

**Ganging Up On Violence: Taking Back the Colours of Harmony**  
**A Community Leader's Forum: Work Group Reports**  
**December 4, 2006 Albert Scott Recreation Centre**

**I. GROUP PRIORITIES**

**GROUP B**

1. Mentors, positive activities, role models, patients
2. Children need to feel loved, valued and cared for
3. Education, need to hear it of peers, exposure, negative effects, keep them involved in education
4. Educate families on how it can end up
5. "De-Glamorize" gangs
6. Promote belonging at home and in society
7. Develop anti-gang curriculum in the schools, define family, extended family

**GROUP C**

1. More workshops like this with speakers that have real life experience
2. After school programs
3. More public info/education of the services available
4. Mentoring programs
5. Motivational ideas and leaders
6. Follow-up and reassess current programs

**GROUP D**

1. Research what is really going on
2. Control of what the media would say
3. Each to get the info/follow-up from the day
4. Emailing list, on-going networking
5. On-going communications i.e. 90 days... report
6. Steering committee to ask for help from others in the network
7. Be realistic - long term solutions & interconnect

**GROUP E**

1. More forums, revenues, education, dialogue
2. Take information back to my organization and find out what more school can play
3. Work on own faults and strengths to better help others
4. Develop realistic community plan, small goals, 1 family at a time
5. Engage families in planning process, empower families

**GROUP F**

1. Cannot prioritize

**GROUP G**

1. Education and Awareness
2. Circle of Courage: belonging, mastery, generosity, independence; Choices
3. Holistic
4. Acceptance – diverse cultures
5. Combating fears, Courage
6. Passing on Lessons Learned

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**GROUP H**

1. Did not get to priorities or action plan

**GROUP I**

1. Assess the problem
2. Develop a gang strategy & working committee
3. Educate the committee
4. Look for resources (i.e. Keynote speakers)
5. Implementation plan: know your objectives, have a variety of messages for different groups, follow up and reassess

**GROUP J**

1. Show *R U Down or R U Out* video to all schools
2. Treat youth as equals and valued – use as mentors
3. Give youth skills and resources for mentoring young ones
4. Police at schools should be peace officers to protect our youth
5. Positive role modeling - funding after school programs

**II. THE QUESTIONS**

***QUESTION 1:***

**What strategies are needed to prevent recruitment of young people into gangs?**

**GROUP B**

1. Reclaim gang members – people work with them
2. Combine and coordinate all groups to work on crime
3. Present approach and understanding of gangs need to change – local research needed (this requires funding)
4. Activities for youth are essential – more youth programs: traditional culture teachings, sweats, athletics, volunteer work, and Cadet corps

**GROUP C**

No input

**GROUP D**

1. Everything starts at home
2. Make sure supports are there to help the family
3. **Understand First Nations history**
4. Healing
5. **Education for everybody (parents & community)**
6. Look at community approach (City, Province, First Nations, Feds...internationally)
7. Educating youth in schools (Safety Services)
8. Communication - strength is built there
9. Positive activities (i.e. sports/arts – group activity)

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10. **Acceptance from community & ownership from the community – in all questions; ownership from the community**

**GROUP E**

1. Stronger presence of parents for children; strong identity for kid, family culture
2. Cultural identity; First Nations development
3. Develop community identity
4. Help young people feel comfortable with who they are
5. Let young people know they are cared for
6. Develop youth self-confidence/image strategies
7. Families mentoring families to strengthen families – develop links with vulnerable families
8. On-going money for community programs
9. Finding committed/healthy families/individuals to work with others
10. Teach spirituality to children
11. “De-glamorize gangs” strategy
12. Babysitting group
13. Open up closed families
14. Parents need to be clear and honest about their values and beliefs and communicate the same to their children – congruence
15. Minimal cost for recreational programs
16. Leaders need to be positive role models

**GROUP F**

1. Root causes, addressing the cause
2. Housing, health, finances, schooling, recreation
3. School atmosphere
4. Provide a good learning environment
5. Educating ourselves
6. Welcome families
7. Culture events
8. Listen to the kids
9. Involve the elders
10. Help heal
11. Support
12. Even for non-First Nations children
13. Teach those who can relate to children
14. Role models
15. Educating community teachers
16. Educate meaningful information
17. Give kids choices
18. Provide positive choices, sports, crafts, drumming, cooking, dancing
19. Don't judge these youth
20. Opportunity to allow healing

**GROUP G**

1. Less time exposure to the younger children, fill in the gaps of opportunity that older youth have in recruiting, Adults fill in gap times - more adult supervision, giving youth someone to talk to who will listen, understanding peer pressure
2. Place C.B.O. - Safe places & choices of what to do and no colors

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3. Need love, sense of belonging: sense kids matter, place kids can go that is safe, generosity is foundation of giving and skills and abilities development
4. Education/awareness - parents/youth: the video is great tool to be used
5. Holistic approach - not just schools and parents - others need to come from the community

**GROUP H**

1. Opportunity for healing
2. Look for root causes, e.g. housing, poverty, finances, and recreation
3. Improve school atmosphere
4. Necessity to have Elders involved with young people's lives
5. Educate community, teachers, with understanding individual choice can be made—non-judgmental

**GROUP I**

1. Mentors, positive role models
2. Approach to funding needs to change
3. Promote belonging at home and in society
4. Activities for youth

**GROUP J**

1. Talk to your children at home
2. Make sure supports are in the home
3. Understanding history of First Nations and Metis
4. Education for parents and communities
5. Healing
6. Prevent youth from joining gangs
7. Look at supports in community, and then look at provincial and federal systems
8. Have Kids First in schools - mobile safety services
9. Video, family love and support (examples of positive behaviors)
10. Positive activities for kids who are struggling /kids who have struggled – kids who have more dollars
11. Color circles, buttons and pins in schools & videos in the schools

***QUESTION 2:***

**What role can school, sport and recreation play to reduce or eliminate gang recruitment of children, junior youth and youth?**

**GROUP B**

1. Make good use of ***R U Down or R U Out*** video with interactive discussion in schools
2. Identify at-risk students who might be recruited by gangs
3. Create a culture of inclusiveness
4. Establish dress code in schools
5. Launch “traditional” teaching & sport, culture, recreation programs that promote positive pride
6. Compete with gangs, provide food for schools
7. More accessible programs are focused on participation for interesting school subjects
8. Information sessions
9. Native studies
10. Approachability of teachers
11. Make kids curious

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**GROUP C**

1. Educate/Accept
2. More accessible programs that are focused on participation (funding)
3. Schools can have a mission statement on safe schools and communities
4. Information sessions
5. Approachable teacher - Traditional teachers - culture/Aboriginal history; this is the first

**GROUP D**

1. **Feeling of acceptance – sense of belonging**
2. **Not tolerate gang violence**
3. Opportunity not just drop-in
4. Kids are very talented (arts)
5. Schools close their doors but still heat gyms
6. Pay people for quality programs (mentors, supplies, equipment)
7. **Involve youth in all discussions! OR fail!**
8. **Don't feel comfortable going out of the community**
9. 24 hours for kids with nothing for them to do

**GROUP E**

1. Self-esteem programs in school
2. Don't hide the issues in schools, don't pretend gangs don't exist, talk about it with school children so they can make informed decisions
3. No colors in school
4. Anti-bullying
5. Programming after school hours
6. Focus groups and videos on school
7. Visit student's homes after school
8. Schools need to be open to reality
9. Re-direct resources to support kids at risk in vulnerable families
10. Drama, theatre programs
11. Aggressive outreach with families to break cycle of intergenerational gangs

**GROUP F**

1. Talking circles using talking stick or rock
2. No time limit for circle
3. After school sports
4. Role models
5. Identify gang colors, have zero tolerance for any gang signs/emblems
6. Healthy home environment
7. Allow them to have their thoughts and feelings, make positive reinforcement, greet them, attitude of school
8. Personal development
9. Confidence building
10. No suspensions from school, they result in quitting school and are part of the problem

**GROUP G**

1. Use the experience to educate, promote awareness and develop strategies of what they know
2. Exit strategy needed for gang members
3. Awareness of youth at schools - anti-bullying, create safe places

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4. Kids are showing colors - update teachers: limits and boundaries have to be set. Use video because the youth in video are experts
5. Need more awareness so a parent can teach their kids
6. Teachers & parents need to improve their relationships/communications
7. Need to know who can approach, treat everyone with certain level of intelligence; make changes - start our own recruitment...

**GROUP H**

1. Talking Circles: culture teachings – no time limits; sports and recreation available – no barriers; healthy role models – identify them
2. Healthy home environment
3. Personal development, confidence building
4. No suspension from schools

**GROUP I**

1. Cultivate culture at school
2. Schools identify at-risk students
3. Gang counselors in schools, male and female
4. Traditional teachings about culture and pride

**GROUP J**

1. Schools can support youth, kids need a sense of belonging
2. In schools kids need to know that gang colors and violence are not acceptable
3. Mentoring processes that give kids more opportunities
4. Some kids are artistic and athletic – need programs that sustain sense of belonging to these groups that are of interest to them
5. Schools close doors at 6pm. Still, opportunities and activities can happen in them after hours. Need to pay people to keep facilities open and to run positive programs
6. Involve kids in discussions, let them plan what they want or fail
7. Youth leadership is very important
8. Need to break down barriers across the city
9. 24 hour place available for kids because they are out at all hours of the day

***QUESTION 3:***

**What are the strategies and tactics we need – the solutions we need to reduce or end youth gang violence?**

**GROUP B**

1. Exit strategy for youth wanting out of gangs
2. Awareness/Education that youth violence is everybody's problem, not just North Central's
3. Drug & alcohol treatment Centre needed immediately
4. After treatment support needed (healthy homes required) self-identified families
5. Strength-based development program is needed

**GROUP C**

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1. Through awareness and education, inform youth of dangers associated with and difficulties involved in getting out of gangs
2. Healing and stopping the pattern
3. Gangs won't always be there for you when you are in jail, etc.

**GROUP D**

1. Zero tolerance (no violence):
  - a. The tough part is enforcing this
  - b. Could we engage the gang members now?
  - c. Make options
  - d. When the opportunity is there...use it
  - e. **Starts with the "Pre" gang members**
2. Safety

**GROUP E**

1. Hold community forums for families - families helping families
2. Family visiting program to de-normalize/change unacceptable behavior
3. Develop healthy committed youth to help mentor others
4. "Scared Straight" programs
5. Work with media to develop communication strategy

**GROUP F**

1. Ask the children/youth, involve the youth
2. Assume the reason for gang affiliation
3. We do not offer enough choice
4. Lay out the consequences
5. Parenting needs to change
6. Poverty
7. Sentencing circles give back to the community
8. Communication and pride
9. Give hope
10. Be a support
11. Involve the community

**GROUP G**

1. Positive examples of achievement - boys winning provincial championships
2. Albert, Wascana schools brought in the kids to share in this positive exercise and support the local boys
3. Reinforce positives: Sacred Heart march mentor - care for the little kids
4. Positive choices: softball team, etc.
5. Not going to rescue everybody but important to give choices
6. Awareness from Kokum, Mooshum to ages 3 to 4
7. Community/recreation gym nights – setting limits to create safe places
8. Encourage youth to make better choices; help them to find their talents
9. Spirituality, beliefs - take what works for you to make a difference
10. System Fed. To move, build up and be role model
11. How do we get into the families? How do we get into their daily routines? Address generational issues

**GROUP H**

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1. Communication and Pride
2. Ask child & youth – don't assume the reason for gang affiliation
3. Lay out consequences
4. Whole community working together
5. **Parenting needs to change**
6. Recruitment in jails should be changed by making a different strategy by using sentencing circles

**GROUP I**

1. Awareness/education: gangs are everybody's problem, not just North Central
2. Drug and alcohol treatment centre needed
3. Illegible
4. Exit strategy from gangs, identify strategies to leave gangs

**GROUP J**

1. No tolerance for violence, Victims need to come forward
2. We need options to feel safe and supported
3. When opportunity is there and gang activity is at a low, then we can approach them
4. Relocation is needed for a gang member but sometimes they cannot leave real family
5. Safe house may be needed; sometimes school is a safe house
6. The video can be used – the kids on the video can become role models

***QUESTION 4:***

**As an individual, what action will you take to contribute to the solution(s)? What more can your organization do?**

**GROUP B**

1. Market video
2. Create the conversation
3. Ensure all uniformed members (Police) see the video
4. Ensure other City Departments see the video
5. Bring people & organizations to library

**GROUP C**

1. **Self:** mentor youth, volunteer, take a lead, accountability, speak out, have pride in who we are
2. **Organization**
3. Support programs that work
4. Get involved in the community
5. Sponsorship

**GROUP D**

1. Getting more involved with a variety of groups, e.g. dealing with homelessness
2. Be part of a bigger plan
3. 15-25 – connecting Youth (Corrections) asking community groups to come forward and help find solutions.
4. **Communications:**



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5. **Listen: the City has to be concerned...perhaps embrace**
6. **Marketing: not volunteers but paid people (volunteers may reduce the importance or value of the work)** Gangs members continue to be stereotyped as Aboriginal youth only
7. Power in the "Ganging up on Violence" Committee
8. Not just a "North Central" issue
9. Themes: Communication (Involve Youth; Education; Access to Programs)

**GROUP E**

1. More forums/venues for education and dialogue
2. Take information back to organizations and schools and find out what more they can do
3. Work on my faults/strengths to better help others
4. Develop realistic community plan with small goals, one family at a time
5. Engage families in planning process/empower families
6. Take what I've learned and use it
7. Better role model to my family and friends
8. Start inner city school for the performing arts
9. Better quality programs – stay involved, get involved and bring neighborhoods together

**GROUP F**

1. Collaborative community strategy with schools, church, government, health, etc.

**GROUP G**

1. Understand Aboriginal/First Nations historical beliefs, give back ownership of their beliefs; whole families live in fear for their choice
2. Awareness, choosing to live a positive lifestyle
3. Balance of choices by family networks
4. Sense of safety in walking in the neighborhood, e.g. walking kids to school, adults age 20-30 caring for kids
5. Dream brokers and the schools
6. Identify resources, links to community, sports venture, Kids Sport, etc;
7. Identify youth and reinforce positives
8. Schools HBB of community; original concept of community schools involving older people
9. Sports/Recreation gives youth identity that they would get from gangs
10. Embrace schools
11. Relationships, experiences, opportunities to explore their works: Science Centre, Art Gallery, etc.

**GROUP H**

1. Collaborate strategies between churches, government, health and education
2. Cannot be afraid of change

**GROUP I**

No Input

**GROUP J**

1. Become more involved, network with others, and strategize to become part of a bigger plan
2. Corrections - Communities go to corrections with solutions
3. Deal with homelessness
4. Connect youth together

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5. Some programs do not address gaps
6. Theatre, drama, music, arts
7. This is a broad city issue and it affects the entire city, school is one way to address
8. Awareness of issue, e.g. participation
9. Volunteers are not the answer on the whole
10. Some sort of paid work for this important topic may be necessary
11. Market the issue
12. Stop the stereotyping – media plays a role in this, it is a City-made problem
13. Organizations can be more flexible with hours for the kids
14. Acceptance from community – ownership of issue from entire city, Heal one individual at a time, pay it forward.