

# 7. Community Perceptions Data

No picture of a community’s gang crime problem would be complete without the views of *community leaders, community residents, parents, and gang-involved youth*. This information can be collected using surveys, personal interviews, and/or focus groups. The extent of this data collection should be determined by the time and funds available. It also is useful to conduct focus groups with social service workers, detention center staff, and other professionals who spend significant amounts of time with gang-involved youths.

At a minimum, information from the following groups should be collected:

- Community leaders, both formal and informal
- Community residents
- Parents (including parents of gang members, if possible)
- Agency staff members (social services, detention centers, probation, community-based agencies)
- Gang members

The primary reason for gathering this type of information is to determine how community members view gang activity and how they think gangs affect the community. Some of the questions developed for this type of information gathering are open-ended, and interviewers should encourage respondents to freely elaborate. These questions give respondents an opportunity to relate their own experience or beliefs about gangs and gang activity in their community. Care should be taken to ensure that respondents represent the community being assessed in terms of demographics.

**Table 1** identifies the questions to be answered about the community’s perceptions of gang crime, the information needed to answer the questions, and the sources of that information.

<b>Table 1—Community Perceptions of Gangs</b>			
<b>Questions to Be Answered</b>	<b>Information Needed to Answer</b>	<b>Sources of Information</b>	<b>How to Obtain</b>
1. Do community leaders perceive a gang problem? If so, what is the problem? Are they prepared to respond?	Feedback from community leaders about the gang crime problem	Police chief, sheriff, mayor, county prosecutor, probation, judges, youth agency director, county commissioners, all Steering Committee members, faith-based leaders, other community leaders	Community leader interviews by phone or mail
2. Do parents perceive their children to be involved in or at risk of involved in gangs? Why? What should be done?	Input from sample group of parents	Parents, parents of gang members	Parent focus groups

3. How do community residents perceive the gang problem? What do community residents believe should be done?	Input from community residents	Community residents	Community resident survey
4. How do youth workers and youth-serving agencies perceive the problem? What issues are contributing to the area's gang problems? What solutions might be available?	Input from youth-serving agencies	Youth-serving agencies	Agency survey
5. Who is involved in gangs?	Demographic information	Gang members	Gang member interviews
6. What crimes are gang youth committing?	Involvement in criminal activity		
7. Why did youth join a gang? Why would they leave?	Reasons for joining a gang, potential reasons for leaving		
8. What factors are contributing to the gang problem?	Causes of gang problem		

Information from the interviews, surveys, and focus groups should be compared across the different groups, when possible. Use appropriate charts, tables, and other graphics to display the data can be helpful, such as the chart in **Table 2**. Answers to the following questions should be addressed:

1. Do community leaders, parents, and community residents believe a gang problem exists in the community? If so, what is that problem?
2. Are there significant differences across the groups? What are those differences?
3. Do parents believe their children to be involved in gangs or at risk for gang involvement?
4. What do the respondent groups think should be done about the gang problem?
5. In what ways are the respondent groups willing to respond to the gang problem?

<b>Table 2—Sample Community Perceptions Data</b>	
<b>Residents' Concerns</b>	
<b>Concern</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Gang activity	45.1%
Burglary and robbery	40.8%
Drug dealing	34.1%
Low police activity	32.9%
Unemployment	27.5%
Loud music	25.5%
Unkempt property	24.7%
Insufficient street lighting	20.4%
Vandalism	13.3%

Graffiti	12.2%
Homicide	10.2%
Domestic violence	9.8%
Truancy	3.1%

Source: South Park Community Resident Survey, 2008

## Gang-Involved Youth

Gang members face problems beyond those posed by the gang itself. Most lack job skills, and many cannot read and write very well. Few have the self-control needed to hold down a steady job, even if they qualify for one.

As part of the assessment process, an effort should be made to interview at least 25 to 50 gang members—more, if possible—to determine their demographic profiles, criminal involvement, and history with gangs. Interviews with gang members can provide a variety of information, including:

- When local youth joined gangs, on average
- What crimes gang youth are committing
- Youths’ perceptions of the gang problem
- Involvement in high-risk behaviors
- Their views on why youth join gangs
- Their relationships with parents, peers, teachers, police, and other community members
- What can be done to prevent or reduce gang problems in their community

Gang members are often involved with the justice system and can usually be identified through that system. However, gang-involved youth may be difficult to locate: they may be out of school; they may work; they may be homeless or unemployed. Although some gang youth under age 16 will still be attending mainstream schools, others can be found in alternative schools, GED programs, job-training programs, or community-based programs. Some can be located in juvenile detention centers and residential treatment centers, while others can be located through juvenile and adult probation. It may be possible to locate gang members through a “snowball” sampling technique; that is, each gang member interviewed is asked to suggest a gang friend or member of his/her gang to be interviewed. Outreach agencies may also be able to play a role in facilitating these interviews. The gang members interviewed should reflect the racial/gender/age mix of gangs in the community. It may help to provide a small incentive, such as a \$10 or \$20 gift certificate to a local store or restaurant, to interest gang members in participating in the interview.

When planning the interview process, make sure that personal interviews with gang members are conducted by a neutral party and in a neutral setting, and that all information obtained is kept completely confidential. **Under no circumstances should a gang member be interviewed by law enforcement or others associated with the justice system.** Gang-member interviews should be held in a private location.

The gang member interview form (**EXHIBIT 7.5**) is designed to be conducted in a personal, face-to-face format. Sample consent forms for the respondent and for parents/guardians of gang members who are minors are included in **EXHIBIT 7.6**.

**Table 1** on page 95 identifies the questions to be answered about gang-involved youth in the community, the information that will be needed to answer those questions, and the sources of that information. The data collected from these interviews should be analyzed in aggregate form before being reported to the Steering Committee. No identifying personal details should be included. Report the data using the following variables where appropriate:

Gender: Male/Female

Race: Use categories as defined on page 37.

Age: Use categories as defined on page 37.

Use appropriate graphs, charts, and tables to present the information in a user-friendly format, such as those shown in **Tables 3 and 4**.

**Table 3—Percentage of Gang Members Reporting Criminal Activity in the Last Year**

Crime	% of Males (n)	% of Females (n)	% of Total (n)
Beat up or battered someone without using a dangerous weapon	76.8% (73)	75.0% (6)	76.7% (79)
Threatened to attack a person without using a gun, knife, or other dangerous weapon	69.5% (66)	75.0% (6)	69.9% (72)
Wrote gang graffiti on schools, houses, stores, etc.	55.2% (53)	50.0% (4)	54.8% (57)
Stole a car, truck, or motorcycle	42.1% (40)	50.0% (4)	42.7% (44)
Robbed someone by force or by threat of force using a weapon	29.5% (28)	37.5% (3)	35.9% (37)
Beat up or battered someone using a dangerous weapon	36.8% (35)	25.0% (2)	35.9% (37)
Participated in a drive-by shooting	28.4% (27)	50.0% (4)	30.1% (31)
Participated in a murder	6.3% (6)	12.5% (1)	6.8% (7)
Sold drugs	49.5% (47)	25.0% (2)	47.6% (49)

Source: Tabulation of data collected from interviews with gang members

**Table 4—Reason for Joining a Gang**

Reason for Joining a Gang (gang member identified reason as important or very important)	% of Male Respondents (n)	% of Female Respondents (n)	% of Total
Protection	41.9% (39)	50% (4)	42.5%
Respect	29.3% (27)	50% (4)	30.6%
Money	31.2% (29)	37.5% (3)	31.7%
Friends in the gang	29% (27)	37.5% (3)	29.7%
To fit in	23.9% (22)	37.5% (3)	25.0%
Fun	23.9% (22)	25.0% (2)	23.7%
Brother/sister in the gang	15.1% (14)	25.0% (2)	15.8%
Forced to	2.2% (2)	12.5% (1)	3.0%

Source: Tabulation of data collected from interviews with gang members (n=101)

<b>Table 5—Benefits of Gang Membership</b>	
<b>Gang Benefit</b>	<b>% Who Agreed or Strongly Agreed (n)</b>
My gang provides loyalty	72% (72)
I enjoy being a member of my gang	56% (56)
My gang is like a family to me	54% (54)
My gang makes me feel respected	51% (51)
My gang makes me feel like I really belong somewhere	38% (38)
Being in a gang is a good way to make money	38% (38)
My gang makes me feel important	29% (29)
My gang makes me feel like I have a purpose	24% (24)

Source: Tabulation of data collected from interviews with gang members (n=100)

Answers to the following questions should be considered:

1. Who is involved in gangs (age, gender, race)?
2. Why and when (age) did they join a gang?
3. What is their school/education status?
4. What is their family status?
5. What is their employment status?
6. What crimes do gang youth report committing?
7. What are gang youths' perceptions about the gang problem?
8. Why would youth leave a gang?

When these data are presented, include any additional information from the gang member interviews that may shed light on the nature of gang activity in the community.

Data collection instruments provided in this chapter include:

- Exhibit 7.1** Interview form for community leaders (page 100)
- Exhibit 7.2** Survey form for community residents (pages 101)
- Exhibit 7.3** Focus group questions for parents and parents of gang members (page 103)
- Exhibit 7.4** Survey for youth-serving agencies (page 104)
- Exhibit 7.5** Interview form for gang members (page 105)
- Exhibit 7.6** Sample consent forms for gang-member interviews (page 112)

# Exhibit 7.1

## Community Leader Interview Form

**1. Do you believe gangs are a problem in your community?**

- Yes       No  
 Do not know

If so, what kinds of problems do gangs present in your community? Please choose your top three problems.

- \_\_\_ Increase in property crimes
- \_\_\_ Increase in vandalism/graffiti
- \_\_\_ Increased fear in community
- \_\_\_ School disruption
- \_\_\_ Increase in drug crimes
- \_\_\_ Public nuisance
- \_\_\_ Family disruption
- \_\_\_ Increase in violent crime against persons
- \_\_\_ Increase in weapon crimes
- \_\_\_ Increased fear for safety
- \_\_\_ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Why do you believe there is gang activity in your community? Please choose your top three reasons.**

- \_\_\_ Poverty
- \_\_\_ School problems
- \_\_\_ Police labeling
- \_\_\_ Gang members move to community from other places
- \_\_\_ Boredom
- \_\_\_ Family problems
- \_\_\_ Power
- \_\_\_ Protection
- \_\_\_ Lack of activities
- \_\_\_ Prejudice
- \_\_\_ Family/friends in gangs
- \_\_\_ To feel loved/sense of belonging
- \_\_\_ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**3. What is the general community response to gangs by (law enforcement, parents, educators, other community leaders, etc.)?**

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**4. What should be done to reduce the gang problem in the community? Please check your top three choices.**

- \_\_\_ Jobs and job training
- \_\_\_ Tutoring
- \_\_\_ Mentoring
- \_\_\_ Recreation programs
- \_\_\_ School programs
- \_\_\_ More police presence
- \_\_\_ More parental involvement
- \_\_\_ New laws/ordinances
- \_\_\_ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Are you satisfied with the current response to gangs by law enforcement, social service agencies, schools, etc.?**

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**6. Have you had any personal experiences with a gang member? Please specify.**

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**7. How can you help to improve the community's response to gangs?**

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## Exhibit 7.2 Community Resident Survey

1. **Are you:**  
 Female       Male
2. **What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself to be?**  
 White/Caucasian  
 Black/African American  
 American Indian  
 Hispanic/Spanish  
 Asian  
 Native American/American Indian  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. **What is your current marital status?**  
 Never married  
 Married  
 Widowed  
 Separated  
 Divorced

4. **What is the intersection (cross streets) nearest your place of residence?**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Do you feel safer in your community than you did two years ago?**  
 No       Yes

Please Explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Please pick the top three concerns that you have about your community, if any.**
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Unemployment        | <input type="radio"/> Graffiti                     |
| <input type="radio"/> Homicide            | <input type="radio"/> Truancy                      |
| <input type="radio"/> Gang Activity       | <input type="radio"/> Vandalism                    |
| <input type="radio"/> Loud music          | <input type="radio"/> Domestic violence            |
| <input type="radio"/> Unkempt property    | <input type="radio"/> Insufficient street lighting |
| <input type="radio"/> Drug dealing        | <input type="radio"/> Low police activity          |
| <input type="radio"/> Burglary or robbery |  |
| <input type="radio"/> Other: _____        |  |

7. **Do you think there are gangs in your community?**  
 No       Yes

8. **Do you think your child(ren) is in a gang or at risk of being in a gang?**  
 No       Yes

9. **In the past year, has gang activity in your community:**  
 Increased  
 Decreased  
 Remained about the same

10. **Please pick the top three problems, if any, that gangs present in the community:**
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Gangs are not a problem here | <input type="radio"/> Fighting          |
| <input type="radio"/> Increase in violent crime    | <input type="radio"/> School disruption |
| <input type="radio"/> Increase in drug crimes      | <input type="radio"/> Public nuisance   |
| <input type="radio"/> Increase in weapon crimes    | <input type="radio"/> Family disruption |
| <input type="radio"/> Increased fear for safety    |   |
| <input type="radio"/> Other: _____                 |   |

11. **Please pick the top three reasons you believe gang activity exists in your community:**
- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Gangs are not a problem here       | <input type="radio"/> Boredom         |
| <input type="radio"/> School problems                    | <input type="radio"/> Poverty         |
| <input type="radio"/> Lack of activities                 | <input type="radio"/> Power           |
| <input type="radio"/> Family/friends in gangs            | <input type="radio"/> Protection      |
| <input type="radio"/> Police labeling                    | <input type="radio"/> Family problems |
| <input type="radio"/> Gang members move from other areas |                                       |
| <input type="radio"/> To feel love/sense of belonging    |                                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Other: _____                       |                                       |

12. **Please pick the top three things you believe should be done about gangs and gang activity in your community:**
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Gangs are not a problem here    | <input type="radio"/> Programs/recreation |
| <input type="radio"/> More police protection          | <input type="radio"/> Mentoring           |
| <input type="radio"/> Jobs provision and job training | <input type="radio"/> Tutoring            |
| <input type="radio"/> Other: _____                    |   |

13. **Please rank the following organizations from most responsible (1) for dealing with gangs and gang activity to least responsible (12) for dealing with gangs and gang activity:**
- \_\_\_\_\_ Police
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Church
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Court/criminal justice system
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Family
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Service providers
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Neighborhood association
  - \_\_\_\_\_ School
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Housing authority
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Office of juvenile affairs
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Treatment providers
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Community residents
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Office of Youth & Family Services

*Continue to the next page*

**Exhibit 7.2 (continued)**

**14. How has your community responded to gang activity?**

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**15. How satisfied are you with the current response to gang activity?**

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**16. What are you willing to do, if anything, to help deal with gangs and gang activity in your community? Please check all that apply:**

- Nothing
- Neighborhood outreach
- Become a youth group leader
- Tutor
- Form sports leagues/teams
- Mentor
- Teach skills (auto mechanics, crafts, music, computer skills, electronics, etc.)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**17. What is the highest level of schooling you have completed?**

- Completed grade school or less
- Some high school
- Completed high school
- Some college
- Completed college
- Graduate or professional school after college
- Vocational or technical training

**Thank you for your participation.  
Your opinions and comments are appreciated.**

**If you would like to leave any additional comments for us, please use this area or attach another sheet of paper.**

## Exhibit 7.3

### Parent Focus Group Questions

**1. Do you believe gangs are a problem in your community?**

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know

If so, what kinds of problems do gangs present in your community? (Use list below as prompts if necessary.)

- \_\_\_ Increase in property crimes
- \_\_\_ Increase in vandalism/graffiti
- \_\_\_ Increased fear in community
- \_\_\_ School disruption
- \_\_\_ Increase in drug crimes
- \_\_\_ Public nuisance
- \_\_\_ Family disruption
- \_\_\_ Increase in violent crime against persons
- \_\_\_ Increase in weapon crimes
- \_\_\_ Increased fear for safety
- \_\_\_ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Why do you believe there is gang activity in your community? (Use list below as prompts if necessary.)**

- \_\_\_ Poverty
- \_\_\_ School problems
- \_\_\_ Police labeling
- \_\_\_ Gang members move to community from other places
- \_\_\_ Boredom
- \_\_\_ Family problems
- \_\_\_ Power
- \_\_\_ Protection
- \_\_\_ Lack of activities
- \_\_\_ Prejudice
- \_\_\_ Family/friends in gangs
- \_\_\_ To feel loved/sense of belonging
- \_\_\_ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**3. What should be done to reduce the gang problem in the community? (Use list below as prompts if necessary.)**

- \_\_\_ Jobs and job training
- \_\_\_ Tutoring
- \_\_\_ Mentoring
- \_\_\_ Recreation programs
- \_\_\_ School programs
- \_\_\_ More police presence
- \_\_\_ More parental involvement
- \_\_\_ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**4. In reference to question 3, who is responsible for taking action in the reduction of the gang problem?**

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**5. Do you think that your child(ren) are at risk of gang membership?**

- Yes                               No  
 Do not know                       No response

If yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

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**Include the following questions for parents of gang members:**

**6. Why do you think your child joined a gang?**

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**7. What concerns or problems has your child faced since joining a gang?**

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**8. What effect has your child's gang membership had on your family?**

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**Exhibit 7.4**  
**Youth-Serving Agency Survey**

1. Do you believe that gang activity is increasing, decreasing, or staying about the same level among the youth that you serve?

- Increasing
- Decreasing
- Staying the same

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What issues do you think contribute to gang activity on the part of youth served by your project?

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3. Do you believe gang activity exists in your community? If so, why?

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4. What things should be done about gang activity in your community?

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## **Exhibit 7.5**

### **Gang Member Interview Form**

#### **SAMPLE**

##### **Introduction to Gang Member Interview**

To be read by interviewer:

I would like to ask you some questions that will help us learn ore about gangs in (*your community*). We are interested in learning something about your life and experiences, as well as your involvement in a gang.

One section of the interview asks about criminal activity. Give us only the information that we ask for. Do not give us any additional information, including names or dates, connected to any crimes.

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. That is, it will not be shared with anyone. The answers you give us will be added to the information we receive from others we are interviewing and then analyzed together.

You may refuse to answer any question in this interview, and you may end your participation in the interview at any time.

We are asking your permission (and that of your parent or guardian, if you are under the legal age of adult) to conduct this interview. Again, this information will be kept strictly private and confidential.

Are you willing to proceed?

Exhibit 7.5 (continued)

# Gang Member Interview

## Demographics

1. What is your date of birth? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are you:  
 Female                       Male \_\_\_\_\_
3. What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself to be?  
(choose one best answer)  
 White/Caucasian  
 Black/African American  
 Asian  
 Hispanic/Latino  
 Native American/American Indian  
 Other (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the language you use most often at home?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the intersection (which streets cross)  
nearest your place of residence?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your current marital status?  
 Never married  
 Married  
 Divorced  
 Widowed  
 Separated  
 Do not know
7. Do you have any children?  
 No                       Yes, If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Has any family member ever been in a gang?  
 Yes                       No  
 Do not know               No response

If yes, specify number of family members and relationship  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Are you currently employed?  
 Yes                       No  
 Do not know               No response

If yes, do you have a full-time job? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, do you have a part-time job? \_\_\_\_\_  
What type of work do you do? \_\_\_\_\_

## School

10. Are you currently in school?  
 Yes                       No  
 Do not know               No response
11. If you are currently in school, what grade are you in?  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. If you are not in school, what is the highest grade  
you have completed?  
 Grade \_\_\_\_\_               Do not know  
 No response
13. Generally, what are/were your grades like?  
 Mostly As                       Mostly Bs  
 Mostly Cs                       Mostly Ds  
 Mostly Fs
14. For your current/most recent school, how much do  
you agree/disagree with the following statements?

- Use a 5-point scale:    1) Strongly disagree  
                                  2) Disagree  
                                  3) Neither disagree nor agree  
                                  4) Agree  
                                  5) Strongly agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ If I have/had a problem, there is/was a teacher or staff member I could talk to.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I often feel/felt that no one at school cares/cared about me.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Even though there are lots of students around, I often feel/felt lonely.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I do not/did not feel that I am/was part of this school.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I often feel/felt like my teachers respect/respected me.  
\_\_\_\_\_ In school, I often feel/felt put down by other students.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Most of my teachers really listen/listened to what I have/had to say.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Most of my teachers are/were fair in supervising me if I step/stepped out of line.

15. Have you ever dropped out of school?  
 Yes                       No  
 Do not know               No response

If yes, what were the most recent reasons for dropping out?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Exhibit 7.5 (continued)

**16. Have you ever been suspended from school?**

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

If yes, what were the most recent reasons for suspension?

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**17. Have you ever been expelled from school?**

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

If yes, what were the most recent reasons for expulsion?

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**18. In the past year, how often have you witnessed any of the following gang activities at your school or on school grounds?**

- Use a 7-point scale:    1) Never/no times  
                                  2) 1 to 3 times  
                                  3) 4 to 10 times  
                                  4) 11 to 26 times  
                                  5) More than 26 times  
                                  6) Do not know  
                                  7) No response

- Gang members selling drugs  
 Fights between members of different gangs  
 Fights between members of your own gang  
 A drive-by shooting  
 Gang intimidation  
 Gang recruiting  
 Not in school

### Community

**19. Are there areas right now in your community where you are afraid to walk alone?**

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

If yes, is it because of gang-related concerns?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Please explain:

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**20. In the last year, how often have you witnessed any of the following gang activities in your community?**

- Use a 7-point scale:    1) Never/no times  
                                  2) 1 to 3 times  
                                  3) 4 to 10 times  
                                  4) 11 to 26 times  
                                  5) More than 26 times  
                                  6) Do not know  
                                  7) No response

- Gang members selling drugs  
 Fights between members of different gangs  
 Fights between members of your own gang  
 A drive-by shooting  
 Gang intimidation  
 Gang recruiting

**21. In the last year, for each crime, please rate how serious a crime problem you think this is in your community?**

- Use a 7-point scale:    1) No problem  
                                  2) A small problem  
                                  3) A moderate problem  
                                  4) A serious problem  
                                  5) A very serious problem  
                                  6) Do not know  
                                  7) No response

- Vandalism/graffiti  
 Burglary  
 Car theft  
 Robbery  
 Threats/intimidation  
 Gang to gang confrontations  
 Drug dealing  
 Alcohol use  
 Drive-by shooting  
 Possession of knife  
 Possession of gun  
 Firearms use  
 Firearms dealing  
 Arson  
 Assault/battery  
 Homicide/murder  
 School disruption  
 Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

## Exhibit 7.5 (continued)

22. Do you think there is a gang problem in your community?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know            No response

If so, what do you think are the top three causes of the gang problem in your community?

- \_\_\_\_ Poverty  
\_\_\_\_ School problems  
\_\_\_\_ Police labeling  
\_\_\_\_ Gang members move to community from other places  
\_\_\_\_ Boredom  
\_\_\_\_ Family problems  
\_\_\_\_ Power  
\_\_\_\_ Lack of activities  
\_\_\_\_ Prejudice  
\_\_\_\_ Family/friends in gangs  
\_\_\_\_ To feel loved/sense of belonging  
\_\_\_\_ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

23. What do you think should be done about the gang problem in your community?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

24. About how many adults have you known personally who in the past year have:

- \_\_\_\_ Used marijuana, crack, cocaine, or other drugs?  
\_\_\_\_ Sold or dealt drugs?  
\_\_\_\_ Done other things that could get them into trouble with police such as stealing, selling stolen goods, mugging, or assaulting others?  
\_\_\_\_ Gotten drunk?

25. Are any of your friends gang members?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know            No response

26. If you wanted to get a handgun, how easy would it be for you to get one?

- Very hard                       Somewhat hard  
 Somewhat easy               Very easy  
 Do not know                 No response

27. If you wanted to get drugs like cocaine, LSD, amphetamines, crack, etc., how easy would it be for you to get some?

- Very hard                       Somewhat hard  
 Somewhat easy               Very easy  
 Do not know                 No response

28. Are there adults in your neighborhood you can talk to about something important?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know            No response

### Gang-Related Activities

29. Are you currently a gang member?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know            No response

30. In the last 6 months, have you been an active gang member?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know            No response

31. What is your most recent position or rank in the gang?

- Leader  
 Core member/influential (with gang all of the time)  
 Regular member (involved most of the time)  
 Peripheral member (minimally hangs out)  
 Wannabe  
 Veteran/heavy/old gangster/senior gang member  
 Do not know  
 No response

32. Why did you join or associate with a gang? Please rank your answers from 1 – most important to 9 – least important.

- \_\_\_\_ For fun  
\_\_\_\_ For protection  
\_\_\_\_ A friend was in the gang  
\_\_\_\_ A brother or sister was in the gang  
\_\_\_\_ I was forced to join  
\_\_\_\_ To get respect  
\_\_\_\_ For money  
\_\_\_\_ To fit in better  
\_\_\_\_ Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

33. How old were you when you first belonged to a gang?

About \_\_\_\_\_ years old.

*Continue to the next page*

## Exhibit 7.5 (continued)

### 34. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- Use a 7-point scale:
- 1) Strongly disagree
  - 2) Disagree
  - 3) Neither disagree nor agree
  - 4) Agree
  - 5) Strongly agree
  - 6) Do not know
  - 7) No response

- \_\_\_\_\_ Being in my gang makes me feel important.  
\_\_\_\_\_ My gang members provide a good deal of support and loyalty for one another.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Being a member of a gang makes me feel respected.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Being a member of a gang makes me feel like I am a useful person to have around.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Being a member of a gang makes me feel like I really belong somewhere.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy being a member of my gang.  
\_\_\_\_\_ My gang is like a family to me.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Being in a gang is a good way to make money.

### The next few questions ask about your activities involving crime, drugs, and alcohol.

#### 35. In the past year, have you:

Written gang graffiti on school property, neighborhood houses, stores, etc.?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Thrown rocks or bottles at persons, vehicles, or property?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Destroyed property worth less than \$300?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Destroyed property worth \$300 or more?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Set fire to building or property?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Stolen bicycle or bike parts?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Stolen a motor vehicle?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Stolen parts or property from a vehicle (hubcaps, stereo, cell phone, etc.)?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Fenced or sold stolen goods (other than weapons)?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Shoplifted?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Entered a house, store, or building to commit a theft?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Broken into a house, store, or building to commit a theft?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Fenced or sold weapons or firearms?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Threatened to attack a person without using a gun, knife, or other dangerous weapon?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Threatened to attack a person using a gun, knife, or other dangerous weapon?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Robbed someone by force or by threat of force without using a weapon?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Robbed someone by force or by threat of force using a weapon?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

Beaten up or battered someone without using a dangerous weapon?

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know             No response

*Continue to the next page*

**Exhibit 7.5 (continued)**

Beaten up or battered someone using a dangerous weapon?

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

Forced someone to have sex with you (rape)?

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

Participated in a drive-by shooting?

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

Participated in a homicide?

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

Participated in other crimes (specify \_\_\_\_\_).

**36. In the past year, have you used or tried any drugs?**

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

If yes, about how many days per month do you use any drugs?  
\_\_\_ Days    \_\_\_ Do not know    \_\_\_ No response

**37. In the past year, have you sold any drugs?**

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

If yes, did the money go to:

- Benefit the gang  Personal use
- Do not know  No response

**38. In the past year, have you used any kind of alcohol?**

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

If yes, have you drunk:

- Wine
- Beer
- Hard liquor

**39. In the past year, have you had any arrests or police contacts? This may include being stopped, searched, questioned, or being brought to the police station at any time.**

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

If yes, how many times? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please describe the incident(s).

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**40. For the incident(s) described above, please indicate if you were:**

- Treated fairly by the police MOST of the time.
- Treated fairly by the police SOME of the time.
- NOT treated fairly by the police SOME of the time.
- NOT treated fairly by the police MOST of the time.
- Do not know
- No response

**41. Do you think you will ever leave the gang?**

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

**42. If you would leave the gang, which of the following are reasons likely to get you out of a gang? Identify all that would apply.**

Advice/pressure from a family member/relative

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

Advice/pressure from someone else (specify who \_\_\_\_\_)

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

Move out of neighborhood

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

Because of a steady girlfriend/boyfriend/spouse

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

Get married

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

Become a parent

- Yes  No
- Do not know  No response

*Continue to the next page*

## Exhibit 7.5 (continued)

Family responsibilities (specify what \_\_\_\_\_)

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know           No response

Obtain a job

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know           No response

Get into school/education program

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know           No response

Recreation/sports program

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know           No response

Go to jail/prison

- Yes                       No  
 Do not know           No response

Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

## End of Survey

## Exhibit 7.6

### SAMPLE

#### Consent Form and Receipt for Gang Member Interview

Respondent's Copy

I am participating in a community assessment to learn more about gang problems in (*name of community*). My participation in this interview will provide information for this assessment and is part of a communitywide data-collection effort.

I understand that the purpose of this interview is to provide information about gang activities in my community, including my life and experiences, and my involvement in a gang.

I understand that providing this information is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question.

I will not discuss any of the following activities as part of this interview because I understand that the interviewer will be required by law to disclose such information. (*Note: The Research Partner should research which activities fall under this state requirement—each state may be different. Each activity must be listed on this consent form.*)

This form acknowledges that I have been informed about the purpose of this interview and agree to participate. I have received a copy of this consent form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Respondent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Interviewer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Exhibit 7.6 (continued)

### SAMPLE

#### Consent Form and Receipt for Gang Member Interview

Parent/Guardian Copy

My son or daughter is being interviewed as part of an assessment to learn more about gang problems in *(name of community)*.

I understand that interviewing my son/daughter will provide information that will assist this assessment and is part of a communitywide data-collection effort.

I understand that participation in this interview is voluntary and that my son/daughter may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question.

I also understand that he/she will not discuss any of the following activities as part of this interview because I understand that the interviewer will be required by law to disclose such information. *(Note: The Research Partner should research which activities fall under this state requirement—each state may be different. Each activity must be listed on this consent form.)*

This form acknowledges that I have been informed about the purpose of this interview and agree to let my son/daughter participate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Interviewer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date