



Lost Youth: A County-by-County Analysis of California Homicide Victims Ages 10 to 24

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Violence Policy Center

Lost Youth

**A County-by-County Analysis of 2012
California Homicide Victims Ages 10 to 24**

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INTRODUCTION : HISTORICAL DATA AND THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE

Homicide is the second leading cause of death for California youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 years old.

In 2011, the most recent year for which complete data is available from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), homicides in California were outpaced only by unintentional injuries—the majority of which were motor vehicle fatalities—as the leading cause of death for this age group. Of the 633 homicides reported, 83 percent were committed with firearms. Nationally in 2011, California had the 15th highest homicide rate for youth and young adults ages 10 to 24.¹ (Please see Appendix One for a chart ranking the states by homicide rate for this age group for the year 2011.)

Broken out by gender, homicide retains its number-two ranking for males and drops to number four for females for this age group in California. For males, of the 581 homicides reported, firearms were the weapon used in 84 percent of the killings. For females, of the 52 homicides reported, firearms were the weapon used in 67 percent of the killings.

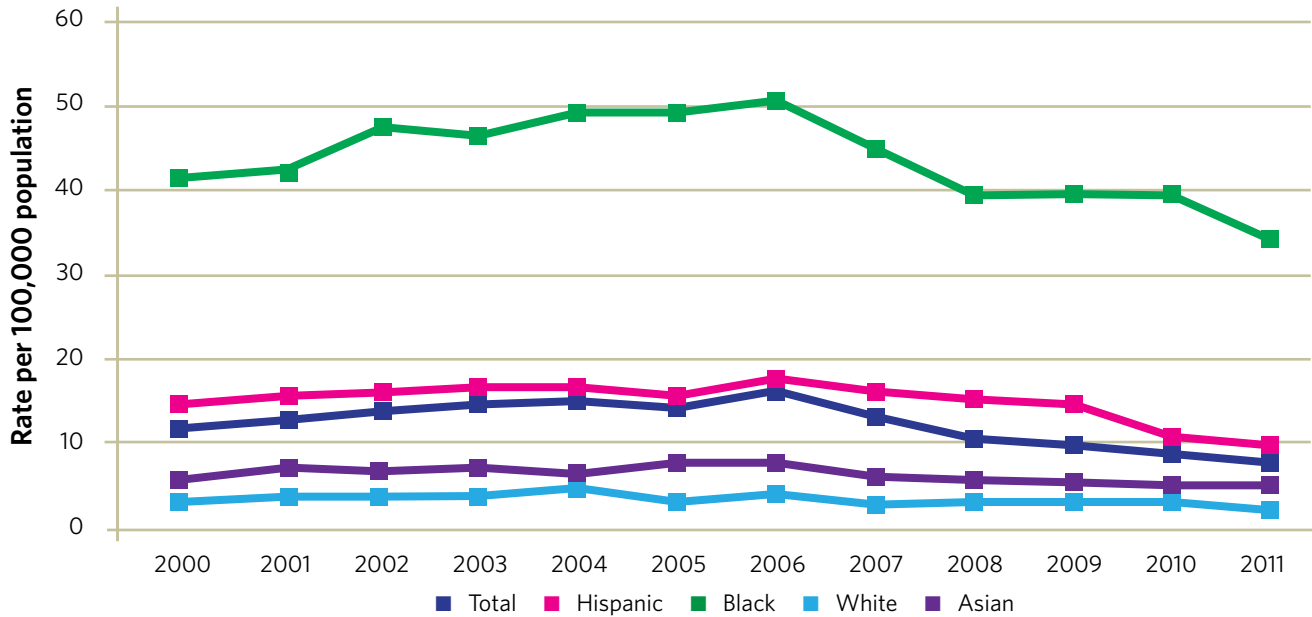
When analyzed by race and ethnicity, however, the rankings become less uniform and the severe effects of homicide on specific segments of this age group increasingly stark.² For blacks ages 10 to 24 in California in 2011, homicide was *the* leading cause of death. For Hispanics it was the second leading cause of death. For Asian/Pacific Islanders it was the third leading cause of death. For whites it was the fourth leading cause of death, and for American Indian and Alaska Natives it was the fifth leading cause of death.

2011 LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH IN CALIFORNIA, BOTH SEXES AGES 10 TO 24, BY RACE					
	Hispanic	Black	White	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native
1	Unintentional Injury	Homicide	Unintentional Injury	Unintentional Injury	Unintentional Injury
2	Homicide	Unintentional Injury	Suicide	Suicide	Suicide
3	Suicide	Suicide	Malignant Neoplasms	Homicide	Heart Disease
4	Malignant Neoplasms	Malignant Neoplasms	Homicide	Malignant Neoplasms	Liver Disease
5	Heart Disease	Heart Disease	Heart Disease	Heart Disease	Homicide

1 All leading cause of death data and state rankings calculated by the Violence Policy Center using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's WISQARS (Web-Based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System) database (<http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html>).

2 Race and ethnicity are two separate designations. To calculate Hispanic ethnicity, for all races Hispanic ethnicity was excluded from race data (e.g., white non-Hispanic, black non-Hispanic, etc.). For the purposes of this study, these definitions will be presented without the modifying descriptions "non-Hispanic" and all races and ethnicity will be referred to as race.

Homicide Rates in California, Ages 10 to 24, 2000 to 2011



As detailed in the graph above, from 2000 through 2011 the homicide rate among black youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in California was far higher than the overall California homicide rate among the same age group.³ The rate for Hispanic youth in California was also consistently above the state’s overall rate for this age group, while the rates for Asian and white youth were below the state’s overall rate. The rates for American Indian and Alaska Natives are not included because the National Center for Health Statistics suppresses data if fewer than 10 deaths are reported for a given population. A chart containing the supporting data for this graph follows on the next page.

However, in the six-year period from 2006 through 2011, the homicide rate for this age group declined from a high of 12.75 per 100,000 in 2006 to 7.73 per 100,000 in 2011—a decrease of 39 percent. Similar declines were seen in the most severely affected segments of this population group.

For blacks, the homicide rate dropped from 50.44 per 100,000 to 34.76 per 100,000, a decrease of 31 percent. For Hispanics, the homicide rate dropped from 15.76 per 100,000 to 9.18 per 100,000, a decrease of 42 percent. For whites, the homicide rate dropped from 3.30 per 100,000 to 1.60 per 100,000, a decrease of 52 percent. And for Asian/Pacific Islanders, the homicide rate dropped from 6.29 per 100,000 to 3.09 per 100,000, a decrease of 51 percent.

And often left unstated is the fact that the effects of violence extend far beyond the flesh and blood toll measured in homicides and non-fatal injuries. And, as detailed in the next section, an additional heavy price is exacted on family members and entire communities: the trauma that results from the psychological stress of living with such violence.

TRAUMA AND YOUTH

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) identifies 13 types of trauma, including community violence.⁴ Community violence is defined as “exposure to intentional acts of interpersonal violence committed

3 Per capita homicide rates for specific races ages 10 to 24 years old determined by the Violence Policy Center using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s WISQARS (Web-Based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System) database (<http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html>).

4 The types of trauma include community violence, domestic violence, early childhood trauma, medical trauma, natural disasters, neglect, physical abuse, refugee and war zone trauma, school violence, sexual abuse, terrorism, and traumatic grief. “Effects of Complex Trauma,” NCTSN, The National Child

**CALIFORNIA HOMICIDE RATES FOR VICTIMS AGES 10 TO 24 BY RACE, 2000 TO 2011
(ALL RATES PER 100,000 FOR RELEVANT POPULATION)**

Year	Hispanic	Black	White	Asian/Pacific Islander	Overall
2000	13.55	41.35	2.83	4.22	10.33
2001	14.16	42.05	3.35	5.59	11.03
2002	14.47	47.49	3.36	5.33	11.65
2003	14.80	47.17	3.23	5.54	11.77
2004	14.99	49.47	3.48	4.44	12.02
2005	14.53	49.42	2.93	6.03	11.85
2006	15.76	50.44	3.30	6.29	12.75
2007	14.27	45.02	2.25	4.42	11.14
2008	12.92	39.21	2.40	4.27	10.16
2009	12.00	39.54	2.29	3.34	9.67
2010	9.64	39.55	2.10	3.12	8.43
2011	9.18	34.76	1.60	3.09	7.73

in public areas by individuals who are not intimately related to the victim.”⁵ While community violence is largely concentrated in urban centers, research on its prevalence reveals that among youth ages 10 to 16, nationwide more than one-third have experienced violence, and an even larger number have witnessed violence in their homes or communities.⁶ When there has been exposure to multiple violent events, it is referred to as complex trauma.⁷ The trauma associated with witnessing violence or experiencing it first-hand has been linked with a variety of negative outcomes that can leave a lasting mark on an individual’s actions and well-being. Some of these outcomes include mental health problems, developmental and behavior issues, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as costs to society.

Compared to other nations, youth and young adults in the United States have far higher firearm homicide rates.⁸

Traumatic Stress Network (<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma/effects-of-complex-trauma>).

5 “Community Violence,” NCTSN, The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma/community-violence>).

6 “Community Violence: Effects on Children and Teens,” United States Department of Veterans Affairs, PTSD: National Center for PTSD (<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/types/violence/effects-community-violence-children.asp>).

7 “Complex Trauma,” NCTSN, The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma>).

8 A 2011 study published in *The Journal of Trauma—Injury, Infection, and Critical Care* compared firearm deaths for a slightly different age group, youth and young adults ages 15 to 24, in 23 high-income countries in 2003: “The U.S. age group at greatest relative risk of homicide is the 15 year olds to 24 year olds, and compared with young people in these other high-income nations, U.S. youth have a firearm homicide rate 42 times higher, and an overall homicide rate more than 14 times higher. Both young men and young women aged 15 to 24 are at higher risk: young men are being killed with firearms at

Decades of research confirm that children and adolescents who witness shootings are susceptible to prolonged trauma.⁹ Moreover, "...the effects of repeated exposures to violence are additive, with each exposure tending to exacerbate or renew symptoms caused by earlier exposures. Chronic trauma, such as that associated with living in a violent neighborhood, can produce particularly severe reactions."¹⁰

Nationally, children's exposure to shootings rises sharply in both past-year and lifetime incidence from one age group to the next. The federal National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence (NatSCEV), conducted between January and May 2008, found that while 1.1 percent of children younger than two years old were exposed to shootings in the past year, 10.2 percent of 14- to 17-year olds had witnessed a shooting in the past year. Looking at children who had witnessed a shooting during their lifetimes, while 3.5 percent of two- to five-year-olds had witnessed a shooting during their lifetimes, for 14- to 17-year-olds the percentage rose to 22.2 percent.¹¹

Exposure to community violence has been shown to increase the risk of mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and withdrawal. Violent communities often create an environment where residents grow fearful of their surroundings, worried that "the world is unsafe and harm could come at any time."¹² The reality of these fears is expressed by Olis Simmons, president and CEO of Youth UpRising, an Oakland-based non-profit that works with urban youth:

It's difficult to verbalize the profound impact [of] living every day, day in, day out, in an environment where you could lose your life for no reason. You don't necessarily need to be in a conflict, you can get shot by a stray bullet - it can just happen, you can be mistaken as someone else. There's no overstating the severe impact that that has on brain development, mental health, a sense of hope and possibility, resiliency - all of the things that give human beings the possibility of sacrificing today in order to build a better tomorrow.¹³

A consequence of this is that people can retreat to their homes and remain shuttered inside, disconnected. Individuals who witness or experience violence have been shown to develop anxiety and depression, and are at a heightened risk for substance abuse resulting from self-medication to cope with unmanaged emotions. In addition to depression, changes in behavior as a result of trauma can include becoming easily triggered or "set off," and having intense reactions.¹⁴ Further, exposure to trauma can result in hindered cognition such as trouble concentrating, and impeded ability to plan ahead and problem-solve.¹⁵

more than 46 times the rate of young men in these other countries, and females at more than 23 times the rate." Richardson, Erin G., S.M., Hemenway, David, Ph.D., "Homicide, Suicide, and Unintentional Firearm Fatality: Comparing the United States With Other High-Income Countries, 2003," *Journal of Trauma—Injury, Infection & Critical Care*, January 2011, Volume 70, Issue 1, pp 238-243.

- 9 One 1987 study examined 159 children attending a Los Angeles school that had been attacked by a sniper: "They found that one month after the attack more than half of the children showed symptoms of PTSD. At a fourteen month follow-up, those children who were not directly exposed to the shooting showed diminished symptoms, while those children who had been near the shooting or had known one of the victims continued to show severe symptoms. They found that factors which increase the likelihood of PTSD in childhood witnesses of violence include: being physically close to the violence, knowing the victim, and previous exposure to violence." Duncan, David F., Dr.P.H., "Growing Up Under the Gun: Children and Adolescents Coping with Violent Neighborhoods," *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, Vol. 16, No. 4, 1996.
- 10 Duncan, David F., Dr.P.H., "Growing Up Under the Gun: Children and Adolescents Coping with Violent Neighborhoods," *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, Vol. 16, No. 4, 1996.
- 11 Finkelhor, David, et al, "Children's Exposure to Violence: A Comprehensive National Survey," *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, October 2009.
- 12 "Community Violence," NCTSN, The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/community-violence>).
- 13 Violence Policy Center interview with Olis Simmons, May 2014.
- 14 "Effects of Complex Trauma," NCTSN, The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma/effects-of-complex-trauma>).
- 15 "Effects of Complex Trauma," NCTSN, The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma/effects-of-complex-trauma>).

In some circumstances, individuals who have prolonged exposure to trauma can develop PTSD as a result of their experiences. It is believed that the development of PTSD is more highly associated with traumas that involve events where an individual experiences a severe injury or witnesses the severe injury or death of others, such as school shootings, car crashes, a friend's suicide, or community violence.¹⁶ It is a misconception that children are too young to understand or won't remember violence occurring around them and that they are immune from the impact of community violence; studies have in fact documented symptoms of PTSD in babies and young children.¹⁷

Research suggests that roughly the same percentage of girls and boys experience at least one trauma (15 percent to 43 percent and 14 percent to 43 percent respectively).¹⁸ However, of those youth who have experienced trauma, girls are more likely to develop PTSD than boys (three to 15 percent compared to one to six percent).¹⁹ Young people who suffer from PTSD are thought to be impacted by trauma in much the same way as adults; however, the way they manifest symptoms differs from those of adults.²⁰ These symptoms include demonstrating aggressive or impulsive behavior, repeatedly reenacting or describing the traumatic event, or reflecting part of the trauma in their lives, such as carrying a weapon after witnessing a shooting.²¹

Ultimately, communities where complex trauma and PTSD are prevalent among residents generate additional negative consequences to society. Taken together, these consequences can include poor academic performance and low graduation rates among youth, impaired ability to develop and sustain relationships, increased prevalence of substance abuse and chronic illness, increased likelihood of engagement in unlawful behavior, and difficulty maintaining employment.²²

It is clear that any discussion of violence against youth must acknowledge and address the trauma that results from it.

16 "PTSD in Children and Teens," United States Department of Veterans Affairs, PTSD: National Center for PTSD (<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/family/ptsd-children-adolescents.asp>).

17 "Community Violence: Effects on Children and Teens," United States Department of Veterans Affairs, PTSD: National Center for PTSD (<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/family/ptsd-children-adolescents.asp>). For example, a 2007 article published in the *San Francisco Chronicle* detailing the lives of children living in an "urban war zone" in the city noted: "The violence, layers of it overlapping year after year, can eventually take up residence in the children's minds. Like combat veterans, they develop post-traumatic stress disorder—the soldier's sickness. As many as one-third of children living in our country's violent urban neighborhoods have PTSD, according to recent research and the country's top child trauma experts—nearly twice the rate reported for troops returning from war zones in Iraq." "Hidden Victims of Violence," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 26, 2007. More recently, an August 2014 article published by MSNBC online cited a 19-year-old in Chicago who stated, "It just be so heavy on your head you really don't be knowing what to do. Like a boat is just sitting on top of your head, just a boat of thoughts and you don't know which ones to choose." The article cited a recent study by the city's Cook County Hospital, a Level-1 trauma center that treats many of the city's shooting victims. The study found that 40 percent of patients showed symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Those wounded by gunfire were about 13 times as likely as others to suffer symptoms of PTSD. "Trauma in the trenches of gun-weary Chicago," *MSNBC*, August 4, 2014 (<http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/chicago-trauma-trenches-gun-weary>).

18 "PTSD in Children and Teens," United States Department of Veterans Affairs, PTSD: National Center for PTSD (<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/types/violence/effects-community-violence-children.asp>).

19 "PTSD in Children and Teens," United States Department of Veterans Affairs, PTSD: National Center for PTSD (<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/types/violence/effects-community-violence-children.asp>).

20 "PTSD in Children and Teens," United States Department of Veterans Affairs, PTSD: National Center for PTSD (<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/types/violence/effects-community-violence-children.asp>).

21 "PTSD in Children and Teens," United States Department of Veterans Affairs, PTSD: National Center for PTSD (<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/types/violence/effects-community-violence-children.asp>).

22 Rich, John, et al., *Healing the Hurt: Trauma-Informed Approaches to the Health of Boys and Young Men of Color*, Drexel School of Public Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, October 2009 (<http://pas.fpg.unc.edu/resources/healing-hurt-trauma-informed-approaches-health-boys-and-young-men-color>), "Complex Trauma," NCTSN, The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma>), "Effects of Complex Trauma," NCTSN, The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma/effects-of-complex-trauma>).

THE PURPOSE OF *LOST YOUTH*

This is the fourth consecutive year that the Violence Policy Center has published *Lost Youth*. The primary goal of this series of reports is to offer localized information on youth homicide victimization on the county level in California to better inform citizens, advocates, service providers, and policymakers.

Lost Youth also includes a section that begins with an assessment of the known impact of “tough on crime” policies (the all-too-frequent default response to violence in general, and youth violence in particular), reviews current national and California-specific prevention-focused violence-reduction efforts, and concludes by highlighting three community-based California programs working to reduce youth violence.

All too often, the immediate, devastating effects of violence and its aftermath are little recognized outside of those who are directly affected. By comparing on a county-by-county level the homicide rates for youth and young adults in California, it is our goal to add a new, ongoing context for information to be presented and progress to be measured while at the same time helping support discussion, analysis, policy development, and action. Above all, this work is conducted in the belief that information aids in the development of sound prevention strategies—on the local, state, and national levels.

SECTION ONE: 2012 CALIFORNIA COUNTY-BY-COUNTY DATA

This study offers both statewide and county-by-county homicide statistics for youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 utilizing 2012 California Supplementary Homicide Report (SHR) data (this is the most recent California homicide data available at the time of writing and is separate from the historical data cited in the prior section) and 2012 census data. To help ensure more stable rates, only counties with a population of at least 25,000 10- to 24-year-olds are included. The selected counties account for 99 percent of homicide victims ages 10 to 24 in California (646 out of 651 victims) and 98 percent of California’s population ages 10 to 24 (8,014,360 out of 8,188,043) for 2012.

It is important to note that the coding contained in the California Supplementary Homicide Report data used in this report comes from law enforcement reporting at the local level. While there are coding guidelines followed by the law enforcement agencies, the level of information submitted to the SHR system, and the interpretation that results in the information submitted (for example, gang involvement) will vary from county to county. While this study utilizes the best and most recent state data available, it is limited by the degree of detail in the information submitted.

COUNTY RANKINGS

HOMICIDE VICTIMS AGES 10 TO 24 BY CALIFORNIA COUNTY IN 2012, RANKED BY RATE				
Ranking	County	Number of Homicides	Population, Ages 10 to 24	Homicide Rate per 100,000
1	Monterey County	22	94,328	23.32
2	San Francisco County	27	116,400	23.20
3	San Joaquin County	36	164,391	21.90
4	Alameda County	62	297,222	20.86
5	Stanislaus County	18	120,963	14.88
6	Solano County	13	87,540	14.85
7	Merced County	10	67,476	14.82
8	Contra Costa County	24	210,356	11.41
9	Tulare County	12	111,674	10.75
10	Los Angeles County	207	2,166,791	9.55

In 2012, the homicide rate among victims 10 to 24 years old in California was 8.06 per 100,000. In 2012, Monterey County ranked first as the county with the highest homicide rate among victims ages 10 to 24. Its rate of 23.32 per 100,000 was nearly three times the statewide rate. Monterey County was followed by San Francisco County (23.20 per

100,000), San Joaquin County (21.90 per 100,000), Alameda County (20.86 per 100,000), and Stanislaus County (14.88 per 100,000). The remaining counties that comprise the top 10 are detailed in the prior chart.

A chart listing the number and rate of homicide victims 10 to 24 years old by county and ranking each county by its homicide rate for this age group can be found in Appendix Two.

An alphabetical listing by county with identical information can be found in Appendix Three.

An alphabetical listing by county with data comparing the years 2010, 2011, and 2012 can be found in Appendix Four.

Additional 2012 data for the top 10 counties—gender and race of victim, type of weapon used, relationship of victim to offender, circumstances of the homicide, and location where the homicide took place—can be found in Appendix Five.

General statewide findings are summarized below.

GENDER AND RACE OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS

Out of the 646 homicide victims ages 10 to 24 in California in 2012, 574 were male (89 percent) and 72 were female (11 percent). For homicides in which the race of the victim was identified (643 victims): 337 were Hispanic (52 percent); 214 were black (33 percent); 57 were white (nine percent); 23 were Asian (four percent); and 12 were “other” (two percent). Overall, Hispanic victims were killed at a rate (8.70 per 100,000) more than three times higher than white victims (2.40 per 100,000). Black victims were killed at a rate (42.37 per 100,000) more than 17 times higher than white victims (2.40 per 100,000). Asian victims were killed at a roughly similar rate as white victims (2.51 per 100,000 compared to 2.40 per 100,000).

RACE AND GENDER OF CALIFORNIA HOMICIDE VICTIMS AGES 10 TO 24, 2012

	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Total
Hispanic	313	93%	24	7%	337
Black	192	90%	22	10%	214
White	41	72%	16	28%	57
Asian	18	78%	5	22%	23
Overall	574	89%	72	11%	646

CALIFORNIA HOMICIDE RATES FOR VICTIMS AGES 10 TO 24 BY RACE AND GENDER, 2012
(ALL RATES PER 100,000 FOR RELEVANT POPULATION)

	Male	Female	Overall
Hispanic	15.66	1.28	8.70
Black	73.93	8.96	42.37
White	3.33	1.40	2.40
Asian	3.84	1.12	2.51

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

Among youth and young adults in 2012, for homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 47 percent (153 out of 325) were killed by a stranger. Thirty-nine percent (127 out of 325) were killed by someone they knew. Forty-five additional victims (14 percent) were identified as gang members.²³

For this age group, black, Hispanic, and Asian victims were more likely to be killed by a stranger than white victims. Sixty-five percent of all black victims were killed by a stranger (55 out of 85). Twenty-nine percent of black victims (25 out of 85) were murdered by someone they knew. Five additional victims (six percent) were identified as gang members. Forty-two percent of Hispanic victims were killed by strangers (73 out of 175). Thirty-eight percent of Hispanic victims (66 out of 175) were murdered by someone they knew. An additional 21 percent of Hispanic victims (36 out of 175) were identified as gang members. Forty-four percent of Asian victims were killed by strangers (seven out of 16). Fifty percent of Asian victims (eight out of 16) were murdered by someone they knew. An additional six percent of Asian victims (one out of 16) were identified as gang members.

In comparison, 61 percent of white victims were murdered by someone they knew (25 out of 41) and 34 percent (14 out of 41) were killed by a stranger. An additional five percent of white victims (two out of 41) were identified as gang members.

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

Firearms—especially handguns—were the most common weapon used to murder youth and young adults in 2012. Of the 636 homicides for which the murder weapon could be identified, 86 percent of victims (546 out of 636) died by gunfire. Of these, 70 percent (381 out of 546) were killed with a handgun.

23 Information on gang activity is provided in two sections of the SHR data and is dependent on how local jurisdictions define and record such data. Although relationships are defined as victim to offender, because of potential inconsistencies in on-scene reporting a relationship may be coded as “gang member” if the victim of the homicide or the offender is believed to be a gang member. In the circumstance field, it may be coded as “gangland killing” or “gang killing” if the homicide is believed to be related to gang activity, whether or not the victim is a gang member.

USE OF GUNS AND HANDGUNS IN HOMICIDES OF CALIFORNIANS, AGES 10 TO 24 BY RACE, 2012

	Number of Gun Homicides	Gun Homicides as Percentage of All Homicides	Number of Handgun Homicides	Handgun Homicides as Percentage of All Gun Homicides
Hispanic	281	84%	185	66%
Black	199	94%	150	75%
White	39	72%	28	72%
Asian	19	83%	12	63%
Overall	546	86%	381	70%

USE OF GUNS AND HANDGUNS IN HOMICIDES OF CALIFORNIANS, AGES 10 TO 24 BY RACE, 2010, 2011, AND 2012

	Number of Gun Homicides			Gun Homicides as Percentage of All Homicides			Number of Handgun Homicides			Handgun Homicides as Percentage of All Gun Homicides		
	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012
Hispanic	315	283	281	88%	83%	84%	233	217	185	74%	77%	66%
Black	216	180	199	93%	90%	94%	172	128	150	80%	71%	75%
White	27	34	39	61%	68%	72%	18	17	28	67%	50%	72%
Asian	15	21	19	65%	70%	83%	10	19	12	67%	90%	63%
Overall	581	520	546	87%	83%	86%	439	382	381	76%	73%	70%

CIRCUMSTANCE

The overwhelming majority of homicides of youth and young adults in 2012 were not related to any other felony crime. For the 432 homicides in which the circumstances between the victim and offender could be identified, 78 percent (339 out of 432) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 65 percent (222 of 339) were gang-related.²⁴

For all races except for white victims, the majority of deaths were not related to the commission of any other felony.

For Hispanic victims, 88 percent (230 out of 261) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 72 percent (165 out of 230) were gang-related.

For black victims, 75 percent (83 out of 111) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 60 percent (50 out of 83) were gang-related.

For white victims, 41 percent (14 out of 34) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 21 percent (three out of 14) were gang-related.

For Asian victims, 56 percent (nine out of 16) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 33 percent (three out of nine) were gang-related.

LOCATION

In 2012, among youth and young adults for homicides in which the location could be determined, 54 percent (343 out of 635) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Sixteen percent (103 out of 635) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Fourteen percent (86 out of 635) occurred at another residence, and six percent (39 out of 635) occurred in a vehicle.

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 65 percent of Asian victims (15 out of 23), 56 percent of black victims (119 out of 212), 55 percent of Hispanic victims (182 out of 333), and 39 percent of white victims (22 out of 56) were killed on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot.

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 39 percent of white victims (22 out of 56), 22 percent of Asian victims (five out of 23), 15 percent of Hispanic victims (49 out of 333), and 12 percent of black victims (25 out of 212) were killed in the home of the victim or the offender.

Sixteen percent of black victims (33 out of 212), 14 percent of Hispanic victims (45 out of 333), and 13 percent of white victims (seven out of 56) were killed at another residence. No Asian victims were killed at another residence.

Eight percent of Hispanic victims (25 out of 333) and seven percent of black victims (14 out of 212) were killed in a vehicle. No white or Asian victims were killed in a vehicle.

24 Information on gang activity is provided in two sections of the SHR data and is dependent on how local jurisdictions define and record such data. Although relationships are defined as victim to offender, because of potential inconsistencies in on-scene reporting a relationship may be coded as "gang member" if the victim of the homicide or the offender is believed to be a gang member. In the circumstance field, it may be coded as "gangland killing" or "gang killing" if the homicide is believed to be related to gang activity, whether or not the victim is a gang member.

SECTION TWO: HISPANIC VICTIMS

In 2012, Hispanic youth and young adults were murdered at a rate more than three times higher than white youth and young adults: 8.70 per 100,000 compared to 2.40 per 100,000. While Hispanic youth and young adults comprised 48 percent of California's population between the ages of 10 and 24, they accounted for 52 percent of the homicide victims in the same age group.

GENDER OF HISPANIC HOMICIDE VICTIMS

Of the 337 Hispanic homicide victims age 10 to 24 in California in 2012, 313 were male (93 percent) and 24 were female (seven percent).

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

Among Hispanic youth and young adults in 2012, for homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 38 percent of victims (66 out of 175) were murdered by someone they knew. Seventy-three victims were killed by strangers. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 21 percent of the victims (36 out of 175) were gang members.

HISPANIC HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND WEAPONS

As with youth and young adult homicide victims in general, firearms—especially handguns—were the most common weapons used to murder Hispanic youth and young adults in 2012. In the 334 homicides for which the murder weapon could be identified, 84 percent of Hispanic victims (281 victims) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 66 percent (185 victims) were killed with a handgun.

HISPANIC HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND CIRCUMSTANCE

The overwhelming majority of homicides of Hispanic youth and young adults in 2012 were not related to any other felony crime. For the 261 homicides in which the circumstances between the victim and offender could be identified, 88 percent (230 out of 261) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 72 percent (165 out of 230) were gang-related.

HISPANIC HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND LOCATION

In 2012, among Hispanic youth and young adults, for homicides in which the location could be determined, 55 percent (182 out of 333) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Fifteen percent (49 out of 333) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Fourteen percent (45 out of 333) occurred at another residence, and eight percent (25 out of 333) occurred in a vehicle.

SECTION THREE: BLACK VICTIMS

In 2012, black youth and young adults were murdered at a rate more than 17 times higher than white youth and young adults: 42.37 per 100,000 compared to 2.40 per 100,000. While black youth and young adults comprised six percent of California's population between the ages of 10 and 24, they accounted for 33 percent of the homicide victims in the same age group.

GENDER OF BLACK HOMICIDE VICTIMS

Of the 214 black homicide victims age 10 to 24 in California in 2012, 192 were male (90 percent) and 22 were female (10 percent).

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

Among black youth and young adults in 2012, for homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 29 percent of victims (25 out of 85) were murdered by someone they knew. Fifty-five victims were killed by strangers. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, six percent (five out of 85) of the victims were gang members.

BLACK HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND WEAPONS

As with youth and young adult homicide victims in general, firearms—especially handguns—were the most common weapons used to murder black youth and young adults in 2012. In the 212 homicides for which the murder weapon could be identified, 94 percent of black victims (199 victims) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 75 percent (150 victims) were killed with a handgun.

BLACK HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND CIRCUMSTANCE

The overwhelming majority of homicides of black youth and young adults in 2012 were not related to any other felony crime. For the 111 homicides in which the circumstances between the victim and offender could be identified, 75 percent (83 out of 111) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 60 percent (50 out of 83) were gang-related.

BLACK HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND LOCATION

In 2012, among black youth and young adults, for homicides in which the location could be determined, 56 percent (119 out of 212) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Twelve percent (25 out of 212) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Sixteen percent (33 out of 212) occurred at another residence, and seven percent (14 out of 212) occurred in a vehicle.

SECTION FOUR: WHITE VICTIMS

In 2012, white youth and young adults were murdered at a rate of 2.40 per 100,000. While white youth and young adults comprised 30 percent of California's population between the ages of 10 and 24, they accounted for nine percent of the homicide victims in the same age group.

GENDER OF WHITE HOMICIDE VICTIMS

Of the 57 white homicide victims age 10 to 24 in California in 2012, 41 were male (72 percent) and 16 were female (28 percent).

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

Among white youth and young adults in 2012, for homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 61 percent of victims (25 out of 41) were murdered by someone they knew. Fourteen victims were killed by strangers. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, five percent (two out of 41) of the victims were gang members.

WHITE HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND WEAPONS

As with youth and young adult homicide victims in general, firearms—especially handguns—were the most common weapons used to murder white youth and young adults in 2012. In the 54 homicides for which the murder weapon could be identified, 72 percent of white victims (39 victims) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 72 percent (28 victims) were killed with a handgun.

WHITE HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND CIRCUMSTANCE

For the 34 homicides in which the circumstances between the victim and offender could be identified, 41 percent (14 out of 34) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 21 percent (three of 14) were gang-related.

WHITE HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND LOCATION

In 2012, among white youth and young adults, for homicides in which the location could be determined, 39 percent (22 out of 56) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Thirty-nine percent (22 out of 56) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Thirteen percent (seven out of 56) occurred at another residence.

SECTION FIVE: ASIAN VICTIMS

In 2012, Asian youth and young adults were murdered at a roughly similar rate as white youth and young adults: 2.51 per 100,000 compared to 2.40 per 100,000. While Asian youth and young adults comprised 11 percent of California's population between the ages of 10 and 24, they accounted for four percent of the homicide victims in the same age group.

GENDER OF ASIAN HOMICIDE VICTIMS

Of the 23 Asian homicide victims age 10 to 24 in California in 2012, 18 were male (78 percent) and five were female (22 percent).

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

Among Asian youth and young adults in 2012, for homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 50 percent of victims (eight out of 16) were murdered by someone they knew. Seven victims were killed by strangers. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, six percent (one out of 16) of the victims were gang members.

ASIAN HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND WEAPONS

As with youth and young adult homicide victims in general, firearms—especially handguns—were the most common weapons used to murder Asian youth and young adults in 2012. In the 23 homicides for which the murder weapon could be identified, 83 percent of Asian victims (19 victims) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 63 percent (12 victims) were killed with a handgun.

ASIAN HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND CIRCUMSTANCE

The majority of homicides of Asian youth and young adults in 2012 were not related to any other felony crime. For the 16 homicides in which the circumstances between the victim and offender could be identified, 56 percent (nine out of 16) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 33 percent (three out of nine) were gang-related.

ASIAN HOMICIDE VICTIMS AND LOCATION

In 2012, among Asian youth and young adults, for homicides in which the location could be determined, 65 percent (15 out of 23) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Twenty-two percent (five out of 23) occurred in the home of the victim or offender.

SECTION SIX: WHAT WORKS IN STOPPING YOUTH VIOLENCE

Historically, the response to rising crime rates has been to increase the severity of punishment through suppression and sanctions-based policies. This is equally true for crimes committed by youthful offenders as for adult criminal behavior. However, sweeping legislative reforms enacted across the country over the last two decades that reflect tougher responses to crime, including California, may not be the most effective solutions, particularly for addressing juvenile crime and gang activity. In fact, research has shown that where juvenile confinement rates decrease, juvenile arrests decrease.²⁵ This points to a need to rethink traditional methods of juvenile crime reduction, and to explore alternative practices that may generate better outcomes for delinquent youth and communities. This is especially true for cities with enduring levels of high youth violence despite falling crime rates across the country.

For well over a decade, nationwide trends continue to show overall drops in both violent crime²⁶ and violent crime victimization rates for adults and juveniles as well as stabilizing rates of gang activity.^{27 28 29 30} However, a closer look at local crime data reveals that some of the country's largest cities are not experiencing the same reductions in crime rates as the rest of the nation. In some cities, juvenile crime and gang activity have actually increased. According to findings from the U.S. Department of Justice's *National Youth Gang Survey*, which examined trends between 1996 and 2011, gang activity is concentrated predominantly in urban areas – particularly larger cities, where nearly 90 percent of gang-related homicides occurred. All three “gang-magnitude” indicators – number of gangs, gang members, and gang-related homicides – demonstrated increases in larger metropolitan areas over the last decade, where the most significant increase occurred in the number of gangs, which has grown by more than one-third. The authors of the report note “all three of the survey's gang-magnitude indicators...show increases within metropolitan areas from 2002 to 2011.”³¹ A traditional response to the challenge of combating pernicious violent crime and gang activity has been the application of suppression strategies such as those enacted through California's Proposition 21 that included: increasing the severity of consequences; setting mandatory minimums; and, enacting legislation that expands the type of crimes classified as serious.³² The next section offers evidence

25 Mendel, Richard A., “No Place for Kids: The Case for Reducing Juvenile Incarceration,” The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2011 (<http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-NoPlaceForKidsFullReport-2011.pdf>).

26 In the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, violent crime is composed of four offenses: murder and non-negligent manslaughter; forcible rape; robbery; and, aggravated assault. Violent crimes are defined in the UCR Program as those offenses which involve force or threat of force.

27 *Crime in the United States*, 2012, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2012 (<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s./2012/crime-in-the-u.s.-2012/violent-crime/violent-crime>).

28 Truman, Jennifer, Langton, Lynn and Planty, Michael, *Criminal Victimization*, 2012, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013 (<http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv12.pdf>).

29 Puzanchera, Charles, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: National Report Series-Juvenile Arrests 2011*, December 2013 (<http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/244476.pdf>).

30 Egley, Arlen, Jr., and Howell, James C., *Highlights of the 2011 National Youth Gang Survey*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Juvenile Justice Fact Sheet*, September 2013 (<http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/242884.pdf>).

31 Egley, Arlen, Jr., and Howell, James C., *Highlights of the 2011 National Youth Gang Survey*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Juvenile Justice Fact Sheet*, September 2013 (<http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/242884.pdf>).

32 California Proposition 21 was on the March 7, 2000, ballot in California as an initiated state statute, where it was approved. Proposition 21 made various changes to California's laws related to the treatment of juvenile offenders as detailed by Ballotpedia ([http://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_21,_Treatment_of_Juvenile_Offenders_\(2000\)](http://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_21,_Treatment_of_Juvenile_Offenders_(2000))):

to support alternatives to this conventional response – and points to the promising outcomes resulting from alternatives to incarceration.

WHY NOT SUPPRESSION?

In response to a predicted surge in juvenile violent crime, lawmakers across the country authored legislation that fundamentally changed the law enforcement approach to juvenile delinquency. A shift, favoring punishment over rehabilitation, began to take hold. By the end of the 1990s, nearly every state had toughened laws for youthful offenders, making it easier to try youth in adult courts and incarcerate them in the adult system.³³ These policy shifts are often referred to collectively as the “adultification” of youthful offenders because of their resemblance to punitive measures typically reserved for adults.³⁴ One consequence of this punitive approach was “net widening,” which swept up many youth into juvenile corrections unnecessarily in that many young people were imprisoned for non-violent offenses. As a result, incarceration rates skyrocketed—despite a concurrent drop in the juvenile population and overall juvenile crime. As a result, more youth have been funneled into the juvenile justice system, derailing their education, separating them from their families, and aggravating any existing mental health or substance abuse issues.³⁵ Further, these policies have also had a disproportionate impact on youth and communities of color, where black and Latino youth are significantly more likely to absorb the negative impacts of these policies, exacerbating the existing problem of unequal treatment of youth of color in the justice system.³⁶ For over two decades “tough on crime” policies, including “zero tolerance” laws that further contributed to swelling incarceration rates and disparate application toward youth of color, held legislators and voters captive.

However, an expanding compilation of research reveals that the tendency to toughen treatment of young people involved in juvenile corrections has not yielded the desired outcomes of reduced delinquency and decreased gang affiliation. Indeed, mounting evidence demonstrates that these policies have, in fact, generated a range of adverse effects. As the following section will detail, evidence has shown that these policies actually result in the opposite outcome, causing youth to re-offend at higher rates and enabling stronger gang affiliation while confined.³⁷

- Juveniles 14 years of age or older charged with committing certain types of murder or a serious sex offense, under Prop 21, are generally no longer eligible for juvenile court and prosecutors are allowed to directly file charges against juvenile offenders in adult court for a variety of circumstances without having to get the permission of juvenile court to do that.
- Under Prop 21, probation departments do not have the discretion to determine if juveniles arrested for any one of more than 30 specific serious or violent crimes should be released or detained; rather, Prop 21 makes detention mandatory under those defined circumstances.
- Prop 21 prohibits the use of informal probation for any juvenile offender who commits a felony.
- Prop 21 reduced confidentiality for juvenile suspects and offenders by barring the sealing or destruction of juvenile offense records for any minor 14 years of age or older who has committed a serious or violent offense.
- Prop 21 increased extra prison terms for gang-related crimes to two, three, or four years, unless they are serious or violent crimes. In those cases, the new extra prison terms would be five and 10 years.
- Prop 21 revised the lists of specific crimes defined as serious or violent offenses, making most of them subject to the longer sentence provisions of existing law related to serious and violent offenses.

33 Lipsey, Mark W., Howell, James C., Kelly, Marion R., Chapman, Gabrielle, and Carver, Darin, *Improving the Effectiveness of Juvenile Justice Programs: A New Perspective on Evidence-Based Practice*, Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, Georgetown University, December 2010 (<http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/pdfs/ebp/ebppaper.pdf>).

34 These include efforts to: transfer more juveniles into adult criminal court; extend “three-strikes” laws to juvenile offenders; and, expand the criteria for what can be considered “gang activity.”

35 *Smart on Crime: Recommendations for the Administration and Congress*, The Smart on Crime Coalition, 2011 (<http://besmartoncrime.org/pdf/Complete.pdf>). The efforts of the Smart on Crime Coalition are coordinated by the Constitution Project (<http://constitutionproject.org/>).

36 *No More Children Left Behind Bars: A Briefing on Youth Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention*, The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, Harvard Law School, 2008 (<http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NO-MORE-CHILDREN-LEFT-BEHIND.pdf>).

37 *No More Children Left Behind Bars: A Briefing on Youth Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention*, The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, Harvard Law School, 2008 (<http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NO-MORE-CHILDREN-LEFT-BEHIND.pdf>).

PUNITIVE POLICIES INCREASE DELINQUENCY AND STRENGTHEN GANG IDENTIFICATION

A body of well-established research reveals that youth who are incarcerated rather than diverted to community-based alternatives do not show reductions in delinquent behavior, and in some cases are more likely to be rearrested than youth who do not face confinement.^{38 39} For example, *Research on Pathways to Desistance*, a study that has followed more than 1,300 serious young offenders over seven years, reports, "...there is no clear advantage of institutional care over other types of intervention and rehabilitation."⁴⁰ Further, a 2004 report examining the causes and correlates of youthful offending issued by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention concluded that while some might argue suppression tactics may accomplish the immediate public safety goal of removing offenders from the street, there is overwhelming evidence that these punitive strategies are largely unsuccessful in stemming future criminal behavior.⁴¹ The report suggests that community-based sanctions coupled with appropriate supervision and access to services may result in a reduction in youthful offending.

These findings are echoed in a 2010 report from the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice, which discusses the merits of diversion programs as an alternative to incarceration for youth who have committed low-level offenses. The report's authors concluded, "For diverted youth, less exposure to the juvenile court system decreases the likelihood of recidivism by reducing association with delinquent peers, reducing the stigma associated with court involvement, and creating less disruption to pro-social activities."⁴² Indeed, researchers at The National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice arrived at a similar conclusion, stating: "...data indicate that incarceration is a spectacularly unsuccessful treatment..."⁴³ The growing body of research on this issue consistently, and increasingly, leads to the conclusion that implementation of sanctions-based, suppression-oriented tactics have not resulted in reductions in criminal activity among youthful offenders. Reflecting this sentiment, Robert Listenbee, administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention observes: "As a growing body of evidence underscores the corrosive effects that system involvement and confinement can have on healthy adolescent emotional, mental, behavioral and social development, many jurisdictions are examining and developing ways to divert nonserious offenders from entering the system."⁴⁴

Moreover, when evaluating the impact of punitive policies on reducing gang-related violence and gang affiliation, the research findings are strikingly similar. Literature on gang membership among youth reveals that frequently a young person's attachment to a "gang" can be temporary and transient. Enacting harsh penalties and widening definitions of who can be deemed a "gang member" for prosecutorial purposes can needlessly draw youth who may not have fully committed to the culture of gang violence into juvenile corrections. These juveniles may otherwise have corrected their behavior with the support of cost-effective programs that have demonstrated success.⁴⁵

- 38 Holman, Barry and Zeidenberg, Jason, *The Dangers of Detention: The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and Other Secure Facilities*, Justice Policy Institute, 2006 (http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/06-11_rep_dangersofdetention_jj.pdf).
- 39 *Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice Annual Report 2010* (<http://www.facjj.org/annualreports/00-FACJJ%20Annual%20Report-FINAL%20508.pdf>).
- 40 *Research on Pathways to Desistance: December 2012 Update*, Models for Change, an initiative supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, 2012 (http://www.pathwaysstudy.pitt.edu/documents/MFC_RPD_2012_final.pdf).
- 41 Thornberry, Terence P., et al, "The Causes and Correlates Studies: Findings and Policy Implications," *Juvenile Justice Journal*, Volume IX, Number 1, September 2004 (<http://www.ncjrs.gov/html/ojjdp/203555/jj2.html>).
- 42 *Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice Annual Report 2010* (<http://www.facjj.org/annualreports/00-FACJJ%20Annual%20Report-FINAL%20508.pdf>).
- 43 Leone, Peter E., et al, "School Failure, Race, and Disability: Promoting Positive Outcomes, Decreasing Vulnerability for Involvement with the Juvenile Delinquency System," National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice, 2003 (http://www.edjj.org/Publications/list/leone_et_al-2003.pdf).
- 44 Puzanchera, Charles, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: National Report Series Juvenile Arrests 2011*, December 2013 (<http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/244476.pdf>).
- 45 Greene, Judith and Pranis, Kevin, *Gang Wars: The Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies*, Justice Policy Institute,

Additional research details the failure of suppression and prosecution of gang members—as well as other “gang crackdown” techniques, such as those used in the 1980s and 1990s—to curb the prevalence of gang activity or gang violence over the last three decades.^{46 47} An evaluation of a gang suppression strategy in Los Angeles known as Operation Hardcore revealed that while the strategy resulted in an increase in prosecutions and arrests of gang members, it did little to stem gang-related activity in the areas targeted by the initiative.⁴⁸

In addition to findings that expanded prosecutorial power and arrest of gang members have little effect on reducing gang activity in the community, research has further shown that such tactics may actually *strengthen* gang affiliation, especially among youth who may not have been fully committed to gang membership. Scholars who have assessed gang formation theorize that by being publicly branded a *gang* member, and by spending time with more hardened gang members while incarcerated, youth who may have opted out of a gang can actually develop stronger ties to gang culture, increasing the likelihood of gang membership upon release.⁴⁹ Further, research suggests that suppression efforts have been shown to “increase gang cohesion by reinforcing an ‘us versus them’ mentality, and by providing external validation of the gang’s importance.”⁵⁰

In summary, there is strong and convincing evidence from a range of disciplines over years of research that illustrates the ineffective and in many cases damaging and counter-productive impact of a “tough on crime” approach to reducing delinquency and gang-related violence. As the next section will detail, these policies are not only unsuccessful, but also enormously costly.

PUNITIVE POLICIES ARE NOT COST-EFFECTIVE

A wealth of cost-benefit analyses show that investments in alternatives to incarceration—primarily community-based sanctions and programming—are far more cost effective and successful at reducing delinquency than incarceration.⁵¹ The Constitution Project’s 2011 report *Smart on Crime: Recommendations for the Administration and Congress* canvassed research on “tough on crime” policies from a wide range of disciplines, including economics, developmental psychology, and public health. The report found that “public dollars spent on effective prevention and education programs are far more effective at reducing crime than broadening prosecutorial powers or stiffening criminal penalties for young people.”⁵² The financial benefit achieved by prioritizing rehabilitation in a community-based setting over incarceration has garnered support from surprising voices in the “rehabilitation versus incarceration”

2007 (http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/07-07_rep_gangwars_gc-ps-ac-jj.pdf).

46 *No More Children Left Behind Bars: A Briefing on Youth Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention*, The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, Harvard Law School, 2008 (<http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NO-MORE-CHILDREN-LEFT-BEHIND.pdf>).

47 Greene, Judith and Pranis, Kevin, *Gang Wars: The Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies*, Justice Policy Institute, 2007 (http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/07-07_rep_gangwars_gc-ps-ac-jj.pdf).

48 *No More Children Left Behind Bars: A Briefing on Youth Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention*, The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, Harvard Law School, 2008 (<http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NO-MORE-CHILDREN-LEFT-BEHIND.pdf>).

49 *No More Children Left Behind Bars: A Briefing on Youth Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention*, The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, Harvard Law School, 2008 (<http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NO-MORE-CHILDREN-LEFT-BEHIND.pdf>).

50 Greene, Judith and Pranis, Kevin, *Gang Wars: The Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the Need for Effective Public Safety Strategies*, Justice Policy Institute, 2007 (http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/07-07_rep_gangwars_gc-ps-ac-jj.pdf).

51 *Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice Annual Report 2010* (<http://www.facjj.org/annualreports/00-FACJJ%20Annual%20Report-FINAL%20508.pdf>). See also: *No More Children Left Behind Bars: A Briefing on Youth Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention*, The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, Harvard Law School, 2008 (<http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NO-MORE-CHILDREN-LEFT-BEHIND.pdf>) and Piquero, Alex and Steinberg, Laurence, *Models for Change, Systems Reform In Juvenile Justice, Rehabilitation Versus Incarceration of Juvenile Offenders: Public Preferences in Four Models for Change States*, 2007 (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/186>).

52 *Smart on Crime: Recommendations for the Administration and Congress*, Smart on Crime Coalition, 2011 (<http://besmartoncrime.org/pdf/Complete.pdf>). The efforts of the Smart on Crime Coalition are coordinated by the Constitution Project (<http://constitutionproject.org/>).

debate. Historically, conservatives have been the strongest advocates for “tough on crime” policies regardless of the fiscal impact or consequences of an increased reliance on corrections. However, the self-described “conservative case for reform” website *Right on Crime* breaks from the “tough on crime” position and concludes that investing in programs that save taxpayer dollars and avert future delinquency is “a positive moral outcome....”⁵³

While recognizing that alternatives to incarceration necessitate significant investments, a report from The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School points to research from economist James Heckman. Heckman asserts that these investments pay off in the long run through their enormous social benefits to the community: savings to taxpayers (avoided incarceration, averted medical costs, and costs saved as a result of redirecting individuals away from social welfare programs); averted violence; and, the redirection of youth away from gang life toward healthy alternatives.^{54 55} Echoing Heckman’s observation, a 2010 Center for Juvenile Justice Reform report notes, “Much is known about effective prevention programs from research and practice and the question of how to optimize such programs for cost-effective impact on juvenile behavior is worthy of careful consideration.”⁵⁶ And, in a 2010 annual report, the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice recommends, “Diverting youth from more expensive formal court processing with greater recidivism rates to less expensive diversion with lesser recidivism rates improves system-wide efficiency.”⁵⁷

Given that the national average annual cost of incarcerating a juvenile is \$100,000 (ranging up to \$200,000 in New York and \$300,000 in California) the current use of incarceration has become unsustainable.⁵⁸ Some scholars have suggested that the government would be wise to reallocate federal crime prevention dollars toward community-based sanctions and proven programs that target skill building for juvenile offenders rather than continuing to support strategies that emphasize harsher penalties and incarceration.⁵⁹ To this end, in 2010 Congress launched the Justice Reinvestment Initiative. This Initiative identifies areas where corrections spending can be reduced such that the savings can be reinvested in community-based programs that have demonstrated success. The Justice Reinvestment Initiative website describes the program as a “data-driven approach to improve public safety, examine corrections and related criminal justice spending, manage and allocate criminal justice populations in a more cost-effective manner, and reinvest savings in strategies that can hold offenders accountable, decrease crime, and strengthen neighborhoods.”⁶⁰

Presuming that lawmakers act on behalf of their constituents’ demands, one might assume that the public generally supports policies that favor incarceration over rehabilitation. However, there is evidence to the contrary. Looking at

53 Right on Crime website (<http://www.rightoncrime.com/priority-issues/juvenile-justice/>).

54 *No More Children Left Behind Bars: A Briefing on Youth Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention*, The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, Harvard Law School, 2008 (<http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NO-MORE-CHILDREN-LEFT-BEHIND.pdf>).

55 Heckman, James and Masterov, Dimitriy, *The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children*, 2004 (<http://www.ced.org/pdf/The-Productivity-Argument-for-Investing-in-Young-Children.pdf>).

56 Lipsey, Mark W., Howell, James C., Kelly, Marion R., Chapman, Gabrielle, and Carver, Darin, *Improving the Effectiveness of Juvenile Justice Programs: A New Perspective on Evidence-Based Practice*, Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, Georgetown University, December 2010 (<http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/pdfs/ebp/ebppaper.pdf>).

57 *Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice Annual Report 2010* (<http://www.facji.org/annualreports/OO-FACJJ%20Annual%20Report-FINAL%20508.pdf>).

58 *The Fourth Wave: Juvenile Justice Reforms for the 21st Century*, National Campaign to Reform State Juvenile Justice Systems, 2013 (PDF at <http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/530>).

59 *No More Children Left Behind Bars: A Briefing on Youth Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention*, The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, Harvard Law School, 2008 (<http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/NO-MORE-CHILDREN-LEFT-BEHIND.pdf>).

60 The Justice Reinvestment Initiative is administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) in the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice in coordination with other independent organizations (https://www.bja.gov/programs/justicereinvestment/what_is_jri.html).

four Models for Change⁶¹ states (Illinois, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, and Washington), researchers examined public sentiment on policy preference and discovered that overall taxpayers view investing in rehabilitation far more favorably than investing in prosecution and incarceration of juvenile offenders.⁶² The authors of the survey concluded: “More respondents are willing to pay for additional rehabilitation than for additional punishment, and the average amount in additional annual taxes that respondents are willing to pay for rehabilitation is almost 20% greater than it is for incarceration (\$98.49 versus \$84.52).”⁶³ Such findings comport with the results of other public opinion polls that show that the public favors rehabilitation over incarceration for youth and juvenile offenders. These public opinion results are heartening in that they appear to align with what research suggests. Additionally, they offer legislators feedback regarding constituent preference for shifting funding priorities toward approaches that focus more on intervention and prevention.

NATIONAL AND STATEWIDE INITIATIVES SHIFT FROM PUNISHMENT TO PREVENTION

There is a growing consensus that it is not fiscally responsible, nor is it sound policy practice, for communities to attempt to arrest their way out of youth and gang violence. The arguments in support of prevention efforts have gathered momentum, and this shift away from punishment is reflected in federal and state efforts targeted at reducing such violence. To this end, the 2013 Department of Justice’s *Smart on Crime* document identified the goals and priorities of the Department, stating, “By shifting away from our over-reliance on incarceration, we can focus resources on the most important law enforcement priorities, such as violence prevention and protection of vulnerable populations.”⁶⁴ This section reviews federal and national initiatives that seek to reduce youth violence through a variety of prevention and intervention strategies drawn from the research.

FEDERAL INITIATIVES

“MY BROTHER’S KEEPER” INITIATIVE

In response to the persistent educational and workforce disparities that exist among boys and young men of color, as well as their continued over-representation in the nation’s prisons and jails, in February 2014 the Obama Administration launched the “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative. This national initiative seeks to leverage resources from foundations and businesses to support existing local partnerships and community-based programs to increase and expand opportunities for boys and young men of color. Building on already developed collaborative approaches involving law enforcement, city or county agencies, and community groups in many jurisdictions, the initiative hopes to broaden the reach of programs and services that are already resulting in improved outcomes for the youth whom they serve.⁶⁵ This effort recognizes the invaluable contribution of community collaboratives and the need to engage multi-disciplinary entities, such as those referenced above, in efforts to redress youth violence.

61 “Models for Change supports a network of government and court officials, legal advocates, educators, community leaders, and families working together to ensure that kids who make mistakes are held accountable and treated fairly throughout the juvenile justice process...[T]he initiative provides research-based tools and techniques to make juvenile justice more fair, effective, rational and developmentally-appropriate.” (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/about/index.html>).

62 Piquero, Alex and Steinberg, Laurence, *Rehabilitation Versus Incarceration of Juvenile Offenders: Public Preferences in Four Models for Change States*, Models for Change, Systems Reform In Juvenile Justice, 2007 (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/186>).

63 Piquero, Alex and Steinberg, Laurence, *Rehabilitation Versus Incarceration of Juvenile Offenders: Public Preferences in Four Models for Change States*, Models for Change, Systems Reform In Juvenile Justice, 2007, (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/186>).

64 U.S. Department of Justice, *Smart on Crime: Reforming the Criminal Justice System for the 21st Century*, August 2013 (<http://www.justice.gov/ag/smart-on-crime.pdf>).

65 See <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/02/27/fact-sheet-opportunity-all-president-obama-launches-my-brother-s-keeper->

“DEFENDING CHILDHOOD” INITIATIVE

Spearheaded by the Office of the Attorney General in 2010, this effort consolidates several other earlier initiatives under one roof to unify efforts to address the wide-ranging impact of children’s exposure to violence. The initiative aims to leverage “existing resources across DOJ [Department of Justice] to focus on preventing, addressing, reducing, and more fully understanding childhood exposure to violence.”⁶⁶ One of the existing programs now under the Defending Childhood Initiative is the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s (OJJDP) Safe Start Initiative, which, begun in 1999, works to prevent and reduce the impact of children’s exposure to violence. Under this initiative, OJJDP conducted the National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence. This survey, administered between January and May of 2008, collected data on the type and nature of violence experienced by children as well as the impact such violence has on youth. Recognizing the enormous implications of exposure to violence, this initiative offers a strategic approach to addressing the negative impact of exposure to violence.

“YOUTH PROMISE ACT”

Another example of how the wealth of research related to prioritizing rehabilitation over incarceration has led to proposed policy changes can be seen in the Youth PROMISE Act, federal legislation first introduced by Representative Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA) in 2009.⁶⁷ The Youth PROMISE Act stands for Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support and Education, and seeks to institute a number of measures aimed at curbing “youth violence, gang crime, and juvenile incarceration by promoting a more holistic form of juvenile justice that targets high-risk youth and tries to offer real alternatives to incarceration.”⁶⁸ Specifically, the Act would empower local jurisdictions to invest in the implementation of evidence-based programs that offer intervention, prevention, and treatment services to at-risk and justice-involved juveniles and young adults. The Act calls for the coordination of local stakeholders involved in youth welfare to “assist the [federal] Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in: (1) assessing and developing standards and evidence-based practices to prevent juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity; and (2) collecting data in designated geographic areas to assess the needs and existing resources for juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity prevention and intervention.”⁶⁹

Notably, the legislation takes into account the research findings discussed earlier in this section. And while the scope of its reforms would apply to the nation, lawmakers and advocates in California played a key role in developing the content of the bill. Representative Scott met with advocates and local government officials in Los Angeles and San Francisco—two of the numerous cities that have passed resolutions in support of the legislation. According to Bobby Vassar, Minority Chief Counsel, U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security and legislative aide to Representative Scott, California was “pivotal” in demonstrating early support for the bill. Vassar noted that the endorsement by the Los Angeles City Council was particularly crucial, stating that “when the gang capital of the country adopts your strategy, you know you’re on the right path.”⁷⁰

In addition to Los Angeles and San Francisco, cities and counties across the country that have endorsed the legislation include: Pasadena, California; Santa Fe County, New Mexico; New York, New York; East Cleveland, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Norfolk, Virginia; Newport News, Virginia; and, Hampton, Virginia. The state of New Hampshire has endorsed

66 See <http://www.justice.gov/defendingchildhood/about-initiative.html>.

67 See H.R. 1064, 111th Cong. (2009), S. 435, 111th Cong. (2009).

68 “The Youth PROMISE Act: A brief overview,” The Cochrane Collaboration College for Policy at George Mason University (http://bobbyscott.house.gov/uploads/YPA_brief__Key_points_v2.pdf).

69 “The Youth PROMISE Act: A brief overview,” The Cochrane Collaboration College for Policy at George Mason University (http://bobbyscott.house.gov/uploads/YPA_brief__Key_points_v2.pdf).

70 Telephone interview with Bobby Vassar, conducted on October 19, 2012.

the legislation as well as the Vermont House of Representatives. Further, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Association of Counties have adopted resolutions pressing Congress to pass the Youth PROMISE Act. In addition, a coalition of more than 250 national, state, and local organizations has voiced support for the Act. During the 113th Congress, the bill was re-introduced on March 21, 2013 and has 121 co-sponsors in the House (companion legislation in the Senate has five co-sponsors).^{71 72} The bill was referred to the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.⁷³

COMMUNITY-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Other federal initiatives such as the Community-Based Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (CBVP) of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the White House-led National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention are playing out at the state level in California. Through the CBVP program, funds were awarded to the city of Oakland to put in place a multi-disciplinary violence reduction strategy that involves the coordinated efforts of local agencies and community groups to implement evidence-based practices. The website from the national evaluators of the CBVP program states that the strategy that underlies the program focuses on "...detering violent behavior by working directly with high-risk youth and gang offenders, by setting clear standards for their behavior, and by providing appropriate pro-social opportunities for youth in the neighborhoods affected by violence."⁷⁴

Oakland has established a strong street outreach effort that works with the Oakland Police Department and many community-based organizations to address violence and gang activity among youth and young adults.

The California cities of San Jose and Salinas are two of 10 cities that were selected to participate in the Forum on Youth Violence Prevention.⁷⁵ The Forum was spearheaded by the Obama Administration and, in partnership with multiple federal agencies, the effort aims to start a national conversation about youth violence and gang-related crime affecting the nation's youth.⁷⁶ The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of California describes the goal of the Forum: "The administration created the Forum as a context for participating localities to share challenges and promising strategies with each other and to explore how federal agencies can better support local efforts."⁷⁷ Similar to the CBVP, the Forum hopes to achieve these goals through the collaboration of numerous government agencies, corporate partners, non-profit groups, and community and faith-based organizations.

AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IN CALIFORNIA

While all too often media coverage remains driven by an "if it bleeds, it leads" mentality that has little time for, nor interest in, day-in and day-out community-based efforts to reduce youth violence, there are a number of organizations that operate promising and successful prevention and intervention programs. This section highlights three local efforts

71 The Act was re-introduced in the Senate by Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) in July 2013.

72 See <http://www.bobbyscott.house.gov/youth-promise-act/>; <http://peacealliance.org/youth-promise-act-congressional-co-sponsors/>.

73 See <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d113:H.R.1318:@@P>.

74 The national evaluator of the CBVP program is Dr. Jeffrey Butts of The City University of New York's John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Research and Evaluation Center. Additional information on the evaluation can be accessed online at <http://johnjayresearch.org/rec/projects/cbvp/>.

75 The other Forum cities include: Detroit, Boston, Chicago, and Memphis. The Forum was expanded on September 19, 2012, to include four additional cities: New Orleans, Philadelphia, Minneapolis, and Camden, N.J.

76 See National Forum on Youth Violence (<http://findyouthinfo.gov/youth-topics/preventing-youth-violence/about-national-forum>) and Department of Justice Press Release (<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2012/September/12-ag-1135.html>).

77 The Northern District of California, Office of the Attorney General's website on the National Forum on Youth Violence (<http://www.justice.gov/usao/can/programs/nationalforum.html>).

from Northern and Southern California. For this study, the VPC interviewed each organization's executive director and asked questions regarding: their goals and how they achieve them; the challenges they face; how they define success; one individual's story of how they were aided by the program; what additional work they would undertake if resources were not an issue; advice they would offer for lawmakers who set policy around youth violence and related issues; and, any final thoughts.

COALITION FOR RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (CRCD), LOS ANGELES

***"True collaboration really does work. If you can approach working with the population that people consider is committing or is on the cusp of committing this type of violence, you can really change neighborhoods in partnership. And I think our work has demonstrated that that can be done. I'm not only talking about partnerships with nonprofit organizations, but I'm talking about partnerships with for-profit organizations, law enforcement, business entities, educational institutions, religious institutions. Everything and every item that makes up the fabric of any community should be part of a collaboration or partnership at some point."* Mark Wilson, executive director**

The Coalition for Responsible Community Development (CRCD) is a neighborhood-based community development corporation in the Vernon-Central neighborhood of South Los Angeles. CRCD serves a 15-square-mile area immediately south of downtown Los Angeles east of the 110 Harbor Freeway, with a focus on the Vernon-Central Avenue corridor.⁷⁸

Founded in 2005, CRCD's mission is: "To better sustain, coordinate and improve local planning, development and community services that address the needs of low-income and working-class residents and small businesses in South Los Angeles."⁷⁹ CRCD focuses on young people in Vernon-Central ages 16 to 25 and collaborates with residents, businesses, community-based organizations, civic leaders, and the Los Angeles Trade Technical College.⁸⁰

CRCD "leads initiatives to foster a safe and economically vibrant neighborhood - a place where young people can thrive and contribute to neighborhood revitalization."⁸¹ Working in partnership, "CRCD promotes public safety and civic pride, trains and hires unemployed youth to remove graffiti and beautify the neighborhood, engages young people in education, training, and career-building, builds permanent supportive housing for transition-age youth, including former foster youth and other low-income residents, and strengthens small businesses to promote economic growth."⁸² In its strategic plan for 2014 to 2019, the organization plans to "create nationally recognized programming and educational strategies proven to change the lives of at-risk youth including permanent supportive housing, workforce readiness and support services" and will "develop CRCD Enterprises, creating competitive business lines that will generate a significant percentage of CRCD's annual income."⁸³ CRCD has 52 full-time employees with an annual budget of approximately \$3.8 million. Over the next five years, CRCD plans to serve more than 2,500 young people through its programs.

For this study, Mark Wilson, executive director of the Coalition for Responsible Community Development, took part in an interview with the Violence Policy Center. Excerpts of the interview are offered below.

78 See http://www.lisc.org/los_angeles/target_neighborhoods/central_avenue_corridor.php.

79 *Coalition for Responsible Community Development Strategic Plan, 2014 to 2019* (http://www.coalitionrcd.org/media/CRCD_StrategicPlan.pdf).

80 See <http://www.coalitionrcd.org/about.html>.

81 See <http://www.coalitionrcd.org/about.html>.

82 See <http://www.coalitionrcd.org/about.html>.

83 See *Coalition for Responsible Community Development Strategic Plan, 2014 to 2019*, (http://www.coalitionrcd.org/media/CRCD_StrategicPlan.pdf).

On the goals of the Coalition for Responsible Community Development. Simply put, our goal is to change lives and build neighborhoods responsibly. That is done through an intentional, comprehensive approach to community development, where we have a multi-pronged approach to the work. The way that we change lives and build neighborhoods responsibly is through our youth-centered, comprehensive community development work.

On how the Coalition for Responsible Community Development works to achieve these goals. We achieve those goals through partnership and collaboration. We feel [that] as a community development organization, with the multiple challenges residents are faced with in this neighborhood, we can't do all of the work on our own. So it requires a team approach to address some of the issues that we have found to really have an impactful change, and it's done through meaningful collaborations with reputable organizations that have expertise in things that we don't do. So we come to the table with an expertise in a particular subject matter and then we work with other like-minded organizations that have a good reputation that also want to see change happen in the neighborhood that bring other expertise to the table. Our expertise is providing leadership, pulling together a collaboration to work on a particular initiative. I think that we bring expertise in working with the 18-to 24-year-old population, now called opportunity youth. [We work] with young people who for whatever reason haven't completed high school, are system-involved youth coming out of the juvenile justice system, young people that are homeless or aged out of the foster care system, and young people who, for the most part, have not had the opportunity to be gainfully employed or have limited employment experience. So, working with that population to change their lives – I believe that's the expertise we bring to the table. We also bring to the table an expertise in providing intensive case management services and service delivery for that population.

On challenges the Coalition for Responsible Community Development faces. Like many other organizations, there are always political changes when you have different officials that may come in, or different parties that may come in, with different ideas and different approaches. That also dictates how resources flow in and out of our neighborhood. The other challenge is just keeping up with the need. Every time the societal shift happens with politics, the working poor, the poor, [face the] threat of losing resources, and sometimes do lose resources like unemployment benefits, or tenant resources, or other resources that help them get on their feet, including affordable housing. Every time those are stripped from the people we are trying to serve, that intensifies the work that we have to do as far as providing services. For agencies like ours, we have to always keep our ear to the ground to be able to address the needs of folks that we're trying to serve, but it can also be a large challenge.

How the Coalition for Responsible Community Development defines success. Success is always defined by folks that we're working with completing one of our programs. For example, whenever I go to our high school graduation from the CRCDC Academy, located on the campus of LATTC, and I see hundreds of young people walking across the stage or sitting in the audience, and seeing the smiles on their faces that they've actually accomplished and completed something that's going to impact their lives – to me that's success. When a young person gets a job that changes their life, and now they can buy a car, afford an apartment, and take care of their family – that's success. Or someone that was once homeless and now has their own apartment – those things are success to me. Success is seeing the fruits of our labor. It took a lot of blood, sweat and tears and hours of work for us to get to those places – so, to me, that's success to see our strategy come to life, to see our strategy and plan actually make a difference. Those things combined are a success for me.

One individual's story. There's a young man [who] came to us when he was [19 years old and] out on the streets, he had just become a young father, they were literally living in a car, and he came to our program – he came into our office to sign up for our Vernon Central Workforce Development Network Program, which is a partnership of three reputable

organizations and the Los Angeles Trade Tech Community College. [He] successfully completed the program, and then he was hired part-time with the CRCD and then came on as a full-time employee and then driver because we helped him remove some of the blemishes on his driving record so he could get his driving license. And once he got his driving license, we hired him on as a driver. Because of our housing program, we were able to secure a voucher for him so that he could live in an affordable housing unit. There, he was able to take full custody of his child and raise his son on his own because of that housing. Because of the skills that [he] gained at CRCD, he has now been hired for another job by the John Stewart Company –one of the larger property management companies in Los Angeles – as part of their maintenance team on one of their buildings, where he’s earning more money, has benefits, and he’s able to afford to live. That in itself is a step-by-step process of what a young person receives. It doesn’t take just one piece of it, we have to fold in a lot of intensive work and case management and really see what the goals of the young person are. But if we’re able to accomplish some of the goals like securing a job, getting an education, secure housing, it really changes the trajectory of their life. He was struggling with housing. He found secure housing. Because he found secure housing, he was able to take his son out of a bad living situation and move into a better situation with him, simply because he had housing. It’s all of the elements and the pieces of what we package to provide our young people – it really impacts their lives in a positive way.

If resources were not an issue, what else would the Coalition for Responsible Community Development do? Commercial corridors are significant to community change and are significant to the spillover that would happen in neighborhoods adjacent to those corridors. We would definitely want to buy more real estate along the commercial corridors to prohibit the chance of gentrification from happening and small businesses being pushed out. Right now, our neighborhood sits between two or three economic centers in the city of Los Angeles – and that’s downtown Los Angeles and the University of Southern California. Because of that economic activity, all the neighborhoods adjacent to downtown Los Angeles have been affected, from Chinatown, to Boyle Heights, to Highland Park and some parts of South LA. But our neighborhood sits right there, five minutes from the economic engine of the city. It seems like at some point, someone is going to take advantage of the real estate here in this area like they have in the age-old story in neighborhoods across this country, that were once seen as bad neighborhoods, high crime, high gang activity and all of a sudden now they’re the place to go because there are new businesses and retail that have come in, new investment. So the reason we would do new investment along the commercial corridors is because we would purchase those buildings so that we can have a hand in working with the community to dictate what comes into the neighborhood and what goes out. And small mom and pop businesses that are trying to support themselves and send their kids to school won’t get pushed out and they too will have an opportunity to move into newer and better spaces.

We would provide more resources to our youth programs because we know that funding sources typically fund these programs for 10 to 12 months, sometimes six to 12 months, but we find that our young people need more support over 24 months. We would run our programs for a longer term. We would do more neighborhood-serving type projects: more beautification efforts, more leadership efforts. But primarily, it would be the purchase of real estate and asset development to protect cultural landmarks and so forth that can become community-serving. We would beef up our current programming so that they run longer and provide our young people with additional opportunities.

Advice the Coalition for Responsible Community Development would offer to lawmakers who set policy on youth violence and related issues. One thing is that we want alternative sentencing programs. [Currently CRCD is in a partnership with] the City Attorney’s Office, the Public Defender’s Office, Justice Programs, and the Los Angeles County Superior Court. What we’re doing is young people don’t have to go to jail if they participate in programming at CRCD. It’s structured in a way where it’s not mandatory, it’s voluntary, so you can choose not to do it. If you choose to do it, there are

monthly check-ins that happen with the judge, the city attorney, and our youth advocates, which are what we call our case managers. They do this for 12 months, and if a young person successfully completes the CRCD program, the city attorney will resubmit the case back to the judge and ask that it be dismissed, so that particular offense that the young person participated in goes away. So for me, it would be lawmakers changing policy to allow a lot more of that to happen, which could reduce caseloads for attorneys, which could reduce the amount of people that are in our county jail system, and overall, it could reduce the recidivism with young people, which is a common case in our neighborhood with people going in and out of jail or prison. But if we're able to change policy to allow groups like ours to engage young people differently, then we can help stem violence, or stem the high rate of young people going in and out of jail, and reduce recidivism, just by some policy pieces that change.

Another policy piece is around housing. Housing impacts people in a lot of different ways. There's a lot of regulation and red tape out there that makes it very difficult for someone that is low income or no income to receive housing. I would encourage regulatory changes or policy changes there because I think that sometimes preventing violence stems from healthy living as well.

Final thoughts. True collaboration really does work. If you can approach working with the population that people consider is committing or is on the cusp of committing this type of violence, you can really change neighborhoods in partnership. And I think our work has demonstrated that that can be done. I'm not only talking about partnerships with nonprofit organizations, but I'm talking about partnerships with for-profit organizations, law enforcement, business entities, educational institutions, religious institutions. Everything and every item that makes up the fabric of any community should be part of a collaboration or partnership at some point.

INSIDEOUT WRITERS, LOS ANGELES

"The main piece of advice is just to realize that they're kids. You can't create an adult system and expect the kids to seamlessly flood into it. They're kids so there have to be differences in how you take care of them and discipline them. If you're going to have rehabilitation, then make it meaningful." Wendelyn Killian, executive director

The mission of InsideOUT Writers (IOW) "is to reduce the juvenile recidivism rate by providing a range of services that evolves to meet the needs of currently and formerly incarcerated youth and young adults."⁸⁴ InsideOUT Writers was founded in 1996 by juvenile hall chaplain Sister Janet Harris, former *Los Angeles Times* journalist Duane Noriyuki, and other professional writers who volunteered to teach creative writing three times a week to youth incarcerated in Los Angeles County's Central Juvenile Hall.

Today, the program has 39 weekly classes in four juvenile detention facilities (Central, Los Padrinos and Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Halls, and Camp David Gonzales). IOW also offers classes at Ironwood State Prison in Blythe, California and the California Institution for Men in Chino, California for former juvenile hall students who are now serving time in the adult prison system. IOW also convenes annual Writers' Retreats at each juvenile detention facility and publishes *In Depth*, a quarterly literary journal of student and alumni writings.

In 2009, IOW launched the Alumni Program, which supports former students upon their release from detention. The Alumni Program provides a continuum of care to Writing Program students who have been released from detention. Program participants receive services and participate in programming designed to support their ongoing development of pro-social attitudes and behaviors that will serve them well as they continue in their transition from incarceration. The

84 See <http://www.insideoutwriters.org/mission/>.

Alumni Program is comprised of six interconnected components: case management; life skills enrichment sessions; a mentoring program; writing circles; community engagement; and, cultural events and field trips.⁸⁵

Since 1996, more than 11,000 youth have participated in more than 15,000 IOW classes. Since 2009, more than 125 young people have participated in the Alumni Program which has partnered with more than 100 local community organizations. InsideOUT Writers has a staff of six, more than 50 volunteer teachers (some of whom receive small stipends), and an annual budget of approximately \$750,000.

For this study, Wendelyn Killian, executive director of InsideOUT Writers, took part in an interview with the Violence Policy Center. Excerpts of the interview are offered below.

On the goals of InsideOUT Writers. It's twofold. It's to give kids who have been discarded and who have been relegated to a very scary place – juvenile halls and other juvenile detention facilities – a little bit of hope in the midst of their struggles. These kids – many of them – are youth of color, who come from predominantly disenfranchised, low-income communities, very difficult circumstances, and they have gotten themselves in some trouble. I'm not here to tell you that all these kids are perfect and many haven't done their crimes; that's not really the point of it all. The point is we try to give them hope in the midst of the terrible situations that they face. Inside juvenile detention facilities there is very little opportunity for them to be children. In one of the units we work in, Unit J at Central Juvenile Hall, we work with 10- to 13-year-old boys – and these little boys, they want to play Legos and be superheroes. They've got themselves into a situation that is indescribable. But the point is, when our teachers go inside, they give them an opportunity to be children and to hopefully develop some self-awareness about what it is that got them there, and write about some of the challenges, whether it be abuse or the trauma that they've faced, the bad things that they've done, or that have been done to them, and maybe begin to work through these things. [The second goal is that] when they get out, and when they're working with us in the Alumni Program, is to never go back. If that contact was your first or your twelfth, we hope that that's the last time you have contact with the criminal justice system. We give them concrete tools and supportive services to navigate around selling drugs and being involved in a gang, which are rational decisions when you feel like there is nothing else, [but] are now irrational because you realize you can go to school, you can get in the trades or find a job, and there are techniques you can learn to become a good parent. It's helping them realize that there are alternatives to the really difficult situations that they face.

On how InsideOUT Writers works to achieve these goals. For so many of these kids, they're told, "You're a criminal, and you're a gang-banger." In class, these kids can write about anything and be whoever they want to be. They can write a love letter to a girl, they can write a letter of apology to mom, they can write about being a piece of fruit, or entering into adulthood. They're now telling their story, and they're now finding their voices. So many of them have said to me, "This is just what you do; you join a gang, you follow rules, this is what people tell you you're going to be. We have trouble in school, they put me in a special-ed class, and they tell me I'm not smart." These kids are finding their own voice and it's really about that. Don't let somebody dictate to you who you will be, you can be whoever you want to be, and through writing, they're really able to explore that because, as you know, the settings for this level of self-expression and reflection in a juvenile hall are very limited, though there is some programming.

Our Alumni Program is focused on addressing the service gaps that remain for formerly incarcerated youth, because the needs of kids are so different from adults. Our niche is 16 to 25. Inside, we see much younger kids, and some of our kids will come out after 10 years, and we're able to help them. But we really focus on that young adult group and helping them

85 See <http://www.insideoutwriters.org/mission/>.

navigate an environment that they really haven't grown up in. Their social skills are often delayed, and how they interact with bosses and relationships – it can be difficult for them.

It's a lot of hard work. I tell the kids all the time, "We open the door, but you've got to do all of the leg work." We don't enable them; I can't promise them a job. I can promise you that if you submit applications and you go to interviews, and you answer the questions properly that you're giving yourself a better shot at getting the job, but I can't guarantee you jobs. We're helping them figure out how to operate in society without having to go back to the ways that led them to juvenile hall to begin with.

Many of them are going back to communities where there are no services and there are no or very limited [support systems for them], or their families are struggling and doing the very best they can. At IOW, they can come here to East Hollywood (our office isn't fancy by any stretch of the imagination), and receive services and surround themselves with supportive peers.

On challenges InsideOUT Writers faces. Always funding. Working with kids and young adults who are or have been incarcerated isn't a universally appealing cause and it can be a difficult sell with potential funders – unless [you have a funder like] The California Wellness Foundation [that] sees health in a larger context than the absence of illness. TCWF realizes that the health of a community depends on having really active and engaged participants, and that's not possible if you're incarcerated. That's incredible and that's amazing, but that's not a concept that a lot of funders get. We're based in Los Angeles, and everybody wants a nice packaged story, but sometimes it's really messy. We're making progress. It's just really figuring out how to articulate our work and impact, how to get folks to realize the power of the human connection and the importance of writing for these young people and the importance of supportive services in our communities. I think that's really a big challenge. There are so many organizations doing such great work. I want to make sure that we're always supporting the young people we serve and each other and aren't in competition.

How InsideOUT Writers defines success. [We define success] by our kids staying out of the system. Additionally, for alumni, it's accomplishing life's major milestones – getting a job, completing their probation or parole conditions, going to school, finding stable housing, etc. Those are the victories that we celebrate.

One individual's story. We work with a wonderful young lady and her number one priority when she got out of detention was to find a job. Recently, we developed an amazing partnership with LA Kitchen, and they set aside two paid internship spots for two alumni who are dual status – in the foster care system and the criminal justice system. [She] is now going through the training program in the culinary arts. They're going to help her develop that skill set, which could be very prosperous for her when she completes it, in terms of the skills she needs to get a great job and be successful. Hopefully, she won't have to think about the underground economy to support herself. We have every expectation that she will be successful in this endeavor. That's a success for us.

If resources were not an issue, what else would InsideOUT Writers do? In terms of the Writing Program, we want to have more classes and more sites, including in LA County and beyond. We would love to be a national model. In terms of the Alumni Program, we have case managers who are generalists, and they help the alumni address a wide variety of their needs, including education, employment, housing, transportation, health care, etc. We would add an employment specialist to the team and this person would be specifically responsible for addressing and supporting the alumni's career needs and goals. We would also add a mental health advocate who is trained to address the alumni's mental health needs.

What the alumni need when they get out, they tell us first and foremost, is a job. We would want to continue to build partnerships with prospective employers and create a pipeline from our job training program to entry-level jobs. We would hope to achieve the same thing with local schools and work with community colleges, to set aside slots for formerly incarcerated youth and provide bridge programming to support one's integration into the school community.

Advice InsideOUT Writers would offer to lawmakers who set policy on youth violence and related issues. The main piece of advice is just to realize that they're kids. You can't create an adult system and expect the kids to seamlessly flood into it. They're kids so there have to be differences in how you take care of them and discipline them. If you're going to have rehabilitation, then make it meaningful. I realize there are some kids - for their safety and for the safety of others - that need to be in some sort of lock-down situation, but I believe that the majority of kids that I've seen would be better served getting the help and resources they need from community-based organizations who have high-quality services and programming. I think more resources should be allocated towards effective community solutions to adequately address the juvenile recidivism crisis.

Final Thoughts. Our students and alumni are always boxed in - physically, mentally, socially, economically - and in several other ways. What they are trying to do is establish independence and self-definition. This does not come cheap and it does not come easy. Even at their most successful, they are works-in-progress and any single area of their life has the power to derail the sum of whatever progress they have made. This is true for all of us, but for the formerly incarcerated, loss of freedom is a reality that looms large and close to home. Missteps are more costly than you can imagine and progress is powerful, yet fragile. IOW has existed for nearly two decades and we understand that even we stand at the initial phases of finding and cementing solutions to the problems faced by those we serve. Learning how to best serve this population, which should be a fully integrated section of the larger population, is like freedom. It is ongoing, evolving, and lasts a lifetime.

YOUTH UPRISING, OAKLAND

Violence prevention has to be afforded long-term structures of support. This isn't a fad. We have to make long-term investments in this world. As we begin to make progress, we have to begin to expand out the notion of what prevents violence. That has to be contextualized in the larger question of what does health of a community, health of people, and health of a family look like? That takes into account your built environment, mental health, economic opportunities - a host of things. It's focusing on the crisis at hand while building out structures that truly prevent violence, like quality early education, that ultimately will get us to where we're going, which is safe communities. Olis Simmons, president and CEO

Youth UpRising was established in 2005 as a "one-stop health and human services center designed by and for youth." Its creation was the result of a public/private partnership between the organization and government, foundation, and other local youth service agencies. Youth UpRising serves approximately 300 youth each day.⁸⁶

Youth UpRising's mission is to "transform East Oakland into a healthy and economically robust community by developing the leadership of youth and young adults and improving the systems that impact them." Describing itself as a "neighborhood hub," the center offers services and programs for young people that increase their "physical and mental wellbeing, community connection, educational attainment, and career achievement." The organization has four core program areas: Health & Wellness; Career & Education; Arts & Expression; and, Civic Engagement.⁸⁷

Recognizing that "safety and violence are among the most critical issues facing youth in Oakland," Youth UpRising has three public safety programs. *The Oakland Strategy* is a "comprehensive strategy" to reduce crime and violence in Oakland,

86 See <http://www.youthuprising.org/about-us/who-we-are/history/>.

87 See <http://www.youthuprising.org/about-us/who-we-are/vision-mission/>.

emphasizing early prevention, intervention, and enforcement. Participants include the Oakland Police Department and community organizations. *LeaderSHIFT* is a program that sponsors gender-specific retreats for at-risk young people. Participants “raise self-awareness, address trauma, begin the healing process, learn alternative methods to addressing conflicts and develop positive life plans.”⁸⁸ *Code 33 Youth/Police Dialogue* is an interactive curriculum stemming from a partnership between Youth UpRising and the Oakland Police Department with the goal of improving relations between youth and law enforcement through understanding and mutual respect.⁸⁹ Code 33 increases the consciousness of officers and youth about each other, their history and their politics.⁹⁰

Youth UpRising’s “theory of change” believes that “personal transformation” coupled with “systems change” and “community development” leads to community transformation.⁹¹ Youth UpRising’s staff numbers between 65 and 90, depending on the season of the year and the organization’s programming schedule. Its annual budget is approximately 7.5 to 8 million dollars, not including in-kind donations (which would bring the total to approximately \$10 million per year).

For this study, Olis Simmons, president and CEO of Youth UpRising, took part in an interview with the Violence Policy Center. Excerpts of the interview are offered below.

On the goals of Youth UpRising. The goal of Youth UpRising is to transform the place without displacing people. We believe that by starting with young people who are at the epicenter of violence, pivoting them and supporting their transformation, [we can] help them [change] their lives, their families, and their communities.

On how Youth UpRising works to achieve these goals. The way that we do this work is through meeting young people where they are and offering services and support in four separate focal areas that are all integrated: art and expression; health and wellness; career and education; and, youth leadership development and civic engagement. In this model, young people can come in and receive mental health support, medical services, tutoring, transcript review, job readiness and actual jobs, an opportunity to dance, make music, and produce films. What we have found is that if you remain relevant and cater to the needs of young people – their interests and their desire to form their own identity – you’re able to attract young people to you. This summer we’ll hit 10,000 unduplicated young people that we have served in the past nine years.

On challenges Youth UpRising faces. As a leader, you operate in a multi-dimensional world, and each dimension has its own challenge. There’s the fundraising challenge; there’s the talent-attraction, talent-development challenge; there’s the public-system challenge – developing relationships with the police department so that you become an ally, as opposed to an enemy. Each dimension brings with it a different range and level of challenges. Overall, we believe that no one is coming to save us and that the solution resides in the people who live there – so we hire indigenously. Talent development is probably the biggest challenge for us. In a place that is arguably in its third decade of educational institutional failure, where the majority of the people have been cut off from the kind of intellectual and economic opportunity that you and I might take for granted, and transform them relatively quickly – in an accelerated manner – into leaders of their lives and other peoples’, to move from being an individual contributor to being a team leader, that’s a very difficult thing. Building a culture of continuous learning and having that be true not because you import people with a certain pedigree but because you build it from the ground up, I’d have to say that that is maybe the most challenging thing.

Violence prevention is very much relational. You are able to get ahead of violence and redirect that force of nature because

88 See <http://www.youthuprising.org/issues-responses/public-safety/>.

89 Code 33 is the police code for “Clear Radio Channels for Emergency Traffic.”

90 See <http://www.youthuprising.org/issues-responses/public-safety/>.

91 See <http://www.youthuprising.org/about-us/who-we-are/theory-of-change/>.

you've built a relationship with people, and they know you and they trust you, and you've given them a bridge to an alternative set of behavior. That happens hand-to-hand, person-to-person. So the quality of your program, ultimately, is about the quality of your staff. Ultimately, it's all about the people.

Helping young people make a choice for a different life while they're in an environment where they're saturated by messages to make the wrong choice is tough. We're open from 8:00 in the morning until 8:00 at night. Even if a young person is with us that full 12 hours, they're going home, and the messages there are very different. Counteracting that and creating an incentive - because people change because the pain of remaining the same outweighs the pain of change - is very difficult and nuanced and complex. Every one of those challenges comes down to the quality of the people that you have working for you.

How Youth UpRising defines success. We have three quick answers to that. One is that we operate in a performance-management environment. So we have to be very intentional about investing the time upfront to define success for us and what the outcomes are that are successful and what the indicators are that let you know that you're moving toward success. Our five primary buckets are emotional, spiritual wellness, physical wellness, intellectual wellness, financial wellness, and then community cohesion. We have very clear indicators and every young person that comes in is assessed. There is a really comprehensive base-lining of them. If they trigger through their responses certain concerns for us around, for instance, stability of housing, they see a case manager immediately. We base-line young people, we assess where they are, and every six months we go back and reassess a sampling of them, but every young person that works with an adult in the building has a pretty comprehensive profile built of them over time, so all of the case notes are all in a performance-management system. All the pre/post tests are in a performance-management system. That's the technical answer for how you do it. The challenge with using that alone is that it is individually based or program-based, and we're a community transformation organization so we have to have other dimensions as to how we look at success. So for us, ultimately, over time, success is you come in at 13 and you're troubled and you age out at 25 (because we stop serving at 24), and you are well on your way to home ownership. You have a post-secondary degree, you are financially literate, you have a bank account. You have all the things that just are not true now. You're a stakeholder in that place. So that second dimension, that longitudinal future, is also important, and we're ever-conscious of that. But the third - which is harder to measure - is about the quality of the culture in the space for both the young people and the adults. Does it feel like love, does it convey hope and possibility, is it a place that people retreat to from the realities of the larger context of the community? So until we change that larger context, is it a safe haven? So there is an individual program, performance management effort, there's a more longitudinal look at have we changed the place, evidenced by the way that the people are moving. Then, the short-term one for us is do we have a culture of love and acceptance and safety?

One individual's story. [One young woman] came to us when she was in the tenth grade. She'd led a group of girls called Savage Girls, and they were known to jump on anybody, including grown men, and beat them. They were really savage girls. We got into a relationship with them and redirected their attention. We started talking to them about what their lives could be, and were they aspiring to what they saw around them. So [she] gets into cheerleading. From cheerleading, we get her into track, which is really a re-engagement of her in school altogether. We get her out of high school, she gets to California State University at Northridge on a track scholarship. She leaves Northridge and goes to Boise State University where she finishes her undergraduate degree. We literally flew a staff person out to Boise, Idaho for her graduation because her family absolutely couldn't afford to go. Upon earning her undergraduate degree, she tells us she has enrolled at Grambling in a Master's program in criminal justice. So how far of a journey is it from - she

was a Savage Girl – so that she understands the larger construct around her and around her community and wants to be a part of the solution.

If resources were not an issue, what else would Youth UpRising do? We see ourselves as responsible for building out a healthy ecosystem. We think that there are, in addition to the work that Youth UpRising does, there are four other things that we need to expand into. The first is a cradle-to-career continuum that provides high-quality education prenatally, all the way through a post-secondary degree. We have launched a new institution, a separate 501(c)(3) called Castlemont Community Transformation Schools (CCTS), to hold and drive that cradle-to-career continuum. The second place that we would expand – and we will – is into mixed-income housing. The Bay Area is experiencing a seismic shift around who lives in which communities, and the region’s incredible wealth from the Internet industry is pushing whole cities out, and Oakland is on the brink of completely slipping. The housing market conditions are completely out of control, with no real accountability to the people who are being displaced. In the last decade alone, Oakland’s African-American population decreased by twenty-five percent. That said, villainizing newcomers is not the way to go. Development and investment should be welcome in poor neighborhoods. But residents should be able to benefit from the new jobs and other perks. The question is not whether this change is good or bad, it’s how do we find a balance, and how do we start the conversation? We believe that the people who are indigenous to the place, who have been there for generations, have a right to stay and that you can do a mixed-income community by helping those people move up the economic ladder. So mixed-income housing is certainly a part of what we want to do. We also believe that business incubation and business support is important, that economic development is about the flow of capital in a neighborhood, and so [is] the reemergence of a merchant class. People need to be able to operate businesses in their neighborhood because that stimulates jobs. The question is, how many times can your dollar bounce in a neighborhood? And all of those things are violence prevention – all of them, every single one of them: quality housing is, quality education is, a really positive mix of goods and service is. We see expansion into that work as a necessary part of our journey.

What advice would you have for lawmakers who set policy around youth violence and related issues? Treating violence purely with case management misses the point. Violence isn’t a response to poverty; there are people all over the world who are poor but are not violent. It’s a response to the growth in inequity that you have when you have this level of affluence, juxtaposed to this level of devastation. Economic development is probably the greatest violence-prevention strategy: quality education, career pathways, linked learning. It’s not to take away from the importance of gang intervention and case management – absolutely not. Those are essential elements; they are simply not enough to take us all the way to scale. At scale, it is necessary that people have real economic opportunity.

Final Thoughts. It’s difficult to verbalize the profound impact [of] living every day, day in, day out, in an environment where you could lose your life for no reason. You don’t necessarily need to be in a conflict, you can get shot by a stray bullet – it can just happen, you can be mistaken as someone else. There’s no overstating the severe impact that that has on brain development, mental health, a sense of hope and possibility, resiliency – all of the things that give human beings the possibility of sacrificing today in order to build a better tomorrow. Violence prevention has to be afforded long-term structures of support. This isn’t a fad. We have to make long-term investments in this world. As we begin to make progress, we have to begin to expand out the notion of what prevents violence. That has to be contextualized in the larger question of what does health of a community, health of people, and health of a family look like? That takes into account your built environment, mental health, economic opportunities – a host of things. It’s focusing on the crisis at hand while building out structures that truly prevent violence, like quality early education, that ultimately will get us to where we’re going, which is safe communities.

WHAT WORKS IN JUVENILE VIOLENCE PREVENTION?

The traditional approach to working with young people who are at-risk or justice-engaged has been to focus efforts on addressing deficits that are seen to drive delinquency, including histories of abuse, neglect, drug use, mental health issues, violence, and aggression.⁹² As a result of the strong relationships between youth with these backgrounds and juvenile justice involvement, many jurisdictions have elected to pursue “multi-system” approaches to service provision that involve coordination and collaboration between child welfare services, mental health departments, and the juvenile justice system. Many juvenile treatment programs also focus on the way in which these deficits pose challenges to youth returning to the community following involvement with the juvenile justice system. Additional circumstances that contribute to these challenges include weak connections to the educational system, lack of job preparedness and marketable skills, and lack of connections to positive adult role models and community support.⁹³

However, an expanding body of literature points to the effectiveness of community-based alternatives to incarceration in stemming juvenile delinquency and gang involvement.

POSITIVE YOUTH JUSTICE

In contrast to the traditional “deficit-based” perspective discussed above,⁹⁴ recent efforts have sought to re-characterize juvenile programs as “strengths-based,” that is, focusing on promoting positive developmental alternatives through connecting young people to caring adults, engaging them in their schools and communities, and increasing opportunities for them to develop leadership skills.⁹⁵ Scholars agree that programs that seek to include the participation of family members or caregivers, promote positive community connections by offering critical “pro-social” skills, mental health resources, and opportunities for academic engagement are strongly associated with reducing juvenile delinquency—and are likely to offer alternative paths for those youth most susceptible to delinquency and gang involvement.

There is an emerging field of successful and innovative juvenile justice programming that embraces this more holistic view of addressing the needs of young people and their communities. Successful community-based programs for justice-involved youth seek to engage youth in positive, strengths-based alternatives to improve outcomes. As one set of researchers noted, “All justice-involved youth, even those who require some of these specialized treatments, need basic supports and opportunities if they are to avoid future criminality and learn to lead positive, productive adult lives.”⁹⁶ Three counties in California are currently engaged in efforts to integrate these elements into their probation departments and one city is on a parallel track with its school district through the Positive Youth Justice Initiative (PYJI). PYJI, an initiative of the California-based Sierra Health Foundation with additional support from The California Endowment and The California Wellness Foundation, is focused on shifting the punitive philosophical approach traditionally held by probation departments to one that aligns more closely with the research on strengths-based alternatives described above.⁹⁷

92 Butts, Jeffrey A., Bazemore, Gordon, and Meroe, Aundra Saa, *Positive Youth Justice: Framing Justice Interventions Using the Concepts of Positive Youth Development*, Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2010 (<http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Positive%20Youth%20Justice.pdf>).

93 Griffin, Patrick, *Models for Change: Innovations in Practice*, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, November 2010 (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/287>).

94 Butts, Jeffrey A., Bazemore, Gordon, and Meroe, Aundra Saa, *Positive Youth Justice: Framing Justice Interventions Using the Concepts of Positive Youth Development*, Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2010 (<http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Positive%20Youth%20Justice.pdf>).

95 Butts, Jeffrey A., Bazemore, Gordon, and Meroe, Aundra Saa, *Positive Youth Justice: Framing Justice Interventions Using the Concepts of Positive Youth Development*, Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2010 (<http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Positive%20Youth%20Justice.pdf>).

96 Butts, Jeffrey A., Bazemore, Gordon, and Meroe, Aundra Saa, *Positive Youth Justice: Framing Justice Interventions Using the Concepts of Positive Youth Development*, Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2010 (<http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Positive%20Youth%20Justice.pdf>).

97 Positive Youth Justice Initiative, Sierra Health Foundation (<http://www.sierrahealth.org/pyji>).

Implementing this strengths-based perspective in the context of juvenile justice has at times been difficult. The juvenile justice system has long relied upon identifying deficits and focusing punitive measures at those problems. However, current community-based approaches to addressing factors associated with justice involvement have been successful largely because of their strengths-based focus on building skills, competencies, and positive connections between youth and their communities.

Several best practices have been developed in the wake of this transition toward strengths-based, community-based juvenile justice programming.

As an alternative to incarceration, diversion programs for juvenile offenders are playing a key role in juvenile justice reform. Diversion programs seek to redirect young people who have non-serious charges from being formally processed in the justice system. While there are no standardized definitions of what constitutes a diversion program, the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice describes diversion programs as "...a variety of alternative programs that may include teen courts, victim restitution and restoration programs, and mediation programs."⁹⁸ Holding young offenders accountable with "less costly and more effective programs, while avoiding the negative consequences" of convictions and court records began initially by focusing on mental health, substance abuse, and developmentally impacted youth offenders, but has been expanded to include a broader population of youth offenders.⁹⁹ A growing body of evidence supports this trend, showing that for many youth, formal adjudication in the juvenile justice system may lead to higher rates of re-offending.¹⁰⁰

Current youth justice programming also focuses on improving the quality of education and job training for youth who are justice-engaged.¹⁰¹ Community partnerships in various jurisdictions have addressed this goal through efforts to improve classroom instruction in juvenile institutions, improve relationships between placement schools and juvenile offenders' home school systems, and promote career and technical education programs in focused and credible career training tracks.¹⁰² Such efforts have yielded results, including expediting the educational records transfer between institutional schools and home school systems, boosting high school diploma and GED achievement rates in discharged youth, and improving math and reading scores.¹⁰³ The focus on job training and certifications has also yielded results, including a chance for juvenile offenders to earn legal wages upon release, often for the first time. Youth also have the opportunity to establish work histories, practice employment skills, develop confidence, and reduce the likelihood of reoffending—all of which serve them well in their efforts to return to their communities.¹⁰⁴

If the more recent initiatives taking hold across the county are any indication, the "tough on crime" mentality that, despite overwhelming research, exercised control over far too many policymakers, may be losing momentum. This is hopeful news

98 *Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice Annual Report 2010*

(<http://www.facjj.org/annualreports/00-FACJJ%20Annual%20Report-FINAL%20508.pdf>).

99 Dickman, Autumn, *Models for Change Innovation Brief: Using Diversion Fairly, Consistently, and Effectively*, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/311>).

100 Dickman, Autumn, *Models for Change Innovation Brief: Using Diversion Fairly, Consistently, and Effectively*, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/311>).

101 Griffin, Patrick, *Models for Change: Innovations in Practice*, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/287>).

102 Griffin, Patrick, *Models for Change: Innovations in Practice*, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/287>).

103 Griffin, Patrick, *Models for Change: Innovations in Practice*, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/287>).

104 Griffin, Patrick, *Models for Change: Innovations in Practice*, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (<http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/287>).

for those who envision a new era of juvenile justice, characterized by rehabilitative principles and holistic approaches that work in partnership with youth and their families. California has made enormous progress by reducing its juvenile prison population by nearly 88 percent in the decade spanning 1996 to 2010.¹⁰⁵ During this period of population reduction, there was a concurrent drop in both felony and misdemeanor juvenile arrests indicating that young people can successfully be diverted from youth prisons without negatively impacting crime rates.¹⁰⁶ The evidence continues to propel us in the direction of shifting how we address juvenile crime, underscoring the fact that moving away from punitive, sanctions-based policies will not jeopardize public safety, and will indeed result in more positive outcomes for youth.

105 *Bringing Youth Home: A National Movement to Increase Public Safety, Rehabilitate Youth and Save Money*, National Juvenile Justice Network, July 2011 (<http://www.njjn.org/uploads/digital-library/Bringing%20Youth%20Home%20FINAL,%208.9.11.pdf>).

106 *Bringing Youth Home: A National Movement to Increase Public Safety, Rehabilitate Youth and Save Money*, National Juvenile Justice Network, July 2011 (<http://www.njjn.org/uploads/digital-library/Bringing%20Youth%20Home%20FINAL,%208.9.11.pdf>).

CONCLUSION

Homicide, and particularly gun homicide, continues to be one of the most pressing public health concerns in California among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24.

Effective violence prevention strategies must include measures that prioritize preventing youth and young adults from accessing firearms, especially handguns. With firearms accounting for 86 percent of homicides in the 10 to 24 age range in California and handguns accounting for 70 percent of all gun homicides, the importance of prevention strategies to limit exposure to firearms in this age range are of the utmost importance. Important components of such a strategy would be the identification of the make, model, and caliber of weapons most preferred by this age group as well as analyses identifying the sources of the weapons. It should be kept in mind that a large percentage of this age group—those under the age of 21—cannot legally purchase a handgun. It is also generally illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to possess a handgun.¹⁰⁷ While most youth and young adults can neither buy nor possess a handgun, this in no way protects them from the emotional and psychological effects of gun violence. An ongoing need exists for the expansion of comprehensive violence intervention and prevention strategies that include a focus on the psychological well-being of witnesses and survivors of gun violence.

This year's county-by-county rankings also point to the continuing urgent need for tailored, localized approaches to reducing youth homicide that integrate prevention and intervention while engaging local leaders and community stakeholders. At the same time, state and regional policies should incorporate elements necessary to help ensure effective community practices.

The trauma resulting from youth violence and its attendant high rates of homicide as well as gang warfare devastate many neighborhoods, destroying countless lives. The impact of this violence ripples across communities, ravaging local economies, home values, and depressing business centers. The violence forces people inside, limiting recreation and neighbor-to-neighbor interaction, holding residents captive. It is consuming and seemingly relentless. What is also clear is that these communities and the residents who reside in them are suffering deeply. Overwhelming evidence demonstrates that numerous programs—many on shoestring budgets—are capable of turning lives around and healing communities using holistic approaches. What might these communities look like if a substantial percentage of corrections funds were diverted to support street outreach and mental health services? The current “tough on crime” mentality that, despite the wealth of research, continues to exercise control over too many policymakers is not only economically unsustainable, it is also morally suspect. It is time to allow programs such as the examples detailed in this report a real opportunity to improve neighborhoods and change lives through a significant shift in resources, and in the way we think about violence.

107 Federal law prohibits Federal Firearms License holders from selling handguns to anyone under the age of 21. California law prohibits the sale of handguns by any person or corporation to anyone under the age of 21. Federal and California law prohibit the possession of handguns by anyone under the age of 18 with exceptions including hunting and competitive shooting. For exceptions see Cal. Penal Code § 29615 Sections (a)(1), (a)(2).

APPENDIX ONE: YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT HOMICIDE VICTIMS AGES 10 TO 24 IN THE UNITED STATES BY STATE, RANKED BY RATE, 2011

State Ranking	State	Number of Homicide Victims	Homicide Rate per 100,000
1	Louisiana	175	18.04
2	Maryland	146	12.35
3	Illinois	324	12.17
4	Mississippi	75	11.65
5	Alabama	110	10.99
6	Michigan	204	9.83
7	Pennsylvania	249	9.73
8	South Carolina	88	9.14
9	Missouri	107	8.69
10	Tennessee	109	8.45
11	Florida	302	8.35
12	Arkansas	49	8.11
13	New Jersey	138	7.99
14	Ohio	182	7.74
15	California	633	7.73
16	Georgia	161	7.64
17	Delaware	14	7.56
18	North Carolina	142	7.19
19 (tie)	Alaska	11	6.90
19 (tie)	New Mexico	30	6.90
21	Arizona	93	6.81
22	Nevada	37	6.80
23	Oklahoma	52	6.55
24	New York	259	6.53
25	Connecticut	45	6.24
26	Kansas	37	6.07
27	Massachusetts	80	5.95
28	Indiana	82	5.93
29	Texas	315	5.55
30	West Virginia	19	5.48
31	Virginia	88	5.35
32	Nebraska	19	4.96

State Ranking	State	Number of Homicide Victims	Homicide Rate per 100,000
33	Kentucky	38	4.34
34	Colorado	42	4.06
35	Idaho	11	3.20
36	Oregon	24	3.19
37	Wisconsin	36	3.11
38	Washington	39	2.84
39	Minnesota	29	2.70
40	Iowa	12	1.89
	Hawaii	fewer than 10 deaths*	NA
	Maine	fewer than 10 deaths	NA
	Montana	fewer than 10 deaths	NA
	New Hampshire	fewer than 10 deaths	NA
	North Dakota	fewer than 10 deaths	NA
	Rhode Island	fewer than 10 deaths	NA
	South Dakota	fewer than 10 deaths	NA
	Utah	fewer than 10 deaths	NA
	Vermont	fewer than 10 deaths	NA
	Wyoming	fewer than 10 deaths	NA
	U.S. Total	4,708	7.30

* Beginning with 2008 data, the National Center for Health Statistics has begun suppressing data if fewer than 10 deaths are reported in a given state. Death counts and rates are not included for those states. They are, however, included in the U.S. total for deaths and rate.

APPENDIX TWO: YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT HOMICIDE VICTIMS AGES 10 TO 24 IN CALIFORNIA BY COUNTY, RANKED BY RATE, 2012

County Ranking by Rate	County	Number of Homicide Victims	Homicide Rate per 100,000
1	Monterey*	22	23.32
2	San Francisco	27	23.20
3	San Joaquin	36	21.90
4	Alameda	62	20.86
5	Stanislaus	18	14.88
6	Solano	13	14.85
7	Merced	10	14.82
8	Contra Costa	24	11.41
9	Tulare	12	10.75
10	Los Angeles	207	9.55
11	Fresno	21	9.08
12	Sacramento	25	8.15
13	Kern	16	7.71
14	Santa Clara	22	6.41
15	Santa Cruz	4	6.26
16	San Diego	40	5.78
17	Madera	2	5.68
18	Kings	2	5.61
19	Butte	3	5.40
20	Riverside	21	3.98
21	Orange	25	3.82
22	San Bernadino	19	3.73
23	Ventura	6	3.32
24	El Dorado	1	2.95
25	Shasta	1	2.90
26	San Mateo	3	2.42
27	Santa Barbara	2	1.78
28	San Luis Obispo	1	1.50
29	Sonoma	1	1.06

County Ranking by Rate	County	Number of Homicide Victims	Homicide Rate per 100,000
30 (tie)	Humboldt	0.00	0.00
30 (tie)	Imperial	0.00	0.00
30 (tie)	Marin	0.00	0.00
30 (tie)	Napa	0.00	0.00
30 (tie)	Placer	0.00	0.00
30 (tie)	Yolo	0.00	0.00
	California Total	646	8.06

* To help ensure more stable rates, only counties with a population of at least 25,000 youth and young adults between the ages of 10 to 24 are included. The selected counties account for 99 percent of homicide victims ages 10 to 24 in California (646 out of 651 victims) and 98 percent of California's population ages 10 to 24 (8,014,360 out of 8,188,043) for 2012.

APPENDIX THREE: YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT HOMICIDE VICTIMS AGES 10 TO 24 IN CALIFORNIA AND RATES, ALPHABETICALLY BY COUNTY, 2012

County	County Ranking by Rate	Number of Homicide Victims	Homicide Rate per 100,000
Alameda*	4	62	20.86
Butte	19	3	5.40
Contra Costa	8	24	11.41
El Dorado	24	1	2.95
Fresno	11	21	9.08
Humboldt	30 (tie)	0	0.00
Imperial	30 (tie)	0	0.00
Kern	13	16	7.71
Kings	18	2	5.61
Los Angeles	10	207	9.55
Madera	17	2	5.68
Marin	30 (tie)	0	0.00
Merced	7	10	14.82
Monterey	1	22	23.32
Napa	30 (tie)	0	0.00
Orange	21	25	3.82
Placer	30 (tie)	0	0.00
Riverside	20	21	3.98
Sacramento	12	25	8.15
San Bernardino	22	19	3.73
San Diego	16	40	5.78
San Francisco	2	27	23.20
San Joaquin	3	36	21.90
San Luis Obispo	28	1	1.50
San Mateo	26	3	2.42
Santa Barbara	27	2	1.78
Santa Clara	14	22	6.41
Santa Cruz	15	4	6.26
Shasta	25	1	2.90
Solano	6	13	14.85

County	County Ranking by Rate	Number of Homicide Victims	Homicide Rate per 100,000
Sonoma	29	1	1.06
Stanislaus	5	18	14.88
Tulare	9	12	10.75
Ventura	23	6	3.32
Yolo	30 (tie)	0.00	0.00
California Total		646	8.06

* To help ensure more stable rates, only counties with a population of at least 25,000 youth and young adults between the ages of 10 to 24 are included. The selected counties account for 99 percent of homicide victims ages 10 to 24 in California (646 out of 651 victims) and 98 percent of California's population ages 10 to 24 (8,014,360 out of 8,188,043) for 2012.

APPENDIX FOUR: YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT HOMICIDE VICTIMS AGES 10 TO 24 IN CALIFORNIA AND RATES, ALPHABETICALLY BY COUNTY, 2010 - 2012

	County Ranking by Rate			Number of Homicide Victims			Homicide Rate per 100,000		
	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012
Alameda	2	4	4	55	50	62	18.41	16.82	20.86
Butte	28	24	19	1	2	3	1.87	3.60	5.40
Contra Costa	6	5	8	27	31	24	12.94	14.74	11.41
El Dorado	31 (tie)	30 (tie)	24	0	0	1	0.00	0.00	2.95
Fresno	7	11	11	27	20	21	11.61	8.64	9.08
Humboldt	31 (tie)	30 (tie)	30 (tie)	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Imperial	26	19	30 (tie)	1	2	0	2.33	4.65	0.00
Kern	11	17	13	23	12	16	11.12	5.79	7.71
Kings	25	13	18	1	3	2	2.79	8.42	5.61
Los Angeles	10	9	10	248	207	207	11.35	9.55	9.55
Madera	9	30 (tie)	17	4	0	2	11.39	0.00	5.68
Marin	20	28	30 (tie)	2	1	0	5.35	2.63	0.00
Merced	5	16	7	9	4	10	13.44	5.93	14.82
Monterey	1	3	1	23	16	22	24.36	16.96	23.32
Napa	31 (tie)	30 (tie)	30 (tie)	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Orange	23	22	21	22	25	25	3.37	3.82	3.82
Placer	31 (tie)	30 (tie)	30 (tie)	0	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Riverside	18 (tie)	20	20	30	24	21	5.75	4.55	3.98
Sacramento	13	12	12	30	26	25	9.75	8.48	8.15
San Bernardino	16	14	22	34	39	19	6.67	7.65	3.73

	County Ranking by Rate			Number of Homicide Victims			Homicide Rate per 100,000		
	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012
San Diego	22	23	16	26	25	40	3.73	3.61	5.78
San Francisco	8	2	2	14	21	27	11.52	18.04	23.20
San Joaquin	3	1	3	30	35	36	18.36	21.29	21.90
San Luis Obispo	24	29	28	2	1	1	3.16	1.50	1.50
San Mateo	15	15	26	9	9	3	7.26	7.26	2.42
Santa Barbara	30	27	27	1	3	1	0.93	2.67	1.78
Santa Clara	27	18	14	7	19	22	2.05	5.54	6.41
Santa Cruz	14	10	15	6	6	4	9.73	9.40	6.26
Shasta	18 (tie)	30 (tie)	25	2	0	1	5.75	0.00	2.90
Solano	12	6	6	9	12	13	10.24	13.71	14.85
Sonoma	31 (tie)	21	29	0	4	1	0.00	4.24	1.06
Stanislaus	17	8	5	7	12	18	5.78	9.92	14.88
Tulare	4	7	9	20	15	12	18.06	13.43	10.75
Ventura	21	26	23	9	5	6	4.96	2.77	3.32
Yolo	29	25	30 (tie)	1	2	0	1.69	3.19	0.00
California Total				680	631	646	8.48	7.87	8.06

APPENDIX FIVE: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR CALIFORNIA AND THE 10 COUNTIES WITH THE HIGHEST RATES OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT HOMICIDE VICTIMIZATION

CALIFORNIA

646 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in California in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in California was 8.06 per 100,000 in 2012¹⁰⁸

GENDER

Out of 646 homicide victims, 574 were male (89 percent), and 72 were female (11 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 643 homicide victims, 337 were Hispanic (52 percent), 214 were black (33 percent), 57 were white (9 percent), 23 were Asian (4 percent), and 12 were “other” (2 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 86 percent of victims (546 out of 636) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 70 percent (381 victims) were killed with handguns. There were 64 victims (10 percent) killed with knives or other cutting instruments, 7 victims (1 percent) killed by a blunt object, and 8 victims (1 percent) killed by bodily force.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 39 percent of victims (127 out of 325) were murdered by someone they knew. One hundred fifty-three victims were killed by strangers. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 14 percent (45 out of 325) were gang members.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 78 percent (339 out of 432) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 65 percent (222 homicides) were gang-related. Twenty-two percent (76 homicides) involved arguments between the victim and the offender. Five percent (16 homicides) were drive-by shootings.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 54 percent (343 out of 635) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Sixteen percent (103 out of 635) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Fourteen percent (86 out of 635) occurred at another residence, and 6 percent (39 out of 635) occurred in a vehicle.

108 To help ensure more stable rates, only counties with a population of at least 25,000 youth and young adults between the ages of 10 to 24 are included. The selected counties account for 99 percent of homicide victims ages 10 to 24 in California (646 out of 651 victims) and 98 percent of California's population ages 10 to 24 (8,014,360 out of 8,188,043) for 2012.

MONTEREY COUNTY

22 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in Monterey County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in Monterey County was 23.32 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 1st in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 22 homicide victims, 21 were male (95 percent), and 1 was female (5 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 21 homicide victims, 21 were Hispanic (100 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 86 percent of victims (19 out of 22) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 21 percent (4 victims) were killed with handguns. There were 2 victims (9 percent) killed with knives or other cutting instruments, and 1 victim killed by a blunt object (5 percent).

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 29 percent of victims (2 out of 7) were murdered by someone they knew. Five victims were killed by strangers.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 94 percent (16 out of 17) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 88 percent (14 homicides) were gang-related. Six percent (1 homicide) involved arguments between the victim and the offender. Six percent (1 homicide) were drive-by shootings.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 62 percent (13 out of 21) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Nineteen percent (4 out of 21) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Five percent (1 out of 21) occurred at another residence, and 5 percent (1 out of 21) occurred in a vehicle.

SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY

27 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in San Francisco County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in San Francisco County was 23.20 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 2nd in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 27 homicide victims, 26 were male (96 percent), and 1 was female (4 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 27 homicide victims, 5 were Hispanic (19 percent), 18 were black (67 percent), 2 were white (7 percent), and 2 were "other" (7 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 96 percent of victims (26 out of 27) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 96 percent (25 victims) were killed with handguns. There was 1 victim (4 percent) killed with a knife or other cutting instrument.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 100 percent of victims (3 out of 3) were murdered by strangers.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 64 percent (7 out of 11) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 71 percent (5 homicides) were gang-related. Twenty-nine percent (2 homicides) involved arguments between the victim and the offender.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 70 percent (19 out of 27) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Eleven percent (3 out of 27) occurred at another residence. Seven percent (2 out of 27) occurred in a vehicle.

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

36 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in San Joaquin County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in San Joaquin County was 21.90 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 3rd in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 36 homicide victims, 34 were male (94 percent), and 2 were female (6 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 35 homicide victims, 15 were Hispanic (43 percent), 10 were black (29 percent), 5 were white (14 percent), and 5 were Asian (14 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 94 percent of victims (33 out of 35) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 70 percent (23 victims) were killed with handguns. There were 2 victims (6 percent) killed with knives or other cutting instruments.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 38 percent of victims (6 out of 16) were murdered by someone they knew. Six victims were killed by strangers. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 25 percent (4 out of 16) were gang members.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 76 percent (16 out of 21) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 38 percent (6 homicides) were gang-related. Twenty-five percent (4 homicides) involved arguments between the victim and the offender. Thirty-eight percent (6 homicides) were drive-by shootings.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 31 percent (11 out of 35) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Twenty-six percent (9 out of 35) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Fourteen percent (5 out of 35) occurred at another residence, and 17 percent (6 out of 35) occurred in a vehicle.

ALAMEDA COUNTY

62 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in Alameda County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in Alameda County was 20.86 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 4th in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 62 homicide victims, 44 were male (71 percent), and 18 were female (29 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 62 homicide victims, 5 were Hispanic (8 percent), 45 were black (73 percent), 4 were white (6 percent), 7 were Asian (11 percent), and 1 was "other" (2 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 95 percent of victims (59 out of 62) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 73 percent (43 victims) were killed with handguns. There were 3 victims (5 percent) killed with knives or other cutting instruments.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 46 percent of victims (12 out of 26) were murdered by someone they knew. Fourteen victims were killed by strangers.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 67 percent (18 out of 27) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 17 percent (3 homicides) were gang-related. Sixty-one percent (11 homicides) involved arguments between the victim and the offender.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 73 percent (45 out of 62) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Fifteen percent (9 out of 62) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Three percent (2 out of 62) occurred at another residence.

STANISLAUS COUNTY

18 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in Stanislaus County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in Stanislaus County was 14.88 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 5th in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 18 homicide victims, 17 were male (94 percent), and 1 was female (6 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 18 homicide victims, 12 were Hispanic (67 percent), 2 were black (11 percent), 3 were white (17 percent), and 1 was Asian (6 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 94 percent of victims (17 out of 18) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 53 percent (9 victims) were killed with handguns. There was 1 victim (6 percent) killed with a knife or other cutting instrument.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 27 percent of victims (3 out of 11) were murdered by someone they knew. Four were killed by strangers. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 36 percent (4 out of 11) were gang members.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 77 percent (10 out of 13) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 40 percent (4 homicides) were gang-related. Thirty percent (3 homicides) involved arguments between the victim and the offender. Twenty percent (2 homicides) were drive-by shootings.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 41 percent (7 out of 17) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Forty-one percent (7 out of 17) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Twelve percent (2 out of 17) occurred at another residence.

SOLANO COUNTY

13 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in Solano County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in Solano County was 14.85 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 6th in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 13 homicide victims, 12 were male (92 percent), and 1 was female (8 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 13 homicide victims, 3 were Hispanic (23 percent), 7 were black (54 percent), and 3 were white (23 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 85 percent of victims (11 out of 13) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 73 percent (8 victims) were killed with handguns. There was 1 victim (8 percent) killed with a knife or other cutting instrument, and 1 victim (eight percent) killed by bodily force.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 50 percent of victims (3 out of 6) were murdered by someone they knew. Three victims were killed by strangers.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 63 percent (5 out of 8) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 40 percent (2 homicides) were gang-related. Forty percent (2 homicides) involved arguments between the victim and the offender.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 46 percent (6 out of 13) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Eight percent (1 out of 13) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Thirty-one percent (4 out of 13) occurred at another residence, and 15 percent (2 out of 13) occurred in a vehicle.

MERCED COUNTY

10 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in Merced County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in Merced County was 14.82 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 7th in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 10 homicide victims, 9 were male (90 percent), and 1 was female (10 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 10 homicide victims, 8 were Hispanic (80 percent), 1 was black (10 percent), and 1 was white (10 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 80 percent of victims (8 out of 10) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 75 percent (6 victims) were killed with handguns. There were 2 victims (20 percent) killed with knives or other cutting instruments.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 50 percent of victims (2 out of 4) were murdered by someone they knew. Two victims were killed by strangers.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 86 percent (6 out of 7) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 83 percent (5 homicides) were gang-related. Seventeen percent (1 homicide) involved arguments between the victim and the offender.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 40 percent (4 out of 10) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Twenty percent (2 out of 10) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Twenty percent (2 out of 10) occurred at another residence.

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

24 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in Contra Costa County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in Contra Costa County was 11.41 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 8th in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 24 homicide victims, 22 were male (92 percent), and 2 were female (8 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 24 homicide victims, 6 were Hispanic (25 percent), 16 were black (67 percent), 1 was white (4 percent), and 1 was “other” (4 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 96 percent of victims (23 out of 24) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 52 percent (12 victims) were killed with handguns. There was 1 victim (4 percent) killed with a knife or other cutting instrument.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 25 percent (3 out of 12) were murdered by someone they knew. Eight victims were killed by strangers. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 8 percent (1 out of 12) were gang members.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 56 percent (5 out of 9) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 20 percent (1 homicide) was gang-related. Twenty percent (1 homicide) were drive-by shootings.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 54 percent (13 out of 24) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Thirteen percent (3 out of 24) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Eight percent (2 out of 24) occurred at another residence, and 13 percent (3 out of 24) occurred in a vehicle.

TULARE COUNTY

12 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in Tulare County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in Tulare County was 10.75 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 9th in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 12 homicide victims, 12 were male (100 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 12 homicide victims, 11 were Hispanic (92 percent), and 1 was white (8 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 75 percent of victims (9 out of 12) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 67 percent (6 victims) were killed with handguns. There were 2 victims (17 percent) killed with knives or other cutting instruments.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 50 percent of victims (2 out of 4) were murdered by someone they knew. One victim was killed by a stranger. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 25 percent (1 out of 4) were gang members.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 100 percent (7 out of 7) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 86 percent (6 homicides) were gang-related. Fourteen percent (1 homicide) involved arguments between the victim and the offender.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 36 percent (4 out of 11) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Nine percent (1 out of 11) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Eighteen percent (2 out of 11) occurred at another residence, and 18 percent (2 out of 11) occurred in a vehicle.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

207 youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 were murdered in Los Angeles County in 2012

The homicide rate among youth and young adults ages 10 to 24 in Los Angeles County was 9.55 per 100,000 in 2012

Ranked 10th in California among counties with a population of 10- to 24-year olds 25,000 or greater

GENDER

Out of 207 homicide victims, 189 were male (91 percent), and 18 were female (9 percent).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Out of 206 homicide victims, 131 were Hispanic (64 percent), 62 were black (30 percent), 6 were white (3 percent), 4 were Asian (2 percent), and 3 were “other” (1 percent).

MOST COMMON WEAPONS

For homicides in which the weapon used could be identified, 86 percent of victims (176 out of 204) were shot and killed with guns. Of these, 77 percent (136 victims) were killed with handguns. There were 16 victims (8 percent) killed with knives or other cutting instruments, 3 victims (1 percent) killed by a blunt object, and 5 victims (2 percent) killed by bodily force.

VICTIM TO OFFENDER RELATIONSHIP

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 32 percent of victims (29 out of 92) were murdered by someone they knew. Forty-three victims were killed by strangers. For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 22 percent (20 out of 92) were gang members.

CIRCUMSTANCE

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 85 percent (135 out of 158) were not related to the commission of any other felony. Of these, 79 percent (107 homicides) were gang-related. Fifteen percent (20 homicides) involved arguments between the victim and the offender. One percent (2 homicides) were drive-by shootings.

LOCATION

For homicides in which the location could be determined, 55 percent (112 out of 204) occurred on a street, sidewalk, or in a parking lot. Twelve percent (25 out of 204) occurred in the home of the victim or offender. Sixteen percent (33 out of 204) occurred at another residence, and 8 percent (17 out of 204) occurred in a vehicle.



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