

## 2006 APIN Conference – Youth & Gangs

### Small Group Discussions - Summary (15 responses total)

*How do we keep our clients and children safe from partners or ex-partners who may be involved in gangs?*

#### Response #1

- empower women:
  - emotionally connect to mom
  - provide family with personal resources
  - work on family attachment
  - non-judgmental
  - trust between worker/client
  - safety – child welfare issues – how to keep families together
- needs to be assessed with individual workers – their experiences and understanding – are they scared?

#### Response #2

- our client needs to want to be separate from gang life – we need to give them tools, resources & connections to keep themselves and their kids safe – give them a non-judgmental atmosphere of support & encouragement

#### Response #3

- have more support out there for younger children – more programs

#### Response #4

- need safe services for family

#### Response #5

- advertise safe places to live & receive health care

#### Response #6

- give resources
- be aware
- assess the home for risk factors

#### Response #7

- ask the client first!
- then offer them the services available in their community
- explore other options that are sensitive to the client's needs, e.g. relocate to another family member's residence

#### Response #8

- put funding in place for appropriate, real life supports & resources
- include education in planning as they are aware of issues usually before other professionals are aware

Response #9

- give other alternatives
- find other positive supports
- support in moving if required/relocate

Response #10

- have something like a second stage housing program (W.I.S.H.) for gang members and their families to support them when they leave

Response #11

- ensure supervision is adequate to the level of risk
- be involved enough to be able to accurately assess risk – this would mean establishing a trusting relationship with parent(s) and talking to children
- make a safety plan that is realistic

Response #12

- help them and talk to them – listen to them about why they are in gangs or how they can not go in that direction
- encourage them to make different and better choices

Response #13

- more awareness on consequences from illegal activities that are generated by gangs
- programs that offer help/referrals and networking with other organizations

Response #14

- protection orders
- provide community referrals

Response #15

- Kids Help Phone
- Safety plans developed – relative's home, safe place to go

***How do we keep our frontline workers safe in the community? Does your organization or department currently have a policy addressing safety protocols for frontline workers?***

Response #1

- knowledge of the culture of gangs
- teams to go into certain areas
- cell phones

Response #2

- we do not share our personal info with our clients (i.e. phone or address)
- we do home visits, etc. in pairs
- we use cell phones and radios to keep contact when off-site

Response #3

- listen to troubled children/youth – they need a lot of support in their community. They need a chance at life. Some of us have no one to turn to, too.

Response #6

- send frontline workers to the home in pairs because of risk factors in the home – need to identify these areas

Response #7

- go out in pairs
- on an activity sheet, identify your location, phone number & name of person you are visiting
- have a cell phone & personal system device (alarm)
- meet at another destination, e.g. park, coffee house
- have knowledge of your exits and listen to your intuition

Response #8

- depends on what type of frontline work is being done – all places need to have a safety plan, based on their needs

Response #9

- buddy system
- CPI training
- Effectiveness training

Response #11

- rely on frontline worker's assessment of personal safety
- partner home visits always where there is potential for risk

Response #12

- at any school, there is a no headwear policy, no graffiti, etc.
- make rules so people obey them

Response #13

- community awareness
- contact/speak to gang reps to discuss with them what our roles are
- safety protocols for our organization are in place as of February 2006 – we have safe places in North End that we can go to if in trouble

Response #14

- panic buttons
- security camera
- 2 workers must be present at all times

Response #15

- develop safety plan with supervisor on what to do with children in unsafe scenario
- have thorough intake assessment – ask potential clients if their children are gang involved

***When does an agency decide to pull out a worker and what are the potential implications of that decision? How might negative impacts be lessened?***

Response #1

- when clear and present danger

Response #2

- if there is any threat (verbal or physical) we pull out. Contact by phone or letter at a later date to offer resources. For younger children, we have a banning system from the Centre based on how bad the situation was.

Response #6

- depends on risk factors (drug house, alcohol, mental issues, any safety issues, threats)

Response #7

- when personal safety becomes an issue
- find another way to communicate the supports and resources available to them by mail or phone
- establish a trusting and respectful rapport with the client and their friends or family members who are supports to them

Response #8

- the situation of the “gang” has transpired through 3-5 generations of “institutional imposition” – we need to be patient because we are planting seeds to grow. We need to maintain support indefinitely.
- our approach/intervention needs to be collective – “a village” – education, child welfare, social agencies, justice, etc.

Response #9

- when the worker’s safety is in jeopardy
- as a last resort

Response #11

- as long as there is risk, we are mandated to ensure children & families are safe, therefore are unable to “pull out worker” – if that is not an option, we are obligated both to worker and family to provide safety

Response #13

- when a worker's life is in danger/gets too involved emotionally
- limit workers to regular hours of work
- for clients, building and losing the sense of trust is jeopardized

Response #15

- when a worker feels unsafe or is threatened by client – that really leaves families without the help they need, in a vulnerable spot