

**Gangs Program Proposal**

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April 29, 2025

## **Introduction**

Gang prevalence and violence has been a long standing issue in the city of Providence, Rhode Island, particularly in the East Providence area. East Providence exhibits a significant number of gangs, many of which demonstrate a multigenerational aspect to gang activity within the city (Howell et al., 2011). It is understood that individuals are becoming gang involved at a young age, and despite some aging out, the number of both adult and young members is still substantial.

Many youth seek out gang connections to fill a void they experience in their day-to-day life. These voids present themselves in many sectors of life, including but not limited to education, unemployment, poverty, and familial disorder. Gangs provide not only a sense of community and family that these youth have been missing their whole life, but also a way to escape severe poverty and gain protection from other street-involved individuals.

This program seeks to improve structural facets of the East Providence community to promote diversion of at-risk youth from joining gangs, into more conventional means of making money and finding a place within their community. When multiple domains of risk are identified and minimized, the likelihood of gang membership is significantly reduced as there are more acceptable avenues of having basic needs met and connections reinforced.

This specific program aims to utilize resources the community and schools already have in place in a repurposed manner to provide better support for youth. Focusing on East Providence High School, Riverside Middle School, and Edward R. Martin Middle School, many resources will be provided to students of all ages, each geared towards an important sector of risk reduction. For example, clubs with a focus outside of athletics, employment opportunities,

relationship building between students and local police departments, as well as parental involvement, and an increase in guidance counselors available to students at all times.

With the implementation and upkeep of these new initiatives, this program intends to reduce the number of youth joining gangs within the community. If the major domains of risk are mediated through more targeted approaches, ideally, these youth will be less inclined to turn to the streets for community, economic means, or a sense of security. The program aims to facilitate a reduction of youth joining gang activities, therefore providing a smaller number of youth gang members in general, and consequently, a reduced crime and violence rate within the East Providence area.

**Background:**

Providence, Rhode Island, has frequently struggled with gang-related violence and crime, particularly in the urban neighborhoods. These gangs are seen to be involved in crimes such as drug trafficking, shootings, and other criminal activities that take place. This city's gang faces many challenges, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of educational opportunities. Urban areas are most impacted by gang violence, struggling with underinvestment in local infrastructure, limited community resources, and the absence of mental health and social support services. This creates a fertile ground for gang recruitment and involvement. Young people in these communities may see involvement in these organizations as a way to gain economic stability, respect, and a sense of belonging. Additionally, systemic inequalities such as racial and economic disparities exacerbate tensions within the city, further hindering efforts to break the cycle of gang violence.

There is a rising concern about youth involvement that has become a critical issue within the East Providence community. The program is to promote the development of a new initiative

aimed at addressing the root causes that contribute to this growing trend. With the implementation and ongoing maintenance of these initiatives, the program is designed to reduce the number of young individuals joining gangs by targeting the major domains of risk. The risks that ultimately lead them down this path further create violence and victimization within the community. These domains often include factors such as lack of access to economic opportunities, feelings of isolation, and the absence of positive role models. When combined, they can drive youth to seek out alternative forms of community and security on the streets. By focusing on these areas with more targeted, community-based approaches, the program aims to offer at-risk youth viable alternatives to gang involvement. This includes creating safe spaces for youth, providing educational and employment opportunities, and fostering mentor relationships to offer guidance and support. By addressing these core issues, youth will be less likely to seek comfort in gangs as a means of belonging and or survival. As fewer young people choose to affiliate with gangs, it is anticipated that the general gang membership in East Providence will decrease, leading to a reduction in crime and violence. Ultimately, the program aspires to create a more cohesive and safer community, where the youth are empowered to choose positive paths moving forward in their lives. Contributing to a future away from the destructive cycle of gang involvement.

On May 13th of 2021, on Carolina Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island, six active gang members opened fire in the peaceful Providence neighborhood (*Six Indicted in May 2021 Gang Shootout That Wounded Nine in Providence | Rhode Island Attorney General's Office*, n.d.). This incident highlights the presence and activities of street gangs in the area. Four members of the “Get Money Family” gang drove to a residence at 87 Carolina Avenue. Upon arrival, they exited their vehicle and opened fire on individuals associated with the rival “Lakeside” gang, who were

on the porch. The gunmen then fled the scene but later sought medical treatment for their injuries at the Rhode Island State Hospital. Investigators then revealed that the shooters used multiple firearms, including ghost guns and weapons with destroyed serial numbers. This situation highlights a violent incident that stemmed from an ongoing feud between two rival street gangs in Providence, RI. Demonstrating the victimization and violence on the streets due to gang-related activity.

Providence continues to struggle with gang-related violence, particularly in underserved urban neighborhoods plagued by poverty, unemployment, and limited educational opportunities. These conditions create a great opportunity for gang recruitment. This greatly impacts community members within the area, especially youth who seek a sense of belonging, respect, and financial stability. The two recent cases mentioned highlight the ongoing threat posed by gangs and the challenges faced by law enforcement. In response, East Providence has launched a new initiative aimed at tackling the root causes of youth gang involvement through community-based support, education, mentorship, and access to opportunity. By addressing these core issues, the program hopes to steer at-risk youth away from gangs and towards a safer and better future.

### **Theoretical Perspectives On Gangs**

An understanding of Rational Choice Theory (RCT) is essential for understanding gang involvement, due to its emphasis on the idea that individuals make decisions based on perceived costs and benefits. According to RCT, individuals are more likely to engage in criminal or delinquent activity, such as joining a gang, when they believe the benefits (e.g., protection, financial gain, status) will outweigh the consequences (e.g., victimization, incarceration) ("The Oxford Handbook of Gangs and Society," 2024). This assumes that individuals use their

rationality before making decisions; therefore, gang prevention strategies should heavily focus on altering these perceived incentives. In return, the program aims to show youth that the rational choice of joining a gang will not provide them with the safety and stability they seek. The community itself will provide what the youth need if allowed to do so.

The application of RCT to gang involvement would suggest that effective intervention programs increase the perceived costs of joining a gang whilst simultaneously encouraging the benefits of prosocial opportunities. The Career Club/Employment Prep that the program will offer aligns with this approach due to its offering of both economic and social alternatives to gang membership. By integrating the local businesses and increasing exposure to alternative careers (including trades), the program will provide tangible pathways to economic stability that do not rely on illegal activities or gang association. In disadvantaged communities, gangs often offer economic support systems to at-risk youth. In providing legitimate job opportunities, the allure of gang life is reduced.

Furthermore, mentorship programs such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Rhode Island and Mentor Rhode Island support will foster rational decision-making processes by connecting the students with positive role models. When there is a lack of positive adult influences in a child's life, the risk of joining a gang increases (Higginson et al., 2018). By introducing mentors who emphasize the benefits of education and legal employment, as well as a life free of crime, this program is intended to shift the perceived benefits away from gangs and more towards personal or professional development.

The program's sports-based program, Midnight Field Day, serves multiple purposes under RCT. Integrating law enforcement into the program can foster positive relationships

between the youth and authority figures. This reduces the appeal of gangs as a source of protection through violence, while also providing an immediate alternative to delinquent activities during the high-risk evening hours. It also intends to reinforce good behavior through academic and behavioral incentives. Making school success more appealing to the youth alters their cost-benefit analysis.

One of the most critical elements of the program is the implementation of trained guidance counselors. Their role in the program is to provide targeted interventions for high-risk students. By identifying those most vulnerable to gang recruitment, the counselors can help shift the students' perceived options. In doing so, this increases their interest in prosocial behavior. The faculty recommendations for this segment of the program ensure that students who are at the highest risk receive invitations to participate, further reinforcing positive decision-making.

This program directly addresses the underlying decision-making processes that lead to gang involvement by utilizing RCT as a foundational framework. In increasing the benefits of career paths, mentorship, and prosocial alternative activities, while also raising the costs of gang affiliation, the program will help to discourage gang involvement and encourage prosocial behavior.

In addition to a strong connection to Rational Choice Theory, gang activity in East Providence can be traced to social disorganization. According to Social Disorganization theory, the breakdown of strong social structures in a community contributes heavily to criminal activity, in this case, gang membership and activities. This can include areas of intense poverty, weak family units, and a lack of meaningful support in education. When imperative social institutions and structures are deteriorating or missing entirely, there is a significant increase in risk across

multiple domains (Howell & Egley, 2005). With such heightened risk levels, many youth seek alternate routes of fulfillment, often manifesting as criminal behaviors and gang involvement.

One major institution this program seeks to make improvements within is the middle and high schools in East Providence, making their offerings more suitable for giving the highest-risk age groups conventional means of forming connections. Improving school systems and their involvement opportunities aims to foster a sense of connectedness for the students (Fussy, 2017). These strengthened social bonds and additional opportunities for positive social behavior will yield better outcomes for youth in the area and provide conventional means for finding a sense of community.

Such implementations directly in the schools will include an influx of guidance counselors available to students for support. These counselors will not only serve as a resource for students in need of additional resources and support, but will also be imperative to understanding the impacts of this program. They can aid with familial and other social relationship issues, as well as recommend that kids join other extracurriculars for further immersion into their academic community.

Additional positive reinforcement from guidance counselors and other faculty is pivotal to the success of high-risk students (Fussy, 2017). Encouragement from these authority figures promotes closer bonds between the student and their school, offsetting the impacts of other disorganization that could be present within the institution. Similarly, clubs will be put in place for employment preparation.

Employment Preparation Club would not only improve the school system, but also help the students financially, to reduce their state of poverty, diverting them from unconventional

means of money-making. Not only does this opportunity teach youth valuable skills and traits for acquiring jobs presently and in the future, but it also forms further connections with the community outside of school as well.

Improved connections between youth and their school are majorly impactful for combating the effects of social disorganization, as it strengthens bonds within the community at large. Maintaining a job and the responsibilities it entails creates a closer bond to the community, but also leaves less time for youth to engage in delinquency (Stouthamer-Loeber et al., 2004). This support coming from their educational institutions has tremendous positive impacts in many domains of social disorganization, and ultimately provides more conventional means for earning money, networking, and acquiring marketable skills.

Finally, out-of-school events such as Midnight Field Day seek involvement from not only students but also their families and law enforcement officers from the community. These activities, though not available every night, provide an opportunity for youth to form connections with their peers and local police departments. Such bonds aim to drive the notion that the police department, and by extension, the officers can create positive relationships, even with students of “high-risk.”

The involvement of families is also critical to the success of this program from a social disorganization perspective. Familial breakdown is a major stressor and therefore a predictor of youth seeking out gangs to gain a family-like bond and an outlet of support. If families, primarily parental figures, join their children in the Midnight Field Day events, engage with their interests, and spend time using the amenities that will be provided, bonds will be strengthened and family units will be brought closer together. Furthermore, interaction between the parental figures and

school faculty, as well as law enforcement, can help identify areas of risk and promote further social cohesion between the major structures youth interact with daily (Chu et al., 2011).

## **Program Description**

After extensive consideration and research, the program that was designed is to directly take initiative against the juvenile gang issue, specifically in the East Providence area. After researching the history behind the schools, the area, as well as theoretical perspectives regarding youth gang involvement, the program has been curated to help make a difference, not only within these youths' lives, but also for the safety and well-being of the community.

Through examination, it has become apparent that it is critical to not only engage in gang prevention but also a level of intervention- the program takes this into account. To approach the problem effectively, it is paramount to target a variety of aspects that are impacted by gang involvement. Including, acknowledging, and addressing risk factors that further influence juvenile delinquency. The program makes an effort to address youth considered "at risk" as well as youth who are showing signs of being involved in gang life. The factors of risk include but are not limited to: parental involvement, behavior in school, academic performance, employment, and presence of a juvenile record (Stouthamer-Loeber et al., 2004). With this in mind, the program attempts to alleviate and resolve these factors in a variety of ways.

The main objective of the program is to create a connection between the youth within the East Providence area, the community, as well as the police department. With the guiding theories of the program being Social Disorganization Theory as well as Rational Choice Theory, it is important to address the factors that play a role in gang formation and involvement within communities. It is a priority within this program to bridge the gap between troubled and at-risk youth and their community, as well as the police department. The program is designed to

demonstrate that gangs do not provide a level of safe community and protection that the outside community could not provide. As well as showing the youth that the community, including local law enforcement, wants a safe connection and a brighter future for these children.

Featuring a combination of efforts to create a sense of community, the program will offer a variety of resources and events for the youth involved. Events that will be included within this program are Midnight Field Day events with police officers, counselors trained in the problems of the community, violence prevention and intervention discussions, conflict management, health relationships, and domestic violence discussions, as well as employment preparation and guidance. The heart of this program lies within the community, including the schools, parents, general members of the public, as well as officers involved in these youths' lives. Having this rather large scale of local members involved serves the purpose of both deterring youth from gang life and guiding them to better academic performance, connection, support, and opportunities for a brighter future.

The planned events, discussion-based classes, and resources offered are a defining part of this program. Designed through a strategic reflection, the purposes of these events serve to tackle major factors of risk. The Midnight Field Day event proposed will involve police officers in the East Providence Area, counselors, parents, and community members involved within the program. This will offer juveniles who are involved to create a connection with the community and see police officers as real people, rather than just authoritative figures. "Gangs form and flourish in communities in which normally directing and controlling customs and institutions fail to function efficiently and effectively." (Howell, 2019) Therefore, the programs need to focus on counteracting these ineffective community factors that further influence gang formation. "Contributing conditions included poverty, deteriorating neighborhoods, disintegration of family

life, ineffective religion, lack of opportunity of wholesome recreation" (Howell, 2019). It is crucial to create and facilitate a meaningful connection between the juveniles and the members of the community. The program intends to do so in a manner that not only creates this wholesome recreation opportunity, but also in a manner that takes into consideration other factors that contribute to the formation and evolution of gang activity. While bridging the gap between juveniles and their communities is pivotal, the program aims to facilitate conversations between the community members and police officers, not only to create a connection but also to educate and inform.

Taking into consideration the other factors contributing to youth participation in gang life, the program will offer classes that facilitate these difficult conversations neutrally and safely. Juveniles need guidance in the correct direction, and at-risk youth are certainly no exception to this statement. Factors that further facilitate gang involvement include the inability to navigate conflicts and react in a manner that does not create violence- a major component of gang culture (Merrin et al., 2015). With this being stated, it is rather important to aid in starting the conversation of how to not only avoid violence, but also how to navigate conflicts that may occur with those at risk. The gang culture in these neighborhoods, where high-risk juveniles often reside, provides ample opportunities for conflict and further influences violence perpetrated by juvenile gangs. Therefore, it is an objective of the program to address these issues. Aiming to provide a program that is effective in addressing both the connection between the community and juveniles, while also combating the disorganization. Violence can result from a culmination of "...the lack of jobs that pay a living wage, limited basic public services, the stigma of race, the fallout from rampant drug use and drug trafficking, and the resulting alienation and absence of hope for the future" (Anderson, 1999). Providing juveniles with the fundamental tools to

navigate the disorganization within their communities, as well as separate themselves from these issues. The objective is to aid in allowing those impacted by said disorganization to strive towards removing themselves from the very aspects that contribute to gang culture while giving them the means and guidance to do so.

Another objective of this program is to reach at-risk juveniles of all genders and backgrounds. Therefore, the program attempts to make the connections between juveniles at risk who are not only males, but also females. The female population is involved in gangs at the same rate as males are, however, the risk factor between the two differs. Females who find themselves at the highest risk of being in a gang are often overlooked.

The program intends to acknowledge this while recognizing that it is important to address the unique underlying factors that impact females specifically. These factors of highest risk are often unwanted sexual experiences of objectification, sexual victimization, and unhealthy relationships. “Studies show, friendship, solidarity, self-affirmation, and a sense of new possibilities were found to motivate young inner-city females to join and remain in gangs” (Moore, 2001). The Big Brothers/Sisters aspect of the program will directly focus on this factor of gang formation. In providing these juvenile girls with a bond to others within their age cohort who are not involved in gangs, the Big Brothers/Big Sisters can provide a sense of friendship, support, and solidarity.

“Several studies found that the female gang may be a refuge from physical and sexual abuse at home” (Moore, 2001). Sexual victimization can be difficult to examine due to underreporting, but it is a pivotal underpinning to the violence and gang involvement among female adolescents. When considering this, more targeted approaches can be applied to ensure safety and prevention for young girls.

With this concern being an objective of the program, a healthy relationships and domestic violence class and counseling will be offered. The intention is to allow females who may be involved within the gang culture due to an unhealthy relationship to see and be informed on what a healthy relationship looks like. Also acknowledging that other males within the program or females may need these conversations to navigate and create relationships between friends, family, and significant others. In doing so, the program will assist in further providing the ‘tools’ and education juveniles need to not only create meaningful connections, healthy relationships, but also prevent violence, as well as having an outlet to express the issues they are experiencing through the counseling process of the program.

Lastly, the program will connect to local businesses within the East Providence community that are willing to hire the juveniles involved in the program. With one of the major factors of at-risk youth becoming involved in gangs being unstructured time, employment can reduce this significantly. The objective behind having the employment aspect of this program is to further provide the older youth within this program the opportunity and the tools to secure a job. A job will provide these juveniles not only with structured time when not in school, but also allow them to find something to work for. In doing so, juveniles can find a sense of responsibility, work ethic, and hope, all of which are tools that are important for successful adulthood. Being employed will also provide the means of earning money needed to survive and prevent the youth from turning to illegal activities that gangs can create and further facilitate. The employment program will attempt to address and tackle the issue of not only unstructured time that further influences risk, but also provide the adolescents involved within this program with tools that are vital to being a successful contributing member of society within the workforce.

With the program's geographical area of focus being on the East Providence area, the schools that will be proposed to take on this program will be East Providence High School, Riverside Middle School, and Edward R. Martin Middle School. The ages of focus for the program are ages eleven through sixteen years old. As indicated through research, gang involvement and serious inclination toward crimes, including violent crime, begin within these ages. A study done by the *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* facilitated a longitudinal study to investigate the ages at which gang membership was most prevalent. The study found through a self reporting survey consisting of juveniles known to be involved within a gang the average age of those involved within a gang was at 15 years old. "the sample self reported ever belonging to a gang between the ages of 13 and 18. Membership peaked at age 15, with about equal percentages reporting gang membership at ages, 14, 16, and 18." (Hill, 1999). Therefore, directing the focus to said age groups of juveniles who are not necessarily experiencing gang membership yet. The goal is to engage in prevention-based work with these youth while also targeting the average age of gang membership to attempt intervention.

The program will remain open to anyone who would like to enroll their child, but invitations will be sent out via faculty, counselor, court, or community members' recommendations. The Rhode Island family court will also be recommending certain youth showing involvement in gang activity or elevated risks to the program. These risks include poor academic performance, familial problems, juvenile records, presentation of involvement with problematic peers, etc. Those who choose to participate in this program will be provided rewards such as extra credit within classes, employment opportunities, and the 'midnight' events. The objectives of this program are to highlight and aid in reducing these risk factors through giving juveniles involved the tools and resources necessary to do so.

Juveniles involved in this program will be evaluated for progress through a pre-intervention test, mid-intervention test, as well as a post-intervention test. The results from the pretest and the test administered in the middle of the duration of the year-long program will allow the variety of school faculty, counselors, police officers, and community members to gauge the severity of the risk of juveniles involved. This will allow further evaluation of progress and improvement to be seen and monitored to ensure the program's validity and reliability. These improvements will include better school engagement, fewer offenses and less crime involvement from juveniles, a decrease in violent crime, a decrease in domestic violence, job involvement, as well as changes in the juveniles' involved behavior. The program being proposed will truly be focusing on giving these troubled youth the outlet needed to create connections and support, while also giving them the tools and resources needed to prevent gang involvement.

### Youth Gang Prevention Program Plan (Logic Model)

| Stage             | Details   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>1. Prepare</b> | <p><b>Project Goal:</b><br/><b>Reduce youth gang involvement and violence in East Providence by addressing educational, employment, family, and mentorship risk factors, with gender-specific considerations.</b></p> <p><b>Target Population:</b><br/><b>Youth ages 11–16 from East Providence; focus on at-risk students.</b></p> |

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| <b>2. Map</b>     | <p><b>Inputs (Resources):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Human:</b> Guidance counselors, mentorship orgs, law enforcement, social workers</li> <li>• <b>Physical &amp; Material:</b> Schools, businesses, recreational centers, funding, evaluation tools</li> <li>• <b>Support:</b> Family court referrals, business partnerships, volunteers</li> </ul> <p><b>Assumptions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth seek belonging, stability, or economic support</li> <li>• Multi-risk intervention reduces gang appeal</li> <li>• Gender-specific programming enhances impact</li> <li>• Community collaboration strengthens resilience</li> </ul> <p><b>External Factors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socioeconomic hardship, public perceptions, legal constraints</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategies (Activities):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community events, conflict management classes, mentorship and employment clubs</li> </ul> <p><b>Outputs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events, forums, mentorships, class participation, evaluations</li> </ul> |
| <b>3. Cluster</b> | <p><b>Community Integration &amp; Relationship Building:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Midnight events, forums, parent engagement</li> </ul> <p><b>Educational &amp; Counseling Supports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict workshops, healthy relationship classes, expanded counseling</li> </ul>  |

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|  | <p><b>Mentorship &amp; Employment Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentorship matches, employment clubs, business partnerships</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>4. Link (Logical Flow and Connections)</b></p> | <p><b>From Inputs to Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources create events, classes, programs</li> </ul> <p><b>From Strategies to Outputs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs → measurable results (participation, mentorships)</li> </ul> <p><b>From Outputs to Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-Term: Increased engagement, skills, community involvement</li> <li>• Intermediate: Reduced gang interest, better academics, job readiness</li> <li>• Long-Term: Lower gang membership, stronger community, cost savings</li> </ul> <p><b>Additional Linkages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender-specific interventions</li> <li>• Data-informed program adjustments</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>5. Verify</b></p>                              | <p><b>Evaluation Measures:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys, school records, police reports</li> <li>• Indicators: disciplinary incidents, GPA, job outcomes</li> <li>• Youth wellbeing</li> </ul> <p><b>Verification Process:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular stakeholder meetings</li> <li>• Mid-year and end-year evaluations</li> <li>• Program adjustments based on feedback</li> </ul>  |

### Expenditure Breakdown/Justification

| Program Area        | Brief Description of Program Element  | Expenditure Amount   | Explanation/Justification for Expenditure   |
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| Guidance Counselors | Specialized guidance counselors working specifically with teacher-recommended students (adding 6 additional counselors to the 4 that are in the district already, totaling 10 counselors) | \$40,000 per additional counselor, with six new hires, totaling \$240,000 annually   | Additional support readily available within the schools is an important resource for students. Not only should there be a reasonable number of guidance counselors within the school system, but they should also be adequately paid, making \$40,000 annually, on par with the RI average. |
| Midnight Field Day  | Food Trucks to provide reasonably priced meals, snacks, and drinks to event-goers   | \$2,750 per food truck per evening<br><br>Three food trucks per event, totaling \$8,250<br><br>One event per month, all year round, 12 months at \$8,250 per month, totaling \$99,000 annually | Food trucks not only provide food and drinks to event-goers at a reasonable price, but also serve as an appeal to bring more students and their families to the events.   |

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| Midnight Field Day | <p>Advertising and outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Banner for events</li> <li>- Flyers to increase reach</li> </ul> | <p>Pop-up banner and display - \$549</p> <p>Flyers to hand out to each student, hang in schools, and parks/frequented locations - 2,000 flyers, costing \$64.99 per 100, totaling \$1,299.80</p> <p>Fabric banners for high-traffic areas of schools and such - \$2.99 each, purchasing 5, totaling \$14.95</p> <p>Total cost of advertising = \$1,863.75</p> | <p>Advertisement is important not only to ensure the word gets around to students and their families, but also encourages other businesses or resource organizations to hear about the events and contribute if it interests them.</p>   |
| Midnight Field Day | <p>Police personnel to be present for security reasons as well as community building</p>  | <p>Police special detail: \$100/hour (middle ground of average detail rate)</p> <p>5 officers at each event (\$500 per event) x 12 events a year</p> <p>Total police detail cost: \$6,000</p>   | <p>Police personnel on site is a pivotal aspect of this event, not only will they serve as security to make sure event-goers are safe and maintain proper order, but they will also be there to interact with students and families, serving as a resource and building connections with the community directly.</p> |

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| Training and informational classes for safe conflict management | Self-defense classes, domestic violence classes for warning signs, and healthy management | Self-Defense Classes: \$200 per month per person<br><br>Paying the cost of 250 one-month-long slots so students in need don't take on a financial burden<br><br>Self-defense class total: \$50,000<br><br>Domestic Violence Training: \$45 per household for 8 8-hour course<br><br>Covering the cost of 1,700 families to account for the entire student body of high school<br><br>DV-Training total: \$76,500 | Ensuring that students and their families have access to proper education on how to recognize signs of domestic violence within their homes and peers' behavior is imperative. Additionally, self-defense education is important to ensure that when faced with conflict, they are aware of how to protect themselves properly. |
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| Back Up Money | Funds to dip into if any issues arise or unaccounted for expenses | \$25,000 + \$1,636.25 (leftover balance after all expenditures)<br><br>\$26,636.25 | Just in case we need anything extra. |
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Total Expenditures should not exceed \$500,000.

Total spent (including allotted backup money): \$498,363.75

Remaining balance (to be added to backup money pool): \$1,636.25

### **Outcomes and Evaluation**

This program is designed to be a multifaceted initiative that produces a variety of outcomes. At the time of the program's completion, it is expected to see a reduction in delinquent behavior, increased school attendance and academic achievement, improved social bonds between students and their perceived role models, enhanced employment readiness, and a cutback in idle time while seeing an increased participation in structured activities.

To determine the effectiveness of the program, the key performance indicators will be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively through data collection. While looking for indicators of a reduction in delinquency and gang involvement, pre- and post-program self-reports of gang affiliation, delinquent behavior, and substance use will be analyzed. Post-program self-reports are predicted to show a downward trend in affirmative student answers. School disciplinary records and police data will also be analyzed to determine whether there has been a decrease in fights, suspensions, behavioral referrals, and calls for service involving youth near program sites.

Increased academic engagement will also be assessed pre- and post-program to monitor predicted increases in performance. Students' GPAs, grades, attendance rates, and homework completion will be compared, and teacher/faculty reports of student improvement will also be collected. To determine any impact on prosocial attachments, surveys measuring student satisfaction with mentoring relationships will also be conducted at the program's conclusion. Parents and mentors will also be asked to complete feedback forms detailing any perceived improvements.

An assessment of vocational readiness will be conducted by measuring the level of participation in the Career/Employment Prep club, the rate of resume and job application completion, student interest inventories that show shifts in job/career aspirations, and employer feedback on student readiness and engagement. It is anticipated that by the end of the program, students who participate in the club will demonstrate increased employability skills and more initiative. To further evaluate positive behavior shifts, the number of students earning rewards for good grades and behavior will be recorded, as well as a collection of counselor reports on individual progress and peer evaluations/reflections.

The aforementioned data will be collected at the mid-year point and the end of the year. By conducting surveys of all involved parties, as well as analyzing data typically collected by the included institutions, a clear picture of the program's impact will be established. A designated program coordinator will oversee the data collection and prepare a year-end evaluation report.

This program goes beyond inciting academic and behavioral improvement - it is designed to provide students with hope, structure, and a chance to break cycles of violence, poverty, and detachment. By investing in prosocial relationships, guidance, and opportunity, the program is

not only designed to reduce gang activity - it is also designed to help students build a future. When students are engaged in school, invested in their futures, and connected to caring adults, there are fewer disciplinary issues, more stable families, and safer neighborhoods. The long-term impact of the program could result in cost savings in criminal justice, education, and social services. Designed with sustainability in mind, partnering with existing community resources leverages what is already working and allows for the expansion and continuation of the program without requiring major ongoing investments.

Ultimately, this program gives young people the opportunities and tools needed to thrive. It creates real, tangible choices for youth who often feel they have none. Supporting this program means supporting a smarter, safer, and more compassionate community. The impact will extend far beyond individual participants, and with the right support, this program can be a model for how communities turn risk into resilience.

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