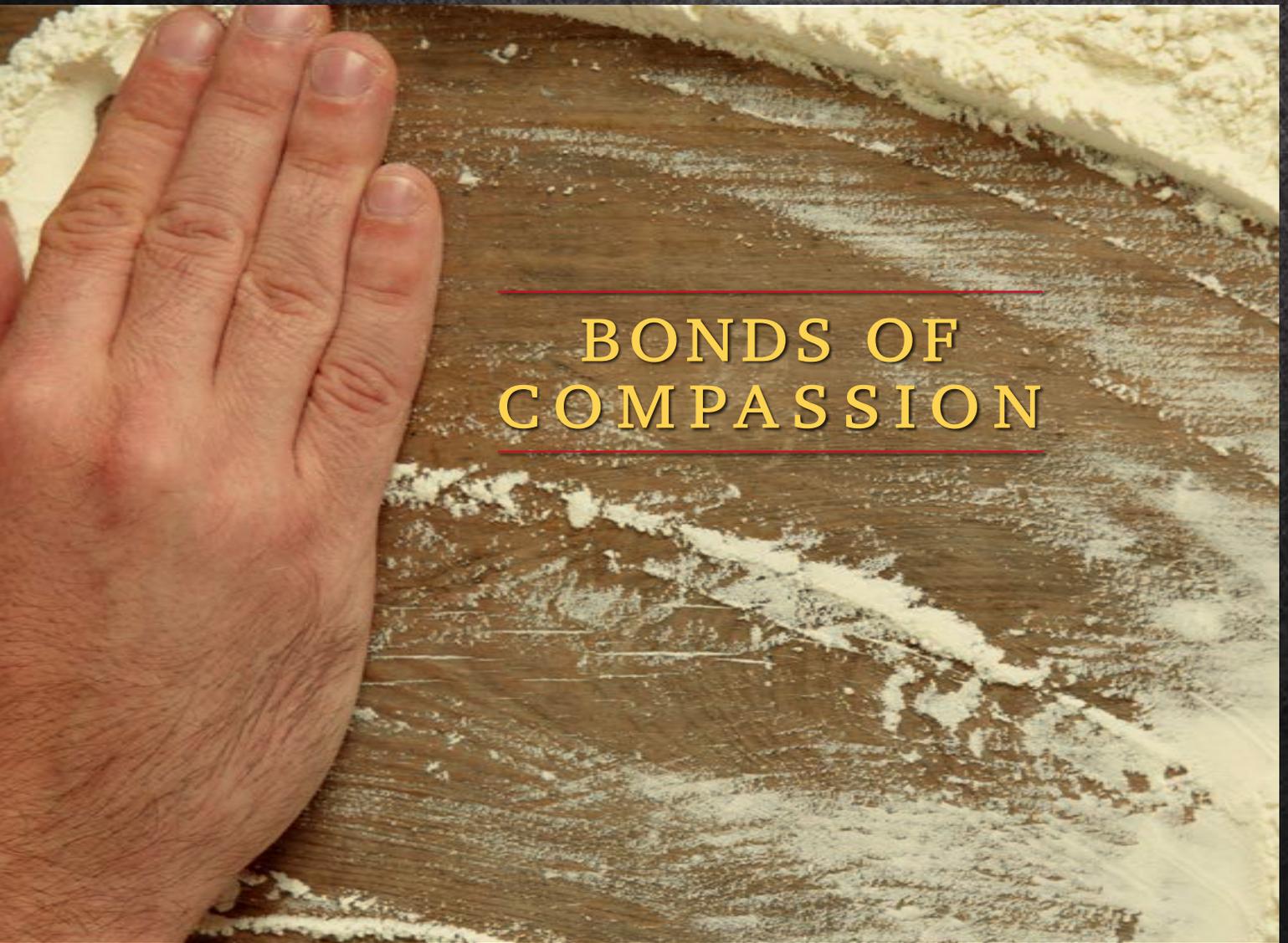


NATIONAL GANG CENTER

SPRING/SUMMER 2014



BONDS OF COMPASSION



The National Gang Center (NGC) is jointly funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Bureau of Justice Assistance. NGC conducts research on street gangs and serves as a clearinghouse for individuals and agencies seeking information, technical assistance, and training in the areas of gang prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry.

www.nationalgangcenter.gov

index



Bonds of Compassion— Homeboy Industries

Helps formerly gang-involved men and women reidentify themselves as vital members of a therapeutic community.

page 1 



National Gang Center Web Site

The NGC Web site has recently been refreshed and updated in an effort to improve the user's online experience.

page 3 



Long-Term Consequences of Adolescent Gang Membership for Adult Functioning

Researchers from the University of Washington have found that the consequences of adolescent gang membership last far into adulthood.

page 4 



Life Facing Bars: A Gang Prevention Documentary

California's Central Coast gangs and ex-gang members share their experiences and dispel lies about gang life.

page 5 



OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model Training

This event coalesced more than 60 attendees, representing more than 15 jurisdictions from across the United States.

back page 



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Bonds of Compassion— Homeboy Industries



Helps formerly gang-involved men and women reidentify themselves as vital members of a therapeutic community



“Lisa” started kicking it with the “homies” in her Los Angeles neighborhood when she was 13. By the time she was in high school, she was heavily into drugs and “hitting up and shooting up” with the gang. With her younger sister as her “crime partner,” Lisa “finally got that attention I was looking for,” she said.

It wasn’t long before Lisa caught the eye of an older gang member. At 28, he was considered a shot-caller who commanded the respect of the younger gang members. Lisa assumed he made his money selling drugs, but she didn’t ask, and he didn’t talk about it. When Lisa got pregnant at 17, the couple married and moved to Chicago. As it turned out, Lisa’s suspicions regarding her husband’s income only hinted at a much more complicated reality: the “Windy City” was home base for an international drug cartel, and her new husband worked as a runner between Chicago and Mexico.

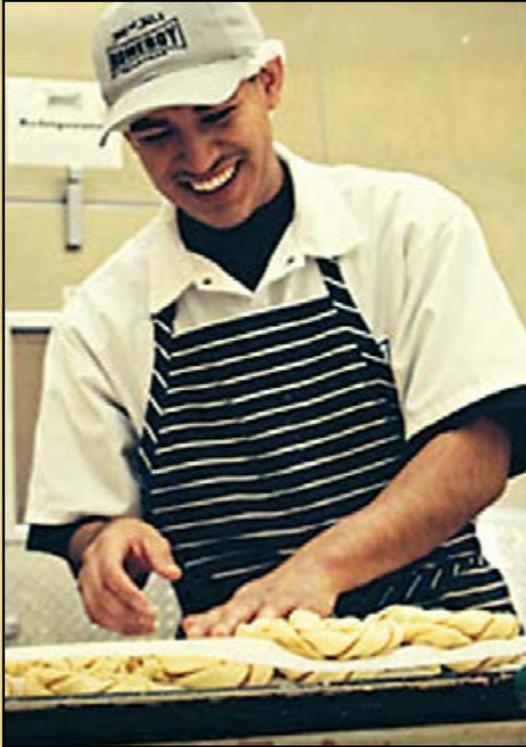
In her unexpected role as a mother of one and then two children, and wife to a drug lord, Lisa felt trapped. “I had all the glamour,” she said, “but no friends or family. I practically had a double life. My husband had a different name, I couldn’t talk to anybody, and he was never there.”

When her husband was killed in a drug feud, Lisa moved back to Los Angeles and shortly thereafter was incarcerated on charges of accessory to murder (in an unrelated case). She was a young widow separated from her children, with a long list of addictions and no hope for recovery.

After prison, Homeboy Industries was Lisa’s off-ramp, as it is for other previously incarcerated and formerly gang-involved men and women who

Bonds of Compassion—Homeboy Industries

Continued from page 1



seek the agency's services. For more than 25 years and for thousands of clients, Homeboy has served as a beacon of hope in Los Angeles, illuminating an alternative route for those traumatized by the intergenerational cycle of gang violence.

Lisa entered Homeboy's paid 18-month job training program, where she began working in maintenance, and was quickly promoted to an administrative position.

During their time at Homeboy, clients are assigned case managers who help them chart an individualized course through therapy and additional services tailored to their needs. Various classes include the following: computer basics, bride to college, building healthy relationships, parenting, domestic violence, and anger management. Clients participate in 12-step groups, have visible tattoos removed, obtain their GEDs, and work with mental health professionals to deal with the traumas they have experienced. Employment counselors assist clients with the creation of résumés and guide them in setting career-oriented goals.

Lisa's words evoked what so many participants at Homeboy experience: "Because of the program, I'm finally getting the taste of a free world," she said. In less than a year at Homeboy, Lisa has obtained her driver's license—an achievement a judge once deemed "impossible"—and is working to be granted visitation of her children. She has moved into a safer neighborhood and is saving money to pursue her longtime dream of becoming a make-up artist.

The Homeboy model of therapeutic community served as a catalyst in changing both Lisa's thoughts and her behaviors regarding her future.

"Before, I hated life," she explained. "I felt like I was always a disappointment to everyone. Here, people look up to me as I transform my life."

A UCLA longitudinal, mixed-methods study of Homeboy Industries, currently being conducted by Dr. Todd Franke and Dr. Jorja Leap, has begun to document the shift in identity towards prosocial behaviors and the decrease in antisocial activities. In a subsample of 50 individuals followed over four years, 38 have expressed their belief that identity or the sense of self is a core issue, and that their involvement in the Homeboy program has allowed them to change.

According to Dr. Leap, "Every sample member openly admitted to having belonged to a gang or neighborhood but the majority invariably added, 'I have moved on,' or 'That's not part of me anymore.'"

What the research has begun to demonstrate through both quantitative and qualitative measures is that effective reentry is achieved by replacing the conditional acceptance of gang membership with the unconditional love of a therapeutic community. Lisa's experience exemplifies this shift. As she explained, "What makes us a family is that we try to help each other. We feel each other's pain."

For more information on Homeboy Industries, please visit www.homeboyindustries.org.

NGC
NATIONAL GANG CENTER

**SAME SITE —
NEW LOOK!**

The National Gang Center (NGC) program works to further the mission of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) by providing national leadership, information, training, and technical assistance that target gangs and street gang members of all ages. Serving researchers, policymakers, and practitioners nationally, NGC activities contribute to reductions in gang-related crime and violence and gang activity by juveniles and adults. The NGC is excited to announce that the Web site has recently been upgraded in an effort to improve the user's online experience.

Among the many exciting enhancements:

- Easier navigation
- Improved search capabilities
- Featured releases and updates
- And much more!

Over the next few weeks, the NGC is planning to release several new features, tools, and resources. We encourage you to come back often.

The NGC is a project jointly funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, DOJ.

We hope you enjoy the new improvements.

Visit the new NGC now!

Publications and National Youth Gang

Find gang-related publications by [category](#); download our [ongoing National Youth Gang](#) publication. You can also [download](#)

Featured Publications

National Gang Center
Volume 3, Winter 2014
[NGC-Newsletter-2014](#)

This issue features top information sharing by OJJDP and BJA.
[More...](#)

Highlights of the
[www.ojdp.gov/](#)
This fact sheet d
[More...](#)

Guide to
Assessment
provides a
[More...](#)

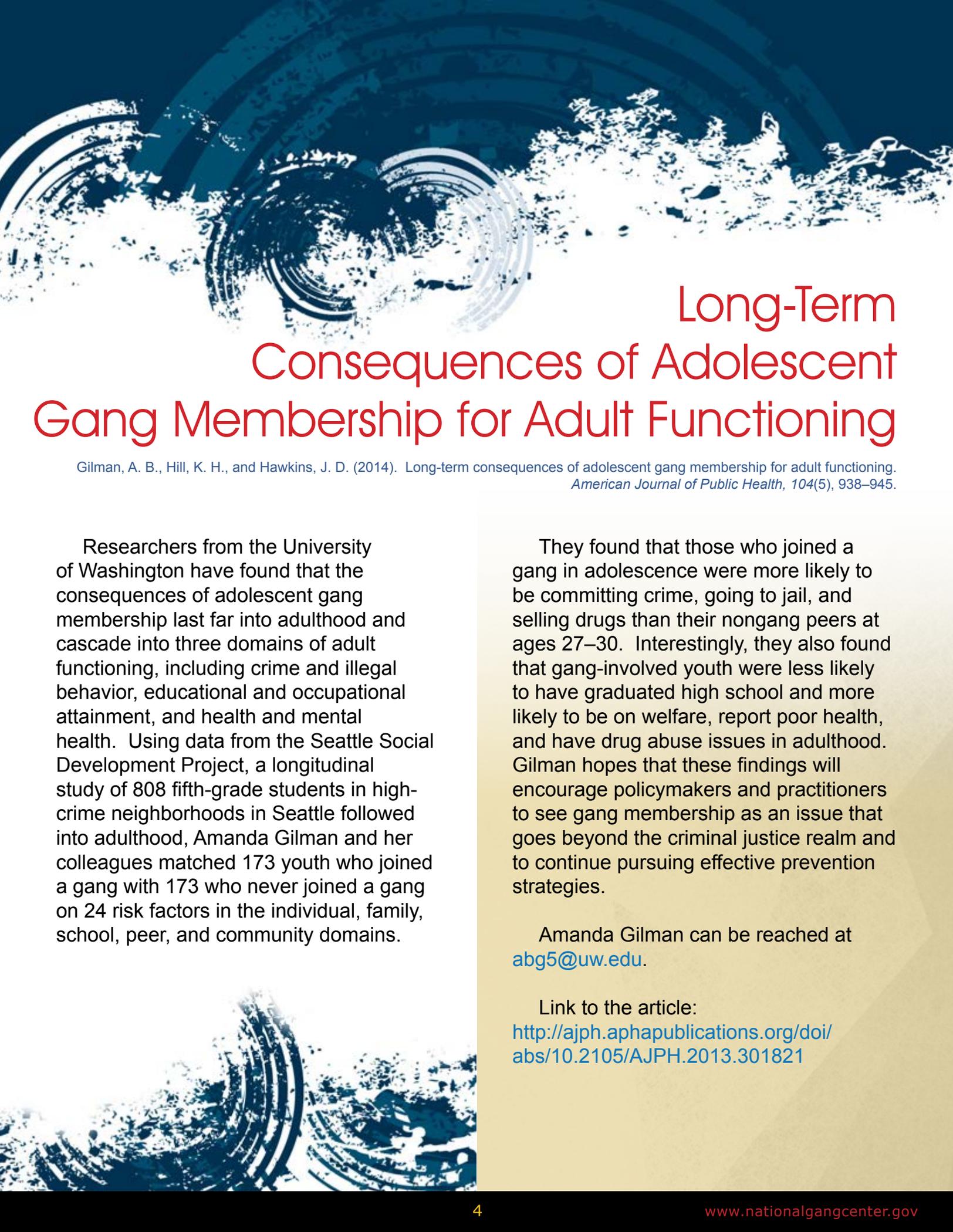
BJA **OJJDP**
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Check out
the new
look!

NGC Newsletter Subscription Information

If you would like to subscribe to the NGC Newsletter or check out our previous issues, please visit <http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Newsletter>.





Long-Term Consequences of Adolescent Gang Membership for Adult Functioning

Gilman, A. B., Hill, K. H., and Hawkins, J. D. (2014). Long-term consequences of adolescent gang membership for adult functioning. *American Journal of Public Health, 104*(5), 938–945.

Researchers from the University of Washington have found that the consequences of adolescent gang membership last far into adulthood and cascade into three domains of adult functioning, including crime and illegal behavior, educational and occupational attainment, and health and mental health. Using data from the Seattle Social Development Project, a longitudinal study of 808 fifth-grade students in high-crime neighborhoods in Seattle followed into adulthood, Amanda Gilman and her colleagues matched 173 youth who joined a gang with 173 who never joined a gang on 24 risk factors in the individual, family, school, peer, and community domains.

They found that those who joined a gang in adolescence were more likely to be committing crime, going to jail, and selling drugs than their nongang peers at ages 27–30. Interestingly, they also found that gang-involved youth were less likely to have graduated high school and more likely to be on welfare, report poor health, and have drug abuse issues in adulthood. Gilman hopes that these findings will encourage policymakers and practitioners to see gang membership as an issue that goes beyond the criminal justice realm and to continue pursuing effective prevention strategies.

Amanda Gilman can be reached at abg5@uw.edu.

Link to the article:
<http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2013.301821>

Life Facing Bars: A Gang Prevention Documentary

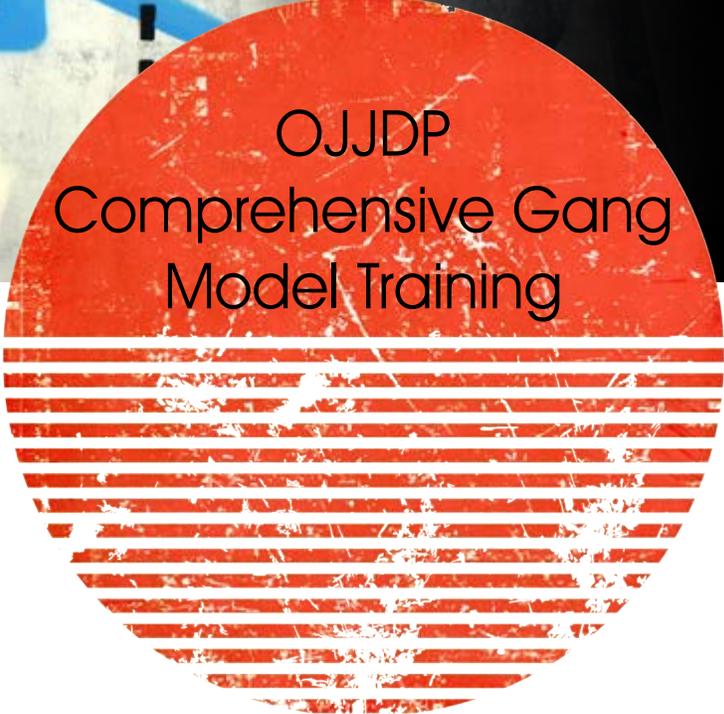
This documentary, produced by the Santa Maria Police Department, features California's Central Coast gangs and ex-gang members sharing their experiences and dispelling the lies about the gang lifestyle. You can watch the video on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wal5QFvTSW>



Don't Miss These Updates

- Understanding the reasons behind a youth's decision to join a gang can help you design and implement more successful gang prevention and intervention strategies. To explore these issues, the NGC has released a new video titled "Why Youth Join Gangs." To view the video, please visit www.nationalgangcenter.gov/video.
- The NGC Gang-Related Legislation page was recently updated to include updates and changes as of December 2013. Visit <http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Legislation/> for a comprehensive listing by state, subject, and municipal codes.





OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model Training

Sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), training on the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model (Model) was offered by the National Gang Center (NGC) on March 4–6, 2014, in Dallas, Texas. This event coalesced more than 60 attendees, representing more than 15 jurisdictions from across the United States. The evaluations demonstrated that communities need more training and resources to support the Model's core strategies—community mobilization, opportunities provision, social intervention, suppression, and organizational change and development.

March 4–6, 2014 ♦ Dallas, Texas

The ultimate goal of this effort is to provide the tools communities need to develop a comprehensive, collaborative approach, designed to prevent and reduce gang violence. For information on the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model, see <http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Comprehensive-Gang-Model>.



Interested in Anti-Gang Training?

Check out the links below for dates and locations:

Training and Conferences

<http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/About/Other-Training-and-Conferences>

Law Enforcement Anti-Gang Training

<http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Training-and-Technical-Assistance/Law-Enforcement>



www.nationalgangcenter.gov



This project was supported by Cooperative Agreement No. 2011-MU-MU-K001, awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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