Evaluation is handled by hiring outside evaluators for the authority, and partnering with the funded programs to provide technical assistance to teach them how to evaluate their own programs.

Some suggestions Barbara had for us for funding in LA, was licensing firearm owners in the City and County for \$1.00 a year or \$5.00 for five years for a license to own a firearm. I am currently inquiring whether the State Pre-Emption about firearms would allow the city and county to conduct a licensing program. She also mentioned a surcharge for violent video games to raise funds. The Authority is like a governor’s board or commission, with the AG’s office providing in kind by taking care of human resources, and infrastructure, while the Health Department provides space, phones, communications, mail etc.

In all, it was a worthwhile trip and we learned a great deal. I would recommend that for LA we design something that incorporates an intervention program like CeaseFire, with a stronger and larger prevention strategy with greater emphasis on healthy children, communities and families, particularly in high-risk areas. If we only do intervention, in another ten years we will be facing the same problems as we have been in past decades.