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Youth Violence Reduction

Literature Review

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YOUTH VIOLENCE REDUCTION LITERATURE REVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

"Youth violence" increasingly has captured the public's attention in recent decades, compelling local and regional communities and public service organizations to explore suitable prevention and intervention strategies. While diverse efforts to address youth-related concerns have been deployed, the problems remain significantly challenging to our communities. The DeVos "2025 Initiative" has joined together diverse community stakeholders to collaborate toward a common understanding of the local problems and potential responses.

This review, authored by researchers from Grand Valley State University School of Criminal Justice, outlines risk and protective factors and processes linked to youth violence gleaned from the literature. This report highlights factors salient to community stakeholders and shares programmatic prevention and intervention experiences documented across the literature as a means to further inform local programming. The current effort also includes recommendations in support of culturally competent intervention capabilities and "best processes" to facilitate healthy and sustainable community transformation.

PARTNERS

The Grand Valley State University Community Research Institute, in partnership with the School of Criminal Justice through the College of Community and Public Service, received grant support from the R.D.V. Corporation to create this report.

LITERATURE REVIEW METHODS

The primary data analyzed for this report derives from both foundational and recent studies addressing youth violence. Subsequent to forming a research team, investigators conducted a parameter-based review of the literature to identify salient themes and responses as a means to inform further discussion, evaluation, and action. For purposes of analysis and presentation, factors were organized using a three-tier typology classifying concepts at the (1) individual, (2) institutional, and (3) societal levels of analysis.

While the information presented in this report provides important insights into a complex phenomenon – youth violence – it is nevertheless not intended to be exhaustive or conclusive. While the literature has begun to deliver significant information and depth on individual and clusters of variables related to youth violence (e.g. gang formation and criminal behaviors), there is an equally significant gap in applying and assessing this information in empirically-grounded prevention and intervention programs. Rather, there exists a myriad of anecdotally-based programs implemented to address local and national concerns that have yet to be empirically assessed for effectiveness. Furthermore, studies derived from applied research are limited in their capacity to inform local solutions to youth violence, suggesting the need for collaborative efforts between researchers, practitioners, and stakeholders to obtain information grounded in unique community dynamics.

Summary of Findings

An examination of recent research efforts regarding local youth indicates that a small but significant (6.7%) number have been involved in criminal behavior that has come to the attention of the city police. Additional research examining gang dynamics suggests that the local gang problem is predominately neighborhood based, with the degree of organizational structure correlated with racial composition. Local gang violence tends to be predominantly gang-on-gang arising from interpersonal conflicts rather than territorial battles.

As the underlying motivation of this report is to explore the complex dynamics of youth violence, such as that expressed through gang activity, a variety of issues must be recognized at respective levels of analysis.

Individual Level of Analysis

- Establishment of a racial identity can serve as a risk or protective factor
- Racial discrimination and risk of violence have been found to be critical for multiracial youth
- Supportive parenting was found to serve as a protective factor against the effect of discrimination on violence
- Exposure to violence, as well as violence perpetration, varies by gender
- Some researchers argue that girls are engaging in more violence than a decade ago
- "Upcriming" vague status offense violations to the status of violent offender has serious repercussions
- Depression and post-traumatic stress disorder contribute to youth violence
- Victimization has been identified as one risk factor linked to the early initiation of alcohol and drug use
- Academic achievement was found to be a protective factor
- The dynamics of poverty, parenting, and personal relationships strongly affect youths' coping skills and strategies
- Aggression and behavioral problems are more common with children who are or were abused
- A significant predictor of involvement in delinquency was opportunity to engage with antisocial peers, antisocial beliefs, and antisocial rewards
- Research suggests that how the parents respond to early conduct disorder or ADHD symptoms plays a key role in the development of violent behaviors

Institutional Level of Analysis

- Guns play a significant role in the rates of youth homicide and suicide
- Schools are generally safer places than the neighborhoods surrounding them
- National concern for school safety is driven by media focus and research on school shootings/violence
- Studies show that adults often do not recognize or do not intervene in bullying behavior

- Divorce is a traumatic event in the lives of children
- Neighborhood-level family structure predicts the risk of youths engaging in violence
- Minority youth and youth in urban areas are more likely to experience official maltreatment

SOCIETAL LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

- Social disorganization may influence youth violence especially as it is correlated with a differently racialized gang presence
- Males are generally more likely to be exposed to violence
- Moderators to exposure to violence include gender - females are more likely to experience long term emotional negative effects; males are more likely to have negative behavioral impacts with more immediate results
- Most immediate consequence of adolescent victimization was a decrease in commitment to education
- Gangs and related gang problems tend to emerge from larger social and economic problems in the community and are as much a consequence of these factors as a contributor
- Neighborhood social disorganization disrupts resident networks that would otherwise provide the capacity for the social control of street gang behaviors
- Communities with high levels of violence are not necessarily the same communities that have high levels of gang violence
- When considering networks of existing support, an individual's family is considered to play a significant role in the prevention, detection and early intervention of risk behaviors

This research, conducted by adults, most often reflects adult perceptions and interpretations of the conditions of and experiences associated with youth violence. A growing body of research has sought to expand beyond the traditional adult perspective that has informed much of the program development and delivery processes aimed at youth violence intervention and prevention. This recent research has recognized the importance of developing studies of youths' perspectives and interpretations of violence in their everyday lives.

In addition, as a result of the current literature review, it is apparent that programs to address youth violence often are implemented in only one domain, for example, therapeutic interventions aimed at individual youth or anti-bullying programs in the schools. Consequently, youth violence reduction strategies do not readily recognize, or may not successfully link, prevention and intervention efforts effectively at all levels of analysis. However, the literature suggests that youth violence, including gang activities, arises from and may be perpetuated at each of these levels as a result of a lack of integrated support. While this is a limitation it also points to an opportunity to effectively link programming across various domains (individual, institutional, societal) to reduce youth violence and its negative consequences to youth, families, and communities.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Attached to this literature review is Appendix A entitled "Summary of Information on Gang Prevention/Intervention Strategies Included in Literature Review" designed to provide quick reference to a variety

of model intervention and prevention programs. Appendix B, attached to this report, includes article abstracts of selected model prevention and intervention programs. In addition to absorbing lessons garnered from model projects as a means to inform ongoing collective dialogue across stakeholders, it is important to recognize that intervention and prevention programs should be tailor-made for each community based on specific local and cultural needs. Appendix C provides recently published guidance for non-profit organizations seeking to develop a culturally competent perspective and a framework for creating culturally-competent practices. Finally, responsible progress in understanding, and effectively responding to, the dynamics of local youth violence requires engaging with issues at the local community level while employing processes of translational research -- collaborative researcher-stakeholder partnerships to affect change.

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YOUTH VIOLENCE REDUCTION LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, issues of "youth violence" increasingly have come to the public's attention and progressively have challenged local (Grand Rapids, Kent County) and regional (West Michigan) communities and public service organizations seeking to provide appropriate prevention and intervention efforts. In many such instances, the issue of youth violence has received considerable attention from a variety of community stakeholders, including the police, schools, politicians, community and neighborhood organizations, the media, and diverse social service agencies. Consistent with both scholarly studies and applied social programming efforts, such issues have been framed in a variety of fashions, addressing individual, institutional (e.g. family and schools), societal (e.g. economic), and political (local, state, and national) trends and responses. Locally various institutional responses have been deployed to address these issues, often in isolation from one another. In such responses it is possible to identify varying philosophical foundations, ranging from short-term social control mechanisms (e.g., curfew sweeps) to more forward thinking attempts to provide youth with tools for life-long self-governance (e.g., mentoring programs).

While each of these initiatives has contributed to addressing a variety of youth related issues, the problems associated with this population have nevertheless continued to challenge our communities. Until recently, there has not been sufficient coordination across these efforts with the specific goal of efficiently using available resources to develop youth, community, and organizational capacities to identify and address the complex social processes and factors that give rise to youth violence. To this end, the DeVos "2025 Initiative" has brought together diverse community stakeholders with a commitment to engage with the problems of youth violence. From initial meetings and dialogues an approach has emerged that recognizes the multiple domains – Community, Schools, Faith-Based – from which prevention and intervention efforts might arise. One significant purpose of this initiative is to explore current efforts and future opportunities for effective response.

As part of examining the Community sphere the current literature review, grounded in local and regional conditions, will serve to inform our understanding of:

- individual, institutional, and societal contexts, especially attending to the complex array of biological, psychosocial, ecological, and social factors that dynamically both protect youth from, and increase their risk of, exposure to violence, violent behavior, and victimization
- organizational capacities for assessment and intervention
- model relevant approaches and interventions that will inform an understanding of "best practices"
- collaborative processes and organizational qualities that will facilitate youth violence reduction goals and objectives both short term and in the long run.

While this literature review is not intended to be exhaustive or conclusive, it is intended to provide the salient themes and responses that may inform further discussion, evaluation, and action.

A Picture of the Local Problem

Before moving to a review of the literature it will first be valuable to gain some understanding of the regional and local conditions with respect to youth crime and violence, with a degree of attention devoted to understanding how such behaviors are comparatively expressed through regional and local gang dynamics. To this end, and as a result of collaborative support among a mixture of area stakeholders, various research endeavors have been produced across recent years (with focus on 2006 through 2008), many seeking to form a picture of local and/or regional youth behaviors. Reflection on such findings will provide the underpinnings for considering subsequent information herein.

One such research effort involved the Grand Rapid's Office of Children, Youth and Families producing a report in partnership with Grand Valley State University's (GVSU) Community Research Institute (CRI) and the Grand Rapids Police Department (GRPD) entitled the "Grand Rapids Juvenile Offense Index Annual Report: 2006 Data." This report, in part, was a reaction to a noted spike in the number of intake cases to the Kent County court during 2006 – an increase of 393 cases following a prior 2 year decline (17th Judicial Circuit Court & Kent County Probate Court Annual Report, 2006). Results of this research effort were grounded in official juvenile (ages 8 through 16) data for the city of Grand Rapids across all of 2006 (i.e., offenses recorded by the GRPD that involved juveniles within the city limits). While these data were limited in many ways (e.g., cross-sectional in content, not inclusive of unreported delinquent behavior or juvenile crimes that occurred outside the city limits by youth who reside in Grand Rapids, confounded by arresting officer interpretations), as they were driven by institutional policies and practices, the innate value of this report rests in how the data was disaggregated to demonstrate distribution of youth behaviors across the city as a whole and its respective neighborhoods.

Taken as a whole this report found that approximately 6.7% of youth ages 8 through 16 were involved in criminal behavior that came to the official attention of the city police – approximately 1,713 juveniles were involved in 2,640 crimes (42%), status offenses (44%), and family domestic incidents (14%). In addition to an aggregate review of prevalence rates the report's key findings are also helpful in painting a picture of local youth dynamics as they relate to criminal behavior:

1) Family conflict was a major reason for police involvement with youth – the majority (58%) of offenses involved domestic conflict, family strife, runaway behaviors, and curfew violations. Thus, the majority of crimes were not technically crimes against society but were family or self-directed.
2) There were no homicides committed by juveniles in 2006 (i.e., under the age of 17)
3) After school and early evening hours are the primetime for juvenile delinquency – this highest proportion of youth offenses occur on school days, from just after the end of the school day into the evening hours.
4) Nearly half of all crimes (42%) were disorderly conduct, assault, and retail fraud (i.e., shoplifting).
5) The early teen years represent a critical period in terms of the escalation of misbehavior and delinquent acts – the ages 13 and 14 show the most dramatic increase in delinquent behavior, including both crime and status offenses.
6) The majority of youth offenders committed only one offense in 2006 – thus, the community perception that a few "bad apples" are committing the majority of the offenses does not hold up in light of the data.

(Grand Rapids Juvenile Offense Index Annual Report, 2006)

In relation to the key findings of this report noted above, some qualifying information may also be worthy of consideration. First, while there were indeed no homicides committed by juveniles during 2006 (i.e., under the age of 17) it is important to recognize that there was an increase in Grand Rapids homicides by young adults ages 18 through 24. In addition, a number of incidents involving youth violence gained significant media exposure, resulting in an outcry from the general public to address youth related criminal behaviors. Perhaps the most visible examples of these incidents involved a succession of youth-on-youth violent crimes taking place at a local bus station. Other examples of violent youth crime that have readily informed the community dialogue have included gang-related fights and shootings (e.g., Brick House shooting).

As previously acknowledged, this report also was recognized for its value in reviewing data beyond the aggregate city level, information leading to more specific neighborhood-based findings (throughout this report Grand Rapids was recognized to be made up of 32 distinct neighborhoods). Here, the distribution of youth crime was found to be very diverse, though the reasons for various “hotspots” have yet to be fully explored or understood. It is anticipated that, using this data as a baseline, future reports will have the capacity to indicate significant trends (e.g., changing aggregate crime trends, shifts in youth activities across different criminal behaviors, recurrence rates by juvenile profiles, correlations and/or variance adjustments across neighborhoods).

In addition to the questions addressed as part of the Grand Rapids Juvenile Offense Index Annual Report, recent years also have found other area stakeholders attempting to describe regional and local youth violence dynamics in the form of gang activity. Specifically, the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Anti-Gang Initiative, coordinated through the Western District of Michigan (WDMI) US Attorney’s Office, began in 2006 as a parallel effort to PSN’s Anti-Gun-Violence program initiated some 5 years earlier. As part of this effort, a PSN Task Force was formed, consisting of law enforcement, service providers, community members, and research partners. In early 2008 the PSN Task Force commissioned a regional study to be conducted by Private Sector Consultants (PSC) where research interviews with experts across WDMI were carried out in an effort to understand the extent to which gang activities had taken root in their respective communities, and how such activities – recognized as general themes and trends – might correspond to other cities across the district and to national gang themes identified in the literature.[1] WDMI communities that provided data for this report included Battle Creek, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Muskegon, and Grand Rapids. The findings from this report served to generate a picture of regional similarities and differences regarding youth gangs. A brief review of this report’s findings will serve useful prior to considering various factors correlated with youth violence in the ensuing literature review.

The specific goal of PSC’s report, as directed by the WDMI PSN Task Force, was to assess similarities and differences across the district regarding gang profiles – structures, organizational networks, behaviors, and principal activities. To this end, the report noted “more similarities than differences in the nature of gang behavior

[1] It is worth noting that a similar protocol and its results were shared by the Department of Justice only a few months after this regional project had been commissioned – entitled “Best Practices to Address Community Gang Problems.” Specifically, a national research team “attempted to identify every promising community gang program in the United States based on a national survey…once programs and sites were identified, the team collected information on the magnitude and nature of local gang problems from representatives of each agency or organization that other participants identified as being affiliated with or being a partner in each local program…[the] team of researchers interviewed program developers and reviewed all available program documentation” (Department of Justice, 2008, p.1).

in the WDMI" (PSC, 2008, p. 1). More specifically, all participating jurisdictions reported gang activity "ranging from identified, named groups to more loosely organized 'affiliated but non-organized youth who congregate'" (PSC, 2008, p. 1). Here jurisdictions reported the number of "membership affiliations" ranging from 2 to 30, with most further described as geographically and territorially bound by discrete neighborhoods. Other similarities across regional jurisdictions included gang member ages, typically between 12 and 22 years of age (ranging from 10 to 30), and often some level of family involvement evidenced (i.e., recruitment of youth, accomplice behaviors). PSC (2008) also reported that while gangs across the WDMI did not seem to systemically evidence infiltration by national gangs, they nevertheless did appear to subscribe to nationally-based symbolic gang behaviors (i.e., colors, tattoos, graffiti, and rituals).

While the data collected to inform this report recognized a significant number of similarities across regional gang profiles, there were nevertheless some key distinctions. Foremost among these emerged a divergence in organizational composition across jurisdictions, ranging from highly sophisticated (i.e., Battle Creek – focused early recruitment efforts, Kalamazoo – hierarchical structure) to less organized and loosely controlled gangs with fluid organizational structures. In such instances, "the removal of one or more gang member from a leadership position has very little impact on the organizational management of the gang" (PSC, 2008, p. 2). In addition to structural considerations, a review of demographic data regarding race and gang affiliation documented that in some jurisdictions gang members were "predominantly African American with an increasingly large Hispanic membership"; however, in other "communities, race does not appear to be a primary factor in gang membership, with jurisdictions reporting inter-racial gang compositions" (PSC, 2008, p. 2).

Perhaps of central concern to the current report are the comparative findings from this research regarding violent behaviors sponsored or supported through gang affiliation (PSC, 2008):

> Reports of violence related to WDMI gangs varied greatly from city to city….All cities reported instances of graffiti, property damage, and petty theft/larcenies related to gangs. Battle Creek and Kalamazoo reported serious criminal activity including assaults and homicides. Most cities reported that gang violence was predominantly between gang members – with occasional, third-party victims of intra-gang violence….Law enforcement in the WDMI reported a wide range of community perceptions about gang violence in their cities....On the whole, gangs in the WDMI tend to be well armed, and their weapons are more likely to function and are of a higher caliber than those of their non-gang-affiliated counterparts (p. 3).

Of additional use in forming a focused picture of local gang behavior is the jurisdictional profile provided by this report (PSC, 2008):

> Grand Rapids was the largest city interviewed. Like most of the cities in the district, Grand Rapids describes its gang problem as predominantly neighborhood-based with a loose-knit organizational structure. Gang members were identified as being predominantly male, in the 14-22 age range, and racially divided. Hispanic gangs in Grand Rapids tend to be better organized with more national ties and a better defined leadership structure. Gang violence in Grand Rapids tends toward gang-on-gang incidents, although many of these appear to be based more on interpersonal conflicts than rival gang or territorial exercises. Gang members in Grand Rapids do not appear to play a significant role in the city's drug trade; their part in the drug trade constitutes a small retail presence, not a thriving enterprise.

> Several community groups have developed partnerships to combat gang activity in the Grand Rapids area. The DeVos Foundation and the local Boys and Girls Clubs have launched youth initiatives aimed at identifying, diffusing, and providing alternatives to gang activity (p.3).

These locally sponsored reports have allowed a clearer picture of youth crime, violence, and gang-oriented behaviors to emerge but do not reveal the underlying meanings of the concepts employed in reported research efforts. With this the case, it will be useful to examine more closely the meanings of "youth", "youth culture" and "gangs" as a means to provide further context of this discussion of youth violence.

YOUTH VIOLENCE IN CONTEXT

As a concept, the term "youth" traditionally has indicated a particular age-based group, constructed through social and cultural practices at the boundaries between childhood and adulthood (Adelman & Yalda, 2000) The meaning and expectations ascribed to this group have varied according to history, society, geography, language, and practices specific to various cultures, economic regimes, laws, and mental health and scientific disciplines (Yalda, 2002). In the U.S., "youth" were identified as a problem in need of social control only during the last century (Yalda, 2002, p. 373, fn 11):

> The U.S. English term "adolescent" dates only to 1904, and the idea of the "teenager" arose in the mid-forties when increasing numbers of young people intentionally were shifted from the job market into high schools in order to secure jobs for "adult" men returning from the war (Luker, 1996). Indeed, young people were neither perceived nor treated by American society as a social problem until after World War II when "young men, in particular, were gaining cultural and economic independence from their family of origin" (Valentine et al., 1998, p. 10). This public recognition of youth as a social problem prompted criminologists to study delinquent boys; newly professionalized social workers were charged with curing morally deviant girls (Kunzel, 1993).

This invention of "youth" in the United States served to define race, class and gender-appropriate norms, and to identify and control youths who resisted these normative efforts (Yalda, 2002). How "youth" are defined, then, is at the heart of societal expectations of appropriate youth behavior, expectations that reflect the particular (adult) norms and values of a given place and time.

How, then, will youth be defined in this project? Legal, political, and research approaches to youth violence reduction have clustered definitions of youth in terms of "ages and stages", drawing on age categories, educational status, and/or developmental distinctions. Some studies define children and juveniles from ages 9-13 (Taylor and Kliewer (2006) and adolescents from 14-25, while others (see, e.g. Smith and Thornberry, 1995) define adolescents as 12 and older for policy and treatment purposes. Educational status traditionally is separated by elementary, middle, and high school, though recognizing the special needs of educationally challenged students, including those with learning disabilities and psychosocial disorders. These latter concerns reflect developmental distinctions made in the literature, including those based on cognitive behavior, attachment, and capacities (and learned skills) to interpret, narrate, and internalize conflict and conflict management. This task force has defined the youth target population in terms of ages 14-21, drawing on definitions contained in the Work Force Investment Act, so this literature review adopts this definition as well. However, the review explores and discusses the myriad ways that exposure to violence manifests itself though external and internal dynamics of youths' lives, explained via biological, social, psychological theories/perspectives/paradigms.

While these dynamics operate through individual youth, issues of youth engagement with violence extend to "youth peer cultures" as well, which may be defined as those "activities or routines, artifacts, values, and concerns that [youth] produce and share in interaction with peers" (Corsaro & Eder, 1990, p. 197). These peer cultures may start to form as early as third grade (Adler & Adler, 1998), as children begin to create everyday lives that exist separate from those of adults, and become increasingly important as young people age. Judith Harris (1998, p. 198), for example, contends that children, rather than parents, transmit culture to other children, advising that a "child's goal is not to become a successful adult [but rather] to be a successful child." Thus, youth learn to carve out their own social and cultural space; they begin to negotiate their lives according to social norms determined exclusively by adolescent peers rather than adult authorities such as parents and teachers (Adelman & Yalda, 2000), effectively becoming what Hersch (1998) has termed "a tribe apart".

One example of separate youth "tribes", or as described many years ago as a *specific type or variety of society* (Park, 1927), is reflected in youths' collective experiences in gangs. Over the course of the past 80 years, beginning with exploratory case studies and observations of boys and their friends delinquent behaviors (Thrasher, 1927), court "companions", friendship patterns, associations between younger and older offenders, and the existence of organized criminal youth communities located in "delinquency areas" (Shaw, 1927, 1930; Shaw & Moore, 1931), the study of gangs has become progressively more specialized (Short, 2006). Over time many of these research efforts were synthesized and disseminated through early classic works such as:

- The Jack-roller (Shaw, 1930)
- A Study of the Community, the Family, and the Gang in Relation to Delinquent Behavior (1931) – this study was presented to the first US Crime Commission.
- The Natural History of a Delinquent Career (Shaw, 1931)
- Brothers in Crime (Shaw, 1938)
- Delinquency Areas, Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas (Shaw & McKay, 1942)
- Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang (Cohen, 1955)
- Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960)

Responsibility for first framing the topic of gangs and how various conditions and processes might be understood to account for the prevalence and distribution of gang activities, why some children become delinquent, or why some communities have more or less capacity to effectively respond to gang activity rest with these initial reports, as they documented the institutionally supported structural parameters that fashioned community capacities to socialize children and maintain control over their lives (Short, 2006).

This conception of gang activity – as operating on individual, institutional (e.g. family), and societal (e.g. economic) levels – parallels current definitions of violence deployed in youth violence prevention studies to explain the complexities of this phenomenon. The World Health Organization definition of violence provides one exemplar of this social construction: Violence is "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (Bowen, Gwiasda & Brown, 2004, p. 356-357). This multileveled understanding of violence as instrumental and consequential across these different domains has informed contemporary gang research that deploys these complexities in search of explanations as well as effective intervention and prevention strategies.

Contemporary gang research has progressed to questions like "what causes urban street gang violence" and "how might communities better understand the forces that shape this type of adolescent and youth behavior?" While early research was exploratory, depending often on qualitative data collections and descriptive analyses, in decades that followed researchers relied primarily on data gathered from quantitative survey approaches. Present-

day research efforts have learned much from both of these philosophical approaches to the study of gangs and, as a result, are en route to becoming more integrated and multidimensional. Researchers have noted that across the past 20 years,

> …either a subculture of violence (i.e., the values and norms of the street gang embrace aggressive, violent behavior) or a routine activities (i.e., hanging around high crime areas with highly delinquent people) explanation dominated the discussion. To broaden and deepen the picture, many other factors need to be considered, such as ecological, socioeconomic, sociocultural, and sociopsychological...a multiple marginality framework lends itself to a holistic strategy that examines linkages within the various factors and the actions and interactions among them and notes the cumulative nature of urban street gang violence. (Vigil, 2003, p. 1)

Adding to the value of diverse research paradigms, it is also important to note most studies have addressed gang questions from adult perspectives, though with a focus on youth. More recent studies (e.g., Adelman & Yalda, 2000; Morrill et al., 2000; Docuyanan, 2000; Bejarano, 2001; Crawley & Ritsma, 2006) have begun to explore youth violence from a youth perspective and through youth expressions of their experiences. Although youth violence often comes to the attention of adults through violent offenders, studies suggest that youth violence is often hidden from adults (e.g. Morrill et al., 2000). Furthermore, youth violence serves a productive cultural function as a mechanism through which youth explore and establish their roles, relationships, identities, and identifications with their peers as well as with the world at large (Adelman & Yalda, 2000; Morrill et al., 2000). In Morrill et al.'s (2000) study of youth conflict at an urban high school, among other reasons, conflicts arose to quash rumors that were damaging to one's reputation; to maintain and defend friendship circles; and to define and reinforce traditional gender roles and identities, including what it means to be a "good boyfriend" (acting with courage or bravado) or "good girlfriend" (seeking to protect "her man"). This research that focuses on youth culture and crime through the eyes of youth is relatively new and still developing in approach and validity for policy implications. This research, in part, separates youth "gangs" from other collective youth activities.

This approach points to a central issue in all research, that of definitions of the problem and variables that will be explored. Just as "youth" was reviewed and denoted previously, the study of gangs must also be clear in its presentation. In an effort to be definitive, while also enjoying the contribution of numerous research findings, the current study has accepted the "consensus Eurogang definition." Klein (2006) noted that this definition for *street gang* was "developed over five years and agreed upon by over one hundred gang research scholars in the United States and Europe…it is a minimalist definition specifically designed to enhance comparative street gang research" (p. 129). It reads as follows: *A street gang is any durable, street-oriented youth group whose own identity includes involvement in illegal activity.*[2]

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[2] To qualify this definition, the following terms should be noted: 1) *Durable* refers to a period of at least several months – recognizing that many gang-like groups come together and dissipate within a few months. Here the durability refers to the group, which continues despite turnover of members, 2) *Street-oriented* implies spending a significant amount of group time outside home, work, and school, 3) *Youth* recognizes that most gangs are comprised of more adolescent than adults, but some include members in their twenties and thirties, 4) *Illegal* refers to delinquent or criminal behaviors, 5) *Identity* refers to the group, *the collective identity*, not the individual self-image (Klein, 2006).

To further complicate the problem of defining gangs and gang related problems, the state legislature recently passed an amendment defining gangs in relation to criminal activities in Michigan. Enrolled Senate Bill No. 291, to become effective April 1, 2009, states the following:

> (1) If a person who is an associate or a member of a gang commits a felony or attempts to commit a felony and the person's association or membership in the gang provides the motive, means, or opportunity to commit the felony, the person is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than 20 years. As used in this section:
>
> (a) "Gang" means an ongoing organization, association, or group of 5 or more people, other than a nonprofit organization, that identifies itself by all of the following:
>
> (i) A unifying mark, manner, protocol, or method of expressing membership, including a common name, sign or symbol, means of recognition, geographical or territorial sites, or boundary or location.
>
> (ii) An established leadership or command structure.
>
> (iii) Defined membership criteria.
>
> (b) "Gang member" or "member of a gang" means a person who belongs to a gang.
>
> (2) A sentence imposed under this section is in addition to the sentence imposed for the conviction of the underlying felony or the attempt to commit the underlying felony and may be served consecutively with and preceding any term of imprisonment imposed for the conviction of the felony or attempt to commit the felony.

Beyond an attempt to define gangs and gang related behaviors, additional legislation to become effective in April of 2009 includes sanctions for recruiting gang members (2008 PA 562-563):

(a) Causing, encouraging, soliciting, recruiting or coercing a person to join a gang or to assist a gang in committing a felony is a felony punishable by imprisonment for up to 5 years and/or a fine of up to $5,000. MCL 750.411v(1). It's an E felony under the guidelines. MCL 777.16b.

(b) Threatening another person to deter that person from withdrawing from a gang or to punish them for withdrawing from a gang is a felony punishable by imprisonment for up to 20 years and/or a fine of up to $20,000. MCL 750.411v(2-3). It's a B felony under the guidelines. MCL 777.16b.

These revised penal codes, efforts on the part of the Michigan legislature to address what is perceived to be a significantly growing social concern, defines gangs much more broadly than widely accepted research definitions like Klein's offered above. The results of such government efforts reflect the dilemma of defining and responding to youth crime generally and gang activities specifically, that is, broader definitions may criminalize and capture unique non-systemic criminal activities in youths' everyday lives. One consequence of these net-widening definitions is that less than accurate official data may be produced, i.e., gang identity and related crime may be overstated, confounding effective responses. As public policies continue to become progressively evidence-based, it is imperative that we guard against artificially "driving data" up or down with less than accurate definitions. Neither result will provide a clear picture of the problem at hand.

However we may define gangs and crime, they remain central social issues needing attention as they impact public safety as well as individual and community quality of life. As recently as 2008 the Department of Justice (DOJ) noted that "gangs often lure youth with the promise of safety, belonging, economic opportunity, and a sense of identity" (Office of Justice Programs, 2008, p. iii). With this the case, addressing this problem takes concerted efforts. As reported in the 2006 National Youth Gang Survey in 2006 approximately 785,000 gang members across 26,500 gangs were active in more than 3,400 US jurisdictions. This report also held that because most gang members join between the ages of 12 and 15, prevention is a critical strategy within a comprehensive response to gangs that includes law enforcement, prosecution, and reentry.

While these reported numbers are daunting, it is the social destruction associated with gang activity that is of the greatest concern, most specifically youth violent crime. According to researchers "violence is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in adolescents and is recognized as America's most important public health and social problem" (Weist & Cooley-Quille, 2001, p. 147). Violence is conceptualized as interpersonal violence and examines youth as both victims and perpetrators. Studies suggest that while violence is a learned behavior, it develops in a complex way involving numerous variables; simplistic programs for prevention and early intervention will not fully address the problem. Factors contributing toward youth violence include "biological, physiological, chemical, behavioral, psychological, sociological, economical, and political determinants" (Weist & Cooley-Quille, 2001, p. 148, citing Ollendick, 1996). Other scholars (e.g. Zimring, 1998) argue that academics and policy makers have failed to appreciate the complexity of youth violence and its future implications. Among other points, Zimring (1998) argues that framing youth violence as extraordinary (e.g. drive by shootings) neglects the daily disputes, conflicts, and fights that make up most of youth violence activities. Changing juvenile justice policies based on "rare events" creates "a substantial danger of punitive contagion" (Zimring, 1998, p. 176, cited in MacDonald, 2002, p. 176). This focus on rare forms of juvenile violence further masks the need for government attention to youth social needs, including education, health care, job training, etc.

This review, then, looks both at youths and adults, processes and variables, to explore the nature and dynamics of youth violence. Consideration of youth violence requires attention to the dynamics and motivations of offenders, which may include thrill-seeking (for "fun" or distraction), relational (e.g. parents and peers), situational (arising out of particular events or circumstances, e.g., school setting, poverty), consequential (resulting from violence exposure, e.g. victimization), instrumental (goal-oriented), and intentional (planned). The review also identifies at least four levels of youth exposure to violence – violence perpetration (youth as offender), victimization (where the youth experiences the violence directed at him or her), direct observation (hearing or eye-witnessing violence directed at others), and knowledge of violence (which may be gained through relationships or popular media). These levels may be experienced in diverse social settings including private, parochial, and public spheres. Finally, the review examines specific types of violence to inform understandings of occurrences and possible interventions, including where and how interventions might be engaged and how state and non-governmental interventions might effectively intersect with youth culture.

Thus, our discussions of youth violence reduction must be contextualized within this broader understanding of adult norms and expectations in relation to youth peer culture. Our efforts must include identifying and understanding the formation of youth cultural norms and values; locating the tensions and intersections between youth and adult interests; and developing productive means of overcoming potential youth resistance, through reconciling conflicting adult and youth values if possible, or though the least coercive means of compliance if necessary.

Individual Level Analysis

Exploring youth violence at the individual level allows us to identify personal and relational considerations (risk and protective factors) affecting youth development and their association with violence, including social attributes (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, youth identity), psychological considerations (e.g. depression, PTSD, substance use and abuse, self-esteem), and relational factors (e.g. parents, peer groups).

Social Attributes

Racial Identity

Racial identity may be defined as "sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he/she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group" (Caldwell et al., 2004, p. 93). Various studies have examined the ways in which the establishment of a racial identity can serve as a risk or protective factor against living in an environment with limited opportunities (Cross, 2003; Caldwell et al., 2004). One study, for example, found that experience with racial discrimination was the strongest risk factor for young adult violent behavior, "which highlights the significance of race-relations as a critical social context for understanding violent behavior as a response to oppression" (Caldwell et al. 2004, p. 99). The majority of the subjects in this study felt that ethnicity was central to their sense of identity and had positive attitudes toward being black, with males reporting higher levels of centrality, private regard, and public regard than females. More specifically, the study found that young adults who believed that others viewed blacks favorably engaged in more violent acts when they experienced racial discrimination, perhaps because "those with more favorable, idealistic views about race relations were less prepared to encounter racial discrimination and found it unexpected, confusing, and devaluing" (Caldwell et al. 2004, p. 100).

These issues of racial discrimination, self-esteem, and risk of violence have been found to be equally critical for multiracial youth. Some scholars, for example, contend that multi-racial status is linked to increased risk for problematic outcomes such as low self-esteem, feelings of alienation, and marginality (Choi et al., 2006). Multi-racial youth feel divided by their heritage (e.g., may experience two or more religions, customs, or languages), which can have negative effects, including a sense of incompetence, low motivation for academic achievement, lack of aspirations, and conduct problems (Choi et al., 2006). As a consequence, multiracial adolescents have been found to be more likely to have engaged in illegal substance use (cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana) and "exhibited higher rates of violent behavior such as hurting someone badly in a fight, having carried a gun, knife or razor, having stabbed someone, and having told someone to stab another person" (Choi et al., 2006, p. 91). A strong ethnic identity was associated with a decreased likelihood of substance abuse and violence, while experiencing discrimination in one's neighborhood or at school increased the likelihood of substance abuse, defensive threatening, weapons possession, and frequency and levels of violence (Choi et al., 2006).

Whereas a strong ethnic identity has been found to be a protective factor, other research suggests that strong bicultural orientation can be a protective factor as well. One study explored the impact of community violence exposure and its effect on Southeast Asian adolescents, finding that levels of community violence exposure were higher for Southeast Asians than for blacks, whites and Hispanics in a nationally representative sample (Ho, 2008). Witnessing physical aggression and violent crimes was associated with higher externalizing symptoms but was not associated with internalizing symptoms (Ho, 2008). When faced with negative life events, and witnessing and being victimized by community violence, Ho (2008) found that stronger bicultural orientation had a significant effect associated with fewer externalizing and trauma symptoms.

While it is commonly believed that violence and criminality among minority groups precedes discrimination, some researchers have found the opposite to be true. One study, for example, examined the effect of supportive parenting practices as a protective factor against the negative effects of racial discrimination on black male youth (Simons et al., 2006), finding that the majority of boys, as well as their family members, reported being victims of racial discrimination. The researchers concluded "persistent exposure to abusive interaction causes children to develop a hostile view of relationships, and children who possess such a perspective tend to attribute malevolent motives to others and to assume that an aggressive, belligerent attitude is necessary to avoid exploitation" (Simons et al., 2006, p. 375). Discrimination was a predictor of violent delinquency but, in accordance with Mazerolle et al. (2000), Unger (2003), and Taylor and Kliewer (2006), supportive parenting was found to serve as a protective factor against the effect of discrimination on violence. Supportive parents build their child's self esteem and level of understanding to the point where acts of racial discrimination are seen as the actions of cruel and ignorant people, and should not taint one's view of all human interactions and relationships (Mazerolle et al., 2000). Supportive parenting also was associated with decreased anger and hostile views of relationships (Simons et al., 2006).

These various studies suggest that interventions that paint a realistic picture of racism in the U.S. offer the opportunity to bolster racial identity while, at the same time, impart the skills necessary for effectively dealing with discrimination if and when it happens. Even so, it is difficult to know how to communicate to young people the appropriate level of awareness to create a realistic understanding of racial discrimination without generating undue feelings of victimization, anger, or resentment. Further study is required "to determine what constitutes optimal awareness and appraisals of race relations for healthy functioning" (Caldwell et al., 2004, p. 101).

Gender

Exposure to violence, as well as violence perpetration, varies by gender. One study of urban high school students' experiences with violence found that male and female experiences of violence as perpetrators and victims varied, with males more likely to be involved or exposed to gang, criminal, and random violence, and girls reporting higher levels of sexual violence (Scherzer & Pinderhughes, 2002). Yet not all youth conflict or violence reinscribes traditional gender roles (see, e.g., Chesney-Lind & Shelton, 1998). As the gendered nature of crime has been redefined in the past decade, acts of crime and violence committed by girls that were once trivialized are now increasingly criminalized with serious consequences (Brown et al., 2007). The research suggests that it is not girls' behavior that is changing, but the actions of the social control agents responding to girls' behavior. It may be the desire to punish girls' violence as if it were the same as boys' violence that has produced the increase in girls' arrests (Brown et al., 2007).

Contrary to this argument, some researchers have found that girls are engaging in more violence than a decade ago, "with aggravated assaults up 137% and murder up 64%" (Yonas et al., 2005, p. 544). These researchers argue that girls in urban neighborhoods have come to adopt many of the same behaviors as males, "are increasingly interested in issues of respect, peer recognition, and status and…are more likely than ever in the past to use abusive language, posturing, and violence using weapons such as knives, box cutters, and guns to resolve conflicts" (Yonas et al., 2005, p. 544). Males and females were found to share reasons in common for perpetrating violence, including "romantic relationships, respect, idle time, gangs/cliques, and witnessing violence" (Yonas et al., 2005, p. 546).

Even so, it appears that youth may still retain traditional gender expectations. One issue in the race-gender-violence dynamic is revealed in a study exploring black youths' reactions to hip hop music portraying sexual violence against women. Seeking to understand how "the development of beliefs about and attitudes toward heterosexual gender roles and relationships may occur in uniquely complex ways for African American adolescents

who must negotiate their identities and social/interpersonal roles in the context of racial and gender oppression and ethnic group denigration," the study suggests that some adolescents accept and internalize racial and gender stereotypes presented in popular culture (Squires et al., 2006, p. 725). Specifically, the study articulates expectations for Black women, who have been socialized to head the household and provide for their families but who, for the most part, "have been excluded from traditional feminine leisure and domestic roles" (Squires et al., 2006, pg. 726). The study found that while both males and females blamed the female victim in the hip hop music for exposing herself to violence, black males were most accepting of rape myths portrayed in popular culture that women can engender their own victimization because of their style of dress or other behaviors. The researchers concluded that black women are perceived as responsible for their own victimization as a result of cultural norms that valorize black female independence (Squires et al., 2006). This is consistent with the historical treatment of African American women; the "sexualization of African Americans has historically been an embedded aspect of racial oppression, and there is legal precedent for African American women to be treated as instigators, rather than victims, of their own [physical and] sexual abuse" (Squires et al., 2006, p. 726).

Youth Identity

As noted in the previous section, female deviance is increasingly treated as criminal activity. This criminalization of deviance has been labeled as "upcriming", with effects similar to those of zero tolerance policies in the schools (Brown et al., 2007). These sorts of policies have "very troubling implications for economically marginalized communities, because youth in these communities have always been heavily monitored and policed" (Brown et al., 2007, p. 1255). Upcriming vague status offense violations such as incorrigibility to the status of violent offender has serious repercussions, especially for young black girls who are often already at a social and economic disadvantage. "African American girls make up nearly half of those in secure detention, and they are also far less likely than their White counterparts to have their cases dismissed" (Brown et al., 2007, p. 1256). Young African American males similarly are targeted in ways to keep them off the streets, being arrested and locked up for reasons that did not warrant detention in the past, evidenced, for example, by arrests for "minor insults to society, such as public drunkenness" and by the disproportionate number of poor, young, black and brown men in prison for drug related crimes (Strozier, 2002, p. 290). This criminalization of juvenile behaviors, especially vague status offenses, suggests the "net-widening" effects of juvenile justice policies that consequently may result in reactive labeling behaviors (youth internalizing and acting consistent with the proscribed label) as well as the migration of parental authority - through displacement or deferral - to the state.

Psychological Considerations

Acosta, Albus, and Reynolds (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of psychological literature between 1980-1999 addressing youth violence to identify gaps and present recommendations for future research. They found that most research is descriptive or assessment related, rather than treatment or prevention oriented. The majority of articles reviewed addressed youths' direct exposure to violence (as perpetrator or victim) rather than more indirect effects (e.g. witnessing, knowing victims, media exposure). The authors found few articles addressed prevention and none addressed the prevention of youth witnessing violence or treatment of youth experiencing dating violence. Although Acosta et al. (2001) recognize the limits of their analysis, they provide some understanding of the diverse forms of violence to which youth may be exposed or involved in, including "physical and sexual abuse, domestic violence, community violence, gang warfare, juvenile delinquency, dating violence, and many others" (p. 152). Psychological consequences of acute and chronic exposure to violence include "increases in depression, [PTSD], aggressive behavior, memory impairment, withdrawal, and difficulties concentrating" (p. 152). They conclude:

> [S]tudies are needed that help us to understand the key elements of successful interventions and

> to evaluate the effectiveness of preventive programs that target children, families, schools, and communities (Attala et al., 1995; Osofsky, 1995). Prevention and early intervention strategies that address the full complexity of factors that lead to violence exposure among youth must be developed if we are to achieve success in reducing both indirect and direct exposure to violence. This includes an understanding of the context in which violence occurs in the family and community, as well as the societal norms that help perpetuate violence. Furthermore, there continues to be a need for empirically validated prevention and intervention programs that specifically address the effects of witnessing violence, knowing about violence, and media violence. Although more is known about the effects and treatment of certain types of violent victimization (i.e., sexual abuse), some reviews suggest that there continues to be a call for more evidence to support the effectiveness of treatment programs even for these better developed areas in the violence field (Finkelhor & Berlinger, 1995). To ameliorate the problems associated with violence involving youth we need to accept, as a research community, that violence is complex, multiply determined, and that it will require the development of interventions and prevention strategies that can be utilized across various settings. The challenge is therefore to close the gaps in our knowledge and also conduct studies that acknowledge and reflect the complexity inherent in this vital field of research. (Acostaet al., 2001, p. 159-160)

Tolan (2001) explores key themes in a series of articles dealing with child and adolescent violence. He argues that "effective youth violence interventions depend on three major areas of knowledge development: (a) an epidemiological approach that considers multiple types of violence, (b) a developmental–ecological approach to risk that recognizes differential risk for some portions of the population and likely differential impact depending on child age, and (c) the careful testing of a broad set of interventions that are theoretically based and developmentally and ecologically attuned [citations omitted]" (p. 233). Tolan suggests four areas of research and knowledge development that are particularly relevant for child clinical psychologists: epidemiology of violence exposure and perpetration, identification of major risk factors and originating processes, tests of intervention approaches and procedures, and advancement in measurement and methodologies.

With regard to epidemiology, Tolan (2001) notes the prominence, diversity, and rates of violence in children's lives – exposure through media, residence, direct witness of victimization, and direct involvement as victims and perpetrators. He references epidemiological studies that find relationships between child abuse, partnership violence (both youth and parental), and extra-familial violence, though noting that further developmental research is needed to determine the patterns of these forms of violence exposure, victimization, and perpetration and their relationships.

Moreover, in discussing epidemiology, the importance of living environment is stressed. Tolan (2001) concludes that "violence is ubiquitous but exposure and involvement probability varies" (p. 234). Addressing the impact of residential location, he finds that "victimization levels increase substantially when one considers youth-to-youth violence and community violence," with a 'residence location effect' focused in central city (urban poor) locations (p. 234). Even when inner city youth are not directly engaged in gangs or other anti social behaviors, they remain preoccupied with violence (Tolan, 2001). Sweatt, Harding, Knight-Lynn, Rasheed, and Carter (2002) found support for this effect in their qualitative study that asked youths living in an urban high rise what they feared. The number one response was gangs (Sweatt et al., 2002). These youths were frightened to even leave their homes because of hearings stories about children being shot just around the corner. Fear of violence can lead to a preoccupation with violence because it influences the activities in which youths will engage. This fear of violence and exposure to violence may influence the risk of engagement or victimization of violence (Sweatt et al., 2002).

Tolan (2001, p. 235) then takes up the question of risk, and its outcomes, especially as violence involvement affects "developmental trajectories." He notes that psycho-social consequences of violence involvement (e.g. depression, anxiety, PTSD, aggression, diminished cognitive and social functioning) may be mitigated by individual, familial, and social factors (timing, capabilities, resources, etc.). However, exposure to similar types of violence (whether as victim or perpetrator) produces heterogeneous results – children are not affected in the same ways or to the same degree - making appropriate interventions difficult to determine. Some of the outcomes resulting from violence exposure can be determined by an individual's resilience and ability to overcome adverse conditions. Smith and Thornberry (1995) suggest that resilience is an area that needs further exploration to understand and determine why some youths are able to avoid engagement in delinquent or violent activities, while others turn toward these behaviors.

Additionally, the impact of violence exposure, risk factor, or involvement will vary depending on developmental timing and social ecology. "The development of risk needs to be understood within its microsystem, exosystem, and macrosystem influences" (Tolan, 2001, p. 235). Thus developmental models must take into account "multiple pathways to harmful effects, multilevel multivariate models of risk and protective factors, and integrate ecological factors with individual and microsystem characteristics that mitigate vulnerability" (Tolan, 2001, p. 235).

One aspect of this problem, outlined in a study by Reese et al. (as cited in Tolan, 2001, p. 235), is what violence means to youth, especially those youth living in violent environments. As other studies have suggested, youth may become involved in violence as a means of social control over violence in their lives (e.g. gang involvement) or as a defensive mechanism (to avoid victimization). As Tolan notes (2001, p. 235-236), "Often violence organizes social life and developmental opportunities, even if not through direct victimization or perpetration involvement."

Also with regard to risk factors, Tolan (2001) addresses the physiological symptoms/effects of violence on children, and the ways that they might relate to psychological effects, noting the lack of study on these connections. An example of a physiological symptom that youths may experience is inability to sleep due to fear or worry about a parent or oneself. This lack of sleep, and the worry associated with it, may then impact all aspects of their lives from academic achievement to social development. In addition violence exposure may lead to internalizing, emotional problems, externalizing behavior disorders, and long term developmental consequences (Brady, 2006; McCart, 2007).

To address concerns about risk, Tolan (2001) provides recommendations for future research and education in the area. He addresses the role of the family and other mediating influences noting the need for studies that would address (though he doesn't label them as such) resiliency, strength-based, and capacity-development (of protective factors) approaches, including teaching children not to be aggressive.

When discussing methodology and measurement, Tolan (2001) raises the issue of the lack of consistent, reliable, valid, and appropriate measurement instruments that provide standard measures across studies. These include the need for scales to measure: the diverse forms of violence exposure; the relationship between being reporter, perpetrator, or victim of violence; and the relationship between subjective and objective reporting of events (e.g. self-report in comparison to reports by external sources). This also includes the need for more qualitative studies, to provide an understanding of phenomenon beyond linear statistical association, and studies that explore patterns of risk rather than overall trends. "Such 'person-oriented' analyses may be more easily interpreted for clinical implications because they suggest patterns of person–situation characteristics associated with risk rather than a more abstract notion that occurs with the relative extent of several dimensions" (Tolan, 2001, p. 237). The final of the four organizing tropes Tolan (2001) addresses is intervention.

Regarding intervention, Tolan (2001) suggests the need to develop "empirically sound and clinically useful

approaches" (p. 237), especially those that address the complexity and multiplicity of youth involvement with violence; developmental and social ecology implications; flexibility and adaptability of intervention models; systems of service delivery (e.g. systems of care and development); and resources and capacities (e.g. administration, support, policy) needed. He notes Farrell et al. (2003) who caution against measurements of interventions that seek to affect group norms but use individuals as the unit of analysis and call for a more robust study that takes up these issues on a larger scale.

Tolan concludes by suggesting that clinical child and adolescent psychology can contribute significantly to addressing youth violence problems in all of their complexity, including through coalitions with other social service and public service providers (health care, educators, law enforcement, etc.). The following sections provide greater detail into specific psychological conditions that exposure to violence may impact.

Hostile Attribution Bias

Hostile attribution bias occurs when youths interpret behaviors by others as having a hostile basis, while the typical person would not perceive it in this way and social cues fail to indicate the person is behaving hostilely. To explain in greater detail, hostile attribution occurs when a person automatically assumes someone is negatively targeting them, or engaging in hostile behavior, when most others would believe the situation to be neutral. The person who experiences hostile attribution bias is more likely to respond with violence. One potential factor that increases the likelihood of attributing neutral incidents as having a hostile intent is described by Herrenkohl, Huang, Tajima, and Whitney (2003). Herrekhohl et al. (2003) believe that hostile attribution bias may be a result of a lifetime of exposure to violence and is often seen in youths who witness interparental violence. This initial exposure to violence perpetuates the cycle by making it more likely that youths exposed to violence will react in a manner similar to what they have seen throughout their lives.

Depression

Dennis Embry (2001), a child psychologist, explores the psychological factors contributing to youth violence, linking the emotional state of adults to that of youths. He argues that depression is "socially contagious" (p. 97), with negative consequences of depression that may include higher rates of juvenile delinquency and substance abuse. He suggests that these "rising rates of community-level depression" result in an increase of violent youthful offenders because: 1) depressed adults pay more attention to negative rather than prosocial behaviors, which studies have shown result in anti-social youth; 2) increased irritability, social withdrawal, and social isolation associated with depression result in negative peer interactions and increasingly anti-social behaviors; and 3) depression can magnify suicidal ideations and actions, including "terroristic" revenge against those perceived to have caused pain and harm (e.g. Columbine).

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Foster, Kupermine, and Price (2004) examined gender differences as they apply to symptoms of PTSD among inner-city minority youth who are exposed to community violence. Girls are reported to exhibit more internalizing symptoms than boys, and therefore girls were hypothesized to report higher symptoms of posttraumatic stress such as depression, anxiety, nightmares, and detachment. It was also hypothesized, however, that boys will report higher instances of witnessing and being a victim of community violence.

Girls reported higher levels of depression, anxiety and posttraumatic stress (Foster et al., 2004). There were no significant differences between boys and girls in terms of anger or dissociation. For both boys and girls, witnessing community violence was associated with being a victim of community violence. Witnessing incidences of domestic violence and suicide attempts were reported more frequently by girls. "Boys' levels of witnessing violence were significantly related to anger and dissociation, but not to anxiety, depression, or posttraumatic stress symptoms.

For girls, both victimization and witnessing violence correlated significantly with depression, anger, and dissociation" (Foster et al., 2004, p. 63). These findings suggest that there is a difference in the ways boys and girls respond psychologically to witnessing violence. For girls, the act of witnessing violence elicited similar results as actually being the victim of violence. This was not the case for boys whose psychological symptoms were more pronounced after being a victim of violence (Foster et al., 2004).

Substance Use and Abuse

Youth today are exposed to a variety of risk and protective factors that either predispose them to violence or serve as a buffer from engaging in violence and delinquency. Victimization has been identified as one risk factor linked to the early initiation of alcohol and drug use (see e.g. Unger, Sussman, & Dent, 2003; Weiner, Sussman, Sun, and Dent, 2005; Taylor & Kliewer, 2006). Weiner et al. (2005), for example, found that adolescent victimization was a significant predictor of illegal drug use, which in turn was a "significant predictor of violence perpetration five years later" (p. 1264). Later violence perpetration may be due to psychopharmacological effects of drugs on the user, including irritability from drug withdrawal, and victimization may be a consequence of the user's decreased vigilance, i.e., lack of awareness of the presence of danger (Weiner et al., 2005). Contradictory to what much of the previous research (see above studies) has found, there is an alternative theoretical view that posits substance use results in a decrease in violence. Kaplan et al. (2001) found this inverse effect to be empirically supported, however, no policy implications were readily promoted based on this theoretical perspective. In addition to the effects that substance use and abuse has on an individual's behavior, some studies have sought to determine the effect of violence exposure on substance use.

Kilpatrick et al. (2003) discuss some of the negative impacts of interpersonal violence on youths. Here, interpersonal violence was defined as a sexual assault, physical assault, or witnessing violence (Kilpatrick et al., 2003). The authors determine the impact that interpersonal violence has on the risk of PTSD, major depressive episodes (MDE), and substance abuse/dependence. Interpersonal violence was found to increase the risk of PTSD, MDE, and substance abuse/dependence. However, the results were particularly consistent with MDE and substance abuse/dependence, with exposure to interpersonal violence affecting whether or not a youth is going to engage in substance abuse/dependence as well as the mental health of the victim. In addition to these main findings, the study also reported that older adolescents were more likely to report familial alcohol and drug use-problems, witness violence, and experience sexual assault and physical assault.

Self-Esteem & Resilience

The importance of self-esteem and resilience in avoiding violent behaviors has been noted throughout the literature. Unfortunately, youths who have been exposed to violence are placed at a greater risk of having low self-esteem, which exacerbates the psychological concerns addressed previously (e.g. internalizing behavior disorders). Low self-esteem is seen repeatedly in the literature as being a risk factor for engaging in violent activity, doing poorly in school, and partaking in substance use/abuse (Bourassa, Lavergne, Damant, Lessard, & Turcotte, 2006; Wright, 2006). One source of providing a healthy self esteem is school achievement. A concern with youths who have not achieved academic success is that lower academic achievement was associated with recent self reported fighting; academic achievement was found to be a protective factor as adolescents became committed to education (Wright & Fitzpatrick, 2006). While self esteem plays a key role in avoidance of delinquent or violent behavior, so too does resilience. Resilience has been mentioned briefly already; Whittaker (2001) provides more detail about the impact of resilience on youths and the benefits understanding the development of resilience may produce.

Whittaker (2001) suggests that a focus on strength and resilience is critical to effective long-term intervention and prevention efforts. Whittaker (2001) notes the shift in prevention literature from focus on risk factors to attention

on resiliency and well being, quoting Emmy E. Werner's observation that:

> Our findings and those by other American and European investigators with a lifespan perspective suggest that these buffers make a more profound impact on the life course of children who grow up under adverse conditions than do specific risk factors or adverse life events. They appear to transcend ethnic, social class, geographical and historical boundaries. Most of all, they offer us a more optimistic outlook than the perspective that can be gleaned from the literature on the negative consequences of perinatal trauma, caregiving deficits, and chronic poverty. They provide us with a corrective lens—*an awareness of the self-righting tendencies that move children toward normal adult development under all but the most persistent adverse circumstances*. (emphasis added, p. 683)

Youths who have been placed in extremely violent circumstances are not always able to develop the resilience to which Werner refers. Brezina's (2006) review of Hoffman's (2004) study finds that for many youth who have experienced extremely violent lifestyles, violence becomes a commonplace part of everyday life, inevitable especially when being tough is seen as necessary for survival; the threat of violent victimization leads to defensive tactics (e.g. carrying a weapon) that only serve to perpetuate the violence cycle. Hoffman documents the "processes of self evaluation, reevaluation, and change…to provide a better understanding of the 'catalysts, influences, barriers, and retardants' in the termination of assaultive behavior" (Brezina, 2006, p. 399). Part of what Hoffman captures is how "resistance to change, despite the threat of serious injury or early death, appears to have roots in early and extensive exposure to violence" (Brezina, 2006, p. 399). In response to this:

> Hoffman identifies a number of factors that facilitated change, desistance, and prosocial community involvement among her study participants. These include the experience of trauma and lengthy hospitalization, which encouraged reflection and contemplation; exposure to caring health professionals and other conventional role models; exposure to peers who had experienced similar injuries and life situations; opportunities to help others and to develop new skills; a sense of fatigue stemming from the many hassles of a criminal lifestyle; and a growing sense that their current lifestyles were leading them nowhere and harming their loved ones. Thus, Hoffman argues that the period of hospitalization provides a unique "window of opportunity" to intervene in the cycle of violence. Health care providers can play a critical role if they are willing to reach out to violent youth and help them to connect with support services. At the very least, Hoffman believes that her findings show that even the most hard-core offenders are not beyond reach. (Brezina, 2006, p. 399)

Brezina identifies several limitations of Hoffman's study, including its exploratory nature, its lack of comparison group, and its reliance on public health literature to the exclusion of criminological literature on continuity, change, and desistence (e.g. Sampson & Laub, 1993). A lack of over-arching theoretical framework leaves the reader with a "list of factors that appear to be relevant to change" (p. 400) without further connection to the disciplines. Similar to resilience is youths' ability to cope with adverse circumstances.

Dempsey (2002) considered how the impact of violence exposure is mediated by negative coping. Coping is described as "the cognitive and behavioral strategies a person uses to manage stress" (p. 102) while negative coping refers to "asocial or antisocial avoidant behaviors that are not focused on the stressor itself" (p. 103). Examples of negative coping are withdrawal, self-criticism, aggression, and blaming others. Dempsey (2002) determined that much of the variance seen by violence exposure on post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety can be explained by coping behaviors. Therefore, a person's coping style is going to be a better

indicator of whether exposure to violence has an effect on PTSD, depression, and anxiety. The ability to cope is very similar to the development of resilience in that those who are able to positively cope are less likely to experience detrimental effects due to exposure to violence. LeSure-Lester (2002) provides suggestions on how to increase coping skills in youths.

According to LeSure-Lester (2002) aggression and behavioral problems are more common with children who are or were abused at some point, compared with youth who were never abused. A cognitive-behavior therapeutic approach attempts to affect internal and external influences on adolescents' behavior; therapists attempt to help adolescents increase their control over their behavior and emotions, as well as assess cognitive functioning – focus is on increasing self-awareness and coping skills. Overall, cognitive-behavior techniques are conceptualized as way to get adolescents to consider "alternate ways of thinking about, responding to, and feeling about stressful situations" (p. 395) that they typically encounter. A significant implication from this study is that skill-specific intervention techniques can be effective in addressing behavior problems, particularly among African-American youth.

Life Satisfaction

MacDonald, Piquero, Valois, and Zullig (2005) conducted a study to determine if there was a relationship between life satisfaction, risk-taking behaviors, and youth violence. This study was based, primarily, around the theories of Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) (low impulse control) and Agnew (1992) (stressful life conditions). The authors found that youths who reported more satisfaction with life reported being less likely to carry a weapon, carry a weapon on school property, carry a gun (the above three within the last 30 days), and had gotten into fewer physical fights in the last 12 months. In addition, other analogous risk-taking behaviors (i.e. smoking and sexual promiscuity) led to higher levels of violence. For example, sexual promiscuity (as defined as 6 or more partners) led to increased likelihood of fighting, carrying weapons and guns, and carrying weapons on school property, while smoking led to increased levels of carrying weapons and fighting. Interestingly, the authors also noted that increased hours worked per week while in school led to increased weapon and gun carrying, carrying weapons at school, and fighting.

Relational Considerations- Parenting and Peer Groups

Conflict resolution skills may affect substance abuse, and positive family relationships may lead to better prosocial skills with peers, including skills to more effectively manage stressful life situations (Unger et al., 2003; Frank, 2000). Unger, Sussman, and Dent (2003) found that adolescents who employed more aggressive conflict resolution tactics were at higher risk for drug use, suggesting the importance of teaching children (through parents) conflict management skills from an early age in order to prevent the use of aggressive behavior and substance use. The findings of Franke's (2000) study support this conclusion. Franke (2000) found that high levels of family cohesion decreased the likelihood of adolescents being involved in a fight. "The family is an important predictor of the presence, severity, and maintenance of youth violence, drug use, and conduct disorders" (Franke, 2000, p. 62). If a child feels loved and supported by his or her family or caregivers, and has a positive relationship with them, he or she will be imbued with self confidence and improved coping skills. Wright and Fitzpatrick (2006) also found that family support increased confidence and served as a protective factor.

Furthermore, confidence as a result of having a supportive family also buffered the deleterious effects of poverty. At high levels of confidence, there was no relation between poverty and externalizing symptoms, but at low levels of confidence there was a significant positive relation such that poverty was positively related to externalizing symptoms. "The highest symptoms were found in those who had low confidence living under conditions of high

poverty" (Tinsley Li et al., 2007, p. 28). This suggests that one must feel valued and loved in order to experience the protective effects, as opposed to simply being in the presence of one's family.

This dynamic of poverty, parenting, and personal relationships strongly affects youths' coping skills and strategies. Grant et al. (2005) examined the effects of exposure to violence on black urban adolescents while also taking into account parenting practices in relation to economic stressors. The authors propose that adolescent psychological problems are brought on by poverty, as economic stressors decrease parents' ability to remain nurturing toward their children (Grant et al., 2005). Youth living in poverty are at risk for more externalizing symptoms, as illegal avenues of making money present themselves and, in the absence of parental guidance and support, are especially enticing. Living in a high poverty area also increases the chances that youth are exposed to community violence. One reason that this is such a powerful risk factor is the fact that chronic exposure to violence (ETV) produces stress. Spano, Rivera, and Bolland (2006) studied the impact of timing of violence exposure on violent behavior in a high poverty sample of inner city black youth. The authors found that more recent and chronic ETV was associated with increased likelihood of problem behaviors such as posttraumatic stress disorder, school failure, depression, and risky sexual behavior.

Maschi and Bradley (2008) narrowed their focus on male youth, finding that stressful life events (SLE) such as divorce, school problems, loss of loved one, and living in a violent neighborhood are risk factors for engaging in delinquency and violence. Maladaptive emotions and negative interactions with pro-social peers also increased the risk of delinquency and violence. Youth who reported histories of ETV, SLE, anger, and delinquent peer exposure had a greater likelihood of reporting violence compared to youth who did not report exposure (Maschi & Bradley, 2008). Anger was associated with violent offending, whereas depression was not. Even association with a deviant peer group provided some social support that lowered the likelihood of offending. "The significant buffering impact that social support had on violent offending further supports the notion that having someone to count on, including adults and peers, may significantly reduce the likelihood that youth will choose delinquency as a coping mechanism" (Maschi & Bradley, 2008, p. 134). Thus, even in the face of ineffective parenting, peer support may help to counter some of the stressors that may increase risk.

According to Kaplan (2004) characteristics that are significant in determining whether youth will become violent include male gender, low intelligence, slow language development, low resting heart rate, certain personality traits and genetic-environment interactions and relations; less significant predictors include unreliability, carelessness, boldness and low levels of conscientiousness; in contrast, shyness is correlated with low levels of anti-social behavior after later development. Regarding intelligence, it is not overall measures of intelligence, but specific facets particularly indicated by the rate of language development. The predictive indicators are not accurate for predicting youth violence on an individual level, but are predictive at the group level.

In determining whether or not a youth will engage in violence, family and peers are important for a variety of reasons. To begin with, parents may initially influence a youth's beliefs and attitudes regarding violence. Herrenkohl et al. (2001) conducted a study to determine if age of onset of delinquent behavior or a theory integrating social control, social learning, and differential association would best describe violent behavior. It was found that that the best predictors for involvement in delinquency were opportunity to engage with antisocial peers, antisocial beliefs, and antisocial rewards—indicating that the most important factor for engaging in antisocial behavior was the belief that it would be approved of by peers and be unpunished by parents or other adults. Still other researchers have determined that the above predictors should be divided and looked at separately.

Solomon, Wright and Cheng (2008) found that parent attitudes toward fighting are the best indicator, even more so than youth attitudes, of whether a child will engage in aggressive behaviors and future injury risk. However,

other researchers may argue that while this is true initially, as with many beliefs in adolescence, those formed early in life and are often questioned and influenced in the teenage years by peers. According to Herrenkohl et al. (2003) abuse (in early life) shapes attitudes about violence, but violent attitudes indirectly predict violent behavior through peer involvement (i.e. whether violence is accepted by peers) (Herrenkohl, Huang, Tajima, & Whitney, 2003). Given the causes of why many youths engage in violence, often with roots originating in exposure to violence, some researchers have looked deeper to determine the cause and determine a fair and appropriate response to youth violence.

An article written by Thompson (2002) offered deeper, psychological explanations for participation in violence. Thompson (2002) determined that the level of attachment achieved early in life was especially important in later involvement in violent acts. In Thompson's opinion (2002) society often reacts to youths who engage in violence in a harsh manner, basically seeking to contain them without paying attention to why they are behaving in that manner. Thompson (2002) states "we all know they (i.e. violent youth) are primarily poor, poorly educated, in need of some special intervention to support learning, and many have brain damage from drugs, alcohol, lead poisoning, or other toxins" (p. 274). In addition to these deficiencies the parents or caregivers of the youths have failed to properly socialize them and provide them with a sense of secure attachment (i.e. that as infants they knew from a young age they could rely on their caregivers to meet their needs and therefore develop a sense of hope (Newman & Newman, 2009). Given that youth have not developed a sense of attachment with a parent or caregiver, they may substitute this relationship with peer approval. These peers are often from the same background and they engage in delinquent behavior together. Essentially, Thompson (2002) express concern that youth are being taken out of society, often tried as adults, with little or no regard as to how they became the way they are.

Snyder and Rogers (2002) approach the topic of youth violence similarly to address the question of violence in adolescence from a psychoanalytic approach. They separate violence into two categories: (1) self-preservative violence, which is described as engaging in violence to feel alive; and (2) sadomasochistic violence in which the aggressor receives a great deal of satisfaction from the violence, "leading to a surge of arousal and discharge and locating the helplessness and panic in the victim" (p 248). The studies suggest that the development of these violent personalities can often (although not always) be traced back to early life experiences (Snyder & Rogers, 2002). Often the mothers are unresponsive to the youths as infants and, as a result, the infants are in constant states of arousal; consequently, they do not learn proper impulse control. Furthermore, the likelihood of imparting violence in adolescence increases for youths who have violent parents. Psychoanalytic literature suggests that violence is a means of preserving the sense of identity.

Snyder and Rogers (2002) provide case studies of both types of behavior. In one study a young man begins violent offending at the age of 9, is told that he just like his father, that "you sure got the devil in you. You're going to grow up to be no good" (p. 243). His mother slapped him around until the veins in her hands bulged. He began to associate this with a sense of pride and tells people at the age of 9 that he is going to grow up to be just like his father, a killer. He killed two people by the age of 15 and, according to his psychiatrist, "violence became a means of self-definition, self-aggrandizement, and sadistic gratification" (p. 245). The second case study discussed a young man whose father walked out on him; his mother was very detached. He often cut himself to let out frustrations that he felt towards his mother but would not physically express on her. When asked why he engaged in knife fighting he described "a real rush, exhilarating" (p. 246). In sum, Snyder and Rogers (2002) close by reiterating that violence occurs as a preservation of the self, of protecting one's self-identity, which is often formed early in life by parents and caregivers.

Twemlow et al. (2002) agree with other researchers that the family plays a key role in the development of violent behaviors and build upon Snyder and Rogers (2002) expression of the importance of early parenting. Parents are sometimes influenced by early conduct disorder or ADHD symptoms and differ in response to the symptoms. It is noted that juveniles with ADHD are four times more likely to be involved in juvenile delinquency, and as adults have 20 times higher arrest rates. They also state that as infants, these youths often exhibit signs of disorganized parent attachments (i.e. characterized by fear of the caregiver and a lack of a coherent attachment strategy; may appear difficult to soothe; and have vastly different responses to soothing efforts); parents do not know what to do (Newman & Newman, 2009). Children with conduct disorders show difficulties in encoding deficits, experience hostile attribution biases, misinterpretation of social cues, and exhibit social problem-solving deficits (e.g. few and poor quality solutions for conflict) (p. 218). In this area, it is suggested that there is a reciprocal effect on youth influencing parents' behavior, which in turn continues to influence the youth's behavior.

Foster et al. (2004) recommend that future research examine self-concept as a mediator of violence exposure and symptom expression in youths. The authors posit that supportive parenting, along with positive feelings toward school and a positive community environment may help to reduce reported levels of symptoms in youths exposed to community violence (Foster, et al., 2004).

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL ANALYSIS

Exploring youth violence at the institutional level allows us to consider diverse factors impacting social and relational development, including schools, parents and families, gangs, and guns. Although a number of these considerations arose and were discussed at the individual level, the current level of consideration allows us to examine more closely the locations, linkages, and intersections between institutional and individual development, including recognizing that youth violence is a complex problem beyond simple "choice" approaches, that is, understanding that youth are influenced by external factors beyond their individual control.

SCHOOL VIOLENCE

MODERN SCHOOLS

School violence has become more prevalent, or publicized, over the years. Many studies have attempted to determine the reason for school violence and develop methods to prevent it. Twemlow, Fonagy, Sacco, and Vernberg (2002) argue that modern education places too much emphasis on standardized academic achievement and gives insufficient attention to students' individual needs and responses. This is extremely important considering the earlier discussion of self-esteem and the role that academic achievement plays in developing high self-esteem. This criticism of modern education reflects Erik Erikson's belief that the educational environment offers a way to train "disturbed children" to interact with other people. The current primary emphasis on academic achievement makes social interaction a secondary priority, while social interaction should be a key approach and goal of educators. Since children are not being provided with this social interaction they are more likely to engage in violent behavior (in conjunction with family and individual factors). The remedy for school violence is clear, according to Twemlow et al. (2002): "School violence is a systems problem, and since schools are mirrors of the communities they serve, a rational model for assessment of children who threaten to seriously hurt others requires a multilevel focus" (p. 214). An interdisciplinary approach that includes a psychologist, law enforcement, family, and schools must be taken to understand the threat of school violence.

Linville and Huebner (2005) identified drug use, risk-taking behaviors and carrying weapons to school to be risk factors for increased rates of violence and physical fighting. Further, they identified using or selling drugs, physical

fighting, exposure to violence, feeling distant from peers or feeling unprotected, and having a disposable income as risk factors for carrying a weapon to school. In addition it was indicated that youth extra-curricular involvement in church and church activities reduced risk-taking behaviors in general, specifically weapon carrying. However, participation in non-school related clubs was found to lead to increased weapon carrying and physical fighting for males unless those clubs were specifically religiously affiliated. These non-school clubs included sports teams, fitness groups, and volunteer organizations. For females, however, involvement in sports teams or fitness clubs decreased rates of violent activities (Linville & Huebner, 2005). In answer to these factors, the researchers found the rates of physical fighting and weapon carrying to be small when compared to the larger population of youth. They suggested increased parental monitoring of activities of children outside of school, particularly for males, as they are more likely to participate in violent activities, and increased regulation of after-school activities as a means to replace potential risky or violent activities.

Cunningham et al. (2002) suggest that the youth homicide rate rose drastically in the 1980s, particularly for African American males, and that guns play a significant role in the rates of youth homicide and suicide. Additionally, as identified by other researchers, Cunningham et al. (2000) indicate that self-report studies of youths reveal guns to be easily accessible to youth and, further, some youth carry guns to their school, as many as 9% in inner-city areas. This research is based on the notion that understanding the patterns and rationale for youth gun ownership is important for the development of prevention and intervention strategies. Cunningham et al. (2000) separate youth gun owners into low- and high-risk groups, similarly to how other researchers classify adult gun owners. Low-risk gun owners reportedly own weapons for recreational purposes while high-risk gun owners own guns for protection, tend to associate with other gun owners, and engage in illegal activities. The purpose of this study was to examine the patterns of gun ownership within a nonmetropolitan sample, and to examine the specific relationship between high-risk gun ownership and bullying. Here, the author hypothesized that youths who bully other youth are more likely to be high-risk gun owners.

Cunningham et al. (2002) found that there are similar rates and patterns of youth gun ownership between nonmetropolitan areas and urban and suburban areas. In the nonmetropolitan sample, high-risk youth gun owners were found to display more antisocial behaviors, specifically bullying teachers, substance abuse, vandalism and general violent activity; however, the strongest correlate was association with peers and family who also owned guns (Cunningham et al., 2000). Regarding their specific hypothesis, researchers found that high-risk youth gun owners were more likely to engage in bullying than their peers. The researchers suggested four implications based on their results. First, they suggest school-based violence prevention programs be aimed toward high-risk youth. This is a suggestion that intervention attempts to decrease weapon carrying be aimed toward other risk factors (e.g. bullying, substance use, violent behavior). Second, they suggest intervention efforts be made across the various contexts in which youths interacts, such as inside and outside of the school building. This reflects other researchers' conclusions that intervention efforts need to focus on the different contexts in youths' lives (e.g. home, neighborhood, school, community). The third implication suggests that school-based interventions can be effectively focused on high-risk areas and factors. The authors specifically mention monitoring recognized high-risk areas, adjusting class schedules to account for student traffic flow, monitoring the school grounds, enforcing school-wide rules (especially against bullying), and programs that reward pro-social behavior. The fourth implication suggests training and skill building for students, including social skills training and problem solving skill building (Cunningham et al., 2000).

Farrell et al. (2001) discuss how prevention and intervention programs aimed at reducing youth violence have become a national concern, and are often implemented in school settings because of the fact that they serve as the "primary context for social development" (p. 207) for youth. However, as Farrell et al. (2001) indicate, the weaknesses of such programs include that there is still a lack of evaluation and empirical support for effectiveness

of such programs, school resources could potentially be used on more effective programming, and some interventions may in fact have negative effects on youth. The researchers suggest that the way to overcome these limitations is to develop strategies that are based on theory and past research, and to have built in evaluation mechanisms to examine the effectiveness of the program. Farrell et al. (2001) suggest a strategy beginning with an examination of the literature of violence prevention, then bringing together experts in the field with local experts regarding the local environment and school being targeted. In understanding violence preparation, the researchers indicate the need to understand the type of violence an intervention program will be targeting (e.g. situation, relationship, predatory or psychopathological violence – see Tolan & Guerra, 1994), as each may require a different approach. Further, programs need to be focused on a particular population, either universally addressing the entire student population, selectively focusing on subgroups of youth, or specifically focusing on youth displaying certain risk factors (Farrell et al., 2001). Additionally, it is important to keep the age of the target youth in mind, as different ages are generally considered to be associated with different levels or stages of development.

Farrell et al. (2001) suggest using Bandura's social cognitive learning theory as a means to create an understanding of the local context and design an approach to reduce youth violence in a particular area. Social cognitive learning theory states that interactions between any individual and his or her environment results in both healthy and unhealthy behaviors. Healthy behaviors can be considered to be protective factors against violence while unhealthy behaviors are generally considered as risk factors; however, they can vary based on individual demographics of an area and the variables of the local environment. It is not solely the relationship between the individual and the environment, however, which creates protective or risk factors in individuals. Individual characteristics that affect the relationship between an individual and the environment might include an individual's physiological or emotional state, social information processing skills, and values. Environmental factors could include parenting variables, association with particular types of peers, and norms of a particular community (Farrell et al., 2001). Overall, Farrell et al. (2001) suggest developing an understanding of the local context, past relevant research, and how best to integrate a strategy into a specific school context.

Hoang (2001) indicates that schools generally are safer places than the neighborhoods surrounding them; however, it is important for schools to be characterized by safety since they plan an important role in the context of youth development. Accordingly, school violence needs to be properly conceptualized given recent media attention to particularly violent incidents. A full understanding of school violence must include bullying, threats and extortion, in addition to acts of more extreme violence. Hoang (2001) recommends thematically separating perpetrators into two groups: insiders (students from within a particular school) and outsiders (students from another community or school). In planning for prevention, Hoang (2001) indicates the importance of schools having relationships with other public agencies, as well as residents and businesses in the local neighborhood. Further, school administrators should develop an understanding of the particular type and level of violence existing in their local setting, as well as relevant research regarding violence reduction and prevention programs. Hoang (2001) suggests a variety of possible implications and policies available to school administrators, such as installing metal detectors or cameras, hiring security guards, increasing lighting in high-risk areas, increasing the presence of adults, and requiring identification in order to be on school grounds. Further, Hoang (2001) suggests that while many security-oriented policies exist, there is a value in implementing policies that attempt to build self-esteem and skills of students. This echoes suggestions of other researchers who indicate the value of skill building and focusing on increasing protective factors rather than simply eliminating risk factors.

Karp and Breslin (2001) present the argument that social institutions are the focal point of strong communities. Regarding youth, schools are the biggest social institutions of concern, and play an important role in the socialization and control of delinquent behavior (Karp & Breslin, 2001). Taking the social disorganization theory into account, Karp and Breslin (2001) emphasize restorative justice programs taking place in the school,

considering strong institutions to be the most significant barrier against crime, as well as the importance of community capacity building as a way of handling problems without having to resort to the formal criminal justice system. Karp and Breslin (2001) emphasize the importance of restorative justice programs as they relate to substance abuse problems, because substance abuse can be approached as involving community elements (e.g. youth subcultures and weak community controls) rather than simply an individual choice that is most aptly addressed punitively. The researchers identify the major components of restorative justice as focusing on all stakeholders, including victims and relevant community members as well as the perpetrator, emphasizing an individual's relationship to the community, and making sure that an individual's relationship to the community offers opportunities to that individual (Karp & Breslin, 2001). Therefore, if any law or school rule were to be broken, the harm would be identified by the effect it has on other members of that community, not solely measured by the punitive outcome. Karp and Breslin (2001) suggest that in recent years, instead of pursuing a philosophy of restorative justice, most schools have strengthened their relationships with private security and police departments as an approach to violence in schools by increasing punishments and sanctions.

Schools that have embraced a restorative justice philosophy share a number of features, including plainly stating the social norms and behavioral standards of students and providing long-term programming for youth in the areas of self-control development, anger and stress management, decision making, problem solving and communication skills development (Karp & Breslin, 2001). The researchers suggest that a restorative justice approach is applicable to any setting, as well as issues beyond substance abuse, and often varies depending on the particular context and needs of targeted youth. However, Karp and Breslin (2001) identified three areas of difficulty in implementing a restorative justice philosophy. First, it can take a significant amount of time and other resources, such as training costs and the fact that it generally takes a longer period of time (1-3 years) to see any type of significant attitude change. Secondly, in-school restorative justice approaches are often not supported, or do not fit easily, with outside control mechanisms for youth behaviors (e.g. juvenile justice system). Lastly, the researchers anticipate it to be difficult to embrace such a philosophy because it would require the support of every teacher, staff and administrator, who are likely to have an already set culture and language, both of which would most likely need to change (Karp & Breslin, 2001). (Note that despite these concerns, Teen Court programs have been shown to be effective in addressing youth criminal behavior of first time offenders with additional deterrent effects for youth who participate as volunteers in the program (see, e.g., Butts et al., 2002).

Augustine et al. (2002) address heightened national concern over school-based youth victimization, arguing that there have been few theory-based studies on the topic. The researchers focus on criminal opportunity theory, particularly lifestyles-exposure theory and routine-activities theory, as a mean to explain adolescent victimization across types of crime, such as property and violent crime, and between high school and middle school settings (Augustine et al., 2002). The routine-activities theory suggests that three conditions must be met for crime to occur: (1) a motivated offender, (2) a suitable target, and (3) the absence of capable guardianship. The lifestyles-exposure theory suggests that victimization differs based on individuals' particular lifestyles and choices made by individuals.

Augustine et al. (2002) found that opportunity theory is largely generalizable to youth in school settings as a predictor of both violent and property school-based crimes, and across middle and high schools. One significant difference they found was that while attendance at a metropolitan high school was associated with a decreased risk of victimization, enrollment in a metropolitan middle school tended to increase the risk of victimization (Augustine et al., 2002). Augustine et al. (2002) suggest that this may be because metropolitan high schools have already been targeted for violence intervention and such strategies have been successful. Theoretically, this research provides support for the routine-activities theory, and Augustine et al. (2002) indicate the need for further theoretical development to create prevention and intervention strategies that can be generalized to all

schools. Augustine et al. (2002) suggest the use of intervention strategies that address both middle and high schools.

Burrow and Apel (2008) argue that the national concern for school safety is driven by media focus and research on school shootings and violent activities taking place within schools. The common theme that has emerged is that neither schools nor the community in which youth live are safe for youth (Burrow & Apel, 2008). Burrow and Apel (2008) indicate that past research suggests that youth victimization is more likely to occur the more time a youth spends in or around school, but past research has not focused on the individual and school-level variables that place youth at increased risk of victimization. Burrow and Apel (2008) used routine-activities theory to examine individual risk factors as well as examined the characteristics of schools that increased likelihood of victimization. Burrow and Apel (2008) used other opportunity theories, lifestyle-exposure theory and structural-choice theory, to expand the conceptualization of routine-activities theory. The model used by Burrow and Apel (2008) looked at 'guardianship' across three dimensions: (1) social guardianship, which consists of peer and sibling networks as a form of guardianship, (2) physical guardianship, consisting of behaviors and actions such as fighting or carrying a weapon, and (3) spatial guardianship, which consists of measures taken by schools in acting as guardians. When conceptualizing the suitability of a target, Burrow and Apel (2008) use three dimensions: (1) target vulnerability, how weak or strong a target is interpreted to be, (2) target gratifiability, the nature of what the offender wishes to acquire, and (3) target antagonisms, which indicate the qualities of a target that contribute to the aggressiveness of the offender. Burrow and Apel (2008) also consider proximity to be critical, conceptualizing this as the distance between potential offenders and the areas where victims or targets can be found.

Burrow and Apel's (2008) findings replicate support for routine-activities theory. However, in contrast to previous studies, they found minorities less likely to be victims of assault and larceny in the communities near schools and within schools, which suggests minority status is a protective factor. Additionally, as age increases, youth appear to be at less risk of victimization, suggesting age contributes to the notion of guardianship. Also, Burrow and Apel (2008) found that students who perform well academically and do not miss class as often are also at less risk of victimization. However, students who have engaged in past fights are at increased risk of victimization, as well as students who have a long commute to school (Burrow & Apel, 2008).

Burrow and Apel (2008) indicate that traditional security measures are ineffective in reducing rates of youth victimization. Rather, they suggest that rule clarity and consistent management strategies regarding discipline and response to rule violations lead to less crime and school disorder (Burrow & Apel, 2008).

Solomon (2008) examined the process by which educators interpret students and their behaviors as violent, particularly the language used in noticing and naming violent acts versus socially acceptable acts, as well as the process of how educators make sense of students' actions, form an opinion and an argument, then make a decision. Solomon (2008) found two distinct themes used by educators: traditional and rights-informed. The traditional theme tended to be used by educators who grouped students together with the expectation that they deserve equal consideration and consequences are standardized; in short, all students were considered as equal without special consideration (Solomon, 2008). The rights-informed theme involved educators indicating an awareness of differences such as the social dominance of some students; the fact that different students are perceptive to different types of harm, such as intimidation, fear and humiliation; and an expanded understanding of what can be considered violent to students, such as name-calling, certain gestures and threats (Solomon, 2008). Solomon (2008) indicated that most educators moved between each theme, never fully subscribing to one, but using whichever supported their particular claim and understanding of an individual context.

Solomon's (2008) conclusion is that educators often display a different understanding of violence within schools than what is portrayed by the media at the national level. Educators often perceived violent activities to include

less dramatic acts of violence that still have consequences for youth victims, and this understanding of violence allows educators to adapt and react to unforeseen problems.

Kautt and Roncek (2007) examined the relationship of primary and middle schools to burglaries within their surrounding communities, suggesting the value of routine activities theory and ecological criminology. A review of literature offered by Kautt and Roncek (2007) indicated that severely violent crimes are rare while minor victimization of youth is common in schools. However, more victimization occurs on the way to and from school rather than at school. Kautt and Roncek (2007) use routine activities theory to explain this as the routes youth use are often unsupervised, and expand on this by arguing that houses on these routes can become prime targets for youth crime. Kautt and Roncek (2007) support this by indicating daytime burglaries are correlated with truancy and a significant number of burglarized houses are near schools. Kautt and Roncek (2007) referred to past research that indicated proximity to schools was the most significant variable in explaining burglarized versus non-burglarized residences.

Kautt and Roncek (2007) found that only public elementary schools with students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade were associated with increased burglary rates, while no other schools had any effect on burglary rates. The researchers suggest this is because they measured only for burglary rather than for all index crimes, as recorded by the FBI's uniform crime report (Kautt & Roncek, 2007). The data also indicated that high enrollment was associated with higher rates of burglaries of houses on the same block as well as nearby blocks on which the school was located (Kautt & Roncek, 2007).

Kautt and Roncek (2007) suggest that an increased guardianship in the neighborhoods immediately surrounding schools would likely decrease the rates of burglary, and indicate the need for future research specifically regarding elementary schools and the effectiveness of police patrol.

The recent media attention to school shootings has helped shift the focus of school violence to extreme acts of violence committed by males in rural or suburban communities (Herda-Rapp, 2003). Herda-Rapp (2003) examined how threats of school violence have been reconstructed in the recent past by examining media coverage of school violence between 1992-1993 and 1997-1998, and by analyzing publications by professional organizations regarding school violence, with the goal of understanding how threats are assessed at the local level. Herda-Rapp (2003) indicated that the media plays a significant role in shaping opinions of the American public through the construction of reality. This is done through agenda setting, influencing what topic will be considered, and by normalizing topics; however, an individual's personal experience and location will affect their interpretation of the media (Herda-Rapp, 2003).

Herda-Rapp (2003) examined an incident in which a confidential informant disclosed five students who planned to take the principal and administrative staff hostage while executing students who had wronged the assailants in the past. Police and school administrators brought conspiracy and murder charges against three of the boys, which were eventually dropped to reckless endangerment. Herda-Rapp (2003) used this incident as a way to explore the social construction of extreme threats of school violence, concluding that the way media and official organizations cover and portray these types of incidents causes perceived risk to be distributed across the entire student population, and accordingly most people consider the threat to possibly come from any school or any student. Herda-Rapp (2003) also concluded that, at least in the situation examined, such coverage frames the way officials respond to threats, by emphasizing the potential of the threat and responding immediately and treating the threat as a reality. According to Herda-Rapp (2003), conceptualizing school violence in this way has many fiscal costs, as many schools have responded with increased and costly security measures to guard against ambiguous threats. Further, social costs include the changing nature of the school environment, as it is communicated to teachers and students that they work or study in an unsafe environment, also as time is dedicated to safety drills and security

checks (Herda-Rapp, 2003). Herda-Rapp (2003) indicates the need for understanding the true nature of threats in order to effectively respond and allocate resources without embracing stereotypical fears.

BULLYING

Bullying and its accompanying violence are significant problems in U. S. schools. Bullying has serious consequences for its victims, those who bully, and bystanders alike. Bullies and victims share similar risk factors, including a history of domestic violence or abuse at home and poor social skills. Bullying also can escalate into violent retaliation, as reflected by the school shootings at Columbine High School and elsewhere. Studies also indicate that bullying leads to increased criminal behavior.

Unfortunately, studies show that adults often do not recognize or do not intervene in bullying behavior (Cornell & Brockenbrough, 2004) and victims usually don't seek help, in part because they fear that reporting will make the situation worse (Thornton 2002; Gamliel et al., 2003). Students also may not recognize the risks of being victimized at school (Chapin & Gleason, 2004). Younger students may perceive danger on the playground but overlook internal "violence-prone areas" (Astor, Meyer, & Pitner, 2001). However, studies suggest that even if informed, teachers may not take steps to stop the bullying (Batsche & Knoff, 1994). Students are left feeling unsafe in the school environment (Thornton, 2002) and mistrustful of adults who fail to protect them (Haselswerdt & Lenhardt, 2003).

A perhaps unanticipated side effect of anti-bullying policies used in schools, in addition to the subjugation of already disadvantaged youth, is the gender neutralization of sexualized crimes against girls in schools. "What has gotten lost in this surge of reports and frenzy to reduce a rather expansive notion of bullying in schools are the rights of students to go to school in an environment that is gender-safe, free from gender-based harassment and violence" (Brown et al., 2007, p. 1257). Labeling sexual harassment as bullying allows schools to side step their responsibility to properly address and stop gender-based discrimination. The use of the word bullying as opposed to sexual harassment infantilizes the illegal actions of youth, whereas when they enter the adult world the legal system will not (Brown et al., 2007). Therefore, "effective bully-prevention programs in the U.S. must start with research on diverse groups of children and take into account social location, and they must distinguish peer-to-peer bullying from more egregious forms of sexual and racial harassment" (Brown et al., 2007, p. 1267).

Brown et al. (2007) address the ways in which punishments for gender-based victimization are being neutralized in schools. "Renaming sexual harassment as bullying tends to psycho-pathologize gender violence while simultaneously stripping girl victims of powerful legal rights and remedies under civil law, particularly federal law Title IX" (Brown et al., 2007, p. 1251). In not labeling sexual harassment as such, the new anti-bullying policies embodied in the new laws do not hold school administrators liable in the same ways that Title IX requires, but leaves the solving of the problem on the victim (Brown et al., 2007).

Peskin, Tortolero & Markham (2006) note the relative lack of research on bullying and victimization of Black and Hispanic middle and high school students and seek to fill this gap. The authors sampled eight predominately Black and Hispanic secondary schools in a large urban school district in Texas. All eight schools participated in the U.S. DOJ-funded Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative and in all schools the majority of students were of lower socioeconomic status. They used various sampling methods to select student participants to complete student surveys with a resulting n = 1413 for final sample for analysis.

Peskin et al. (2006) explored bullying and victimization, and assessed demographic characteristics; prevalence of bullies, victims, and bully-victims; and correlations by gender, grade, and race-ethnicity. Among other findings, Peskin et al. found that compared to Hispanic students, Blacks were more likely to be bullies, victims, and bully-victims; the prevalence of bullying tended to increase until 9th grade and begin decreasing thereafter; the

prevalence of victimization peaked in 6th grade and decreased through 12th grade, except for a second peak in 9th grade; the most prevalent forms of bullying were teasing and upsetting other students for fun, with males significantly more likely to engage in teasing and harassing behaviors; the most prevalent form of victimization was name-calling by others; males were more likely to be hit and pushed, and made fun of, than females; and Black students "had a higher prevalence of being picked on, being made fun of, and being called names, and more than twice the prevalence of getting hit or pushed compared to Hispanic students" (Peskin, Tortolero & Markham, 2006, p. 474). Peskin et al. also suggest interventions in middle school, with targeted activities focusing on reducing teasing and name calling. More research needs to be done to explore bullying in the context of racial dominance as well as the influence of racial dynamics on bullying. Finally, researchers should develop a standardized measure drawn from youth reports to assess bullying behaviors.

Parents and Families

The effects of victimization and violence exposure may be mitigated through parental or other caregiver support (Taylor & Kliewer, 2006; Unger, Sussman, & Dent, 2003). Positive and nurturing relationships may obviate avoidant coping and self-medicating behaviors (e.g. alcohol and substance use) that youths may turn to as a way of blunting the negative emotions aroused by stressors such as hearing about, witnessing, or being the victim of violence (Taylor & Kliewer, 2006). "Children who are accepted by their caregivers tend to have higher self esteem, are more effective copers, and are able to adapt to situations more readily" (Taylor & Kliewer, 2006, p. 218). The extent to which youth feel accepted by their caregiver increases youth confidence and self esteem, serving as strong protective factors (see, e.g. Frank, 2000; Wright & Fitzpatrick, 2006).

Parenting behaviors can play a role in the likelihood that a youth will engage in violence and antisocial behavior. Twemlow et al. (2002) point to five aspects of the child's environment that repeatedly emerge with long-term antisocial behavior problems: (1) poor supervision; (2) erratic and harsh discipline; (3) parental disharmony; (4) rejection of the child; and (5) low involvement with the child's activities (p. 219). The family also plays an important role in staying involved because many violent youth demand an excessive amount of privacy; parents do not pay attention to what they do. This un-involvement may lead to the child's detachment from their parents; "these children seem to have given up on adults as a source of support, information, and help in solving the exigencies of adolescent identity diffusion" (Twemlow et al., 2002, p. 228).

In the discussion of supportive parenting, it is valuable to discuss the fact that such parenting can go on within single parent families. "Rather than focusing on the negative outcomes in single parent families, more researchers are asking questions about the conditions under which children in single mother families show resilience – function well when the risk factors in their lives suggest they could be functioning poorly" (Thomas, Farrell & Barnes, 1996, p. 884). Thomas et al. (1996) found that father involvement was an important factor to take into account when explaining the variation in the effects of single mother families on male adolescents in particular. According to the 1990 census, 51% of black children compared with 16% of white children under age 18 were living in a single parent family (Thomas et al., 1996). It was hypothesized that girls would fare better in single mother situations, as they still had the female role model present. Boys, on the other hand, lack a male role model and were hypothesized to exhibit higher levels of deviance. "Although most white single mother families form through divorce and separation, most black single mother families are formed by mothers who never married" (Thomas et al., 1996, p. 886). In general, Thomas et al., (1996) found that males reported more delinquency, heavy drinking, and drug use than females. Whites also were found to exhibit higher rates of these behaviors than blacks. Nonresident father involvement was found to have a significant effect on child outcomes depending on the ethnicity and gender of the adolescent. The highest rates of delinquency and substance use were observed among white males living in single mother families with no father involvement (Thomas et al., 1996). For blacks, the

highest rates of delinquency and substance use were observed in single mother families in which there was father involvement. The authors offer some explanations for these findings. "It may be that those adolescents who have experienced a divorce have deeper and more ambivalent emotional bonds with their nonresident fathers. If a father once resided with his son but is uninvolved after a divorce, the son may be resentful and more likely to rebel and become delinquent" (Thomas et al., 1996, p. 893). For blacks males, whose mothers were less likely to have been married in the first place, father involvement may have contributed to negative outcomes in sons because of the possibility that the fathers are functioning problematically themselves, and may provoke conflict and provide negative role models for their children (Thomas et al., 1996).

Waller and Swisher (2006) would agree with Thomas et al. (1996), suggesting that this is because having a father involved who is likely to engage in violent or antisocial behavior himself makes it more likely his children will engage in delinquent behavior as well.

Just as supportive parenting and a positive family environment serve as protective factors for youth, a negative family environment serves as a risk factor for youth in terms of violence perpetration and victimization. Kennedy (2008) found that for females, exposure to community violence and family violence is strongly associated with intimate partner violence. This is logical since chronic exposure to violence would imply that for these females, violence becomes a normative way of life and they will seek out partners with the same behaviors and propensities as their caregivers and peers. For both males and females, witnessing adult on adult violence was associated with victimization at the hands of a caregiver. This is also logical, since the adult violence they are witnessing may be occurring at home. "The youths' experiences, ascribed roles, and relationships within one context, the family microsystem, are associated with their experiences within the broader community system, with risks in one connected to risks in the other" (Kennedy, 2008, p. 37). Through distorted perceptions of normative behavior and low self-esteem these females may begin to blame themselves for their experiences and feel helpless to stop them. Not only may females who have been exposed to and victimized by family violence consider it normal and seek out violent partners, they may also internalize violent behavior as an acceptable way for them to behave and perpetrate violence on their partners.

Family Structure

There are a variety of diverse family structures in the United States. Families may consist of children living with both biological parents, one biological and a step-parent, married parents, co-habitating parents, neither parent, aunts, uncles, or grandparents to name a few. Some families may place a great emphasis on maintaining close ties to the extended family, while others focus on the immediate family. Regardless of the variety of structures, research indicates that each of these different family structures is capable of influencing a child's behavior and, therefore, participation in delinquent or violent activity. The following section will address the impact of family structure on youths.

According to Knoester and Haynie (2005) neighborhood-level family structure (i.e. number of single parent households) predicts the risk of youths engaging in violence. This is to say that neighborhoods with a greater number of single parent households (namely those headed by the mother) are more likely to experience youths committing violence (this explains 58% of variance between neighborhoods but only 6% within neighborhoods). This effect may be mediated by some form of family structure not considered in study (Knoester & Haynie, 2005). Knoester and Haynie (2005) mention the importance of social disorganization in whether or not youths within an environment are going to participate in violent behavior.

In addition to neighborhood structure, the effects of single parent homes on delinquency also may vary by race. As previously discussed, one study found that white male children exhibited higher levels of delinquency and

substance abuse in the absence of the father, whereas black male children exhibited higher rates of delinquency and substance abuse when the father was involved in their lives (Thomas et al., 1996). The researchers argue that divorce was, for white male children, a traumatic and embittering experience that left the child rejected and rebellious. To support this, Franke (2000) found that "boys whose parents had gone through a separation or divorce were more likely to commit violent crimes" (p. 50). Intact families were found to predict the lowest incidences of violence, while kinship families were found to predict the highest incidences of violence (Franke, 2000).

Piquero, MacDonald, and Parker (2002) studied race, local life circumstances, and criminal activity from a life course perspective. Piquero et al. (2002, p. 655) address "turning points" and argue that "the link between past and future crime is due to the impact that the commission of criminal acts has on reducing inhibitions and strengthening motivations to commit crime." This perspective asserts that entrance into adult institutions of social control can lead to the cessation of criminal offending. Piquero et al. (2002) state that crime is inhibited when persons are bonded to conventional institutions of social control such as marriage. "Historically, nonwhites have been disproportionately affected by unemployment, poverty, single parent head of households, and other indicators of social inequality" (Piquero et al., 2002, 657). The authors report that not only are nonwhites less likely to be married, but that black women are experiencing shrinkage of marriageable men (Piquero et al., 2002). Unmarriageable black fathers are those who face unemployment, incarceration or a criminal history, and alcohol or drug addiction (Thomas et al., 1996). As Cross (2003) pointed out however, these tendencies toward a lack of educational and occupational achievement are not rooted in flaws inherent to blacks as a people, but stem from discrimination that leads to manifestations of anger, frustration, and violence.

The issue of youth violence and its solutions offer some basic and broad recommendations for bolstering minority social capital from a structural perspective. Piquero et al. (2002, p. 668) state that the decrease in marriage rates among non-whites in general, and blacks in particular, is a function of increased economic marginality, changing attitudes toward sex and marriage, and the interaction between material and cultural constraints. The authors stress that from an early age, nonwhite children, and black children in particular, should be taught that marriage is a positive institution that should be sought after. Piquero et al. (2002) also propose that nonwhites should be aided in accessing more economic opportunities that will allow them to become more marriageable.

If racism and economic marginalization of minorities were inhibited, it would allow minorities to flourish in society. Greater economic equality would lead to more marriageable men. More marriageable men would lead to more intact minority families, more intact minority families would lead to greater family cohesion among minorities, which would lead to more well-adjusted children who are ready to transition from a healthy and happy childhood to a non-delinquent adolescence, and on to a pro-social adulthood.

Since racism and discrimination are deeply embedded social problems, however, studies like those of Simons et al. (2006), Taylor and Kliewer (2006), and Tinsley Li et al. (2007) that illustrate how strong family support can serve as a buffer against several risk factors can point both research and family interventions in the right direction.

This perception that opportunities are blocked from an early age is merely the first indication of the discrimination that propels black youth into anger, depression and delinquency. While Caldwell et al. (2004) argue that a realistic appraisal of the realities of racism in society can be a protective factor, Vowell and May's (2000) findings implies that a fine line exists between preparing minority youth to deal with racism in a constructive manner, while also empowering them with the tools to overcome racial discrimination. Simons et al. (2006) recommend that more research be conducted that explores the parenting strategies inherent in successful minority families in order to determine what lessons supportive parents pass on to their children that prepare them for a productive life in U.S. society.

MALTREATMENT

A number of studies suggest that minority youth and youth in urban areas are more likely to experience official maltreatment (Garbarino & Ebata, 1987; Hampton, 1987 as cited in Smith & Thornberry, 1995). Maltreatment often appears to be an official determination obtained through child protective service records. One classic study of youth maltreatment, which included all substantiated reports of abuse or maltreatment, found that youth from lower socioeconomic status were more likely to experience maltreatment, almost twice the rate of others (Smith & Thornberry, 1995). Youths from a family structure other than living with both biological parents also were more likely to experience maltreatment (Smith & Thornberry, 1995). Additionally, childhood maltreatment is nonspurious and significantly related to official delinquency, self-reported violent, and self-reported moderate delinquency after controlling for sex, race/ethnicity, mobility, underclass status, and family structure (Smith & Thornberry, 1995). Childhood maltreatment is not a significant predictor for minor or general delinquency; the majority of maltreated youth are not arrested and do not report involvement in serious delinquency (Smith & Thornberry, 1995).

SOCIETAL LEVEL ANALYSIS

Exploring youth violence at the societal level allows us to consider diverse social, community and other environmental factors impacting the prevalence and distribution of youth violence, including fear of, and exposure to, neighborhood violence; the availability of guns; popular images and symbolism that portray youth as gangsters; culturally competent intervention capabilities; and the capacity of the community to formally and informally effectively regulate and organize against youth violence. While some of these considerations arose and were discussed at earlier levels of analysis, this level of consideration allows us to examine more closely community risk and protective factors, including collective efficacy, social engagement, and competency to effect social and political change.

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

Historical explanations for youth delinquency and violence link contemporary problems within the black community to the legacy of slavery, suggesting that it was not slavery per se that has inhibited the social development of blacks, but rather an on-going cycle of discrimination that hinders their educational and occupational development (e.g. Cross, 2003). In the 1940s and 1950s, for example, 70% of black families were intact (Cross, 2003). "Once stable white families, in the face of protracted unemployment due to job layoffs and restructuring, can become the focus of father abandonment, divorce, and lower academic aspirations in children" (Cross, 2003, p. 70-71). These studies suggest that when families face similar socio-economic circumstances, these negative circumstances can negate whatever strengths families of any ethnicity have to bring to the table.

While oppositional identity arising from the legacy of slavery and discrimination is thought to serve as an impetus for blacks to shy away from mainstream models of success and toward crime, following the Civil War, "the scope of educational demands that the masses of ex-slaves placed on themselves can only be comprehended as a social movement for education" (Cross, 2003, p. 72). Thus it may be argued that it was and is the refusal of white society to cultivate and reinforce blacks' drive for achievement and acculturation that stifles their achievement motivation (Cross 2003).

This is evidenced by unequal educational opportunities provided to blacks through segregated school systems. Tax dollars were proportioned so that white children considerably benefited and this led to the underdevelopment of black children and the accelerated development of white children (Cross, 2003). In so doing, the social capital of generations of blacks was diminished. In more recent times, schools located in predominantly black areas are

underfunded, understaffed and dilapidated. In predominantly black neighborhoods, some school schedules are altered so that the children come to school in shifts, causing numbers of black youths to be on the streets with no supervision and little to do during times when they should have been in school (Cross, 2003).

Vowell and May (2000) found the stigma of poverty to be greater among white youth because fewer of them were living in poverty, therefore causing them to feel more isolated from other whites not living in poverty. In contrast, "the substantial percentage of African American students reporting poverty status may result in a greater acceptance among their African American peers" (Vowell & May, 2000, p. 56). The implication is that black youth learn from an early age that their opportunities are blocked solely as a result of their racial group membership. Limited access to positions in society considered most desirable is a fact of life for black youths. Whites were found to expect success, whereas blacks did not.

The myth that black males are genetically and culturally predisposed to criminality remains largely unchallenged in dominant American culture, with "little outrage about the disproportionate number of black men who have some connection to the prison and parole systems" (Cross, 2003, p. 79). A common example of disparity used to illustrate institutional racism in the criminal justice system is revealed in sentencing guidelines for crack and powder cocaine. Not only did the laws result in disproportionate arrest ratios based on race, but mandatory sentencing guidelines have resulted in more blacks spending longer amounts of time in prison (Cross, 2003).

These historical inequities may give rise in young black males to feelings of humiliation and hurt, resulting in feelings of social disempowerment (Strozier, 2002). Acts of racism and discrimination may be considered instances of victimization, as a result of which feelings of strain and anger may arise (see Mazerolle, 2000).

Fear of, and Exposure to, Neighborhood Violence

Cuevas et al. (2007) found that the initiation of delinquent behavior was associated with a decline in mental health (see Spencer et al., 2003) and that victimization preceded delinquency. If black youth are living in poverty in neighborhoods characterized by high levels of violence they are more likely to become victims of violence, experience a decline in mental health, and engage in delinquency.

Sweatt, Harding, Knight-Lynn, Rasheed, and Carter (2002) conducted exploratory research to determine the fears of youths living in an urban high-rise community. The most common response was gangs. Youths were afraid to leave their homes. They heard of innocent children being shot in gang fights and did not want to be a victim as well. One insightful youth (at 14 years of age) stated that they needed more parental guidance and how he wished he had someone to talk to him about the violence in the neighborhood and how to avoid it. "The overwhelming perception reported by these adolescents (i.e. those living in a high rise in Chicago) was that adults were unavailable to protect them and were often unaware of the seriousness of the violence they faced in their day-to-day lives" (Sweatt et al., 2002, p. 117).

Kuther (1999) conducted a meta-analysis of literature in a variety of areas related to youth violence and victimization (e.g. prevalence of covictimization; emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses to covictimization; interactions among emotional, cognitive, and behavioral domains; developmental-contextual approaches to research on covictimization, perception of violence, etc). Kuther (1999) notes that covictimization is rarely operationalized the same. Some studies measure it as direct victimization, while others include only hearing about victimization. Findings related to prevalence of covictimization included that exposure to violence is common to inner city youth with 44% of males and 31% of females (from a sample of 313) witnessing a shooting in a southeastern state. Over two-fifths of sampled Detroit adolescents (sample of 246) had seen someone shot or stabbed. The perceived ease of access to weapons is rather startling, with 44% of Detroit youth saying they had

guns in their homes, 30% stating they could get a gun in an hour, and 31% claiming they could have a gun in a few days. Emotional responses to covictimization may include distress and anxiety as well as PTSD.

Community violence has an impact on cognitive functioning in that youths residing in communities high in violence have difficulty focusing in school and problems with memory, which may lead to low academic achievement. In addition to cognitive difficulties, violent communities may help to explain behavioral problems as "youth may feel as if there is no safe haven or way to escape the violence that surrounds them and, in turn, display aggressive behavior themselves" (Kuther, 1999, p. 703). They may resort to violence when feeling vulnerable. These findings are similar to those of Snyder and Rogers (2002) and Thompson (2002). Kuther (1999) also reported that youths may experience difficulties in developing moral reasoning if their parents limit or restrict their movements outside of the home because of worries about the violence. The youths are not as readily able to experience the social stimulation necessary to shape moral reasoning. This may be significant given Sweatt et al.'s (2002) finding that youths reported staying at home because they feared for their safety. Kuther (1999) suggests that a sense of hope could serve as a protective factor against youth violence.

The rates of youth exposure to violence (ETV) in their communities increased in the 1980s with the rates of youth homicide and youth violence, and while youth homicide has decreased nationally, youths' ETV in community remains a problem (Brady, 2006; Buka, 2001; Cooley-Quille et al., 2001; McCart, 2007; Ruchkin, 2007). Buka (2001) indicated that the ratio of non-fatal incidents to violent yet non-lethal incidents is 100:1, and any one violent event can have innumerable witnesses in addition to the victims. ETV can be broken down into "direct" and "indirect" exposure. While direct exposure is generally conceptualized as victimization of intentional acts of harm inflicted by another individual, "indirect" exposure can include eye-witnessing or hearing a violent incident actually occurring, having knowledge of someone's direct victimization, or simply knowing about violent incidents occurring in the community (Buka, 2001; Cooley-Quille, 2001). ETV is considered a particular problem for low income, inner city areas with predominately minority populations (Buka, 2001). Self report rates of witnessing murder in this type of area is as high as 47% (with 25% being typical), with 56% witnessing a stabbing, and as many as 70% witnessing a shooting (Buka, 2001). While self-reports from suburban areas are significantly lower, many rural and small city areas reflect similar or still significant rates of ETV (Buka, 2001). Over 90% of urban sixth graders reported hearing gunshots, seeing someone beat up, or seeing someone arrested; it is common for youth to witness multiple occurrences of community violence (Perez-Smith, 2001). Exposure to violence is a problem that extends into young adulthood as well (Scarpa, 2001).

There are a number of risk factors for ETV. First, males are generally more likely to be exposed to violence (Buka et al., 2001; Cooley-Quille, 2001; Brady, 2006), but the disparity between genders lessens significantly by the time youth are in high school (Buka, 2001). There has been inconclusive support regarding age, and although ETV increases with age to a certain extent, age cannot be a significant predictor to ETV (Buka et al., 2001). ETV is primarily a problem with ethnic minorities and individuals with lower income, however, ETV is not a problem associated with all low income areas; rather, low-income youth are disproportionately represented among the youth associated with ETV (Buka et al., 2001). ETV generally increases if a youth lives in a house rather than an apartment, if a youth is not living with biological parents, and if a male is the head of the household (Buka et al., 2001). Buka et al. (2001) suggest that parenting styles are not likely to have an effect on ETV, but can act as a moderator to the impact of ETV, either as a strong barrier to the negative impacts or solidifying any negative impacts (Buka et al., 2001). The role of the community is not well understood, but research suggests ties between poverty, high crime rates, low income and dense population and ETV (Buka et al., 2001).

Potential moderators to ETV include gender, as females are more likely to experience long term emotional negative effects, whereas males are more likely to have negative behavioral impacts that result sooner (Buka et al.,

2001). Some research suggests that youth turn to deviant or risky behaviors as a result of their inability to cope with ETV and the negative emotional and psychological problems that follow (Brady, 2006). Brady (2006) suggested that the result of this is that more youth are engaging in risky behaviors, including risky sexual practices, substance abuse and carrying weapons to school and around their neighborhoods. While exposure to community violence was examined separately from domestic violence, McCart (2007) indicated that youth who are exposed to community violence are generally exposed to violence in their homes as well (McCart, 2007). Perez-Smith (2001) suggested that strong ties to neighborhoods with high rates of crime and poverty increases rates of ETV, and in contrast, youth with minimal affiliation with such neighborhoods results in less exposure to community violence.

Youths' exposure to violence in their communities can lead to a number of psychological and emotional problems. Among youth with high rates of ETV, research has found there to be increased levels of anxiety, depression, aggression, fear, hopelessness and lower self-esteem (Buta et al., 2001; Cooley-Quille, 2001; Scarpa, 2001; Perez-Smith, 2001). In particular, PTSD is commonly found in youth with previous exposure to violence, which further serves to facilitate additional psychological and emotional problems (Buta et al., 2001; Cooley-Quille, 2001; McCart, 2007; Perez-Smith, 2001). Further, youth with higher levels of ETV report carrying weapons more often, high rates of substance abuse, and engaging in risky sexual behaviors more frequently (Buta et al., 2001; Brady, 2006; Cooley-Quille, 2001). Youth often develop maladaptive emotional and behavioral problems that can affect subsequent development even in early adulthood (McCart, 2007).

As a result of ETV, youth may lack outlets in which to properly communicate and freely express themselves, which can lead to internalized emotional problems and externalized behavioral problems that can have significant effects through adulthood, or even have developmental consequences in early adulthood (Brady, 2006; Buka, 2001; Cooley-Quille, 2001; McCart, 2007; Perez-Smith, 2001).

There are numerous suggestions for addressing the problem of exposure to community violence. Many researchers have suggested that programming be offered to youth that helps them develop positive coping mechanisms and build problem-solving skills (Buka et al., 2001; Cooley-Quille, 2001; Brady, 2006; McCart, 2007; Perez-Smith, 2001). However, because coping with community violence can take a significant amount of energy, it often causes youth to lose focus and be less successful in school, work and healthy relationships with family and peers; accordingly, researchers suggest in-school resources to provide youth with the necessary tools and opportunities to achieve in school and work (Buka et al., 2001; Cooley-Quille, 2001). In response to the lack of outlets available to youth who have been exposed to community violence, many researchers call for clinical and therapeutic treatment for youth having been exposed to community violence (Buka et al., 2001; Cooley-Quille, 2001; Brady, 2006; Ng-mak, 2004). Further, Ruchkin (2007) suggested there be increased cooperation between mental health services and the police, specifically in order to provide necessary services to youth in need to therapeutic treatment.

Further, many researchers suggest the importance of open and healthy communication between parents and youth in acting as a barrier against the negative outcomes of ETV (Buka et al., 2001; Cooley-Quille, 2001; McCart, 2007). This includes open communication as well as emotional availability of parents and general attentive parenting styles, all of which can be facilitated or further developed through training programs (Cooley-Quille, 2001; McCart, 2007). Overall, violence intervention programs should be implemented at the family, neighborhood, and community levels (Ng-mak, 2004), as youth differ in their previously existing support system and individual vulnerabilities to being exposed to community violence (Ng-mak, 2004; Brady, 2006).

Living in a high crime, high poverty neighborhood means an increase in the likelihood of exposure to violence. One reason that this is such a powerful risk factor is the fact that chronic exposure to violence (ETV) produces stress. Spano, Rivera, and Bolland (2006) studied the impact of timing of exposure to violence on violent behavior in a

high poverty sample of inner city black youth. Spano et al. (2006) wanted to determine whether proximal or distal ETV produced greater negative outcomes such as posttraumatic stress disorder, school failure, depression, and risky sexual behavior. The authors found that more recent ETV was associated with increased likelihood of problem behaviors. Recent and chronic ETV has negative implications for the mental health of youths living in high poverty and high violence areas.

MacMillan (2000) examined the impact of adolescent victimization on income deficits later in adulthood. MacMillan (2000) posits that the experience of violent victimization can set in motion a sequence of events or experiences that give shape to the life course. Victimization can lead to a diminished interest in school, which can lead to lower occupational attainment. The author posited that the most immediate consequence of adolescent victimization was a decrease in commitment to education. MacMillan (2000) calculated the total lifetime cost of adolescent victimization to be $82,400. Moreover, the average lifetime loss for sexual victimization in adolescence is $36,000, $55,200 for assaults with weapons, and $90,400 for having been beaten. The researcher points out that violence is perpetrated more frequently on minority, inner city individuals and, therefore, victimization of these groups could be linked to the economic marginalization of these groups.

MacMillan (2000) argues that interventions geared toward adolescent victims of violence should "be expanded to focus on buffering the educational detriments of violent victimization, such that long term trajectories of educational and occupational attainment are not undermined" (p. 576).

GANGS

In addition to considering youth ETV from a societal level of analysis, it is likewise important to recognize youth-on-youth violence and related criminal behaviors that travel with youth gangs – what has, earlier in this report, been denoted as an example of a "tribe apart." Researchers have held that certain youth and their "local communities – including its component parts, particularly police, schools, youth agencies, probation, churches, businesses, and neighborhood organizations – as well as larger social, economic, and cultural factors together are responsible for the creation and development of the problem" – gangs (Spergel, 2007, p. 3). In other words, "gangs and related gang problems tend to emerge from larger social and economic problems in the community and are as much a consequence of these factors as a contributor" (Howell & Egley, 2005, p.1). Beginning with Thrasher's (1927) research, a succession of researchers have regarded gangs and gang behaviors as an artifact of social dislocations associated with urban life, including poverty, social immobility, ethnic conflict, social alienation, and economic isolation (Bursik, 1988; Howell & Egley, 2005; Kornhauser, 1978; Papachristos & Kirk, 2006; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Shaw & McKay, 1942). This seminal work still remains innate to understanding gang origination from a societal level of analysis:

> Gangs represent the spontaneous efforts of boys to create a society for themselves where none adequate to their needs exist…The failure of normally directing and controlling customs and institutions to function efficiently in the boy's experience is indicated by disintegration of family life, inefficiency of schools, formalism and externality of religion…All these factors enter into the picture of the moral an economic frontier, and, coupled with deterioration in housing, sanitation, and other conditions of life in the slum, give the impression of general disorganization and decay. The gang functions with reference to these conditions in two ways: It offers a substitute for what society fails to give…It fills a gap and affords an escape...Thus the gang, itself a natural and spontaneous type of organization arising through conflict, is a symptom of disorganizations in the larger social framework. (Thrasher, 1927, pp. 12-13)

Additional research has supplemented such approaches to understanding gangs and their associated behaviors by spotlighting the collective efficacy and regulatory ability derived from neighborhood social networks (Bursik, 2002; Bursik & Grasmick, 1993) – that is, "neighborhood social disorganization disrupts resident networks that would otherwise provide the capacity for the social control of street gang behaviors" (Papachristos & Kirk, 2006, p.63). Notwithstanding the well developed explanations for gang behaviors correlating with neighborhood descriptors and processes, these theories, with few exceptions, tend to remain relatively untested. In addition, some researchers (Fagan, 1996; Bursik & Grasmick, 1993) have noted that understanding gang formation as a by-product of social disorganization originated in a time period when "an abundant supply of manufacturing jobs permitted social mobility among the lower classes and the ensuing aging-out of gang behaviors in favor of prosocial life course outcomes, such as marriage, blue-collar employment, or military service" (Papachristos & Kirk, 2006, p.65). Here researchers have held that as such employment opportunities have shifted across time, from manufacturing to more corporate-oriented sectors, gang formation was stimulated as a social mechanism with the capacity to alleviate some of the social dislocations correlated with disadvantaged neighborhoods.

In addition to neighborhood attributes, other theoretical models grounded at the societal level also have emphasized "regulatory capacities that are embedded in the affiliation, interactional, and communication ties of neighborhoods residents" (Bursik, 2002, pp.73-74) – the mechanisms of social regulation. From this perspective, despite social class, it is likely that gang formation will occur in communities that do not express social networks with the capacity to effectively provide services to the community or regulate undesirable behaviors (Papachristos & Kirk, 2006). With this the case, it is important to recognize that research regularly finds gang formation and associated criminal behaviors to be concentrated in poor and disorganized neighborhoods (Curry & Spergel, 1988; Rosenfeld, Bray, & Egley, 1999; Spergel, 1984). However, it should also be noted that communities with high levels of violence are not necessarily the same communities that have high levels of gang violence, even when controlling for attributes such as residential mobility, levels of collective efficacy, informal social control capacities, and concentrated disadvantage. Some research (Papachristos & Kirk, 2006) examining homicide rates as a proxy for "violent crime" exemplifies the understanding that factors such as race, culture, and immigration may impact the nature of gang formation and related criminal behavior:

> [N]eighborhoods that have a high rate of gang homicide without a corresponding high rate of nongang homicide are characterized by high levels of immigrant concentration. Analyses disaggregated by gang motivation show that concentrated immigration is a more complex factor in social disorganization models than previously suggested in either the gang or the neighborhood-effects literature. The effect of immigrant concentration on nongang homicides is *negative*, essentially yielding the opposite result of that predicted by the social disorganization model. However, the effect of immigrant concentration is *positive* for gang homicides, in large part because of the large portion of Hispanic homicides that are gang-related. Thus, gang homicide more closely follows the classic social disorganization predictions than do nongang homicides, due to the larger number of gang homicides committed in neighborhoods with high immigrant concentration. This finding is consistent with Curry and Spergel's (1988) analysis, which shows that black gang homicides tend to follow the "underclass" hypotheses, while Hispanic gang homicides follow more traditional social disorganization hypotheses. (emphasis added, p.81)

While gang formation and behavior, examined from societal level of analysis, has been readily advanced across the past many decades, a developed understanding of the gang phenomena remains incomplete, explained by some researchers as a result of "disconnects between quantitative and qualitative research traditions" (Hughes, 2005, p.98). Here, while qualitative methodologies (e.g., case studies, ethnographies) have been effective in reaching and

describing “hidden gang populations,” an absence of substantial consideration to etiological questions has prohibited advancement in our understanding of how, or if, gangs contribute to crime and violence beyond individual peer group influences (Hughes, 2005, p.108).

GUNS

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a dramatic increase in the rates of youth homicide across the nation, peaking in the early 1990s and declining since (Braga & Kennedy, 2001; Braga, et al., 2001; Braga et al., 2008; Slovak, 2002). From 1984 to 1994, the homicide rate for youth under the age of 18 increased by 418% involving handguns and 125% involving any other types of guns, and every homicide that contributed to the increasing rate of youth homicide involved a firearm[3] (Braga et al., 2001; Heide, 2007). Although offenders between the ages of 18-24 committed the majority of these homicides, the proportion of offenders between the ages of 14-17 experienced the greatest increase during those years (Braga et al., 2001). From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, the number of youth ages 10-17 who committed murder using a firearm increased by 79%, and although homicide rates have decreased overall since then, the majority of homicides and suicides committed by youth involve a firearm (Cunningham, 2000). In 1994, gun-related homicide was the second leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10-24 and in 1996, 85% of the homicide rate for youth ages 15-19 involved a firearm (Slovak, 2002). Overall, the increase in the youth homicide rate lasting until the 1990s has been directly correlated with the increasing rate of youth gun violence, and since the 1980s, youth gun violence has been responsible for the majority of youth homicides, despite the decrease in the youth homicide rate since 1994 (Braga & Kennedy, 2001; Heide, 2007).

Additionally, the rate of unintentional shootings resulting in fatalities has increased consistently with the increasing rate of youth gun violence since the 1980s (Vacha & McLaughlin, 2004). For every fatality resulting from youth gun violence, there is estimated to be at least 100 incidences of non-fatal incidents of youth gun violence, as well as innumerable witnesses to such incidents (Slovak, 2002; Vacha & McLaughlin, 2004). Similar to the rate of youth gun violence, the rate of school-related violence involving firearms has increased (Brezina & Wright, 2000). According to survey reports from 2002, 5-7% of youth in an inner city, low-income neighborhood reported carrying a handgun to school during the last month, and 14% reported having ever carried a handgun to school (Williams et al., 2002).

The increase in the youth homicide rate and the rate of youth gun violence has been attributed to increasing gang-related activities (Braga et al., 2001). The rates of youth gun violence are most strongly representative of African-American males in low-income neighborhoods found in large inner-cities (Braga et al., 2001; Braga et al., 2008; Slovak, 2002). The location of most youth gun violence takes place outside of schools, despite the increasing rates of school-related gun violence, such as areas within low-income neighborhoods, primarily in inner city areas (Brezina, 2000). Some research suggests that youth gun crimes are committed by relatively few individuals and that media attention to youth gun violence has altered the perception of danger and over-exaggerated the levels of violence in inner cities, suggesting that gun violence is increasing, random and indiscriminate (Brezina, 2000).

Ultimately, there are a number of consistently supported recommendations identified in the literature on youth gun violence. First, it is important to identify the sources from which juveniles obtain their guns and to focus on

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[3] This means that any increases in the entire youth homicide rate during this time involved a firearm (non-firearm related homicide must have remained consistent or lowered); “All of the increase in youth homicide was in gun homicides” (Braga et al., 2001, p. 196).

those sources both through legal regulation (Braga & Kennedy, 2001; Lewin et al., 2005) and law enforcement efforts (Braga & Kennedy, 2001; Braga et al., 2001; Braga et al., 2008). In addition, it is important to build a full and accurate understanding of the local problem of youth gun violence, specifically of the prolific offenders, group trends, common behaviors and any other local considerations (Braga et al., 2001; Braga et al., 2008). Problem-oriented policing suggests a "pulling-levers" strategy, involving coordination of law enforcement agencies with community partners, employing a range of sanctions (pulling levers) that are responsive to local variables, involving direct and persistent communication with the targeted population (Braga et al., 2001; Braga et al., 2008). Part of the importance of involving community partners is to avoid putting too great an emphasis on criminal justice professionals, as this has historically failed to fully address the problem of youth gun violence (Brezina & Wright, 2000). Part of value of a collaborative approach is the role of social workers in educating youth as well as parents, particularly in encouraging parents to properly monitor children's access to guns as well as using safe storage practices (Slovak, 2002; Cunningham et al., 2000; Loeber et al., 1999; Williams et al., 2002). The use of zero-tolerance policies for carrying guns has increased in schools, but research suggests school administrators can decrease the likelihood of students carrying guns by providing more after school activities that keep students on school grounds (Slovak, 2002), working to eliminate bullying and personal antagonisms likely to provoke aggression, and work to increase means of achieving conventional success (Brezina & Wright, 2000). One major barrier in decreasing the rate of juvenile gun-carriers is the perception of youth that carrying a gun is a positive attribute and accepted by peers who are also likely to carry firearms (Williams et al., 2002). In this case, Williams et al. (2002) recommend attempting to engage entire networks and groups of friends, similarly to "pulling-levers" strategies (Braga et al., 2008).

Braga et al. (2008) suggest that any approach to dealing with youth gun violence will be required to shift its operations throughout the process, especially in consideration to the exact definition of the problem, frequent reconsideration of preferred methods of intervention and continual evaluation of the membership of a core working group. This requires continuous assessment of the problem of youth gun violence and an understanding of the local variables. A framework for successful approaches will involve focusing on prolific and repeat offenders, issues that the community views as priorities and offender, group and behavior trends (Braga et al., 2008). This framework will rely on a collaborative effort between law enforcement agencies and community partners to provide political legitimacy (Braga et al., 2008). While particular objectives and techniques for intervention might succeed elsewhere, it is critical to bring together local experts to determine which interventions are best suited (Braga et al., 2008).

Popular Images and Symbolism

Whereas Squires et al. (2006) discussed above found black youth to largely accept common myths and stereotypes prevalent in the popular media, Mahiri and Conner (2003) reported black youths to be critical and detached from the violence and depravation surrounding them. Mahiri and Conner (2003) found that students could separate themselves from the feelings of love they had for negative people in their lives from wanting to emulate the actions of the negative people. For example, one boy had an alcoholic father. The boy loved his father but realized that his father had made some bad choices and that being like him was not a desirable thing. The students also expressed insight when talking about homelessness, stating "the conditions of homelessness and poverty were not unconnected to desires for wealth and fame - that a person could achieve one status or slip back into the other because they were two sides of the same coin" (Mahiri & Conner, 2003, p. 132). The students were cognizant of the fact that violence in their community was a product of desperation, and that the root causes of violence were beyond their immediate control. They seemed to realize that, while negative things were occurring within their community, they had the power to take charge of their own behavior and walk away from violence (Mahiri & Conner, 2003).

Like the students in the Squires et al. (2006) study, Mahiri and Conner's subjects recognized the negative portrayal of black men and women in rap and hip hop music, but rejected these portrayals. Men were described as "gangsters" and women were describes as "hos," but in the Mahiri and Conner (2003) study, the students understood the music for its value as entertainment. The students also paired the portrayal of blacks in rap and hip hop videos with an insatiable and unhealthy lust for money and material possessions. The students could see and hear negative images and understand that they are a part of a music genre that they can engage with at a number of levels (Mahiri & Conner, 2003). The students stated that they could appreciate rap and hip hop, dance to its beats, and remain untainted by the violence and sexism inherent in its message. "This challenges the simple connections that the dominant public discourse and media so often draw between rap music and its negative influence on black youth" (Mahiri & Conner, 2003, p. 135).

The implications of these findings are simultaneously hopeful and sinister. On one hand, the responses of the students indicate that not all black youth buy into the stereotypes fed to them by the media. On the other hand, "the vulgar rhetorical traditions and practices expressed in gangsta rap are intricately linked to dominant cultural constructions of the other and market driven strategies for rampant economic and human exploitation" (Mahiri & Conner, 2003, p. 123). The authors contend that rap music is being used as a scapegoat whose negativity is a strategy of containment geared toward reinforcing dominant ideologies (Mahiri & Conner, 2003). It is the authors' contention that the lyrics and images found in rap and hip hop are nothing more than exaggerations of black life that serve to obscure rather than illuminate processes of cultural production and consumption (Mahiri & Conner, 2003). The negativity inherent in some urban music needs to be seen "within the context of the much larger, global processes of the production and consumption of capitalism that commercializes and to some extent shapes what ultimately is experienced as rap and hip hop" (Mahiri & Conner, 2003, p. 138). Mahiri and Conner (2003) make the point that violence has always been a part of American culture and this is fueled by politics, media, sports, law enforcement, and the military. The authors write that black youths are the victims of virulent societal myth and that it is white males over age 30 who have been shown to be the true superpredators (Mahiri & Conner, 2003).

Informal Social Support

Budde and Schene (2004) discussed the concept of informal social support (ISS) interventions for adults, youth and children. ISS interventions are defined as activities intended to change an individual's social network or to introduce a new network using volunteers and peer groups. This is in contrast to traditional programming and formal support mechanisms used in the attempt to prevent victimization and deter offenders, as some researchers consider these attempts to have largely failed in the past. ISS interventions are tailored to an individual's particular situation, but interventions broadly exist in two forms: (1) by mobilizing existing means of support, and (2) using volunteers and peer support groups. Ultimately, the purpose of ISS interventions is to provide consistent assistance and emotional support, improve child development through enhancing parenting skills of guardians, promote pro-social relationships and increase general safety.

When considering networks of existing support, an individual's family is considered to play a significant role in the prevention, detection and early intervention of risk behaviors. However, family members also are potentially able to have a strong negative impact, depending on individual exposure through family members, for example, domestic violence, family conflict or negative parental models. ISS interventions often include an individual's family meeting with peers and members of the community for planning and support. "Volunteer programs" generally focus on child-abuse prevention, and include parent aides, lay home visitors, mentors for parents, and neighborhood groups focusing on distributing services and linkages to support. In using ISS interventions, there is no expectation of returned support by recipients. ISS interventions focus on specific needs of individuals and are

considered to be most effective when implemented intensively and over a long period of time (Budde & Schene, 2004). While Budde and Schene (2004) found ISS interventions to be subject to the same strengths and weaknesses as formal support mechanisms, they consider ISS interventions to result in higher rates of social integration and empowerment for some individuals and families. However, more research is recommended before any model ISS interventions or strong implications be recommended.

Wright (2006) recognizes the significant and increasing rates of youth violence, but proposes the value of using boxing (perhaps a proxy representation) as a means to introduce discipline and promote a strong sense of self-esteem and identity, which have been previously identified as risk factors for violence as a victim, witness and perpetrator. Wright (2006) discusses the theoretical rationale for boxing as a means to reduce individual youths' active role in violence as well as decreasing the likelihood of ETV, including the development and buy-in to a group mentality, engaging in a pro-social activity that helps youth physically release aggression, and as a means of providing a level of discipline and sense of self-efficacy and accountability. While Wright (2006) provides theoretical evidence of boxing as a means to decrease violence; opposing viewpoints (if any exist) are not acknowledged and no empirical support is offered.

Community Regulation & Effectiveness

Rosario et al. (2008) suggest that individual level coping skills and social support systems are not always strong enough to overcome high levels of exposure to community violence; in addition to any interventions focusing on individuals, changes need to occur at the community level. Suggested engagements at the community level include increased police presence, additional after school activities, and anything that assists in the process of community renewal. A recommended model for addressing community violence is the increased availability of services offered through school-based clinics, both for individual students and their families (Rosario et al., 2008).

Bowen, Gwiasda, and Brown (2004) provide a literature review of community-based violence prevention efforts, suggesting that most empirical work is relatively recent. "Community" is viewed as an "intervening variable in terms of its contamination effects…or as a mediating factor through its protective abilities, primarily in school settings…rather than as an actor in violence prevention in and of itself" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004, p. 358). Similarly, with the exception of some "sanctuary models" addressing treatment for trauma victims (e.g. victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and child abuse), community violence prevention efforts have not been sufficiently focused on "ways that the community can be mobilized to affect youth victimization and perpetration" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004, p. 358). The authors cite only the Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) "collective efficacy" study to support the role of community organizing and development as a form of violence prevention.

Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) examine the capacity of communities to prevent youth violence, child maltreatment, and intimate partner violence. They frame their discussion through three critical questions: "What does the research tell us about community capacity to prevent violence that exceeds the efforts of the individuals who live there? How can communities be made more protective? And how can changes in a community's capacity to prevent violence be measured?" (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004, p. 322). They suggest that "the role of the community in preventing violence varies among the domains" (p. 323) and identify social disorganization and collective efficacy literatures as providing the most fully developed theories about community violence prevention. Ecological and community based approaches further are used to describe the "nested levels of interactions among individuals, families, and communities" when examining child maltreatment and domestic violence domains. While these researchers indicate that child maltreatment and domestic violence arise in "the nature of interactions within and across ecological levels," how families and individuals mediate community ecological effects remains unclear (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004, p. 323).

Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) cite research addressing the structural characteristics of neighborhoods with high concentrations of interpersonal violence, including poverty, racial segregation, and single-parent families, but argue that these "persistent correlations" do not explain the processes by which violence arises or can be prevented in communities. They suggest that the concept of social disorganization has developed from Shaw and McKay's (1942) early emphasis on community characteristics/structure to a more "systematic view" that considers the complex relational networks and social ties, as well as "ongoing socialization processes, that characterize communities as primarily responsible for social cohesion and "community capacity to prevent violence" (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004, p. 324).

Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004, p. 324) link this systematic view to a related conceptual development, that of social capital, which they suggest reveals the significance of shared norms, networks, trust, communication, and mutual obligations within social structures:

> Although social disorganization theory is rooted in the norms arising from socialization and kinship networks, social capital theory relates to the connections between persons and positions within communities and the ability to share norms within communities. Neighborhoods deficient in social capital are less able to realize common values and maintain the informal social controls that foster safety.

This view of community capacity to prevent violence grounded in "strong" ties within neighborhoods and communities has been challenged on two grounds. First, some scholars suggest that social networks, especially those based on family and kinship, do not produce the "collective resources" necessary for effective social control as they may be isolated from other communities and social resources (e.g. Wilson, 1996, cited in Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004) and may include law-breakers within their ranks as well (e.g. Pattillo-McCoy, 1999, cited in Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004). Furthermore, as Sampson, Morenott & Earls (1999, cited in Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004) suggest, shared community expectations may exist even in the absence of "thick" neighborhood ties.

Sampson et al.'s (1997, 1999) concept of collective efficacy, then, operates without reliance on strong ties or associations. Rather, Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004, p. 325) suggest that collective efficacy reflects "a combination of working trust and shared willingness of residents to engage in social control…(with) an emphasis on shared beliefs in the capacity of the community to achieve an intended effect." Strong ties may provide a resource potential but shared expectations about engagement in social control efforts more accurately reflect the capacity of a community to act.

The authors end their discussion of youth violence by drawing on Bursik and Gramsick's (1993) three-level conceptualization of social control – private, parochial, and state controls. They argue that state controls work to support private and parochial social control efforts in stable communities, enhancing the collective efficacy of community residents.

They next turn to a discussion of child maltreatment, which includes both violent and nonviolent acts, and "is highly correlated with poverty" and social isolation. They briefly discuss ecological theories (e.g. Belsky, 1993) that explain child maltreatment through a "nested set of systems at the individual, family, community, and sociocultural levels" (p. 326). Cicchetti and Lynch's (1993) transactional model of risk and protective factors addresses children's developing capacities to protect themselves. Child maltreatment also has been linked to neighborhood structure and processes, including elements of poverty and residential mobility, though few empirical studies have assessed the complex multilevel dynamics of individual factors, neighborhood structural characteristics, and neighborhood social processes. In one multilevel study (Coulton, Korbin, & Su, 1999)

neighborhood factors appeared to be related to child maltreatment reporting rates but not the potential for child abuse.

In comparing ecological approaches to youth violence and child maltreatment, Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) suggest that poverty and social isolation are similar factors in each domain. Additionally "routine activities" plays an important role in bringing motivated offenders and potential victims together. These domains may be differentiated through social location (public youth violence versus private child maltreatment), the role of the community (community prevention of youth violence versus family as a mediating consideration in child maltreatment), and relative causality (community violence affects the likelihood and development of child maltreatment).

The above sections reviewing literature drawn across various levels of analysis – individual, institutional, and societal – have offered a variety of initial concepts for consideration in the examination of youth violence in its various manifestations. Having reviewed these concepts it has become clear that a variety of factors are not easily contained within a single level of analysis. In these cases such variables reflect the dynamics that carry through individual, institutional and societal domains to construct the complexity of youth violence (e.g., parenting and family dynamics). As a next step in exploring the protective and risk factors involved in youth violence it will be valuable to reflect on model approaches with particular focus on community intervention and prevention models.

MODEL APPROACHES & PRACTICES

An examination of various model approaches and interventions has the capacity to serve future programming. Not only will some successes, having been accurately documented, offer the potential to inform new applications, but even intervention failures serve to point out useful information for modification and implementation of future strategies. It is readily apparent from the preceding and subsequent discussions that programs to address youth violence often are implemented in only one domain, often leaving youth violence reduction strategies and prevention efforts isolated or fragmented. With this the case, the current section of this report presents selected approaches exemplifying prevention and intervention efforts within each domain, and within and across each level of analysis. As the literature (e.g. Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Henry 2003) suggests that youth violence, including gang activities, arises from and may be perpetuated at each of these levels as a result of a lack of integrated support, this examination points to opportunities to effectively link programming across various domains (individual, institutional, societal) to reduce youth violence and its negative consequences to youth, families, and communities. Appendix A contains a "Summary of Information on Gang Prevention/Intervention Strategies Included in Literature Review" designed to provide quick reference to a variety of model intervention and prevention programs. Appendix B, attached to this report, includes article abstracts of selected model prevention and intervention programs to permit reviewers to gain a more complete picture of the empirical reports investigating these selected model programs. Appendix C provides guidance for organizations seeking to assess and enhance their cultural competency as it may relate to these efforts.

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

Although youth violence occurs through a variety of factors, some researchers suggest that gang involvement is the number one predictor of engaging in violent behavior and, consequently, gang recruitment must be the focus of prevention efforts (Tolan, Gorman-Smtih, & Henry 2003). Researchers engaged in consideration of prevention and intervention at the individual level (e.g., Herrenkohl et al, 2001; Spencer et al 2003; Farrell et al 2003; Kaplan 2004; and Maschi & Bradley 2008) have identified development of youths' prosocial attitudes, knowledge, and

skills; problem solving and conflict resolution skills; and emotional resilience as foundational best methods for effective prevention and intervention efforts. While the first step is to increase the opportunities and rewards for prosocial activities, limiting the opportunities youths have to engage in antisocial activities and interact with antisocial peers is equally critical (Herrenkohl et al, 2001). One noteworthy program, "Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum", provides an emotional literacy program designed to increase the social and emotional skills of youth in the areas of empathy, anger management, and social learning (Maschi & Bradley, 2008). Youths who participated in this program showed an increase in these social and emotional skills along with a decrease in aggression and disruptive behavior. Similarly, Multi-Systemic Therapy "has been shown to be effective in reducing antisocial behavior (i.e. disobedience, running away, drug use, arson, vandalism, theft, and violence against persons) in at risk youth" (Maschi & Bradley, 2008, p. 136). Programs that do not work include 'scare' programs or strategies, which in fact may have a negative effect on youth.

Proactive intervention efforts that seek to enhance youths' psychological well-being in the context of risk and protective factors offer much greater purchase than reactive interventions deployed after chronic exposure to violence has undermined youths' social and emotional health. Research on chronic exposure to violence or other trauma suffered by inner city black youth finds that resulting selective attention to and preoccupation with violence and fear of victimization may impact their performance in school - "as victimized youth become more selectively attentive to violent cues, they will become less attentive to other cues or cope in ways that decrease maximum fit with school values" (Spencer et al., 2003, p. 38). From a policy perspective, researchers argue, "public funding should allow mental health support and services to be available to students without requiring a diagnosis for a particular disorder" (Spencer et al. 2003, p. 46). These supports and services should be presented and administered in non-stigmatizing ways for the most efficacious results.

Nor should intervention programming focus on youth alone but must incorporate parents and other pro-social adults into these skill enhancement efforts. While youths need to develop better problem-solving skills and recognize alternative methods of responding to situations rather than resorting to violence, parents need to deploy age-appropriate disciplinary methods and learn to take responsibility for monitoring their children (Herrenkohl et al, 2001). Mentoring programs that allow youth to bond with pro-social adults show considerable gain as youth who participate in mentoring programs are less likely to engage in anti-social activities such as substance use and violence (Maschi & Bradley, 2008).

Finally, intervention programs should involve youth subgroups as well as individual youth. The Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RIPP) program implemented in one school setting offered a sixth grade program (RIPP-6) focused on social cognition and emotional processes that have been linked to aggression and a seventh grade program (RIPP-7) focused on respecting others, speaking and communicating clearly, listening to oneself, and valuing friendship. A study of this program found that students who participated in RIPP-7 had fewer violations for violent offenses throughout the following year, indicating RIPP-7 as an effective treatment for nonphysical aggression for boys at a 6 month follow up, and for general delinquent behavior for all youth at a 12 month follow up (Farrell et al., 2003). As with previous evaluations of RIPP, students who benefited most from the treatment were those who had high pre-test scores of violent behavior and attitudes (Farrell et al., 2003). This supports universal intervention strategies that are designed both to change students' attitudes by focusing on subgroups of students as well as focusing on school norms.

These findings suggest the importance of having intervention programs that aim at the other contexts of youths' lives, such as homes and communities, as well as implementing in-school treatments that involve or target teachers and administrators, as well as students, in order to achieve a broader population of youth positively affected by such strategies. Four programs that meet these criteria include Functional Family Therapy and Multi-

systemic Therapy, both noted for their impact in reducing arrests and violence precursors; the Incredible Years: Parent, Teacher, and Child Training Series designed for youth ages 2-8 who display indicators of aggression, defiance, opposition and impulsiveness; and the Life Skills Training program designed to prevent or reduce the use of gateway drugs. Each of these programs is considered, based on criteria discussed in the assessment subsection below, to be a model program for the specific types of intervention they address (Kaplan, 2004).

Institutional Level of Analysis

As suggested by preceding discussions, studies of youth violence have addressed prevention and intervention efforts aimed at the psychological and social effects that give rise to and result from this phenomenon. Research on bipolar disorder, early aggressive behavior, genetic history, and lead exposure as contributing factors to youth violence and aggression, offers several suggestions, though not exhaustive, for prevention (Embry, 2001). These include: “adopt the good behavior game in all elementary schools” (an approach aimed at reducing disruptive aggressive behaviors); “promote the use of a Triple-P Program in a community or state” (Triple-P focuses on family interventions to enhance family protective factors and reduce risk factors related to severe behavioral and emotional problems); use genograms (maps of family behavioral outcomes) to determine family history as part of the screening process and suggest potentially effective interventions; and increase maternal care during pregnancy, including intake of Vitamin C and folic acid (to combat the effects of lead exposure) and smoking cessation efforts (to reduce fetal exposure to nicotine and avoid its deleterious effects, including increased aggression, inattention, and other potential anti-social factors) (Embry, 2001, p. 98-99).

Efforts specifically aimed at strengthening minority youths’ perceptions of and commitments to marriage have been put forward by some researchers. They stress that from an early age, nonwhite children, and black children in particular, should be taught that marriage is a positive institution that should be sought after, and further propose that nonwhites should be aided in accessing more economic opportunities, which will allow them to become more marriageable (Piquero et al., 2002).

While these personal development and protective factors are important to understand, researchers also have found that violent victimization (as one risk factor, i.e. exposure to violence) results in decreased school commitment (MacMillan, 2000; Spencer et al., 2003). Long term, this decreased commitment to school sets the victim upon a life course trajectory for lower occupational achievement. Since lower occupational achievement places one at higher risk for poverty, it stands to reason that inner city black youths are caught in a cycle of violent victimization that derails their educational and occupational achievement at an early age, setting them up for future poverty. Living in poverty increases the chances that an individual will live in a bad neighborhood characterized by high levels of violence, thus increasing the individual’s (and his or her children’s) chances for violent victimization (Spencer et al., 2003).

Studies of school bullying address the power dynamics involved in bullying behavior. The analyses begin with the sources of bullies’ power, which may be physical advantage, social advantage such as dominant social rule, higher peer social status, strength in numbers, or systemic power (e.g. race, economic advantage, etc.) (Craig & Pepler, 2007). Power also can be deployed through attack based on another’s vulnerability (e.g. sexual orientation). The repetitious nature of bullying consolidates these power relationships, as the bullies learn “to use power and aggression to control and distress others” and victims becoming increasingly helpless to defend themselves (Craig & Pepler, 2007, p. 86).

One Canadian anti-bullying strategy - PREVNet – Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence - seeks to engage university, government, and community partners in developing innovative approaches to further healthy youth peer relationships. “PREVnet is now bringing together researchers and national organizations to enhance

awareness, build research capacity, assess bullying problems, and promote evidence-based programs and effective policies across Canada (Craig & Pepler, 2007, p. 86-87). Researchers involved in developing PREVNet offer “key empirical messages” of the program. First, bullying is wrong, resulting in long term problems for bullies (anti-social behavior and substance abuse) and victims (anxiety, depression, somatic complaints). The authors cite the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19, which “speaks to the rights of children who are on the receiving end of bullying and harassment” (Craig & Pepler, 2007, p. 87). They suggest that the definition of child abuse be extended to peer abuse. They also reiterate the essential social responsibilities of intervention and prevention shared by all who interact with children and youth. Second, bullying is a relationship problem, as these destructive relationship dynamics impact peer relationships in the moment and long term, including through intergenerational effects. Victims may withdraw from peer relationships and may be shunned by others, thus lacking the “normative social interactions that are critical to their healthy development and emerging relationship capacity” (p. 88). Helping children develop healthy social relationships arguably will reduce short-term and long-term social costs related to bullying, including costs for health care, education, law enforcement, etc. Third, promoting relationships and eliminating violence are everybody’s responsibility. This systemic perspective engages all adults who work with children and youth (including teachers, parents, recreation workers, and others in the community) and reveals how adults may intervene to change as well as perpetuate bullying relationships through social interactions, environmental contexts, modeling behavior, etc. The systemic approach further requires coordination and mutual collaboration among community and public institutions (e.g. community partners and the school).

Finally, PREVnet offers an example of a translational research model, engaging researchers and non-governmental organizations as collaborative partners in a “community-researcher partnership model” (p. 90). One main component is a “train the trainer” approach that draws on consultation with national partners to meet the needs of local stakeholders. “The information is tailored to meet the specific needs of NGOs and governments, which in turn disseminate the educational, assessment, intervention, and policy knowledge and technology to their diverse provincial and municipal stakeholders” (p. 90). The training rests on four pillars – education and training strategy, assessment, prevention and intervention, and policy and advocacy strategy.

While anti-bullying programs proliferate world-wide and have been found effective in some studies as discussed previously, meta-analysis of forty-two studies published between 1995-2006 involving school-based bullying prevention programs – including traditional anti-bullying programs following the Olweus model, Second Step, RIPP, school mediation, and cognitive behavioral approaches -- finds that they have very little effect (Ferguson, San Miguel, Kilburn & Sanchez, 2007). The researchers argued that “although anti-bullying programs produce a small amount of positive change, it is likely that this change is too small to be practically significant or noticeable. Results were best for programs that specifically targeted high-risk youth, although even here, the overall effect size was small” (Ferguson et al., 2007, p. 408). To improve the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs, it must be recognized that bullies receive a benefit from their social dominance, offering little incentive for behavioral change. Furthermore, there may be genetic influences that will require intervention programs to take this biological factor into account. Third, as school violence has decreased dramatically in recent years, the best approach might be to target the seriously at-risk youth, not the general student population. Finally, from a policy perspective, anti-bullying programs may ultimately be too ineffective to justify the cost, especially as some programs have actually increased, not decreased, school aggression (Ferguson et al., 2007). The meta-analysis suggests “anti-bullying programs produce an effect that is positive and statistically significant but practically negligible” (Ferguson et al., 2007, p. 412).

Another concern raised about school anti-bullying programs identifies two often-overlooked consequences that arise from gender neutral anti-bullying policies (Brown et al., 2007). The first “degender(s) school safety by the use of the gender-neutral term ‘bullying’” (Brown et al., 2007, p. 1257), effectively undermining the legal rights offered

by anti-harassment laws. The second consequence "shift(s) the discussion of school safety away from a larger civil rights framework that encompassed both racial and sex discrimination and harassment to one that focuses on, pathologizes, and in some cases, demonizes individual behavior: the bully" (Brown et al., 2007, p. 1258). Researchers argue that the policies currently used in schools do not account for the ways that "power is experienced, desired, expressed, and channeled in a sexist, racist and homophobic society" (Brown et al., 2007, p. 1267) and, therefore the policies fail to address female on female violence or other forms of horizontal violence perpetrated by those in "historically subordinated positions in U.S. culture" (Brown et al., 2007, p. 1267).

One study addressing school safety and youth conflict examined how youth describe their own interpersonal conflicts (Morrill, Yalda, Adelman, Musheno, & Bejarano, 2000). Utilizing a four-point approach, the authors first sought to treat youths' experiences contextually, which meant moving beyond stereotypical images of youth as gangsters to explore the diversity of youth experiences. The second was the realization that youths actively construct meaningful cultural representations, rather than passively absorbing consumer culture and school curricula. The third involved the adoption of methodological orientations that could facilitate youths' self-representation and directly access youth voices and concerns. Finally, drawing on youth culture scholars, the researchers treated schools as strategic sites where youths struggle to make sense of the worlds they create and recreate with peers and adults (Morrill et al., 2000).

The study deployed a process that asked students to construct narratives describing, in their own words, instances in which they were faced with school conflict. Four main narrative types emerged: action tales, the most common, involved the author presenting the conflict within the parameters of ascribed assumptions about the roles expected among peers; expressive tales described strong negative emotions toward the individual who wronged the narrator; moral tales revealed moral norms that dictated both the behavior of the author and the behavior of others; and rational tales reflected the author as a rational decision maker navigating through the conflict (Morrill et al., 2000).

The narratives revealed that students manage conflict in the same ways that adults do – by employing a wide range of perspectives (Morrill et al., 2000). "Youths embed conflict and its management in the everyday assumptions, rules, emotions, and rational choices that enable and constrain peer relations. The students represented violence in the context of emotional outbursts and as quasi-automatic responses to uphold social identities, perform role expectations, and maintain relational competencies" (Morrill et al., 2000, p. 552). Thus, part of being a competent youth meant understanding and speaking the language of violence; violence has become a cultural idiom among many youth.

Among other explanations, the researchers offered an institutional resistance explanation in an attempt to account for the prevalence of action tales (Morrill et al., 2000). "Schools are sites of social control and seek to fill up the vessels of youth with adult tastes and desires" (Morrill et al., 2000, p. 555). Action tales were seen as a mode of communication utilized by youth that exists separate from adult discourses. "Action tales embody the expectations of local peer relations and the various images that youths appropriate for use in that culture from wider contexts" (Morrill et al., 2000, p. 555). Narratives constructed like the ones in this study could help adults better understand youths' needs, allowing them to have an active role in the formation of rules and policy that impact them. "By directly accessing student voices via conflict narratives, youths could more actively be involved with adults in the construction of conflict intervention programs, rather than have the programs laid on them" (Morrill et al., 2000, p. 556).

Community Level of Analysis

Efforts to address the root causes of violence, especially youth violence, at the community level require an

understanding of violence as "a complex phenomenon arising from individual, systemic, and societal factors" and, therefore, must employ a comprehensive collaborative community-based approach that draws potential solutions from local contexts, including from victims, survivors, and others directly affected by violence (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004). Failure to engage in collaborative efforts leads to "disconnect" – the silo effect - between various sectors/domains who act independently (often with different theoretical approaches, advocates, histories, prevention focus, and funding sources) in violence prevention efforts (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004). Community members who seek and rely on diverse social services may not differentiate between these various sectors, but the lack of coordination can undermine service efforts (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004). Furthermore, divorced from each other, these various sectors appear to be unable to sustain prevention in the long term (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004).

The Institute for Community Peace (ICP) believes that collaboration is crucial, "that sustaining primary prevention rests on a community's willingness and ability to challenge normative behaviors and attitudes that support interpersonal and societal violence and to engage in civic activities to address the insidious effects of greater societal policies and values on community life" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004, p. 357). The ICP implemented two demonstration projects to gain information about the role of the community in preventing violence. In the first, the ICP provided continuing grants to eight communities (twelve were initially selected) over a six year period to assess local violence and community-led primary prevention efforts. The communities were required to (1) "develop a broad-based, multisectoral, interdisciplinary collaborative that includes those most directly affected by violence;" (2) "conduct a needs and assets assessment;" and (3) "develop an implementation plan informed and supported by evaluation…ICP staff continually pushed communities toward primary prevention and sustainability by asking: Have you truly prevented violence, and if so, can you sustain it" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004, p. 359)?

One ICP demonstration project – the Linkages Initiative – drew representatives from four sectors – child maltreatment, domestic violence, youth violence, and community violence – to develop an expertise on community violence, provide cross-training at each site, and help with strategic planning efforts. Because of financial considerations, none of the pilot interventions plans were fully implemented. However, some initial linkages were made. At several sites, connections between youth violence and domestic violence were made quickly as efforts turned to addressing male socialization towards violent behaviors. Another site linked domestic violence, child maltreatment, and youth violence to "female norms around victimization, child rearing, and self-sufficiency" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004, p. 364).

Through these efforts, the ICP developed a theory of change as iterative, not linear, a model that suggests a reflexive process of interaction between implementation, evaluation and refinement.

> [The theory] posits that given the proper stimulus and support (financial, technical, and evaluation assistance), communities will mobilize to prevent violence and sustain peaceful outcomes. The process of preventing violence involves developing various capacities (e.g., collaboration, resident engagement) and skills (e.g., communications, data collection) within the community, and using these to assess, analyze, and engage the issues that cause violence. The development of capacities and skills in turn leads to essential changes in individual and community behavior, which ultimately leads to the development of policies, programs, and systems that fundamentally change the individual and community's relationship to violence and greater society's relationship to the community. (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004, p. 360)

ICP identified a series of five developmental stages of community change (the first two are intervention stages and

the last three are prevention stages): 1) creating safety – physical, emotional, and psychological – through collaborative development of public safety functions (e.g. police, CPS) and community healing efforts (e.g. public vigils, marches, commemorative murals); 2) understanding violence – through statistics and mapping of violence incidents, assets, and needs and qualitative data collection (community forums, interviews) "to identify gaps, resources, concerns and solutions;" 3) building community – collaborative activities that broadened community responsibility, engaged community members (adults and youth) in leadership development, worked to "enhance physical vitality", and addressed private as well as public violence; 4) promoting peace – examining root causes of violence (including interpersonal and intergroup hostility), the impacts of community stigma, strategies to challenge biased perceptions, and attention to changing community and individual norms contributing to violence (e.g., identity-based biases – gender, class, race – and power differentials); and 5) building democracy and social justice – addressing how public policies disproportionately affected the communities in question (e.g. incarceration, housing, environmental hazards) and importance of resident participation in democratic processes, including increased political activism. Interesting enough, communities were surprised to find that they could not move forward "to sustain community violence prevention without addressing violence in the home," recognizing that youth perpetrators of violence "were often themselves victims of child maltreatment or witnesses to domestic violence" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004, p. 362). This led to subsequent efforts "to explore how to design and implement community-led primary prevention initiatives that lead to linked outcomes across domestic violence, child maltreatment, youth violence, and community violence" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004, p. 363).

The community residents engaged in the ICP programs consistently agreed on root causes of community violence, identifying:

> poverty or stressful economic times, cultural norms that support violent behavior (especially with regard to the physical discipline of children), poor communication, ongoing witnessing of violence in homes and communities, alcohol and other substance abuse, environmental hazards, and intolerance for racial and cultural differences. Community members also suggested that intervening only with domestic violence, child maltreatment, youth violence, and community violence did not reach far enough into community violence problems and would not break the cycle of violence. They pointed out many other forms of violence that plagued their communities, including, for example, hate crimes, environmental violence, and punitive criminal justice policies that lead to massive disenfranchisement. (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown, 2004, p. 363)

Residents believed that successful prevention and intervention efforts must include family mentoring and support, attention to physical and spiritual health, efforts to increase neighborhood relations and reduce isolation, community education to establish norms around peace, deterrence through community involvement of perpetrators in education and prevention strategies, and the importance of strong community bonds and stable communities (socially, economically, and environmentally). The ICP projects suggest that community engagement can positively impact primary violence prevention efforts, though significant community development efforts remain to further community building and community-based work on violence prevention and promoting peaceful communities.

Those who seek to build more protective communities also seek to understand the obstacles to their success. Some researchers have identified three spheres of social control – the private sphere (e.g. family), the parochial sphere (e.g. voluntary associations or groups), and state controls (government sponsored agencies that may provide punitive actions or resources), suggesting that "neighborhoods can be strengthened by increasing the resources available to them or by increasing the connectedness within and between neighborhoods" (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004, p. 329). Capacity, then, involves relational considerations, "building bonds or 'bridges'"

among organizations to share resources and "connect the community into a broader social fabric" (p. 330). At the private and parochial levels, more needs to be learned about how strong social ties (e.g. kin and family) can be used to foster the trust and social control needed to enhance community capacity and collective efficacy. Community justice models also may provide mechanisms for community engagement as they "build social control through primary ties in collaboration with formal sanctioning institutions" (p. 330). This approach also raises questions about the appropriate balance of diverse social control methods. Some studies have shown, for example, that strong state control can potentially weaken social control through the other domains (e.g. Lynch & Sabol, 2001) suggesting increased fear of crime related to high incarceration rates actually decreased community solidarity and, arguably, collective efficacy.)

Two strong limitations to building protective communities have been identified – hypersegregation and labor market isolation – that reflect macro forces at play beyond the reach of community control (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004). This social and geographic isolation of predominantly poor communities results not from voluntary decisions made by residents but by systemic policies and practices that effectively disadvantage the poor (and people of color) in housing and employment opportunities. Addressing these problems requires a "vertical" strategy of violence prevention that focuses on "the linkages between community life and decisions made at higher levels of power outside of the community" (p. 332). Potentially promising approaches include economic empowerment zones, Jobs Corps, and school to work transition programs.

Finally, one study's exploration of health and wellness interventions may inform understandings about youth violence as well. These interventions are deployed across various "domains", including family, school, and community systems (Wandersman & Florin, 2003). Community-level interventions are defined as "multicomponent interventions that generally combine individual and environmental change strategies across multiple settings to prevent dysfunction and promote well-being among population groups in a defined local community" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 441). Distinguishing between theoretical approach and intervention, the researchers recognize that intervention strategies will depend on the rationales adopted and accepted.

For example, the community development approach "emphasizing grassroots participation, increasing organizational linkages, and strengthening community problem solving…(has) served as (a) catalyst for public agency and foundation initiatives that produced a proliferation of community-level interventions over the past decade" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 441). These interventions have been divided into "research-driven prevention" reflecting academic approaches and "community driven interventions" that arise from everyday activities in schools and other community organizations, often sustained through "community coalitions" of diverse groups aimed at addressing a shared concern (Wandersman & Florin, 2003). One must be careful, however, not to simply dichotomize these approaches (research v. community), and seek to present instead a typology that recognizes existing and possible hybrids as well (Wandersman and Florin, 2003). Examples of successful research-driven prevention trials have addressed substance abuse prevention, smoking prevalence, and high-risk drinking and alcohol trauma as well as community driven prevention efforts with positive outcomes in the areas of reducing adolescent pregnancy, immunizations, arson prevention, and substance abuse prevention (Wandersman and Florin, 2003).

Citing Pentz's (1998) meta-analysis of 17 research driven studies with community organization components, for example, Wandersman and Florin (2003, p. 444) indicate that "community-level interventions that did not show outcomes tended to be those that focused on community public education or organizing or training community leaders for prevention; those that did show outcomes tended to be multicomponent interventions (e.g., school, policy, parent, and media programs)." Similarly, cross-site meta-analyses of community-driven coalitions also show mixed results (e.g. Kreuter et al, 2000; Yin et al, 1997; Hallfors et al 2002). Wandersman and Florin (2003, p. 444)

conclude from these various studies "a call for further improvements, including greater articulation of theory, increased sensitivity of measures, improved (or different) methods or designs, and expanded use of best practices (Hallfors et al., 2002; Kreuter et al., 2000; Pentz,2003; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000)." They recognize outcome and process issues that include the methodological difficulties of detecting and determining outcomes in community level interventions, for example, potential problems with random assignments that may exclude some from receiving intervention, problems with appropriate comparison or matching sites, and difficulties drawing causal connections between program-specific outcomes and potential community wide impact. They cite Stevenson and Mitchell's (2002) "review of collaborative effects on substance abuse prevention (that) categorized studies into three broad strategies: building capacity, increasing service integration, and influencing policy change (and) concluded that the strongest evidence existed for the strategies targeting policy change" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 444). The authors suggest another potential issue is that "community-level interventions are complex and difficult interventions to implement, whether they are community trials or community coalitions" (Waterman and Florin, 2003, p. 444). They continue (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 444):

> Wandersman, Goodman, and Butterfoss (1997) used an open systems framework to describe coalitions as organizations that require resources, organizational structure, activities, and outcomes. The framework suggests that coalitions are complex organizations that require considerable effort to operate successfully—in collaboration, organization, and planning as well as in the implementation of multiple programs and policies (e.g., Florin, Mitchell, & Stevenson, 1993).

Wandersman and Florin conclude that prevention science is "necessary but not sufficient" for bringing about successful prevention programs. They note, citing Nation et al (2003), "nine characteristics that were consistently associated with effective prevention programs: comprehensive, varied teaching methods, sufficient dosage, research-based/theory-driven, positive relationships, appropriately timed, socioculturally relevant, outcome evaluation, and well-trained staff" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 445). While recognizing the "technology transfer approach" to "bring science to practice" (p. 444), they suggest that additional efforts must be implemented to bridge the gap between science and practice in prevention. They suggest that "(a) prevention providers must be enhanced to perform effective prevention and (b) funders should contribute to capacity building by providing improved technical assistance systems for communities engaged in prevention" (Wandersman and Florin, 2003, p. 445).

To accomplish these goals, Wandersman and Florin recommend a "results-based accountability approach" derived from the Getting to Outcomes: Methods and Tools for Planning, Evaluation, and Accountability (GTO) (Wandersman et al, 1999). The GTO approach involves responding to ten accountability questions, as indicated below (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 446).

THE 10 ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS AND HOW TO ANSWER THEM

Accountability Question	Literatures for Answering the Question
1) What are the needs and resources in your organization/school/ community/state?	Needs assessment, resource assessment
2) What are the goals, target population, and desired outcomes (objectives) for your school/community/ state?	Goal setting
3) How does the intervention incorporate knowledge of science and best practices in this area?	Science and best practices
4) How does the intervention fit with other programs already being offered?	Collaboration, cultural competence
5) What capacities do you need to put this intervention into place with quality?	Capacity building
6) How will this intervention be carried out?	Planning
7) How will the quality of implementation be assessed?	Process evaluation
8) How well did the intervention work?	Outcome and impact evaluation
9) How will continuous quality improvement strategies be incorporated?	Total quality management, continuous quality improvement
10) If the intervention for components is successful, how will the intervention be sustained?	Sustainability and institutionalization

The second strategy, technical assistance, complements the first by focusing on "the conditions in which prevention programs are developed, implemented, and evaluated and works to build professional, organizational, and systemic capacity (Crisp, Swerissen, & Duckett, 2000)" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 446). Technical assistance design challenges may include "allocating resources among competing priorities, balancing capacity-building and program dissemination missions, collaborating across categorical program areas, and assuring sufficient dose strength for technical assistance interventions" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 447). The authors suggest that little data exists addressing the success of technical assistance programs on community level intervention outcomes, including the level of assistance necessary to accomplish desired improvements/results.

Finally, the Peacemaker Corps Association (PCA) may offer a promising opportunity to empower both youth participants and adults who lead the programs. The PCA provides a two-day interactive training program to volunteers from the local community, who then become paid consultants to facilitate youth training sessions in the "art of peacemaking" (Baker, 2003, p. 52). The PCA has partnered with other local agencies to find willing adult volunteers. Darryl Jones of Younglife Urban observes, "The Peacemaker Corps gives tools and resources to the adults who know what the problems in their community are and inspires them, as well as the kids, to encourage others to focus on those problems. And by honoring them with a Peacemaker graduation certificate, proving they are a qualified facilitator, it gives the trainers not just a skill to include on their resume but also validates their ability to cultivate a movement toward peace and harmony in their own community" (Baker, 2003, p. 52). Baker argues that the PCA works to stimulate both self- and economic development and "regeneration" (p. 52), an approach with global applications. Mohammed Khan, a UN representative for SmallKindness believes that "The work that the Peacemaker Corps is doing is so important and needs to be instituted internationally, because the

peace processes that work in the inner city can and will also work in places like the Balkans, Africa and Asia" (Baker, 2003, p. 52). For further information about the Peacemaker Corp, see the website excerpt in Appendix B.

Culturally Competent Intervention Capabilities

The differing needs and experiences of various groups illustrate the need for multicultural assessments for program planning. Guerra and Knox (2008) state that evidence based programming is a recent trend in youth violence prevention. "The central notion driving this trend is that programs should be first subject to rigorous evaluation under controlled conditions, followed by large scale evaluations, and culminating in full scale dissemination and implementation across communities" (Guerra & Knox, 2008, p. 304). These assumptions are problematic because they assume a "one size fits all" approach that can be effectively implemented and will work across all cultures in all regions. The authors stress that in order for evidence based prevention strategies to be effective, careful consideration must be given to the culture of the population to be served as well as the culture of the agency providing service.

Guerra and Knox (2008) present their experiences from a pilot study of the program Families and Schools Together (FAST) geared toward low income, Latino immigrant families in southern California. The authors found that the FAST program improved parent effectiveness, led to decreases in substance abuse, gang membership, citations or arrests, and placement on probation, parole, or incarceration among FAST children. They attribute these positive changes to the fact that the FAST program, although not developed for Latinos, is in league with Latino cultural values that include "an emphasis on the importance of the family as the center of an individual's life, the importance of the community, the importance of interpersonal relationships and the person as a whole, and the importance of and deference to elders and other authority figures" (Guerra & Knox, 2008, p. 307). Also central to the success of the program was the fact that the program facilitators included community groups, community residents, local service agencies, city leaders, and researchers to analyze community youth violence data and best practices for implementation. Having individuals with first hand knowledge and connections in the community involved was critical to the program's success, as they understood the needs of residents and knew how to empower them. The authors concluded that it is not desirable for evidence based programs to have wide applicability across varying regions and groups, but that they should be tailor-made for each community based on specific client needs as well as client and agency culture.

This need for client-specific culturally appropriate services is echoed by a study of local nonprofit mental health organizations in West Michigan finding that definitions of cultural competency varied across organizations but reflected a number of common themes, including providing services to different cultures and providing culturally competent services (Grant, 2008). The study further identified various ways that situations may be handled from a culturally competent perspective and offered a framework for creating a culturally competent organization that included recommendations related to the institutional bureaucracy, organizational hierarchy, and individual cultural self-expression. As these recommendations may be useful to local stakeholders, a copy of the study is provided as Appendix C.

Assessing Intervention and Prevention Program Effectiveness

Questions arise about how to measure changes in community capacity to prevent violence. Scholars suggest that "community capacity is both a latent and active phenomenon: the stores of resource must lead to action to prevent violence" (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004, p. 334). What must be measured, then, is "whether the community acts effectively and what social structures and processes enable that effective action" (p. 334). Sampson et al. (1997) measured collective efficacy by examining resident perceptions of community social cohesion and their tendency to act to accomplish community goals. An additional aspect needing attention and

measurement is the linkages between communities often based on weak ties that may further economic or racial integration (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004). Finally, institutional resources must be measured through an assessment of organizational capacity to further social control efforts (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004).

These measurement approaches will involve a number of issues, including definitions of community or neighborhood boundaries and deployment of appropriate approaches for each distinct sphere/level (e.g. parenting role models and institutional support for child maltreatment, state support for victims for domestic violence interventions). Multiple methods (quantitative and qualitative) as well as multiple perspectives (parents, children) will provide valuable approaches for "uncovering the structures and processes that contribute to community capacity for violence prevention" (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004, p. 336).

In addition to the above-reviewed programs and cultural competencies, some researchers have offered methodological criteria by which to evaluate the methodological rigor of programs promoted as models by various stakeholders, including: 1) completion of randomized controlled trial, 2) statistically significant positive outcomes; 3) sustained results for at least one year after the intervention; 4) at least one external replication, also consisting of a randomized controlled trial; and 5) no known unhealthy side effects from the intervention (Kaplan, 2004). If these criteria are met, the program should be considered a model program for its proposed means of intervention.

Management of the Collaborative Process to Effect "Best Practices"

In a perfect world, the observation and conclusions derived from research would move practice toward the development of insightful ideas that would be used to create more effective strategies for addressing social issues. However, it is not uncommon that both policy and practice remain relatively uninformed by existing empirical research, resulting in a gap between research and practices (Crawley, Hughes, Dopke & Dolan, 2007). Often collaborative partnerships (e.g., police, courts, schools, social service providers, non-profits, community leaders, policy makers, federal partners, private business sector) intended to address social issues (e.g., youth violence, gang formation) have unnecessarily limited themselves by working from an *applied research* perspective. In such instances applied research might best be described as "a strategy in which academics draw from the current scientific literature to identify 'best practices' for informing or addressing practitioner inquiries and/or issues emerging from the field" (Crawley et al., 2007, p.179). While the value of applied research has long been recognized as a means by which to quickly react to practitioner-oriented questions concerning urgent issues, it nevertheless seldom generates the comprehensive solutions ultimately required for long term success. In an effort to aid vested parties to more fully understand and engage relevant social issues and concerns, greater benefit could be derived by using the concepts of *translational research*.

Here, translational research, still readily grounded in the collective body of relevant literature, offers collaborative partners the occasion to "struggle together" in an attempt to grow a more methodical and grounded appreciation of the intricacies of a particular issue, as opposed to limiting their search for guidance to findings derived from data that may not be reflective of current conditions or dynamics. Crawley et al. (2007) held that:

> Applied research is limited to drawing "generic" solutions from the literature to address some immediate problem; whereas, translational research involves dynamic interactions across multiple agency/organizational actors in addressing the issues at hand. In addition, such interactions are best characterized by an openness to considering others' perspectives, dedication, and leadership among those vested, in an effort to reach mutual goals for addressing such issues. Through this process, parties are able to share a variety of perspectives and ideas, which will likely lead to more efficacious outcomes. (p.180)

When community partners invest themselves with, and to, each other a reciprocal relationship among stakeholders is formed, with a necessary venue for developing a “shared dialogue” typically emerging. Here, a mutual understanding of the problem facilitates the formation of common goals and a sense of partnership among participants (Department of Justice, 2008). “This is an important concept, as the goal of translational research is to promote circumstances in which all parties at the table feel they have a voice and are benefiting in some capacity. Moreover, a combined effort offers a higher likelihood that the resulting solution will be more efficacious than if one group or the other attempted to perform the task alone” (Crawley et al., 2007, p.182). While this might appear to be common sense, the reality can be both time-consuming and difficult (Tilley & Laycock, 2000).

Following a translational research perspective for advancing long term solutions to shared concerns over time necessitates the development of a strategy or paradigm that encourages collaborating partners to extend themselves to one another for knowledge and insight. It is important to note here that successfully developed strategies require the understanding of two primary considerations:

> (1) Research questions and endeavors must be grounded in, and continuously informed by, the practices and/or issues realized from the field (i.e., the “practitioners’ reality”)
>
> (2) Field policies and related strategies are implemented based on empirically driven information.
>
> (Crawley et al., 2007, p.181)

Research (Smith, Tewksbury, & Potter, 2005; Department of Justice, 2008) examining effective partnership models have noted that they typically begin with constructing an alliance across participants coupled by a common problem in order to grow a workable solution to deal with that problem. With this in hand, issues to consider at the onset of an initiative should include the type(s) of problem(s) that need to be addressed, the resources an agency can offer, the expertise and experience of the parties at the table, the time frame in which the group must operate, the degree of control over the process each party wants, and expectations for the final outcome of the project. Additional research findings in support of effective translational research partnerships include those noted in the following table.

In the table below the inclusion of various system stakeholders is noted as essential to the success of any change effort. However, regardless of who is involved in a particular collaboration, all individuals/agencies must be vested in the success of the project, as numerous stakeholders, each with a differing perceptions and approaches, have the potential to result in competing rather than common agendas (Campbell et al., 2005). Crawley et al. (2007) suggested that “once the initial interactions have established a cohesive group, individual members can begin discussing their unique knowledge and experiences relating to the problem, thus building a collective understanding of how to best proceed. As the work progresses, the group will begin to develop ‘talking points’ to share their successes” (p.185). “Bringing the information into the public arena through the media in ways that maintain the integrity of the findings and conveys the information in an accessible fashion is the key” (Petronio, 1999, p.90). Moreover, this practice facilitates the continuing dialogue crucial for successful progression of the concern (Lane et al., 2004). Once more, it may also provide an additional opportunity to engage those individuals who have thus far not embraced the strategic principles being promoted (Crawley et al., 2007).

While collaboratively engaging in translational research practices certainly presents numerous opportunities perhaps not available through other operating paradigms, it nevertheless is important to consider its potential drawbacks. Some research, while valuable in its final products, have been noted as time-consuming in its processes (Allen-Meares et al., 2005). An additional concern that must be recognized is the potential for individuals/organizations to abuse, unintentionally or not, the findings of the research. This is most likely to be the case when findings are generalized beyond the original scope of the project. Finally, a limitation of translational research practices that must be guarded against is:

> A lack of rigorous assessments failing to answer the “real” questions – lacking scientific validity. The limitation here lies not in applying translational research practices, but rather that it is easier to fall back to using old applied research models. In doing so, assessments may follow the rules

but not the true spirit of what the vested parties strive to do (i.e., serving those in need) (Crawley et al., 2007, p.187).

BEST PRACTICES FOR USING TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

Designated Leaders	Designating leaders at the outset of the project increases the chance of a successful collaboration in that leaders provide other members with motivation, direction, and assistance with communication between organizations.
Bring the "Right" Parties to the Table	Each agency will bring separate but significant qualities to the table that include a unique perspective of the issues, willingness to compromise, and the ability to assess and/or allocate resources. Things to consider with respect to choosing who to include are the compatibility of personalities, openness to considering others' perspectives, and the capacity to overcome biases. Each of these respective strengths builds on the cohesiveness of the group by ensuring that every member agency has a "voice" in the process.
Mutual Goals & Agenda	Shared "vision" achieves buy-in, levels expectations, and provides incentive that each party will benefit in some capacity. Moreover, this will provide parties with a sense of ownership of the project.
Open Communication	This creates a true sense of partnership by building a sense of trust between members. It also affords them the opportunity to hold open dialogue sessions during which critical insights can be shared and a sense of shared responsibility can be maintained.
Timeliness	The nature of the project will determine the timeliness with which the group is able to address the issues—all group members must be willing to adjust priorities and expectations within reason in order to accomplish the group's goals.
Presentation of Findings	The group must be mindful to communicate as to the specificity of the findings so that expectations can be adjusted accordingly. It is also pertinent that findings are reported to each agency at various points throughout the process so that each is able to witness progress. In accordance with this, it may serve stakeholders to develop "talking points," in an effort to share the findings beyond the group.
Dedication	Collaborations of this nature require concentrated effort for a continuous period of time, which includes persevering when inevitable disagreements arise.

(Crawley et al., 2007, p.184)

In general the benefits and advantages of working collaboratively via a translational research model significantly outweigh potential limitations. Employing this conceptual framework will advantage a group to arrive at more viable, effective, and sustainable interventions. Moreover, there are enhanced opportunities to address public concerns through combined and synergistic efforts (e.g., improved communication and information sharing across partners). Finally, this practice systemically leads to a cooperative identification of best practices and approaches to solving problems chronically plaguing the shared community, which serves to inform future stakeholders seeking to engage in translational partnerships…and the wheel turns again…

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Appendix A

Summary of Information on Gang Prevention/Intervention Strategies

Included in Literature Review

Summary of Information on Gang Prevention/Intervention Strategies Included in Literature Review

Sources in Lit Review Text	Intervention	Intervention focus	Outcomes/impacts	Outcome/impact notes	Recommendations
Embry, D. D. (2001).	Triple P Program (Positive Parenting Program)	Family intervention to enhance family protective factors, reduce risk-related emotional and behavioral problems	Embry (2001, p. 98) claims that Triple P "has the strongest empirical support of any family-based preventive intervention with children, particularly for those at risk for conduct problems and substance abuse."		
Peskin, M. F., Tortolero, S. R., & Markham, C. M. (2006).	Safe School / Healthy Students Initiative	Focuses on five elements -- safe school environments and violence prevention activities; alcohol and other drug prevention activities; student behavioral, social, and emotional supports; mental health services; and early childhood social and emotional learning programs.			
Craig, W. M., & Pepler, D. J. (2007).	PREVNet	Canadian anti-bullying network. PREVNet stands for Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence, a national anti-bullying strategy that seeks to engage university, government, and community partners in developing innovative approaches to further healthy youth peer relationships.	"PREVNet is now bringing together researchers and national organizations to enhance awareness, build research capacity, assess bullying problems, and promote evidence-based programs and effective policies across Canada" (p. 86-87).		

Sources in Lit Review Text	Intervention	Intervention focus	Outcomes/impacts	Outcome/impact notes	Recommendations
LeSure-Lester (2002)	Cognitive-behavioral therapy	Therapists attempt to help adolescents increase their control over their behavior and emotions, as well as assess cognitive functioning – focus is on increasing self-awareness and coping skills. Overall, cognitive-behavioral techniques are conceptualized as way to get adolescents to consider "alternate ways of thinking about, responding to, and feeling about stressful situations" (p. 395) that they typically encounter.			
Budde and Schene (2004)	Broad discussion of informal social support (ISS) interventions for adults, youth and children.	ISS interventions are defined as activities intended to change an individual's social network or to introduce a new network using volunteers and peer groups. This is in contrast to traditional programming and formal support mechanisms used in the attempt to prevent victimization and deter offenders, as some researchers consider these attempts to have largely failed in the past. ISS interventions are tailored to an individual's particular situation, but interventions broadly exist in two forms: 1) by mobilizing existing means of support and 2) using volunteers and peer support groups. Ultimately, the			

Sources in Lit Review Text	Intervention	Intervention focus	Outcomes/impacts	Outcome/impact notes	Recommendations
		purpose of ISS interventions is to provide consistent assistance and emotional support, improve child development through enhancing parenting skills of guardians, promote pro-social relationships and increase general safety.			
Baker, L. L. (2003).	Peacemaker Corps Association	PCA provides a two-day interactive training program to volunteers from the local community, who then become paid consultants to facilitate youth training sessions in the "art of peacemaking" (Baker, 2003, p. 52). The PCA has partnered with other local agencies to find willing adult volunteers. Peacemaker Corps implements a seven-module curriculum that includes the following: issues in youth violence, tolerance and diversity training, ethics, mentoring, conflict resolution, peer mediation, community organizing.	Baker argues that the PCA works to stimulate both self- and economic development and "regeneration" (p. 52), an approach with global applications.		
Guerra and Knox (2008)	Families and Schools Together (FAST) [pilot study]	*Target population: low income, Latino immigrant families in southern California.* Programs help parents to feel empowered and teach them how to help their kids feel empowered. Includes universal/preventive	FAST program improved parent effectiveness, led to decreases in substance abuse, gang membership, citations or arrests, and placement on probation, parole, or incarceration	Authors attribute these positive changes to the fact that the FAST program, although not developed for Latinos, is in league with Latino cultural values that include "an emphasis on the	

Sources in Lit Review Text	Intervention	Intervention focus	Outcomes/impacts	Outcome/impact notes	Recommendations
		programs as well as early intervention systems for families to help parents with the support and guidance they may need to help their kids become more productive and well-behaved.	among FAST children.	importance of the family as the center of an individual's life, the importance of the community, the importance of interpersonal relationships and the person as a whole, and the importance of and deference to elders and other authority figures" (Guerra & Knox, 2008, p. 307). Also central to the success of the program was the fact that the program facilitators included community groups, community residents, local service agencies, city leaders, and researchers to analyze community youth violence data and best practices for implementation. Having individuals with first hand knowledge and connections in the community involved was critical to the programs success, as they understood the needs of residents and knew how to empower them.	

Sources in Lit Review Text	Intervention	Intervention focus	Outcomes/impacts	Outcome/impact notes	Recommendations
Kaplan (2004) [review author]	The Incredible Years: Parent, Teacher, and Child Training Series (IYS)	*Target population: IYS is designed for youth ages 2-8 who display indicators of aggression, defiance, opposition and impulsiveness.* Also used to help children with their social skills, to help them become more empathetic and recognize the feelings of others, help them improve their conflict management skills, and helps them to improve their academic skills.	Kaplan identified as model program; details of why not available from current review outline.		
Maschi and Bradley (2008); Kaplan (2004) [not original authors]	Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT)	MST is a family-based method for dealing with delinquent, depressed, and at-risk children. Parents set treatment goals with the help of a therapist and try to help their kids to function better at home, school, and in the community by reducing problem behavior and increasing productive behavior. (Source: http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Youth_Difficult/). FFT is a program for at-risk youth that is meant to decrease risk factors and increase protective factors. Relationships within the family are examined and potentially troublesome interpersonal behavior and Communication is addressed as needed to build the family bonds	MST "has been shown to be effective in reducing antisocial behavior (i.e. disobedience, running away, drug use, arson, vandalism, theft, and violence against persons) in at risk youth" (Maschi & Bradley, 2008, p. 136). Kaplan (2004) noted MST and FFT for their impact in reducing arrests and violence precursors.		

Sources in Lit Review Text	Intervention	Intervention focus	Outcomes/impacts	Outcome/impact notes	Recommendations
		and decrease potentially detrimental behavior.			
Farrell et al. (2003)	Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RIPP) program	*Target population: 6th grade students, expanded to include a series of 7th grade follow up session.* Teaching youth pro-social attitudes, knowledge and skills with an aim towards reducing their likelihood to engage in violent activities. While the 6th grade RIPP program focuses on social cognition and emotional processes that have been linked to aggression, the 7th grade program focused on respecting others, speaking and communicating clearly, listening to oneself, and valuing friendship.	Students who participated in RIPP-7 had fewer violations for violent offenses throughout the following year; RIPP reduced nonphysical aggression for boys at a 6 month follow up, and for general delinquent behavior for all youth at a 12 month follow up.	Students at higher risk (as evidenced by high pretest scores of violent behavior/attitudes) showed the most improvement.	Authors suggest that changes in the particular program might allow for a broader impact on the range of affected students; intervention programs should aim at the other contexts of the lives of youths, such as homes and communities, as well as implementing in-school treatments that involve or target teachers and administrators as well as students, in order to achieve a broader population of youth positively affected by such strategies.
Ferguson, C. J., San Miguel, C., Kilburn, J. C. J., & Sanchez, P. (2007).	42 school-based anti-bullying programs [meta-analysis]	The authors' lit review describes programs that include traditional anti-bullying programs following the Olweus model, Second Step, RIPP, school mediation, and cognitive behavioral approaches.	Review of programs finds that they have very little effect. Although programs show impacts, extent of positive change typically too small to have practical significance.	Authors conclude that results were best for programs that specifically targeted high-risk youth, although even here, the overall effect size was small.	Authors suggest: that bullies benefit from their social dominance and have little incentive to change their behavior. Second, bullying may have a genetic component that will require intervention programs to take this biological basis into account. Third, school violence has decreased dramatically in recent years so the best approach might

Sources in Lit Review Text	Intervention	Intervention focus	Outcomes/impacts	Outcome/impact notes	Recommendations
					be to target the seriously at-risk youth, not the general student population. Finally, from a policy perspective, it is unclear whether the small return is worth the cost. Some programs have actually increased not decreased, school aggression.
	Olweus Bullying Prevention Program	Uses student questionnaires, efforts to enforce rules regarding bullying, classroom discussions to increase awareness and empathy, interventions with students who are bullied as well as those who do the bullying, meetings with parents.			
Kaplan (2004) [review author]	Life Skills Training program (LST)	Designed to prevent or reduce the use of gateway drugs.	Kaplan identified as model program; details of why/how program meets criteria or reference to source evaluations not available from current review outline.		
Kaplan (2004) [review author]	various ‘scare’ programs or strategies		Kaplan's review asserts that these programs do not work and in fact such programs may have a negative effect on youth.		

Sources in Lit Review Text	Intervention	Intervention focus	Outcomes/impacts	Outcome/impact notes	Recommendations
see Ferguson review	Second Step Violence Prevention Program	Classroom-based program that has been effective in reducing antisocial behavior, improving social competence (pulled from Ferguson article).			

Other key ideas about prevention/intervention strategies from the articles reviewed (not specific to any particular intervention/program)

- Caldwell et al. (2004); Simons et al. (2006); Cross (2003); Choi et al (2006)
  - Research linking experience with racial discrimination as strong risk factor for young adult violent behavior; Caldwell et al suggest that therefore interventions and parenting strategies that promote a positive racial identity but also paint a realistic picture of racism in the U.S. may be helpful in imparting the skills necessary for effectively dealing with discrimination if and when it happens.

- Sabol, W. J., Coulton, C. J., & Korbin, J. E. (2004).- discussion of the capacity of communities to prevent youth violence, child maltreatment, and intimate partner violence.
  - Authors suggest that (1) programs should act as “institutions of social integration” (p. 332), providing opportunities for linkages between their clients and mainstream social institutions (e.g. linking at-risk youth programs with schools); (2) violence prevention programs should serve to strengthen community resources and ties within and outside the community; (3) the programs should work to develop or enhance ties within and across each of the three levels/domains of social control, e.g. the “coordinated community response initiatives” in domestic violence prevention.

- Cunningham et al. (2000)
  - Suggested implications of their study on gun-ownership patterns among youth: (1) school-based violence prevention programs should be aimed toward high-risk youth; (2) intervention attempts to decrease weapon carrying should be aimed toward other risk factors (e.g. bullying, substance use, violent behavior); (3) intervention efforts should be made across the various contexts in which youths interact, such as inside and outside of the school building; (4) intervention efforts need to focus on the different contexts in youths’ lives (e.g. home, neighborhood, school, community). Specific recommendations for school-based interventions: monitoring recognized high-risk areas, adjusting class schedules to account for student traffic flow, monitoring the school grounds, enforcing school-wide rules, specifically against bullying, and programs that reward pro-social behavior; training and skill building for students, including social skills training and problem solving skill building.

- Herrenkohl et al. (2001)
    - Indicate that the best methods to intervene and prevent violent behavior in adolescents are much the same as one would with younger children. The first step would be to increase the opportunities and rewards for prosocial activities. The second is to limit the opportunities youths have to engage in antisocial activities and interact with antisocial peers. Also, intervention and prevention programs should focus on skill enhancement of both the youths and their parents. Youths need better problem solving skills and recognize alternative methods of responding to situations rather than resorting to violence. Parents need to know age appropriate disciplinary methods and monitor their children.

- Spencer, Dupree, Cunningham, Harpalani, and Munoz-Miller (2003)
    - Recommend the use of proactive interventions that focus on individual vulnerability to risk factors, as opposed to reactive interventions that attempt to ameliorate mental health symptomatology after it has been observed as a result of violence or other trauma. From a policy perspective, Spencer et al. (2003, p. 46) argue that "public funding should allow mental health support and services to be available to students without requiring a diagnosis for a particular disorder." Spencer et al. (2003) also state that this support and services should be presented and administered in non-stigmatizing ways.

- Criteria for effective intervention/prevention strategies
    - Caldwell et al. (2004): suggest 'interventions that paint a realistic picture of racism in the U.S. are a good way to both bolster racial identity, while at the same time, impart the skills necessary for effectively dealing with discrimination if and when it happens' (YVRI p. 12).
    - Tolan (2001)/Farrel at al. (nd): 'caution against measurements of interventions that seek to affect group norms but use individuals as the unit of analysis and call for a more robust study that takes up these issues on a larger scale' (YVRI p. 21).

- Williams et al. (2002) & Braga et al. (2008) – 'Pulling Levers' strategy
    - Recommend attempts to engage entire networks and groups of youth through coordination of law enforcement agencies and community partners. 'Pulling levers' refers to a range of sanctions that are responsive to local variables. Direct and persistent communication with the target population is a key feature to this strategy.

- Buka et al. (2001), Cooley-Quille (2001), Brady (2006), Ng-mak (2004)
    - Suggest the development of programs and strategies that focus on developing positive coping mechanisms and helping youth build problem-solving skills as a means of directly addressing the impact of exposure to community violence.

- Ruchkin (2007) & Twemlow et al. (2002) [not in bibliography]
    - Support a multi-level, interdisciplinary approach to reducing youth violence that involves numerous stakeholders and creates partnerships. Recommended partners would include psychologists and other therapeutic services, law enforcement, mental health services, family and schools. Ruchkin (2007) specifically notes the need for increased cooperation between police and mental health services to provide youth with necessary therapeutic services.

Appendix B

Abstracts of Selected Model Prevention and Intervention Programs

Baker, L. L. (2003). Building peaceful communities. *UN Chronicle, 40*(3), 52

Baker discusses how the Peacemaker Corps Association (PCA) empowers both youth participants and adults who lead the programs. The PCA provides a two-day interactive training program to volunteers from the local community, who then become paid consultants to facilitate youth training sessions in the "art of peacemaking" (Baker, 2003, p. 52). The PCA has partnered with other local agencies to find willing adult volunteers. Darryl Jones of Younglife Urban observes, "The Peacemaker Corps gives tools and resources to the adults who know what the problems in their community are and inspires them, as well as the kids, to encourage others to focus on those problems. And by honouring them with a Peacemaker graduation certificate, proving they are a qualified facilitator, it gives the trainers not just a skill to include on their resume but also validates their ability to cultivate a movement toward peace and harmony in their own community" (Baker, 2003, p. 52). Baker argues that the PCA works to stimulate both self- and economic development and "regeneration" (p. 52), an approach with global applications. Mohammed Khan, a UN representative for SmallKindness believes that "The work that the Peacemaker Corps is doing is so important and needs to be instituted internationally, because the peace processes that work in the inner city can and will also work in places like the Balkans, Africa and Asia" (Baker, 2003, p. 52).

Bowen, L. K., Gwiasda, V., & Brown, M. M. (2004). Engaging community residents to prevent violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 19*(3), 356-367

Bowen, Gwiasda, and Brown (2004) examine two demonstration projects implemented by the Institute for Community Peace (ICP) to address locally-identified types of violence and link primary prevention efforts. They draw on the World Health Organization definition of violence: "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation" (Bowen, Gwiasda & Brown, 2004, p. 356-357), finding this definition useful as it addresses both individual and societal contexts of violence.

The ICP, founded in 1994, seeks to address the root causes of violence, especially youth violence, in the United States. According to the authors, the ICP recognizes violence as "a complex phenomenon arising from individual, systemic, and societal factors" and, therefore, employs a comprehensive community-based approach that draws potential solutions from local contexts, including from victims, survivors, and others directly affected by violence. "Ultimately, ICP believes that sustaining primary prevention rests on a community's willingness and ability to challenge normative behaviors and attitudes that support interpersonal and societal violence and to engage in civic activities to address the insidious effects of greater societal policies and values on community life" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown 2004, p. 357).

The study provides a literature review of community-based violence prevention efforts, suggesting that most empirical work is relatively recent. "Community" is viewed as an "intervening variable in terms of its contamination effects…or as a mediating factor through its protective abilities, primarily in school settings…rather than as an actor in violence prevention in and of itself" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown 2004, p. 358). Similarly, with the exception of some "sanctuary models" addressing treatment for trauma victims (e.g. victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and child abuse), community violence prevention efforts have not been sufficiently focused on "ways that the community can be mobilized to affect youth victimization and perpetration" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown 2004, p. 358). The authors cite only the Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) "collective efficacy" study to support the role of community organizing and development as a form of violence prevention.

The ICP implemented two demonstration projects to address this lack of information about the role of the community in preventing violence. In the first, the ICP provided continuing grants to eight communities (twelve were initially selected) over a six year period to assess local violence and community-led primary prevention

efforts. The communities were required to 1) "develop a broad-based, multisectoral, interdisciplinary collaborative that includes those most directly affected by violence;" 2) "conduct a needs and assets assessment;" and 3) "develop an implementation plan informed and supported by evaluation…ICP staff continually pushed communities toward primary prevention and sustainability by asking: Have you truly prevented violence, and if so, can you sustain it" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown 2004, p. 359)?

Through its efforts, the ICP developed a theory of change, an iterative (not linear) model that suggests a reflexive process of interaction between implementation, evaluation and refinement. The theory:

> posits that given the proper stimulus and support (financial, technical, and evaluation assistance), communities will mobilize to prevent violence and sustain peaceful outcomes. The process of preventing violence involves developing various capacities (e.g., collaboration, resident engagement) and skills (e.g., communications, data collection) within the community, and using these to assess, analyze, and engage the issues that cause violence. The development of capacities and skills in turn leads to essential changes in individual and community behavior, which ultimately leads to the development of policies, programs, and systems that fundamentally change the individual and community's relationship to violence and greater society's relationship to the community (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown 2004, p. 360).

Through its first effort, ICP identified a series of five developmental stages of community change (the first two are intervention stages and the last three are prevention stages): 1) creating safety – physical, emotional, and psychological – through collaborative development of public safety functions (e.g. police, CPS) and community healing efforts (e.g. public vigils, marches, commemorative murals); 2) understanding violence – through statistics and mapping of violence incidents, assets, and needs and qualitative data collection (community forums, interviews) "to identify gaps, resources, concerns and solutions;" 3) building community – collaborative activities that broadened community responsibility, engaged community members (adults and youth) in leadership development, worked to "enhance physical vitality", and addressed private as well as public violence; 4) promoting peace – examining root causes of violence (including interpersonal and intergroup hostility), the impacts of community stigma, strategies to challenge biased perceptions, and attention to changing community and individual norms contributing to violence (e.g. identity-based biases – gender, class, race – and power differentials); and 5) building democracy and social justice – addressing how public policies disproportionately affected the communities in question (e.g. incarceration, housing, environmental hazards) and the importance of resident participation in democratic processes, including increased political activism. Interesting enough, communities were surprised to find that they could not move forward "to sustain community violence prevention without addressing violence in the home," recognizing that youth perpetrators of violence "were often themselves victims of child maltreatment or witnesses to domestic violence" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown 2004, p. 362). This led to subsequent ICP grants to "five of the initial pilot communities to explore how to design and implement community-led primary prevention initiatives that lead to linked outcomes across domestic violence, child maltreatment, youth violence, and community violence" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown 2004, p. 363).

The authors recognize the disconnect – the silo effect - between various sectors/domains who act independently (often with different theoretical approaches, advocates, histories, prevention focus, and funding sources) in violence prevention efforts. Community members who seek and rely on child and family services may not differentiate between these various sectors but the lack of coordination can undermine service efforts. Furthermore, these various sectors appear to be unable to sustain prevention in the long term.

The second ICP demonstration – the Linkages Initiative – drew representatives from four sectors – child maltreatment, domestic violence, youth violence, and community violence – to develop an expertise on

community violence, provide cross-training at each site, and help with strategic planning efforts. Because of financial considerations, none of the pilot interventions plans were fully implemented. However, some initial linkages were made. At several sites, connections between youth violence and domestic violence were made quickly as efforts turned to addressing male socialization towards violent behaviors. Another site linked domestic violence, child maltreatment, and youth violence to "female norms around victimization, child rearing, and self-sufficiency" (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown 2004, p. 364).

Finally, community residents consistently agreed on root causes of these four forms of community violence (Bowen, Gwiasda, & Brown 2004, p. 364):

> poverty or stressful economic times, cultural norms that support violent behavior (especially with regard to the physical discipline of children), poor communication, ongoing witnessing of violence in homes and communities, alcohol and other substance abuse, environmental hazards, and intolerance for racial and cultural differences. Community members also suggested that intervening only with domestic violence, child maltreatment, youth violence, and community violence did not reach far enough into community violence problems and would not break the cycle of violence. They pointed out many other forms of violence that plagued their communities, including, for example, hate crimes, environmental violence, and punitive criminal justice policies that lead to massive disenfranchisement.

Residents believed that successful prevention and intervention efforts must include family mentoring and support, attention to physical and spiritual health, efforts to increase neighborhood relations and reduce isolation, community education to establish norms around peace, deterrence through community involvement of perpetrators in education and prevention strategies, and the importance of strong community bonds and stable communities (socially, economically, and environmentally).

The projects suggest that community engagement can positively impact primary violence prevention efforts, though significant community development efforts remain to further community building and community-based work on violence prevention and promoting peaceful communities.

CRAIG, W. M., & PEPLER, D. J. (2007). UNDERSTANDING BULLYING: FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE. *CANADIAN PSYCHOLOGY, 48*(2), 86-93.

This article describes a Canadian anti-bullying network. The discussion of bullying includes a discussion of the sources of bullies' power, which may be physical advantage, social advantage such as dominant social rule, higher peer social status, strength in numbers, or systemic power (e.g. race, economic advantage, etc.) Power also can be deployed through attack based on another's vulnerability (e.g. sexual orientation). The repetitious nature of bullying consolidates these power relationships, as the bullies learn "to use power and aggression to control and distress others" and victims becoming increasingly helpless to defend themselves (p. 86). The authors were involved in developing PREVNet – Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence, a national anti-bullying strategy that seeks to engage university, government, and community partners in developing innovative approaches to further healthy youth peer relationships. "PREVNet is now bringing together researchers and national organizations to enhance awareness, build research capacity, assess bullying problems, and promote evidence-based programs and effective policies across Canada (p. 86-87).

Craig and Pepler (2007) offer "key empirical messages" of PREVNet. First, bullying is wrong, resulting in long term problems for bullies (anti-social behavior and substance abuse) and victims (anxiety, depression, somatic complaints). The authors cite the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19, that "speaks to the rights of children who are on the receiving end of bullying and harassment" (p. 87). They suggest that the definition of child

abuse be extended to peer abuse. They also reiterate the essential social responsibilities of intervention and prevention shared by all who interact with children and youth. Second, bullying is a relationship problem, as these destructive relationship dynamics impact peer relationships in the moment and long term, including through intergenerational effects. Victims may withdraw from peer relationships and may be shunned by others, thus lacking the "normative social interactions that are critical to their healthy development and emerging relationship capacity" (p. 88). Helping children develop healthy social relationships arguably will reduce short-term and long-term social costs related to bullying, including costs for health care, education, law enforcement, etc. Third, promoting relationships and eliminating violence are everybody's responsibility. This systemic perspective engages all adults who work with children and youth (including teachers, parents, recreation workers, and others in the community) and reveals how adults may intervene to change as well as perpetuate bullying relationships through social interactions, environmental contexts, modeling behavior, etc. The systemic approach further requires coordination and mutual collaboration among community and public institutions (e.g. community partners and the school).

Finally, Craig and Pepler (2007) recognize the need for an empirically based approach that connects research to practice. PREVnet has engaged researchers and NGOs as collaborative partners in a "community-researcher partnership model" (p. 90). One main component is a "train the trainer" approach that draws on consultation with national partners to meet the needs of local stakeholders. "The information is tailored to meet the specific needs of NGOs and governments, which in turn disseminate the educational, assessment, intervention, and policy knowledge and technology to their diverse provincial and municipal stakeholders" (p. 90). The training rests on four pillars – education and training strategy, assessment, prevention and intervention, and policy and advocacy strategy.

Embry, D. D. (2001). Why more violent youth offenders? *Corrections Today, 63*(7), 96-8, 152-3. Retrieved from http://www.heavybadge.com/correct.htm

Embry, a child psychologist, explores the psychological factors contributing to youth violence. He begins by noting that juvenile depression increased dramatically during a 35-year period, from 2% of juveniles in 1960 to about 25% of adolescents today. He observes that depression is "socially contagious" (p. 97), with depressed parents passing on and attending to their children's negative behaviors more than positive ones. He cites studies (e.g., Schwartz et al, 1990) that suggest "this depressed style of parenting predicts a threefold increase in adverse outcomes for children, such as delinquency and substance abuse" (p. 97). Embry also believes that depression rates are higher for those paid to care for youths, for example, teachers, probation officers, and corrections officers.

Embry suggests that these "rising rates of community-level depression" result in an increase of violent youthful offenders because: 1) depressed adults pay more attention to negative rather than prosocial behaviors, which studies have shown result in anti-social youth; 2) increased irritability, social withdrawal, and social isolation associated with depression result in negative peer interactions and increasingly anti-social behaviors; and 3) depression can magnify suicidal ideations and actions, including "terroristic" revenge against those perceived to have caused pain and harm (e.g. Columbine).

Embry addresses bipolar disorder, early aggressive behavior, genetic history, and lead exposure as contributing factors to youth violence and aggression. He offers several suggestions for prevention, acknowledging that the list is not exhaustive. These include: "adopt the good behavior game in all elementary schools" (an approach aimed at reducing disruptive aggressive behaviors); "promote the use of a Triple-P Program in a community or state" (Triple-P focuses on family interventions to enhance family protective factors and reduce risk factors related to severe behavioral and emotional problems); use genograms (maps of family behavioral outcomes) to determine family

history as part of the screening process and suggest potentially effective interventions; and increase maternal care during pregnancy, including intake of Vitamin C and folic acid (to combat the effects of lead exposure) and smoking cessation efforts (to reduce fetal exposure to nicotine and avoid its deleterious effects, including increased aggression, inattention, and other potential anti-social factors) (p. 98-99). NOTE that Embry (2001, p. 98) claims that Triple P "has the strongest empirical support of any family-based preventive intervention with children, particularly for those at risk for conduct problems and substance abuse."

Ferguson, C. J., Miguel, C. S., Kilburn, J. C., Jr, & Sanchez, P. (2007). The effectiveness of school-based anti-bullying programs: A meta-analytic review. *Criminal Justice Review, 32*(4), 401-414.

Ferguson, San Miguel, Kilburn, and Sanchez (2007) offer a meta-analysis exploring 42 studies published between 1995-2006 involving school-based bullying prevention programs and finds that they have very little effect. The authors' review describes programs that include traditional anti-bullying programs following the Olweus model, Second Step, RIPP, school mediation, and cognitive behavioral approaches. "Thus, it can be said that although anti-bullying programs produce a small amount of positive change, it is likely that this change is too small to be practically significant or noticeable. Results were best for programs that specifically targeted high-risk youth, although even here, the overall effect size was small" (p. 408). The authors make several suggestions. First, they suggest that bullies benefit from their social dominance and have little incentive to change their behavior. Second, bullying may have a genetic component that will require intervention programs to take this biological basis into account. Third, school violence has decreased dramatically in recent years so the best approach might be to target the seriously at-risk youth, not the general student population. Finally, from a policy perspective, it is unclear whether the small return is worth the cost. Some programs have actually increased, not decreased, school aggression. They conclude, "Results of this study suggest that anti-bullying programs produce an effect that is positive and statistically significant but practically negligible" (p. 412).

Peacemaker Corps, 2008, retrieved November 24, 2008, http://peacemakercorps.org/indexin.html

According to the Peacemaker Corps website, http://peacemakercorps.org/indexin.html, the PCA seeks to "facilitate and support peace and tolerance education among the youth of the world. The Peacemaker Corps empowers generations to come together and make our world a peaceful, compassionate, safe and tolerant place to live." The PCA offers a seven-module curriculum that includes the following (PCA, 2008): (note that the following are direct quotes)

- Issues in Youth Violence: Facilitators and students discuss the patterns and prevalence of different types of offenses and victimization. Discussion also includes topics such as domestic violence, date rape, youth gangs, urban terrorism and other issues relevant to today's youth. Additionally, participants discuss perceptions of youth crime, terrorism and crime reduction programs.

- Tolerance & Diversity Training: Participants discuss attitudes within their communities and take part in bias awareness exercises. Students participate in exercises that highlight how their own prejudices affect relations with others. Students also examine how cultural conflicts affect their dealings with others and how these conflicts can lead to resentment, continuing problems and terrorist activities.

- Ethics: Participants are asked to identify ethical behaviors. Scenarios are discussed among the participants to develop a consensus on proper reactions to difficult situations in which their ethics may be challenged.

• Mentoring: Participants discuss the important components of mentoring programs and are exposed to available peer mentoring programs. Through this training, participants learn methods for establishing their own effective programs.

• Conflict Resolution: Students learn conflict resolution skills by enacting and critiquing mock conflict situations. They acquire the necessary skills in cooperation, bias awareness, communication, and problem solving to become successful community Peacemakers.

• Peer Mediation: Peacemakers learn negotiation and communication skills that are essential for amicably settling disputes between their peers. Through observing model mediation sessions and by working through mock mediations, students learn to take responsibility for their actions and make choices that will, in turn, reduce the traditional disciplinary role taken by schools.

• Community Organizing: Students learn the nuts and bolts of community organizing. In this session, participants learn to develop programs, attract and keep participants, and rally support from within their communities. Students present their own plans to local community members and receive constructive feedback on their approach to community organizing.

Peskin, M. F., Tortolero, S. R., & Markham, C. M. (2006). Bullying and victimization among Black and Hispanic adolescents. *Adolescence, 41*, 467-484.

These authors note the relative lack of research on bullying and victimization of Black and Hispanic middle and high school students and seek to fill this gap. The authors sampled eight predominately Black and Hispanic secondary schools in a large urban school district in Texas. All eight schools participated in the U.S. DOJ-funded Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative and in all schools the majority of students were of lower socioeconomic status. [NOTE that although the authors discuss sampling the students it is not clear why these eight schools were selected.] They used various sampling methods to select student participants to complete student surveys with a resulting n = 1413 for final sample for analysis.

Peskin, Tortolero & Markham (2006) used an English pen and pencil Scantron survey with bullying and victimization measures adapted from scales developed by Espelage and Holt (2001). Analyses included descriptive statistics of demographic characteristics; prevalence estimates of classification of bullies, victims, and bully-victims; and correlations by gender, grade, and race-ethnicity.

Among other findings, Peskin, Tortolero & Markham (2006) found that compared to Hispanic students, Blacks were more likely to be bullies, victims, and bully-victims; the prevalence of bullying tended to increase until 9th grade and begin decreasing thereafter; the prevalence of victimization peaked in 6th grade and decreased through 12th grade, except of another peak in 9th grade; the most prevalent forms of bullying were teasing and upsetting other students for fun, with males significantly more likely to engage in teasing and harassing behaviors; the most prevalent form of victimization was name-calling by others; males were more likely to be hit and pushed, and made fun of, than females; and Black students "had a higher prevalence of being picked on, being made fun of, and being called names, and more than twice the prevalence of getting hit or pushed compared to Hispanic students" (Peskin, Tortolero & Markham, 2006, p. 474).

Peskin, Tortolero & Markham (2006) suggest interventions in middle school, with targeted activities focusing on reducing teasing and name calling. More research needs to be done to explore bullying in the context of racial dominance as well as the influence of racial dynamics on bullying. Finally, researchers should develop a standardized measure drawn from youth reports to assess bullying behaviors.

Sabol, W. J., Coulton, C. J., & Korbin, J. E. (2004). Building community capacity for violence prevention. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 19*(3), 322-340.

Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) examine the capacity of communities to prevent youth violence, child maltreatment, and intimate partner violence. They frame their discussion through three critical questions: "What does the research tell us about community capacity to prevent violence that exceeds the efforts of the individuals who live there? How can communities be made more protective? And how can changes in a community's capacity to prevent violence be measured" (Sabol, Coulton, & Korbin, 2004, p. 322).

The authors suggest that "the role of the community in preventing violence varies among the domains." They identify social disorganization and collective efficacy literatures as providing the most fully developed theories about community violence prevention. Ecological and community based approaches further are used to describe the "nested levels of interactions among individuals, families, and communities" when examining child maltreatment and domestic violence domains. While Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) indicate that child maltreatment and domestic violence arise in "the nature of interactions within and across ecological levels," how families and individuals mediate community ecological effects remains unclear (p. 323).

Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) cite research addressing the structural characteristics of neighborhoods with high concentrations of interpersonal violence, including poverty, racial segregation, and single-parent families, but argue that these "persistent correlations" do not explain the processes by which violence arises or can be prevented in communities. They suggest that the concept of social disorganization has developed from Shaw and McKay's (1942) early emphasis on community characteristics/structure to a more "systematic view" that considers the complex relational networks and social ties, as well as "ongoing socialization processes, that characterize communities as primarily responsible for social cohesion and "community capacity to prevent violence" Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin 2004, p. 324).

They link this systematic view to a related conceptual development, that of social capital, which they suggest reveals the significance of shared norms, networks, trust, communication, and mutual obligations within social structures (p. 324):

> Although social disorganization theory is rooted in the norms arising from socialization and kinship networks, social capital theory relates to the connections between persons and positions within communities and the ability to share norms within communities. Neighborhoods deficient in social capital are less able to realize common values and maintain the informal social controls that foster safety.

This view of community capacity to prevent violence grounded in "strong" ties within neighborhoods and communities has been challenged on two grounds. First, some scholars suggest that social networks, especially those based on family and kinship, do not produce the "collective resources" necessary for effective social control as they may be isolated from other communities and social resources (e.g. Wilson, 1996, cited in S, C. & K. 2004) and may include law-breakers within their ranks as well (e.g. Pattillo-McCoy, 1999, cited in Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin, 2004). Furthermore, as Sampson, Morenott & Earls (1999, cited in Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin 2004) suggest, shared community expectations may exist even in the absence of "thick" neighborhood ties.

Sampson et al.'s (1997, 1999) concept of collective efficacy, then, operates without reliance on strong ties or associations. Rather, Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004 p. 325) suggest that collective efficacy reflects "a combination of working trust and shared willingness of residents to engage in social control…(with) an emphasis on shared beliefs in the capacity of the community to achieve an intended effect." Strong ties may provide a resource potential but shared expectations about engagement in social control efforts more accurately reflect the

capacity of a community to act.

The authors end their discussion of youth violence by drawing on Bursik and Gramsick's (1993) three-level conceptualization of social control – private, parochial, and state controls. They argue that state controls work to support private and parochial social control efforts in stable communities, enhancing the collective efficacy of community residents.

Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004 p. 326) next turn to a discussion of child maltreatment, which includes both violent and nonviolent acts, and "is highly correlated with poverty" and social isolation. They briefly discuss ecological theories (e.g. Belsky, 1993) that explain child maltreatment through a "nested set of systems at the individual, family, community, and sociocultural levels" (p. 326). Cicchetti and Lynch's (1993) transactional model of risk and protective factors addresses children's developing capacities to protect themselves. Child maltreatment also has been linked to neighborhood structure and processes, including elements of poverty and residential mobility, though few empirical studies have assessed the complex multilevel dynamics of individual factors, neighborhood structural characteristics, and neighborhood social processes. In one multilevel study (Coulton, Korbin, and Su, 1999) neighborhood factors appeared to be related to child maltreatment reporting rates but not the potential for child abuse.

In comparing ecological approaches to youth violence and child maltreatment, the authors suggest that poverty and social isolation are similar factors in each domain. Additionally "routine activities" plays an important role in bringing motivated offenders and potential victims together. These domains may be differentiated through social location (public youth violence versus private child maltreatment), the role of the community (community prevention of youth violence versus family as a mediating consideration in child maltreatment), and relative causality (community violence affects the likelihood and development of child maltreatment).

Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) ask how we can build more protective communities. Drawing on the three spheres of social control (discussed above) – the private sphere (e.g. family), the parochial sphere (e.g. voluntary associations or groups), and state controls (government sponsored agencies that may provide punitive actions or resources) – they suggest that "neighborhoods can be strengthened by increasing the resources available to them or by increasing the connectedness within and between neighborhoods" (p. 329). Capacity, then, involves relational considerations, "building bonds or 'bridges'" among organizations to share resources and "connect the community into a broader social fabric" (p. 330). At the private and parochial levels, more needs to be learned about how strong social ties (e.g. kin and family) can be used to foster the trust and social control needed to enhance community capacity and collective efficacy. Community justice models also may provide mechanisms for community engagement as they "build social control through primary ties in collaboration with formal sanctioning institutions" (p. 330). This approach also raises questions about the appropriate balance of diverse social control methods. Some studies have shown, for example, that strong state control can potentially weaken social control through the other domains (e.g. Lynch & Sabol, 2001, suggesting increased fear of crime related to high incarceration rates actually decreased community solidarity and, arguably, collective efficacy.) [Discussion of domestic violence and child maltreatment omitted.]

Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) identify two strong limitations to building protective communities – hypersegregation and labor market isolation – that reflect macro forces at play beyond the reach of community control. This social and geographic isolation of predominantly poor communities results not from voluntary decisions made by residents but by systemic policies and practices that effectively disadvantage the poor (and people of color) in housing and employment opportunities. Addressing these problems requires a "vertical" strategy of violence prevention that focuses on "the linkages between community life and decisions made a higher

levels of power outside of the community" (p. 332). Potentially promising approaches include economic empowerment zones, Jobs Corps, and school to work transition programs.

What are the implications of this discussion on the development and structuring of violence prevention programs? First, Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) suggest that programs should act as "institutions of social integration" (p. 332), providing opportunities for linkages between their clients and mainstream social institutions (e.g. linking at-risk youth programs with schools). Second, violence prevention programs should serve to strengthen community resources and ties within and outside the community. Third, the programs should work to develop or enhance ties within and across each of the three levels/domains of social control, e.g. the "coordinated community response initiatives" in domestic violence prevention. In summary, violence prevention programs (p. 334):

> can nevertheless be part of a community- building effort. Whether they achieve this goal is related to the extent to which the programs (a) facilitate social interactions that provide resources to distressed areas (e.g. establish weak ties or bridging social capital), (b) use state controls to provide the correct balance based on a community's need, and (c) produce enduring patterns of interactions that contribute to the mutual trust and capacity for collective action by the community.

Finally, Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin (2004) ask how we might measure changes in community capacity to prevent violence. They suggest that "community capacity is both a latent and active phenomenon: the stores of resource must lead to action to prevent violence" (p. 334). What must be measured, then, is "whether the community acts effectively and what social structures and processes enable that effective action" (p. 334). Sampson et al. measured collective efficacy by examining resident perceptions of community social cohesion and their tendency to act to accomplish community goals. An additional aspect needing attention and measurement is the linkages between communities often based on weak ties that may further economic or racial integration. Finally, institutional resources must be measured through an assessment of organizational capacity to further social control efforts.

These measurement approaches will involve a number of issues, including definitions of community or neighborhood boundaries and deployment of appropriate approaches for each distinct sphere/level (e.g. parenting role models and institutional support for child maltreatment, state support for victims for domestic violence interventions). The authors conclude that multiple methods (quantitative and qualitative) as well as multiple perspectives (parents, children) will provide valuable approaches for "uncovering the structures and processes that contribute to community capacity for violence prevention" (Sabol, Coulton, and Korbin 2004, p. 336).

WANDERSMAN, A., & FLORIN, P. (2003). COMMUNITY INTERVENTIONS AND EFFECTIVE PREVENTION. *AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST, 58*(6/7), 441-448

Wandersman and Florin take up questions of successful community-level intervention, examining existing empirical literature to reveal problems with community intervention efforts. Although they address health and wellness interventions, some of their concepts may be useful here. They speak in terms of "domains", including family, school, and community systems. Wandersman and Florin (2003, p. 441) begin by defining community level interventions as "multicomponent interventions that generally combine individual and environmental change strategies across multiple settings to prevent dysfunction and promote well-being among population groups in a defined local community." They address the relationship between theoretical approach and intervention, recognizing that intervention strategies will depend on the rationales adopted and accepted. For example, the community development approach "emphasizing grassroots participation, increasing organizational linkages, and strengthening community problem solving…(has) served as (a) catalyst for public agency and foundation initiatives

that produced a proliferation of community-level interventions over the past decade" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 441). Wandersman and Florin (2003, p. 442) divide these interventions into "research-driven prevention" reflecting academic approaches and "community driven interventions" that arise from everyday activities in schools and other community organizations, often sustained through "community coalitions" of diverse groups aimed at addressing a shared concern. They warn, however, against dichotomizing these approaches (research v. community), seeking to present instead a typology that recognizes existing and possible hybrids as well. Wandersman and Florin (2003) provide examples of successful research-driven prevention trials addressing substance abuse prevention, smoking prevalence, and high-risk drinking and alcohol trauma as well as community driven prevention efforts with positive outcomes in the areas of reducing adolescent pregnancy, immunizations, arson prevention, and substance abuse prevention. Note that program names/locations are given for both research and community driven approaches. They then turn to the "mixed record" of outcomes derived from reviews and cross-site evaluations of prevention efforts.

Citing Pentz's (1998) meta-analysis of 17 research driven studies with community organization components, for example, Wandersman and Florin (2003, p. 444) indicate that "community-level interventions that did not show outcomes tended to be those that focused on community public education or organizing or training community leaders for prevention; those that did show outcomes tended to be multicomponent interventions (e.g., school, policy, parent, and media programs)." Similarly, cross-site meta-analyses of community-driven coalitions also show mixed results (e.g. Kreuter et al., 2000; Yin et al., 1997; Hallfors et al., 2002). Wandersman and Florin (2003, p. 444) conclude from these various studies "a call for further improvements, including greater articulation of theory, increased sensitivity of measures, improved (or different) methods or designs, and expanded use of best practices (Hallfors et al., 2002; Kreuter et al., 2000; Pentz,2003; Roussos & Fawcett, 2000)." They recognize outcome and process issues that include the methodological difficulties of detecting and determining outcomes in community level interventions, for example, potential problems with random assignments that may exclude some from receiving intervention, problems with appropriate comparison or matching sites, and difficulties drawing causal connections between program-specific outcomes and potential community wide impact. They cite Stevenson and Mitchell's (2002) "review of collaborative effects on substance abuse prevention (that) categorized studies into three broad strategies: building capacity, increasing service integration, and influencing policy change (and) concluded that the strongest evidence existed for the strategies targeting policy change (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 444). The authors suggest another potential issue is that "community-level interventions are complex and difficult interventions to implement, whether they are community trials or community coalitions" (Waterman and Florin, 2003, p. 444). They continue (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 444):

> Wandersman, Goodman, and Butterfoss (1997) used an open systems framework to describe coalitions as organizations that require resources, organizational structure, activities, and outcomes. The framework suggests that coalitions are complex organizations that require considerable effort to operate successfully—in collaboration, organization, and planning as well as in the implementation of multiple programs and policies (e.g., Florin, Mitchell, & Stevenson, 1993).

Wandersman and Florin conclude that prevention science is "necessary but not sufficient" for bringing about successful prevention programs. They note, citing Nation et al (2003), "nine characteristics that were consistently associated with effective prevention programs: comprehensive, varied teaching methods, sufficient dosage, research-based/theory-driven, positive relationships, appropriately timed, socioculturally relevant, outcome evaluation, and well-trained staff" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 445). While recognizing the "technology transfer approach" to "bring science to practice" (p. 444), they suggest that additional efforts must be implemented to bridge the gap between science and practice in prevention. They suggest that "(a) prevention providers must be enhanced to perform effective prevention and (b) funders should contribute to capacity building

by providing improved technical assistance systems for communities engaged in prevention" (Wandersman and Florin, 2003, p. 445).

To accomplish these goals, Wandersman and Florin recommend a "results-based accountability approach" derived from the Getting to Outcomes: Methods and Tools for Planning, Evaluation, and Accountability (GTO) (Wandersman et al, 1999). The GTO approach involves responding to ten accountability questions, as indicated in Table 1 below (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 446).

Table 1
The 10 Accountability Questions and How to Answer Them

Accountability question	Literatures for answering the question
1. What are the needs and resources in your organization/school/community/state?	1. Needs assessment, resource assessme
2. What are the goals, target population, and desired outcomes (objectives) for your school/community/state?	2. Goal setting
3. How does the intervention incorporate knowledge of science and best practices in this area?	3. Science and best practices
4. How does the intervention fit with other programs already being offered?	4. Collaboration, cultural competence
5. What capacities do you need to put this intervention into place with quality?	5. Capacity building
6. How will this intervention be carried out?	6. Planning
7. How will the quality of implementation be assessed?	7. Process evaluation
8. How well did the intervention work?	8. Outcome and impact evaluation
9. How will continuous quality improvement strategies be incorporated?	9. Total quality management, continuous quality improvement
10. If the intervention (or components) is successful, how will the intervention be sustained?	10. Sustainability and institutionalization

The second strategy, technical assistance, complements the first by focusing on "the conditions in which prevention programs are developed, implemented, and evaluated and works to build professional, organizational, and systemic capacity (Crisp, Swerissen, & Duckett, 2000)" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 446). Technical assistance design challenges may include "allocating resources among competing priorities, balancing capacity-building and program dissemination missions, collaborating across categorical program areas, and assuring sufficient dose strength for technical assistance interventions" (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p. 447). The authors suggest that little data exists addressing the success of technical assistance programs on community level intervention outcomes, including the level of assistance necessary to accomplish desired improvements/results.

APPENDIX C

CULTURAL COMPETENCY FOR NONPROFIT MENTAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS (2008)

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