



GAIN

Gang Action Interagency Network

BRIDGING THE GAPS:

SOLUTIONS TO WINNIPEG GANGS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this document is to layout the framework for a Winnipeg based gang strategy. An estimated 1400-1500 of Winnipeg's youth are active street gang members. Manitoba also has one of the highest youth incarceration rates in the country. Clearly youth street gangs continue to be a problem that incarceration is failing to resolve. Gang Action Interagency Network (GAIN), through extensive community consultation, was tasked with becoming the coordinating body to create and implement a plan that would address gangs and the harm they cause. GAIN has worked to ensure the necessary collaboration between all stakeholders to create an overarching approach to the complex issue of gangs in Winnipeg and then all of Manitoba.

In 2014, GAIN completed the study *Community Assessment of a Gang Exit Strategy*. Funded federally by the Youth Justice Fund – Guns, Gangs and Drugs, the research focused on three specific areas: Stakeholder Consultation, Youth Consultation and Existing Evidence (literature review etc... from both here and other jurisdictions). The three key action areas of potential focus identified were:

- **Identity and belonging:** The need for more mentorship, cultural reclamation and community efficacy
- **Healing:** Greater access to addictions and mental health care, and
- **Expanded Programming:** Addressing waitlists, inaccessible locations due to safety concerns, and lack of late night to early morning programming that currently act as barriers.

Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs is based on this research and further consultation to ensure we are relying on the best evidenced based approaches and building on what has proven successful in Winnipeg already. The result is a holistic framework with these guiding principles:

- Anti-colonization,
- Anti-oppression, and
- Harm reduction.

The evidence insists we employ a youth centered complex trauma lens that engages family and extended community as we address gaps in services and build bridges between existing supports to both avoid gang involvement and allow for exiting should a young person get caught up in that lifestyle.

Access to core services such as recreation and cultural programs along with education and sustainable employment are well proven methods in reducing the chances of a young person becoming involved with gangs. However systemic barriers, both actual and perceived, exist. In order to address these, our plan will see the creation and/or better coordination of:

- 24/7 System Navigators
- Mentorship programming
- Mental health and addiction services geared better for youth
- Parent/Family support groups
- Better public awareness and understanding of the root causes of gang involvement along with the solutions.

Expected outcomes should the plan be funded and implemented are:

- Significant reduction in the number of youth incarcerations in Manitoba,
- Eliminate the over representation of Indigenous and newcomer youth in the criminal justice system, and
- An established gang response mechanism and system that can take both a coordinated crisis and long-term approach to Winnipeg's youth gang problem.

This coordinated plan includes prevention, intervention and suppression all working in tandem to create positive pro-social opportunities for young people and a safer community for all. This should include a shift from short term

responses, for example youth incarceration, to long term responses that understand the root causes of youth gang involvement. This shift should be represented by spending more money on prevention and intervention strategies and less on incarceration. It will ensure 'we get out in front' of the social conditions that lead to gang involvement through a very individualized and wrap-around evidenced based approach. We will also continue to identify and address larger systemic barriers to full social inclusion. By working towards healing, identity and belonging through better coordinated and expanded resources, we will create alternate paths to gang involvement for our young people and safer communities for us all.

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TRIBUTE TO FLOYD

When Floyd Wiebe lost his son T.J. to a horrific act of violence, he devoted himself to the protection of youth. While T.J. wasn't involved in gangs, Floyd could see the harm that they were doing in his community, leading other young people into a cycle of drugs and tragedy. Tempering his grief with compassion, it was only natural that Floyd stepped up to be the first chair of GAIN.

As chair, Floyd demonstrated tireless, dedicated leadership. Despite his busy schedule, he never once turned down a chance to meet with a youth or concerned parent. His example still serves as an inspiration for the work that carries on in his absence, and this plan would have been impossible without his efforts.

Floyd left an indelible mark on our network, strategy and city, but the true measure of his legacy is in the lives he changed. To quote one of the many youth he worked with:

“Dear Floyd: with compassion and grace, you helped me to get out the game by sending me on my way to this great escape of peace. You encouraged my voice to speak loud and proud about the struggle of an indigenous voice that would have been silenced into defiance. The impact you had on me will last a life time, I cannot thank you enough for preventing a life of crime. I now shine with pride and encourage others to find their minds to seek to their own heights, just like u helped me to see the light!”

— Jenna liicious

Thank you Floyd. You are missed and will never be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO LARRY MORRISETTE

It is a great honor for me to write about my friend Larry Morrisette. Larry was a social worker in Winnipeg for over thirty years who was mostly involved in working and teaching in the inner city and North End in Winnipeg. However, Larry's love, respect, and honoring of the people would see him touch those from all areas of Winnipeg and even globally as he helped bring awareness to the issues and hardships Indigenous peoples face on a daily basis.

Larry's love and compassion for the community led to his forming and participating in several boards of directors in the Indigenous community, always fighting and advocating for the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in the inner city and in the North End or Point Douglas areas. This includes his work with Ogijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin (OPK), or young warriors living a good life moving forward, in 2000. OPK helped young men trying to escape the gang life integrate back into society through work programs and culturally appropriate ceremony and teachings. Larry was also an active member of the Gang Action Interagency Network, helping to create helping to build that organization as well.

Larry Morrisette taught a community to love, heal, forgive, and be proud to be Indigenous as they had many gifts. He was a silent warrior who walked humbly and lived and breathed reconciliation, demanding respect for the people that he helped and served in the community. Larry believed that it was through one telling their story that they could experience healing and honouring, no matter where that person was from, what they had done, or what had been done to them.

— Ryan Nash

SECTION ONE: GANG STRATEGY FRAMEWORK



INTRODUCTION

The Gang Action Interagency Network (GAIN) is a Winnipeg-based organization comprised of government, law enforcement, and community-based organizations committed to grassroots solutions to the gang problem in Winnipeg. Out of the success of the Sexually Exploited Youth (SEY) Collation, which brought together organizations to fight the growing issue of sexual exploitation of youth, GAIN was born, with the hopes of attaining similar success to SEY, but with a focus on gangs. In its eight-year history, GAIN has held various city-wide forums and both community- and youth-based consultations. In 2014 they released a report that highlighted the importance of identity and belonging, healing, and expanding programming as the three crucial elements to combating gangs in Winnipeg. A multipronged approach, including prevention, intervention, and suppression, is required in order to tackle Winnipeg's gang problem.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH

The gang strategy builds on the holistic nature of GAIN, which recognizes that gangs are not the issue of one sole area of our society, and rather a collective approach is required to tackle the complex social and individual contexts that contribute to young people becoming involved in gangs. In order for this strategy to be successful, engagement from various stakeholders across our community is required.

Through this holistic lens a three-pronged approach is proposed to effect change both systemically as well as in the lives of youth wishing to exit gangs. The three prongs include: prevention, intervention, and suppression.

WHY WE NEED A STRATEGY

A community-led, grassroots gang strategy is needed in Winnipeg. There needs to be a coordinated plan that harnesses the power and passion of people who work not only in the community, but in policing, justice, and the government.

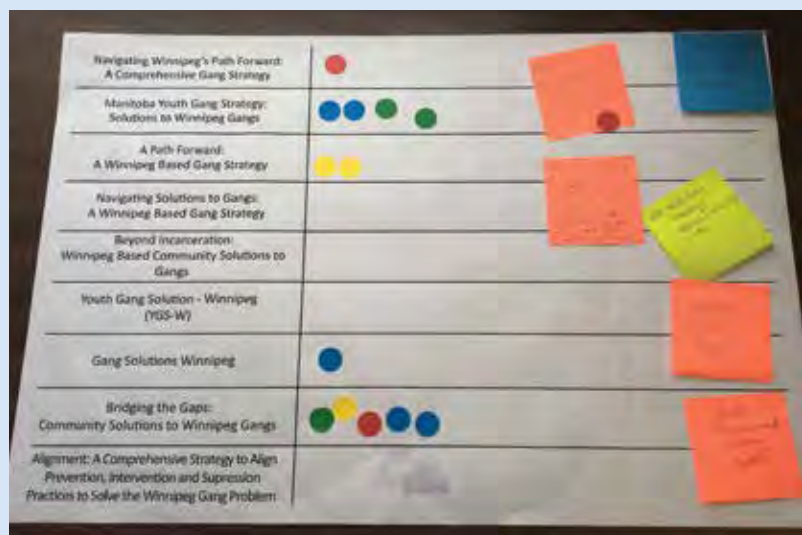
A fundamental shift in the way we view gang issues is imperative. Gangs themselves are not the problem, but rather it is the systems and structures in place that push youth and young people towards gangs as their only viable option. The reasons and risk factors that youth join gangs are heavily imbedded in our governing systems (such as the criminal justice system, educational institutions, and child and family services), as well as the founding of our country, (such as colonialism and racism). These root causes — youth aging out of care, crippling levels of poverty, inadequate transitions out of the justice system — all require serious attention and reform in order to provide youth with positive alternative options to gang involvement.

“We need a comprehensive, connected set of interventions that steer kids away from the path toward gang life. This requires that we focus not only on the child, but on their families, their communities and the broader policy environment”²¹ Therefore, we need to embrace GAIN’s gang strategy, *Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs*, as it is a response to the needs of Winnipeg, as identified by various forums and consultations throughout the city. In addition, it understands the deep-seeded roots of colonialism, poverty, and the inequities in our criminal justice and education systems and how they directly affect youths’ risks of joining gangs.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

GAIN has a network of over 180 individuals who represent various community-based organizations, governmental departments, and police who work with or come in contact with youth in a variety of ways. The planning process was grounded in the extensive knowledge of service providers, community-based organizations and police who have a deep understanding of the gang issues that face Winnipeg.

Present interventions are focused on mitigating the effects of gangs, however “one-dimensional interventions are unlikely to have a significant and lasting impact on gangs and their individual members”²² While prevention and intervention programming are important and worthwhile missions, and can assist individual youth in escaping the



trappings of gang life, they do not create change on a larger level. Instead, we need to address the root causes and systemic barriers — such as poverty, the lasting and detrimental effects of colonialism, the criminal justice system, child and family services, and the education system — that place impoverished youth at a greater disadvantage for gang involvement.

GAIN engaged the community and youth in the creation of this strategy, holding a strategic planning session in September 2016, with over thirty-five people from twenty-three different community-based organizations. Once a draft of the strategy was completed, GAIN consulted with over 200 individuals, including: the Chief of Police, five Winnipeg city councillors, the Winnipeg Committee for Safety, youth probation workers, municipal and provincial government departments, individuals with lived expe-

rience, Indigenous community leaders, local academics, and representatives from the Indigenous and Municipal Relations and Manitoba Justice Departments, including Assistant Deputy Minister Jill Peron. For a complete list of consultations please see Appendix A.

GAIN also conducted youth consultations for the strategy, via a survey that focused on how youth feel they should be involved, what they believe should be the focus for the first year's goals, their thoughts on mentorship, and the barriers that exist for engaging in employment and recreation. Seventy-five youth ranging in age from 14 to 28 participated in the youth consultation phase from various areas of Winnipeg.

RESEARCH SECTION

Research on existing gang strategies and exit programs was conducted throughout the planning process. Building upon the report released in 2014, research was focused on best practices of existing programs and strategies. In addition, the focus included Winnipeg-based research in the hopes of understanding both the prevalence of gangs in the city as well as factors unique to Winnipeg that lead to gang involvement for youth. Additional information on the research that underpins this strategy can be found in Appendix B.

Based on the root causes of youth gang involvement as mentioned above, the goals of this gang strategy are three-fold. **First, the strategy aims for full social inclusion for all young people, adults, and their families having sustainable access to resources and support systems and to avoid exit gangs, with a focus on improving their overall quality of life.** (As identified in GAIN's 2016 Strategic Planning Session).

GOAL: To significantly reduce the number of youth incarcerations in Manitoba and eliminate the over-representation of Indigenous youth in the criminal justice system by connecting at-risk youth to positive prosocial resources.

According to Statistics Canada, Manitoba had one the highest rates of incarcerated youth at 26 per 10,000 youth in 2014/2015 correctional survey.³ Indigenous youth continue to be over-represented in Canada's justice system. Thirty-three percent of all youth admitted to correctional



services in 2014/15 were Indigenous. In comparison, they account for roughly 7 percent of the overall youth population.⁴ As mandated in the Youth Criminal Justice Act, sentencing principles dictate that the Court should consider alternatives to custody, especially in the case of Indigenous youth. However, 52 percent of Indigenous youth were admitted to custody compared to only 42 percent of non-Indigenous youth. In addition, 48 percent of Indigenous youth were admitted to community supervision compared to 57 percent of non-Indigenous youth.⁵

GOAL: To build on existing resources to ensure that all youth at risk of joining gangs and all youth looking to exit gangs have the opportunity to do so.

"Programming is essential in providing gang-affected young people with the necessary skills to lead positive and successful lives without relying on gangs."⁶ While Winnipeg has many great programs and resources available to young people, we need to build on their ability and capacities to affect change for youth looking to exit gangs. This can be done by removing accessibility barriers that exist in current programs/resources.

GOAL: At-risk youth have better connections to and opportunities for healing.

Healing was identified in GAIN's 2014 report as being one of three top priorities. One participant noted that "there's a long-term process that needs to happen in a genuine authentic healing program [in order to connect youth to] their identities and their culture."⁷

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Youth: The United Nations define youth as the “period of transition from dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence.”⁸ Due to the fluidity of when this transition occurs, GAIN’s understanding of youth is inclusive up to the age of 29. Building on GAIN’s previous work, continuing to focus on young people involved in or at risk of joining gangs is the best course of action. Research shows that young men often decide to leave gangs due to aging, maturation reform, and proximity to violence.⁹ As there is no specific age attached to these realizations, GAIN has adopted a fluid version of the term “youth,” using it to refer to anyone between the ages of 6 and 29. A youth focus also makes sense in the context of prevention, which will be a large component of the gang strategy. The vast amount of research finds that for prevention to be successful, programs, resources, and strategies need to focus on youth as young as 6. Upon the success of the youth-focused strategy, GAIN will adapt its plan, creating a specifically adult-focused strategy.

Gang: Throughout this document the mention of “gangs” refers to street-level gangs, commonly understood as having a structure, rules, name, symbol, color and a primary group. Street gangs are frequently involved in random acts of violence and crime, having some stability over a period of time. They may claim a neighbourhood as its territory but they are also quite mobile.¹⁰

Levels of Gang Involvement: the following levels have been adapted from the Winnipeg Police’s Gang Reduction Intervention Program Document:¹¹

Fantasizing about gang activity: May not have knowledge about “real street gangs” but may admire what they perceive the gang lifestyle to be. Emulating Winnipeg street gangs is particularly common in rural and reservation communities where youth are often exposed to street-gang culture through a visiting relative associated to street gangs within the rural community or attending the city itself. The additional spread of gang subculture has been all the more prevalent through the use of social media, glamourizing the aspects of gang involvement.

Potential or Wanna-be Members: Usually the youngest of those associated with a gang. Find gang lifestyle acceptable and gives serious consideration to joining. Most likely

will be exposed to the use of narcotics and be pushed to enter into street-level drug trafficking, commonly at their own risk.

Strikers, Affiliate, or Associate Members: Not fully initiated. Hangs outs with the gang, receives some gang benefits. Participates in gang crimes and activities, and is required to carry out orders to commit violent acts by full status members of any given gang. The completion of these orders can result in the elevation of one’s status within the gang.

Full Patch/Member: Completed a gang initiation. Full membership in the gang demonstrates owing full loyal to the gang. They will be privy to gang language, signals, colors, and traditions. Active gang members often exclude family and former friends. At this status this person can and does begin to manipulate younger or newer members in carrying out acts including violence on behalf of the gang.

Senior Member. A full-time gang member whose daily activity is furthering the interests of the gang. Totally committed to gang lifestyles. Often comprises approximately 5-10% of the gang. Has significant influence in the gang and is frequently incarcerated for criminal activity. Is often involved in the distribution of illicit drugs to lower-level members of the gang, and maintains a connection to organized crime groups that have the ability to supply the gangs’ demands for narcotics.

Leaders. Typically adults, not teens. Control gang policy and activity and hand out rewards and punishments. Usually have extensive criminal backgrounds. Surrounds themselves with trusted members to form an inner circle.

Healing: This refers to dealing with complex trauma, addictions, mental health issues, and developing a healthy lifestyle, as defined by a GAIN subcommittee.

Identity and belonging: *Belonging* can be defined as sharing a common purpose with those around you and acceptance as a member or a part of something bigger than one’s self. *Identity* can be defined as a person’s sense of self; the qualities, beliefs, and personality traits that make up a person. For many youth the basic needs of identity and belonging are often met by gangs. The fulfillment of identity and belonging must shift to positive pro-social entities, communities, families, schools, friends, and the like.

GOALS OF OVERARCHING STRATEGY AND ACTION AREAS

GOAL 1: Full social inclusion for all young people, adults, and their families having sustainable access to resources and support systems and to avoid and exit gangs, with a focus on improving their overall quality of life.

GOAL 2: To build on existing resources to ensure that all youth at risk of joining gangs and all youth looking to exit gangs have the opportunity to do so.

GOAL 3: To provide at-risk youth with better connections to and opportunities for healing.

GOAL 4: To ensure that any youth at-risk can pick up a phone, connect with a 24/7 navigator, and be connected to all the resources necessary to support that youth.

GOAL 5: A fully functioning gang mentorship program (either a stand-alone program or building capacity within existing mentorship programs — to be determined by working group and research).

GOAL 6: Eliminate barriers so that all youth in gangs, affiliated with gangs, or at risk of gang involvement have access to recreation opportunities.

GOAL 7: All gang-involved, affiliated, or at-risk youth have access to appropriate cultural programming if they so desire.

GOAL 8: Gang-involved and at-risk youth have access to meaningful employment opportunities.

GOAL 9: Parents/guardians of youth in gangs or youth at risk of gang involvement have access to support through parent support circles.

GOAL 10: Gang-involved, affiliated, or at-risk youth feel connected to their community.

GOAL 11: Existing appropriate mental health and or addictions services are made accessible to gang involved, affiliated, or at-risk youth. Challenges of cognitive impairment are recognized and programs adapt as necessary to be inclusive.

GOAL 12: To disseminate accurate information regarding gangs among youth and the public at large, as well as raising awareness of the various prevention and intervention programs and services within Winnipeg.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE STRATEGY

Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs is based on the following set of guiding principles that have been developed throughout various GAIN meetings, forums, and strategic planning sessions. These guiding principles are intended to inform a holistic approach, while supporting initiatives and actions aimed at addressing gangs in Winnipeg.

ANTI-COLONIZATION

Based on Canada's history of colonization and its lasting and devastating impact on the Indigenous population, our gang strategy must unpack the gang issues in Winnipeg through an anti-colonization lens. As a network, we

are aware of and are working with the negative impacts of colonialism. GAIN understands that the same forces of colonization that resulted in residential schools are at play today, resulting in Indigenous residents being more negatively impacted by poverty, child and family services, incarceration, barriers to education and employment, and housing. In addition, many Indigenous individuals and families suffer the intergenerational trauma of the experiences of residential schools, sometimes without knowing that this experience is in their family's history. Conversely, many non-Indigenous residents have a lack of information about the legacy of colonialism in Canada and how it has controlled access to resources by ethnicity, and shaped socio (economic) relationships throughout the country between Indigenous and non-Indigenous citizens.¹²

ANTI-OPPRESSION

This is the work of actively challenging and removing oppression perpetuated by power inequalities in society, both systemic oppression and individual expressions of oppression.

HARM REDUCTION

Through a client-centered, non-judgemental, and facilitative approach, harm reduction can help to target the risks and harms associated with gang involvement. A harm reduction lens is evidence informed, practical, feasible, effective, safe, and cost effective. It promotes autonomy and dignity, while operating in a transparent and accountable manner. Harm reduction values meaningful engagement and participation of affected communities in the program and policy decisions that affect them. It also challenges policies and practices that maximize harm. This includes criminalization, discrimination, and social inequities. By incorporating harm reduction as a guiding principle of *Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs*, GAIN is committed to supporting policies, legislation, programs, services, and actions that reduce the harms experienced by people involved or associated with gangs. These harms are disproportionately borne by structurally disadvantaged communities, making these foundational priorities for addressing gang issues in Winnipeg.

COMPLEX TRAUMA LENS

Complex trauma is a type of trauma that occurs repeatedly and cumulatively, usually over a period of time and within specific relationships. For example, physical, sexual, or mental abuse, neglect. This ongoing trauma causes one to constantly be in a state of fight or flight. Due to Canada's history of colonization and the legacy of residential schools, many gang members suffer from intergenerational trauma, which can result in complex trauma. A complex trauma lens is necessary to unpack why youth in Winnipeg may join gangs. Understanding that complex trauma affects all aspects of young people's development is crucial to creating a successful gang strategy.

The following guiding principles of the gang strategy are closely aligned with some or all of the visions and principles of Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness, Youth Agencies Alliance, Block by Block, and the Winnipeg Police Service Strategic Plan 2015–2019:

Youth Centered — apply a wrap-around approach driven by the needs of the youth at risk and their affected families

Youth Engagement — ensure youth are provided the opportunity to share their perspectives on the issues that affect them and that they are empowered to take a leadership role in their own gang exit path

Family Engagement — work with families of at-risk youth or gang-involved youth wanting to exit to identify and address their needs

Community Based — initiatives should recognize the unique needs of communities and foster engagement in a culturally responsive manner through grassroots and community-led prevention and intervention initiatives.

Service Coordination — a focus on building on existing services and resources:

Evidence-based/results-focused — proven initiatives and successes should be identified and leveraged to encourage similar initiatives adapted to our community's needs. All actions and initiatives undertaken by GAIN should be evaluated for impact

Integration, collaboration, and partnerships — foster trust and collective governance through the collaboration of various key stakeholders from all levels of government, the Winnipeg Police, and community-based organizations.

Information sharing — foster an openness to lawful and appropriate sharing of information between individuals and organizations in a timely and accurate manner

THEORY OF CHANGE

All the goals that are listed throughout the strategy are short-term solutions to a long-term problem. By achieving these goals in the interim we will be able to move forward on changing systems that create gang involvement as an option for young people in our city.

By using the Theory of Change model, we are able to show how these interim or crisis-based goals and action items will help to create larger social change in the long term. Figure 1 is representative of what young people currently experience. While some young people are able to overcome various barriers to accessing recreation, mentorship, employment, and other resources and services, many youth are not. Those youth who are unable break through barriers are much more likely to join gangs.

In Figure 2, youth who were before unable to access services have now, with the help of the gang strategy, developed the

ability to break down the barriers that previously kept them from accessing necessary and desired services. GAIN has also become the barrier to youth gang involvement.

Figure 3 demonstrates how the strategy will create the future depicted in Figure 2. GAIN will actively work with existing structures to collaborate on the development of 24/7 navigators and mentors to help young people navigate systems, break down barriers, and seek out funding to enhance the capacity of existing resources. Through this work we will be able to connect at-risk or gang-involved young people to mentorship, employment opportunities, mental health and addictions support, and easier access to programs and services. By doing all this, accessibility barriers will be eliminated, which will help young people to heal and develop a strong sense of identity and belonging. This will all result in youth thriving in our community and not a part of gangs.

Figure 1: What Is Currently Happening

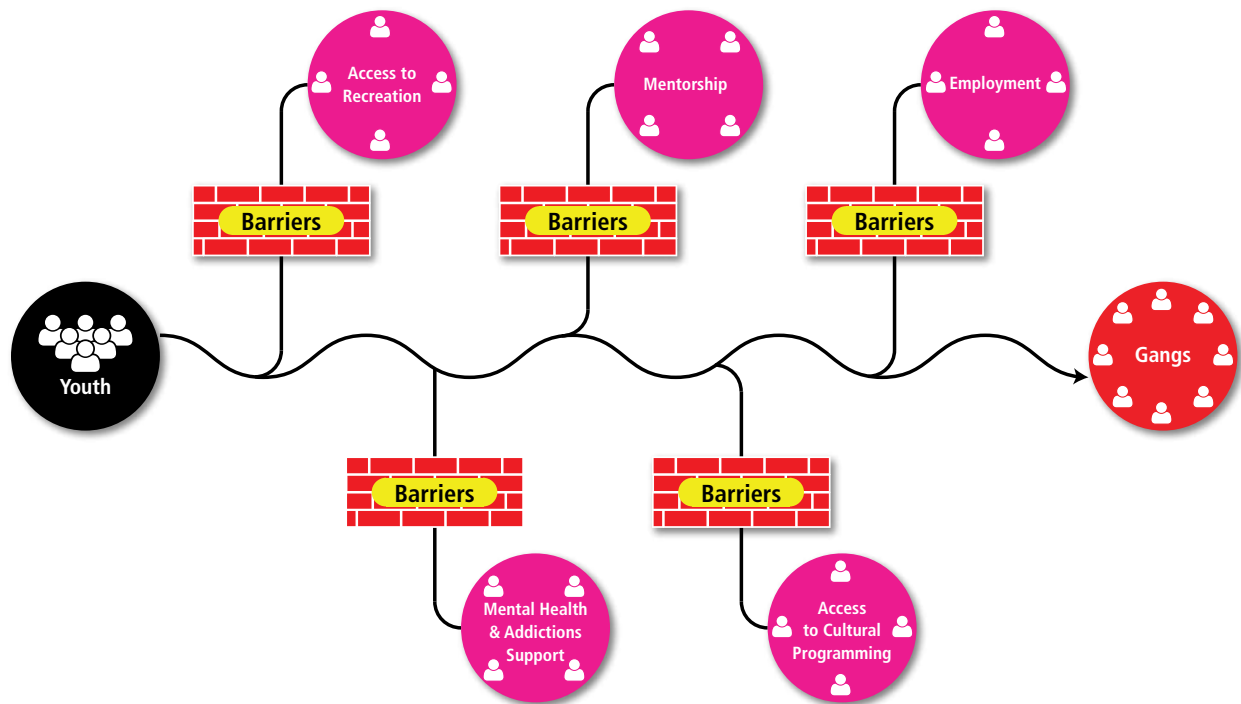


Figure 2: Envisioned future with implementation of gang strategy

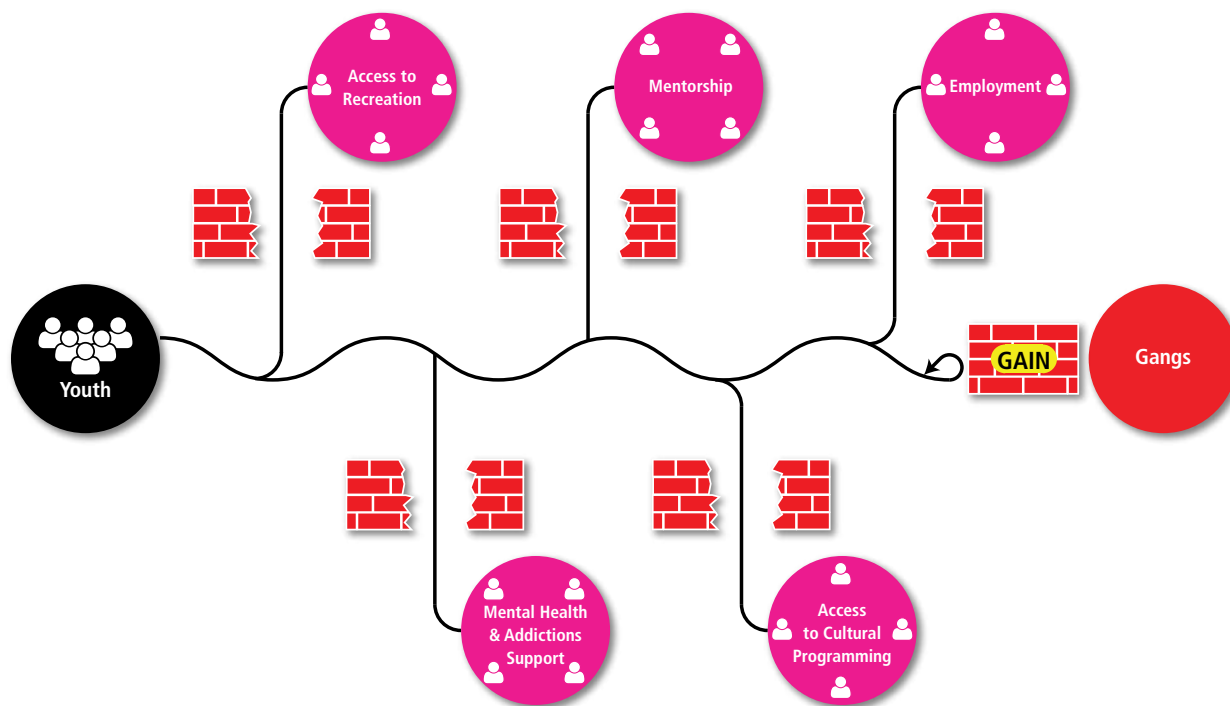
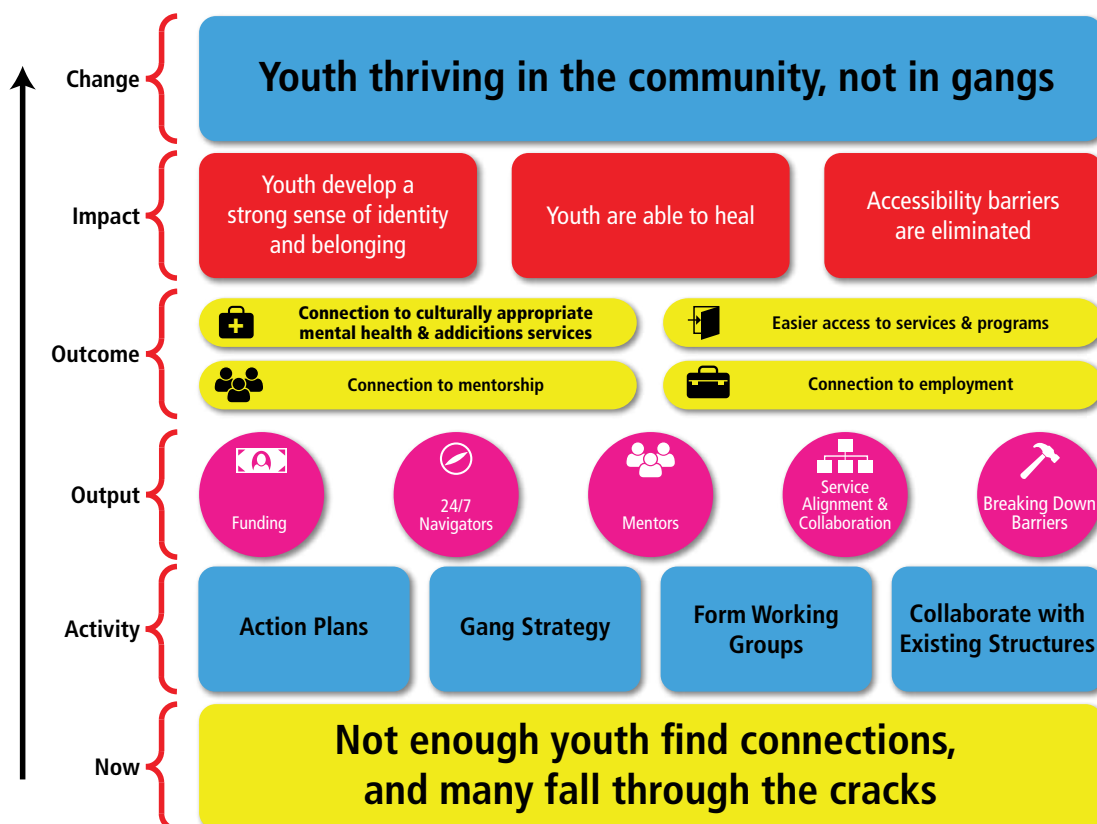


Figure 3: Bridging the Gaps – Theory of Change



CANADIAN TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION CALLS TO ACTION, THE PHOENIX SINCLAIR INQUIRY, AND THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs builds upon the wealth of work and knowledge that came before it. This includes the recommendations and calls to action put forward by the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, The Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The following are excerpts from the above-mentioned reports that most closely align with this strategy's guiding principles and goals.

CANADIAN TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION CALLS TO ACTION

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action document makes various statements asking the federal, provincial, and municipal governments to take steps to redress the legacy of residential schools, and thus advance the process of Canadian reconciliation. The following recommendations guide the Winnipeg Gang Strategy. To read the entire TRC document please visit: http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

Child Welfare Recommendations 1–5

To address child welfare, governments are asked to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care, including publishing yearly reports comparing the numbers of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children in care. Further, the documents calls on governments to create national standards for Aboriginal child apprehension and custody cases.

Education Recommendations 6–12

The document asks for section 43 of the Criminal Code, the section allowing corporal punishment of children by parents and teachers, to be repealed. The federal government and Aboriginal groups are called upon to create a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians. The federal government is to eliminate discrepancies in funding for children educated on and off reserves, and are to be held accountable with yearly reports on funding for First Nations children. The federal government is also called upon to develop Aboriginal education legislation in conjunction with Aboriginal peoples that will help to improve educational attainment levels, develop culturally

appropriate curricula, and protect the rights to Aboriginal languages.

Language and Culture Recommendations 13–17

Further, the government is asked to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act with the aim of preserving Aboriginal languages and funding language initiatives. It is also asked that governments allow residential school survivors to reclaim their names that were changed in the residential school system by waiving all administrative fees for five years.

Health Recommendations 18–24

Governments are asked to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health is a result of previous governmental policies, and to implement the health care rights of Aboriginal peoples as identified in international law. The government is called upon to establish measurable goals to close the gaps in health outcomes for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, including providing sustainable funding, and make mandatory courses in Aboriginal health for nursing students.

Justice Recommendations 25–42

In terms of justice, the Commission asks for a written document reaffirming the independence of the RCMP when investigating crimes in which the government has its own interest. It calls upon all levels of government to review their statutes of limitations to make sure they are not reinforcing historical abuses against Aboriginal peoples. Lawyers are to receive appropriate cultural training, and all law students should be subject to a course in Aboriginal peoples and the law, including the history and legacy of residential schools. All levels of government are asked to commit to eliminating the over-representation of Aboriginal peoples in custody, including youth in custody, by committing to pro-

viding community sanctions, and amending the criminal code to allow judges to depart from mandatory minimum sentences. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) must be recognized as an urgent problem and strategies must be developed to combat it. The government is called upon to reform the criminal justice system to better deal with the needs of offenders suffering from FASD. Aboriginal communities should partner with the governments to provide culturally relevant services to inmates, as well as providing supports for Aboriginal programming in halfway houses and parole services. A plan should be developed to collect and publish information on the criminal victimization of Aboriginal peoples, and specific services need to be developed for Aboriginal victims. A public inquiry is called to investigate the deaths and victimization of Aboriginal girls and women. Finally, the governments must commit to recognizing and implementing Aboriginal justice systems.

Reconciliation Recommendations 43 and 44

To reconcile, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) needs to be fully adopted and implemented, and the federal government is called upon to develop a national action plan. The government of Canada must further develop a Royal Proclamation of Reconciliation in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples. Parties to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement should develop and sign a covenant of reconciliation identifying principles for working collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canadian society. Concepts used to justify European sovereignty must be repudiated. Church parties to the Settlement Agreement are called upon to formally adopt and comply with the principles of UNDRIP. The federal government is called upon to fund the establishment of Indigenous law institutes for the development, use, and understanding of Indigenous laws and justice, and to develop a policy of transparency by publishing legal opinions in regard to Aboriginal and treaty rights. Further, Aboriginal title claims should be accepted once the claimant has established occupation over particular territory.

National Council for Reconciliation Recommendations 53–56

A National Council for Reconciliation should be funded by the Government of Canada and established as an independent body of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members to

monitor and evaluate the government's progress towards reconciliation, develop a multiyear action plan, and promote public dialogue. All levels of government should report and provide data to the National Council, and the prime minister should issue an annual report on the state of Aboriginal peoples to address the plans for advancing reconciliation. Public servants should also receive appropriate training and education on the history of Aboriginal peoples. Churches are asked to apologize to survivors for their role in residential schools and to develop education strategies to ensure their congregations learn about their role in colonization.

Education for Reconciliation Recommendations 62–65

Educators are asked at all levels of government to develop in consultation with Aboriginal peoples and survivors to develop age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, treaties, and Aboriginal history, making it a priority throughout public school. The education ministers must make an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues. Multiyear funding should be provided to community-based youth organizations to deliver programs. The Canadian Museum Association should receive funds to establish commemoration projects on the theme of reconciliation.

Youth Programs Recommendation 66

The federal government needs to establish multiyear funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation, and establish a national network to share information and best practices

Missing Children and Burial Information Recommendations 71–76

All chief coroners and statistics agencies are called upon to provide the TRC with records on the deaths of Aboriginal children in care. Funding is to be provided to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation to develop and maintain a registry of residential school student deaths, and further to create a registry locating Aboriginal student burial sites and provide families with proper ceremonies if desired. Records and copies should be made of all documents relevant to the legacy of residential schools, and communities should be supported to research and produce their own histories. In terms of commemoration, the fed-

eral government is called upon to act in collaboration with survivors and Aboriginal organizations to develop a reconciliation heritage that would include amending the Historic Sites and Monuments Act to include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis representation, integrating Indigenous history heritage values and memory into Canada's national heritage, and creating a strategy to commemorate residential school sites. A national Day for Truth and Reconciliation should be established to honour survivors, their families, and their communities, and ensure public commemoration of residential schools, and a residential school monument should be built in each capital city to honour survivors and the children who were lost.

Media and Reconciliation Recommendations 84–86

The federal government is called upon to restore funding to CBC to allow them to properly reflect diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples. The media is called upon to further reconciliation and educate audiences on the history and legacy of residential schools.

Sports and Reconciliation Recommendations 87–91

Aboriginal athletes must be recognized in history, and the development of Aboriginal athletes should be supported by all levels of government. The Canadian sport system must be inclusive of Aboriginal athletes. All sports policies should be developed and reformed to be inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, and Indigenous peoples' territorial protocols should be respected in the carriage of international sporting events, such as the Olympics. The corporate sector as well is asked to adopt the UNDRIP principles, including ensuring Aboriginal peoples have equal access to jobs. Finally, the newcomer information kit should include a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, and the oath of citizenship should be revised to include a statement regarding the treaties with Aboriginal peoples.

Newcomers to Canada Recommendations 93 and 94

The federal government, in collaboration with national Aboriginal organizations, needs to revise the information kit for newcomers to Canada and its citizenship test to reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal

peoples of Canada, including information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools.

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (UNDRIP)

UNDRIP is an international instrument adopted by the United Nations in 2007, with the purpose of protecting collective rights that may not be addressed in other human rights charters that emphasize the need to safeguard the individual rights of Indigenous peoples.

UNDRIP affirms that Indigenous peoples have the same fundamental human rights as any other group, are free to practice their traditions, and are protected from forced assimilation and destruction of their culture. It guarantees them the freedom to self-govern, or to participate in the government of the state if they so choose. It seeks to protect Indigenous peoples from discrimination based on their belonging to a particular Indigenous community or nation, and their participation in the traditions and customs of that nation. Land and territories are also protected from forcible relocation or relocation without consent. Indigenous peoples are further ensured the rights to participate in decision making affecting their communities, and may be represented by individuals of their choosing. UNDRIP holds states accountable for taking effective measures to ensure the rights of Indigenous peoples are protected.

UNDRIP affirms that Indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such.

UNDRIP is concerned that Indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, among other things, their colonization and the dispossession of their lands, territories, and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests.

UNDRIP recognizes the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples, which derive from their political, economic, and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories, and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories, and resources.

UNDRIP recognizes that the situation of Indigenous peoples varies from region to region and from country to country and that the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical and cultural backgrounds should be taken into consideration.

UNDRIP recognizes, in particular, the rights of Indigenous families and communities to retain shared responsibility for the upbringing, training, education, and well-being of their children, consistent with the rights of the child.

The following articles as outlined in the UNDRIP guide and inform this strategy:

Article 12: 1. Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practise, develop, and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.

Article 13: 1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop, and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems, and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places, and persons.

Article 14: 2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the state without discrimination.

Article 21: 1. Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, among others, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health, and social security. 2. States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of Indigenous elders, women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities.¹³

PHOENIX SINCLAIR INQUIRY

The following are relevant action areas and options for action from the Implementation Report for the Legacy of Phoenix Sinclair. These options for actions and recommendations call for a shift in the way systems in Manitoba

operate to keep the province's youth safe and protected. The full report is available at: http://gov.mb.ca/fs/childfam/pubs/options_for_action.pdf

Action Area: Differential Response

Recommendation: That the Province ensure that the family enhancement services required to support the differential response practice model are developed, coordinated, and made accessible through partnerships and collaboration among the child welfare system and other departments and community-based organizations.

Options for Action: Manitoba Family Services and the CFS authorities encourage and support cooperation between the child welfare system, other departments, and community-based organizations that serve children, youth and families. Manitoba Family Services and the CFS authorities develop a model and protocols for a shared service delivery framework that supports collaboration between the child welfare system, other departments, and community-based organizations for urban-based service delivery that can be adapted to reflect the resources and capacities of the community sectors in different geographic regions and communities. Manitoba Family Services and other departments strengthen the capacity of the community to deliver family enhancement services.

Recommendation: That the authorities enhance availability of voluntary early intervention services by placing workers in schools, community centres, housing developments, and any other community facilities where they would be easily accessible.

Options for Action: The CFS authorities collaborate with community in the development of pilot projects to introduce child welfare workers into schools or other community facilities. Before placing workers in schools or other community sites, the CFS authorities clearly define the mandate, roles, and responsibilities of community-based CFS workers, and communicate these to community members and organizations that share or use the site.

Recommendation: That a public awareness campaign be undertaken to inform the public about the expanded mandate and role of the Representative for Children and Youth.

Options for Action: Take action to enhance the Office of the Children's Advocate's capacity to represent the rights, interests, and viewpoints of First Nations and Métis children and youth, and to work collaboratively with First Nations and Métis families, child and family services agencies and authorities, community-based organizations, communities, and leadership on systemic issues that contribute to the over-representation of Aboriginal children, youth, and families in the child and family services system. This initiative and the ongoing activities it generates must be appropriately resourced.

Action Area: Supporting the Transition to Adulthood

Recommendation: That the Child and Family Services Act be amended to allow for the extension of services to any child who at the age of majority was receiving services under the Act, up to age 25.

Options for Action: The Manitoba government amend the Child and Family Services Act to enable extensions of care and maintenance for youth up to the age of 25 based on criteria developed in consultation with youth who have been in care, and with representatives of CFS agencies and authorities, and youth-serving, community-based organizations. The minister of Family Services ask the All Aboard Committee to consider, as part of Manitoba's Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion Strategy, developing a strategy that provides wrap-around services for 18 to 25-year-olds, particularly former youth in care. Components of this strategy might include a new service tier or program, guided by a framework and standards that focus on support rather than protection, a come-and-go philosophy that provides a supportive space for youth when needed, and resourced with sustainable funding tied to specific self-defined outcomes for the youth who access services and supports. As well, Manitoba Family Services, in consultation with the four CFS authorities, amend the age of majority planning standards to require workers to begin transition planning with youth at the age of 15.

Action Area: Building Community Capacity

Recommendation: That a legislated committee, functioning under the provisions of the Healthy Child Manitoba Act (in its present or amended form) be charged with: a)

coordinating the services provided for children and families between community-based organizations and government departments; and b) allocating government funding to those community-based organizations, following meaningful and inclusive consultation. It is understood that funding from the private sector and other levels of government will continue to play an important role, as it has done, in supporting these organizations and that the composition of this committee mirror the committee described by s. 21(3) of the Healthy Child Manitoba Act, which reflects Manitoba's various regions and cultural diversity, and includes representatives of the community and recognized experts.

Options for Action: Parent-child coalitions consider expanding their mandate beyond its current focus on early childhood to include children, youth (up to the age of 18), and families. The CFS authorities, in partnership with Healthy Child Manitoba, pilot the Children, Youth, and Families Integrated Service Systems project in selected communities.

Action Area: The Importance of Early Childhood Intervention

Recommendation: That the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet consider and recommend for legislative action a framework for the delivery of early childhood development programs with the following characteristics:

- a) voluntary but universally available;
- b) offering a place where children regularly attend to learn with other children;
- c) staffed by trained educators who follow a defined curriculum; and
- d) involving parents.

Options for Action: Introduce a preamble to the *Healthy Child Manitoba Act* that establishes principles to guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Healthy Child Manitoba strategy. The principles introduced in the preamble can be drawn (with one revision) from the principles that currently guide the activities of the Healthy Child Manitoba Office (HCMO). The HCMO principles relate to community-based, inclusive, comprehensive, integrated, accessible quality assurance and public accountability. The principle referring to accessibility

currently states, “Services and programs are available and accessible to families and their children across Manitoba.” This can be revised to incorporate the principle of proportionate universality. For example, the revised principle might state “A universal platform of services and programs are available and accessible to families and their children across Manitoba, accompanied by supports and services that target highly vulnerable children and families and low-income and under-resourced neighbourhoods and regions, and that work to eliminate barriers to access.” The revised principle would then more accurately point to the goal of providing accessible and proportionately universal services and programs.

Recommendation: The legislative framework for delivery of early childhood development programs should also provide for the establishment of integrated service delivery centres to provide a range of services in addition to early childhood education, including public health, employment and income assistance, housing, child welfare, and adult education. These integrated service centers should be located in existing infrastructures such as schools or facilities that house community-based organizations.

Options for Action: Establish integrated service delivery centres in three communities across Manitoba. Healthy Child Manitoba Office (HCMO) will approach the northern First Nations authority, southern First Nations authority, and Métis authority and invite each to identify a community that might benefit from the establishment of a demonstration integrated service delivery centre. The general authority is not included in this group because, as noted earlier in this document, HCMO is already partnering with this authority on an integration project in the Gimli area. If an authority is interested in engaging in this proj-

ect, HCMO will share information about potential models for integrated service delivery, and work in partnership with them on three goals: 1) consult with and engage key partners from the community and from relevant service sectors, provincial, federal and First Nation government departments, healthy child committees, the private sector, and the philanthropic sector; 2) with additional support from engaged partners and drawing on the models, successful practices and lessons learned from other integration projects, develop a model for the centre that addresses the needs and makes the most of the strengths and assets of the area or region it will serve; and 3) plan, develop, and secure resources to establish an integrated service delivery centre.

Recommendation: That government funding to support integrated service delivery centres be allocated, following meaningful and inclusive consultation, by a committee that mirrors the committee described by s. 21(3) of the Healthy Child Manitoba Act and reflects Manitoba’s various regions and cultural diversity, including representatives of the community and recognized experts.

Options for Action: Explore opportunities to empower regional inter-agency and cross-sector coalitions to allocate funding for activities focused on enhancing integration of services and systems that support the development and well-being of children, families, and communities. The Manitoba government has committed to establish a Commission on Early Learning and Child Care that will be looking at ways to redesign Manitoba’s system of early learning child care and guide the province’s future plans. As part of these activities, the Commission could take responsibility for this action.

SECTION TWO – CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND



YOUTH AND GANGS IN MANITOBA

In 2014 Manitoba's youth crime rate was second highest among Canadian provinces at 30, 231 per 100, 000 for young people aged 12 to 24.¹⁴ Much of this crime can be attributed to youth gang involvement, with an estimated 1400 to 1500 youth gang members in Winnipeg¹⁵ in as many as thirty gangs. Manitoba youth street gangs are comprised predominately of Indigenous youth, followed by newcomer youth. However, with that being said, street gangs can attract anyone, regardless of ethnicity or socio-economical background, as gangs are used to fill various voids in a young person's life such as identity, belonging, family, and basic and economic needs. The following section explores the reason why young people join gangs.

RESEARCH ON WHY YOUTH JOIN GANGS

There are various reasons why youth and young people join gangs. While all are susceptible to the lure of gangs, research shows that Indigenous youth join gangs at a higher rate than non-Indigenous youth.¹⁶ This is due to various structural (colonialism, poverty) and systemic (child and family services, education, the criminal justice system) factors. Family and individual factors also play a role, as "low education attainment, weak or negative social networks, and lack of income are among the factors leading adolescents to become gang involved."¹⁷ The following is an in-depth discussion of the various root causes of gang involvement.

STRUCTURAL FACTORS

Colonialism

Canada's history of colonialism is at the core of all root causes of gang involvement. It is directly responsible for the existence of Indigenous street gangs.¹⁸ "Colonialism and its effects have contributed to the grinding, racialized poverty of inner-city communities such as Winnipeg's North End."¹⁹ Due to the legacy of colonization, which includes continued systemic and subtle forms of racism, Indigenous youth are "more likely to experience deep intergenerational poverty [and] are more likely to live in neighbourhoods where gang activity is prevalent"²⁰ Cultural teachings are key to decolonization, as they are "the most effective way of dealing with the damaging effects of colonization that leave young indigenous people with negative-self-concept, lost connection to their culture and in many cases, a sense of shame and self-loathing that leads to destructive behaviors"²¹

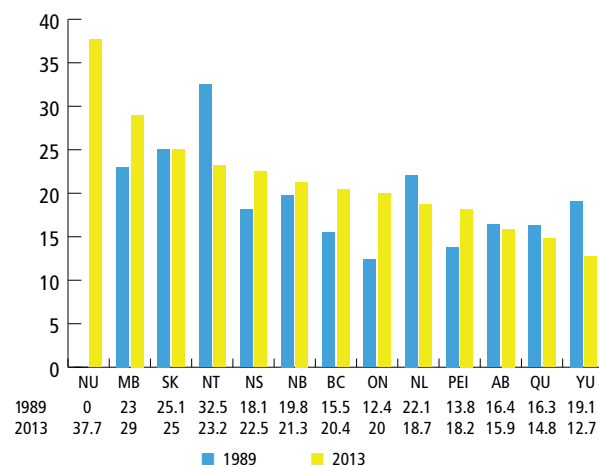
Poverty

The issue of gangs is also rooted in poverty. Therefore, to remove gang involvement as an enticing choice for young people, we must urge for the adoption of guaranteed basic income. This will allow everyone the ability to meet their basic needs and live with dignity regardless of work status. Basic Income Manitoba and Make Poverty History both recommend increasing the province's minimum wage. This would have a direct impact on youth gang involvement as many young people turn to gangs as they offer their only viable form of income.

Across Canada, Indigenous youth are twice as likely to live in poverty as non-Indigenous youth, while in Winnipeg, 50.8 percent of the Indigenous population lives in poverty.²² Specifically in the inner city of Winnipeg, the poverty rate for Indigenous peoples is more than three times that of the non-Indigenous Winnipeg rate.²³ "Indigenous peoples constitute a disproportionately larger percentage of Winnipeg's impoverished inner-city,"²⁴ specifically in Winnipeg's North End where "there is a high rate of poverty, which draws youths into gangs that promise money, safety, and security."²⁵ According to a 2015 report card on child and family poverty put out by Winnipeg Harvest, Manitoba

has the highest child poverty rate of any province at 29.0 percent, based on 2013 statistics²⁶ (see Figure 4).²⁷

Figure 4: Child Poverty Rate By Province and Territory 1989 & 2013



SYSTEMIC FACTORS

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

Aging out of care is a prominent risk factor associated with youth gang involvement. Currently when young people age out of care at 18 they are left with very little which makes them targets for gang involvement, as gangs can fill the role that Child and Family Services once played in their lives, providing shelter, food, and basic necessities. Therefore supporting recommendations made by the Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry and initiatives like 25 not 21 are important for providing youth extensions of care and support past the age of 18. This will help young people successfully transition into adulthood with positive support and guidance.

Time spent in foster care can be an indicator of vulnerability to gang involvement. Youth living in group care are particularly at risk, "just as incarceration can reinforce negative relationships, so too can time spent in group care with other troubled youth."²⁸ A study out of Ontario found that 48 percent of youth in open custody and open detention facilities had a previous history of child welfare.²⁹

JUSTICE

One can see the results of poverty and Canada's history of colonization in the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in our criminal justice system. In 2015, Indigenous adults made up 25 percent of all admissions to provincial/territorial correctional services, while only representing 3 percent of the Canadian adult population³⁰ (see Figure 5). In comparison, Indigenous youth represented 33 percent of admissions to the correctional system while only representing 7 percent of the total youth population.³¹ Due to poverty and the lasting effects of colonization, many young people see gang involvement as their only means of survival and, as a result, people under the age of 35 accounted for 58 percent of admissions to provincial/territorial corrections in 2014–2015. More specifically, young adults between 18 and 34 years of age represented 20 percent of the Canadian adult correctional population in 2014–2015³² (see Figure 6).

Figure 5: 2015 Percentage of Canadian Aboriginal Population in Custody³³

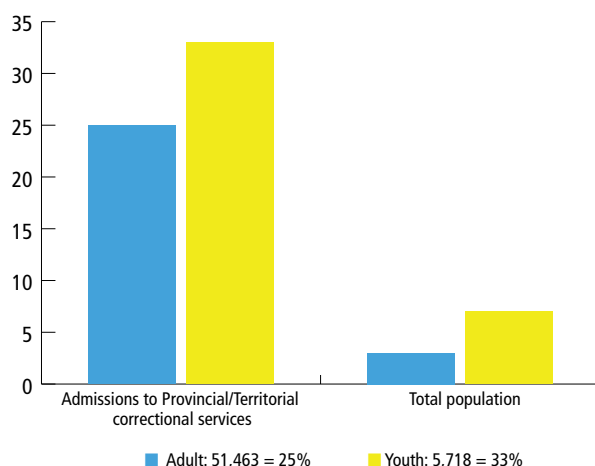
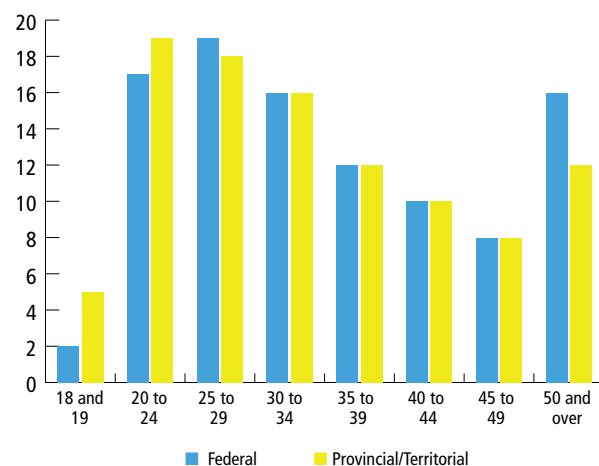


Figure 6: Percentage of adult admissions to correctional services, by age group, 2014/2015, percent

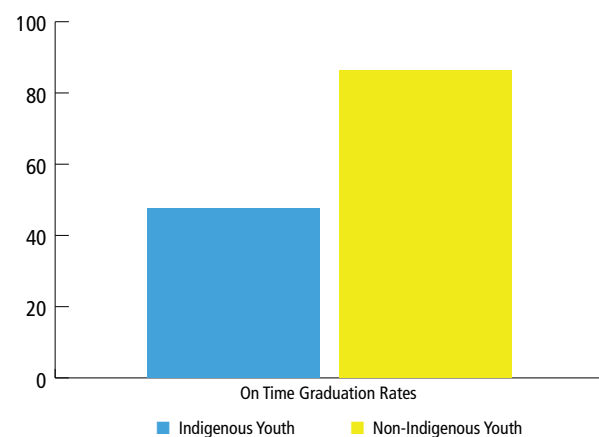


EDUCATION

Youth who are not engaged with school are also at risk for gang involvement. As a result, they are at a greater disadvantage when it comes to finding meaningful employment, which also increases their susceptibility to gang involvement.

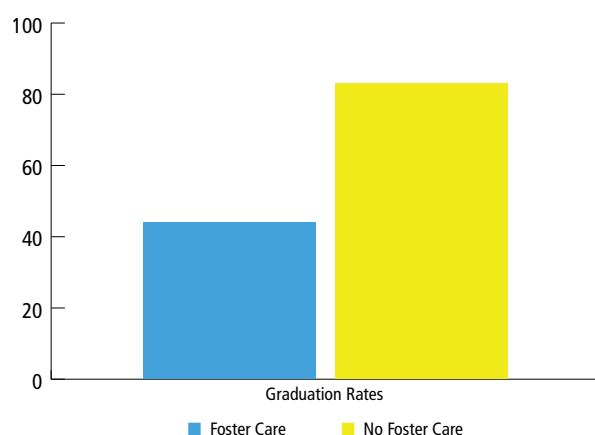
Indigenous youth are more likely to drop out of school than non-Indigenous people. Non-Indigenous youth are 38.6 percent more likely than Indigenous youth to graduate on time from high school. In 2016, 86.2 percent of non-Indigenous youth graduated high school on time compared to 47.6 percent of Indigenous youth³⁴ (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: 2016 On Time High School Graduation Rates in Manitoba



Between 2007 and 2010, dropout rates among off-reserve Indigenous youth were 23 percent compared with 9 percent for non-Indigenous youth³⁵. Only 44 percent of those in foster care graduate from high school, as opposed to 81 percent of those who were not in foster care³⁶ (see Figure 8). “Canadian schools, and especially those with a large number of Indigenous students, must better respond to the realities of their students. This means making curriculum that more accurately reflects our colonial history, but it also means ensuring that there are more Indigenous teachers, principals and education assistants.”³⁷

Figure 8: High School Graduation Rates



FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

In a 2014 report commissioned by GAIN, youth in Winnipeg identified the need to make money, the need to escape home and family problems, the need for protection against bullying or the threat of violence and the need for a sense of belonging as the most common reason young people join gangs.³⁸ Research echoes these reasons, adding mental health issues, depression, low or delinquent self-concept, family inconsistency, violence, abuse, exposure to substance abuse, criminal family members, and inconsistent or lack of monitoring or supervision³⁹ to the reasons why young people may participate in gangs. When family connections break down, young people can turn to gangs to meet their basic needs. A lack of safe, affordable housing in Winnipeg can also push young people towards gangs, as they often will provide living arrangements in exchange for gang involvement.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS ISSUES

Mental health and addictions issues are factors that increase the likelihood of gang involvement for all youth. Limited accessibility to adequate mental health and addictions supports and long waitlists contribute to young people’s risk of gang involvement as they may turn to self-medication as a coping mechanism when more appropriate resources are unavailable. It is estimated that between 10 and 20 percent of Canadian youth are affected by mental illness or a disorder, with 3.2 million Canadians between the ages of 12 and 19 at risk of developing depression. Mental disorders among youth are the second highest hospital care expenditure in Canada and only 1 in 5 children in Canada will receive the mental health services they need.⁴⁰

For newcomers there are various stressors associated with immigration and resettlement — for example the inability to speak one of the official languages, prejudice and discrimination from the host society, low socio-economic status, separation from one’s family, and isolation from one’s cultural background — that can increase the risk for developing mental health problems, which can in turn increase the likelihood of conflict with the law.⁴¹

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) can also be a contributing factor to gang involvement. “There is a growing concern with the levels of alcohol use and the prevalence of FASD in the Indigenous community and the role that FASD plays in Indigenous adult and youth conflict with the law.”⁴² Between 123 and 740 babies are born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) in Canada each year, and an estimated one thousand are born with Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE). The prevalence of FAS and FAE among Indigenous peoples varies widely, from .52 to 190 cases per one thousand live births, depending upon the community.⁴³ Common disabilities for people with FASD include “memory impairments, problems with judgement and abstract reasoning, and poor adaptive functioning.”⁴⁴ These symptoms make people with FASD more susceptible to gang involvement, as they are less capable of making rational choices. “Many mental health problems of Indigenous peoples arise from a long history of colonization, residential school trauma, discrimination and oppression, and losses of land, language and livelihood. Rates of mental health problems, such as suicide, depression, and substance abuse, are significantly higher in many Indigenous

communities than in the general population. The rate of suicide among Indigenous is 2.1 times the Canadian rate. Similarly, the rate of suicide for Indigenous women is three times the national rate.”⁴⁵

INDIGENOUS YOUTH AND GANGS

Due to root causes such as poverty, colonization, and inter-generational and complex trauma, gangs disproportionately affect Indigenous youth in Manitoba. Winnipeg is considered the Indigenous street gang capital of Canada, as Indigenous youth are twice as likely to participate in gangs with, “fifty eight percent of youth gang members in Manitoba of Indigenous descent.”⁴⁶ Research also shows that “inner-city Indigenous children in Winnipeg are behind their peers based on Early Development Instrument (EDI) indicators that measure physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and thinking skills and communication skills, and general knowledge. This is yet another factor that makes them particularly vulnerable to gang involvement.”⁴⁷

NEWCOMER YOUTH AND GANGS

Manitoba welcomed 1,495 refugees in 2014, with 85 percent of them making Winnipeg their home. In addition, Manitoba also welcomed 1,100 Syrian refugees between November 2015 and August 2016.⁴⁸ Due to the difficulty newcomers have in finding meaningful employment, gangs are a reasonable alternative for newcomers because they seldom have necessary educational or employment requirements. Newcomer youth tend to be detached from their old culture and from typical safety nets (such as school and recreation) in their new community, and this lack of basic needs being met increases their vulnerability to gang recruiters.⁴⁹ In the GAIN’s 2014 report, stakeholders among the newcomer community explained that many newcomer families have witnessed horrible atrocities in their home countries and suffer from related trauma. If newcomers don’t receive the counselling and treatment they need because of a lack of resources, families, and youth in particular, can end up misunderstood by others. These issues can point youth towards joining gangs because they lack a sense of belonging and understanding of Canadian culture.⁵⁰ Newcomers’ vulnerability to joining gangs can also stem from conflict that can arise between their “home culture and dominant



culture [which] often contributes to the growing detachment from parents.”⁵¹ Newcomer youth often struggle with education, which can be due to issues with English proficiency or disrupted school experiences.⁵² This lack of attachment to school and the community can make newcomer youth susceptible to gang involvement.⁵³

WOMEN AND GANGS

The reasons that draw young women to gang involvement are similar to those of young men: a sense of belonging and identity; the fulfillment of basic needs (such as food, clothing and shelter); and a source of income. The context of a young woman’s neighbourhood and the exposure to gangs via neighbourhood peers, and the existence of family problems, such as violence or drug abuse and gang-involved family members, are all contributing factors to women’s gang involvement.⁵⁴ This means there is overlap between genders in regards to supports needed to leave gangs. Women in particular need safe housing options, as they often fall into gangs because of a lack of safe housing. For example, there are very few safe housing options available to

young women when they are leaving incarceration. Often, the risk of losing their children will keep women from leaving gangs, so supports that can accommodate children need to be available as well.⁵⁵ It is also important to note that women and girls may be exploited by male gang members to participate in the sex trade or are shared as sexual objects within the gang itself,⁵⁶ so counselling and health services need to be made readily available to young women looking to exit gang life. It is worth noting that Indigenous girls between the ages of 17 and 25 also are at a high risk of becoming gang involved.⁵⁷ Due to the marginalization they face as a result of their race, age, and gender, Indigenous girls “have an even higher chance of experiencing structural inequality and institutional racism, increasing the likelihood of them becoming involved in violent incidents either perpetrated against or by them.”⁵⁸ This, coupled with limited educational and employment opportunities, increases young Indigenous girls’ chances of becoming involved in gangs.

SECTION THREE: GANG STRATEGY



THREE PRONGED APPROACH TO WINNIPEG YOUTH GANGS:

Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs takes a three-pronged approach that includes prevention, intervention, and suppression, to address the gang problem in Winnipeg.

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The strategy falls mainly under the prevention and intervention categories. This is because, depending on where a young person is in their life and based on the circumstances around them, any component of the strategy could act as a preventative or intervening measure. Specific prevention components include public education, the GAIN Referral Process, parent support circles, mentorship, and 24/7 navigators. The intervention component includes the exit strategy flow chart, increased mentorship opportunities for gang-involved or affiliated young people and access to 24/7 navigators.

SUPPRESSION AND POLICE ALIGNMENT

GAIN recognizes that suppression is an important component to any gang strategy, however as GAIN is a community-based organization it does not have any way to formally suppress gang activity. Therefore, it is imperative that GAIN continue to partner with suppression agencies such as the Winnipeg Police and Manitoba Corrections. As the Winnipeg Police play a large role in the suppression component of *Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs*, it is important to highlight where their goals and strategies align with those of this plan. With an overarching goal of a “culture of safety for all” and a mission to “build safe and

healthy communities across Winnipeg through excellence in law enforcement and leadership in crime prevention through social development,” many of the Winnipeg Police’s goals and strategies align closely with the gang strategy. They include the following:

WINNIPEG POLICE GOALS/STRATEGIES	GANG STRATEGY GOALS/INITIATIVES
Gang Suppression Strategy	
1.C Continue Efforts to Prevent and Suppress Gang Activity and Recruitment 1.D Increase the Use of Restorative Justice and Diversion Programming 2.A Lead Collective Action to Prevent Crime Through Social Development 2.B Work with Partners to Protect Vulnerable Persons 2.D Enhance Community Relationships	Public Education and Awareness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Winnipeg Police to create a joint presentation with a cohesive message regarding gangs in Winnipeg. Connections Among Youth and their Communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster youth community involvement
Engagement with Indigenous and Newcomer Communities	
2.A Lead Collective Action to Prevent Crime Through Social Development 2.B Work with Partners to Protect Vulnerable Persons 2.D Enhance Community Relationships	Connections Among Youth and their Communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster relationship building among newcomer communities, Indigenous communities and the Police and Criminal Justice System

THE GANG STRATEGY COMPONENTS

Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs outlines a gang strategy that builds upon GAIN’s previous report, *Community Assessment of a Gang Exit Strategy for Winnipeg, Manitoba*. Three areas were identified by Winnipeg’s youth as crucial components to exiting gangs, healing, identity and belonging, and expanding programming and they are embedded throughout this gang strategy. With an overarching goal of full social inclusion for all young people, adults, and their families having sustainable access to resources and support systems and to avoid and exit gangs, with a focus on improving their overall quality of life, this gang strategy is comprised of the following nine best practices identified by the research.

24/7 NAVIGATORS

These are people available 24/7 who can help young people navigate the systems they are in or need to be in. For example, a navigator could walk through the process of getting one’s SIN number or a health card. Of youth surveyed for this strategy, 54.6 percent of them are very likely or somewhat likely to use this service.

As identified from the early stages of GAIN, youth require access to 24/7 assistance. Currently this type of help exists, however, it is done in an uncoordinated, ad hoc, individual basis. Working with various community-based organizations as well as the provincial government will be key to

creating a well-designed and lasting service, so any youth at risk can pick up a phone and can connect with a 24/7 navigator and be connected to all the resources necessary to support that youth.

MENTORSHIP

A key component is to develop a mentorship program that works specifically with at-risk or gang-involved young people. Of youth surveyed, 73 percent believe mentorship is helpful for keeping young people out of gangs. “I think having a strong relationship with an adult that you trust can help in almost all areas of a youth’s development. Just knowing you have somewhere else to turn” (youth, age

26). Across a broad literature review of successful gang exit programs and strategies, mentorship was listed as a key component. As a result, this will be a large focus of the intervention component of this strategy, with the goal of creating a fully functioning gang mentorship program (either a stand-alone program or building capacity within existing mentorship programs – to be determined by working group and research).

EMPLOYMENT

It is crucial to work with existing programs and organizations to break down barriers to employment for at-risk or gang-involved young people. Of youth survey, 53.3 percent believe that employment is crucial to helping young people exit and avoid gang involvement. “Employment helps youth stay busy from many distractions and it is a better and safe way to make money in a better environment” (youth, age 19). Gangs provide youth access to fast money. When exiting a gang youth rarely have essential skills, training, or education to obtain a job. Therefore, opportunities for education, training, and skill development are crucial to the intervention process. Employment acts both as a prevention and intervention strategy, and by providing young people increased opportunities to access meaningful employment, we will be able to steer folks away from gang involvement and help those already entrenched to earn money in a legal manner.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SUPPORT

Many young people involved with gangs have mental health and or addictions issues. Mental health and addictions support was thought to be the most important component when helping a young person avoid or exit gangs, as 54.6 percent of surveyed youth indicated this to be true. “Getting help for mental health and addictions issues is very important, it can be beneficial to getting a person on a better path to turning their life around” (youth, age 28). Many youth suffer from addictions or various mental health issues, such as cognitive impairments. This can make young people more susceptible to gangs, as well as make exiting gangs very difficult. By working with the Province on their development of a new mental health and addictions strategy, GAIN will help to increase opportunities for young people to heal. By encouraging the development of appropriate mental health and addictions services, more

young people involved with or at risk of gang involvement will have easier access to necessary services.

PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

A pilot support group for parents will be developed to help answer questions, provide a space for sharing experiences, and give parents and guardians of young people at risk or involved with gangs a voice. Family engagement is essential to assisting youth in exiting gangs. Parents dealing with this situation require support from other parents going through the same ordeal. Support circles can offer that assistance. By piloting a parent support group, parents and guardians of youth in gangs or youth at risk of gang involvement will have access to support.

ACCESS TO RECREATION

Work with existing programs and organizations to break down barriers to accessing recreation opportunities for at-risk or gang-involved young people is another important element of the strategy. Of youth surveyed, 37 percent believe that increased access to recreation opportunities is important to helping youth exit and avoid gangs. “People need a safe place to have fun” (youth, age 17). Recreation plays a large part in prevention, it helps young people create pro-social bonds and as well as positive attachments to their community and hobbies. Therefore, it plays a significant role in preventing young people from engaging with gangs. It also creates opportunities for young people to exit gang life. However, there are barriers that restrict gang-involved or affiliated youth from participating in recreation opportunities, so those barriers must be eliminated. By eliminating barriers, all youth in gangs, affiliated with gangs, or at risk of gang involvement will have access to recreation opportunities.

ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE CULTURAL PROGRAMING

It is key that we increase the availability of culturally appropriate programing for at-risk or gang-involved young people so they are able to develop their sense of identity. As identified through youth consultations, identity and belonging and healing were major factors in youth exiting gang involvement. One way to foster identity, belonging, and healing will be through access to appropriate cultural programing and opportunities. By increasing appropriate

cultural programming opportunities, all gang-involved, gang-affiliated, or at-risk youth will have access to cultural programming if they so desire.

CONNECTIONS AMONG YOUTH AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

A connection to one's community can act as an insulating factor against gang involvement. By highlighting and encouraging youth community involvement, we can foster relationship building among gang-involved, gang-affiliated, or at risk youth and their communities. By doing so, these youth will feel connected to their community.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

So often the media glorifies gang culture and life, which can draw young people towards it. Therefore, it is paramount that accurate information is portrayed in the media as well as at the community level. By working with the police to create a cohesive message and sharing that message with Winnipeg's young people, they will have an accurate representation of the reality of gang involvement. In doing so, GAIN will work with partners to disseminate accurate information regarding gangs among young people and the public at large, as well as raising awareness of the various prevention and intervention programs and services within Winnipeg.

For detailed steps on how GAIN plans to achieve action in each of these priority areas, please see the Gang Strategy Action Steps section or Appendix C for the action plan.

GANG EXIT STRATEGY FLOW CHART:

While Winnipeg offers a variety of excellent prevention programming and resources, gang-intervention opportunities are sorely lacking. As a result, *Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs* includes a gang exit flow chart in response to the need for immediate action when a young person decides to leave a gang. Currently there are individuals doing great work on an ad hoc basis throughout the city, however there is no formalized process.

GAIN recognizes that life does not exist in a linear fashion, however, for the purpose of the graphic (see Figure 9), the exiting process is depicted in that way. When a young person decides they want or need to leave a gang they can either contact GAIN directly or a network member/community member. Whoever the youth contacts will bring forth the issue to GAIN, there they will wrap around the young person to deal with immediate crisis responses needs (Safety, Basic Needs, Immediate Housing, Mental Health/Addictions issues). Once those crisis needs are met and dealt with we would then move forward, using existing resources, services, and programs to deal with long-term needs (mentorship, employment/education, access to recreation, permanent housing options, long-term mental health/addictions issues, and so forth).

There will be GAIN members who can assist with the various crisis and long-term needs when a young person decides to leave gang life. The importance of this exit process is that it takes the onus off the young person to have to pull various supports from various systems around them. Instead the supports already exist and are waiting to help young people transition out of gangs.

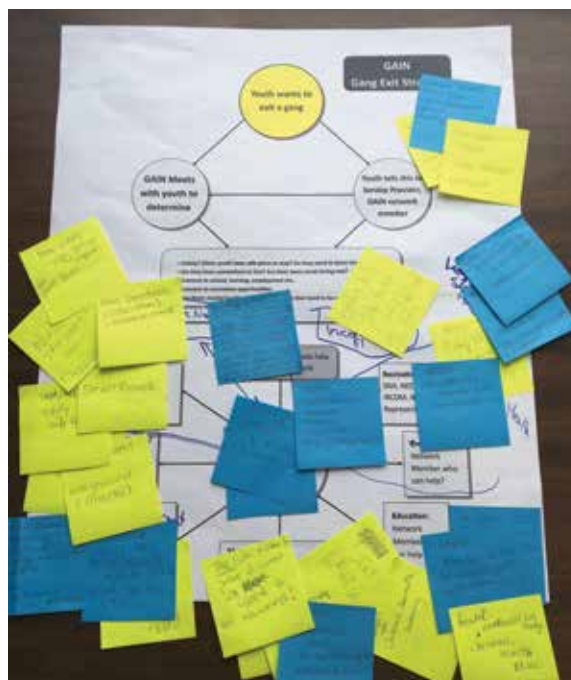
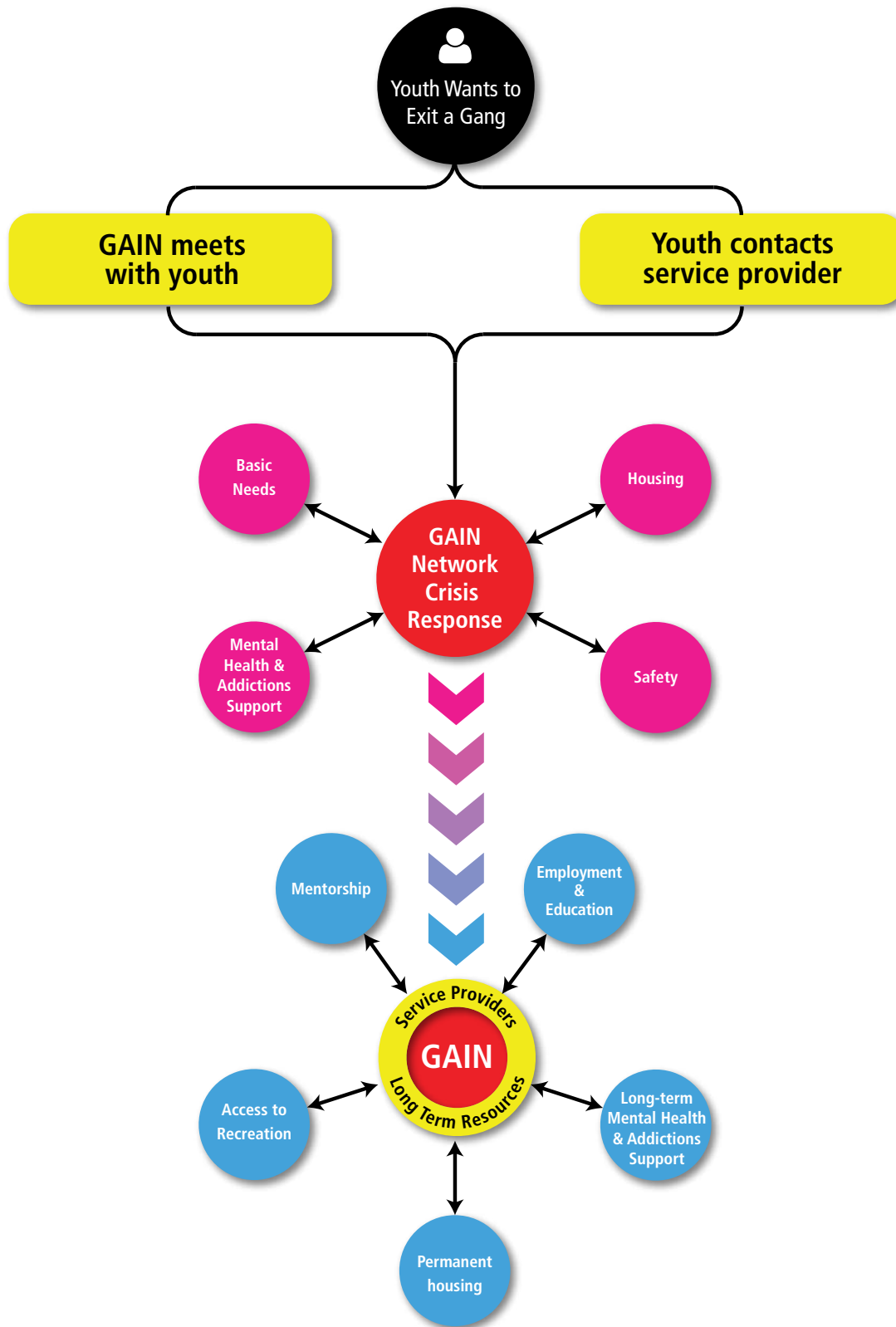


Figure 9: GAIN Gang Exit Strategy



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs, builds off of previous work done by GAIN. Various forums were held and GAIN released a report in 2014 that was the basis for this gang strategy. After the first draft of the gang strategy was created, GAIN consulted with various stakeholders (see Appendix A for more details).

Once the strategy is launched GAIN will immediately begin implementing the action steps for each of the first year's goals. Detailed action steps can be found on page 42 and in Appendix C.

TIMELINE

Bridging the Gaps: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs proposes a three-year timeline. In the first year GAIN will actively work on the goals and their related action steps, which include 24/7 navigators, Mentorship, Employment, and Mental Health and Addictions support, while also actively promoting the strategy through public education.

In year two GAIN will continue to work on its goals and related action steps, which include fostering connections among youth and their communities, parent support groups, increasing access to recreation opportunities, and public education. In addition to the year two goals, GAIN will also work at expanding the strategy beyond Winnipeg to the province as a whole.

In year three, GAIN will continue to work on all strategy goals while determining how best to expand the strategy to adults over the age of 30.

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE – 3 YEAR PLAN		
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Actively Publicize the strategy (including presentations to the public, education, service providers etc...)• Develop and launch mentorship component• Develop and launch 24/7 Navigators• Develop evaluation framework• Work towards making appropriate mental health and addictions supports and services more readily available• Work with existing employment programs and resources to increase gang involved youth's access to employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand plan beyond Winnipeg to Manitoba as a whole, making necessary adjustments and additions to current plan• Launch across province• Engage in Public education• Consult with community stakeholders /youth on how young people can/do give back to the community• Break down barriers for gang involved youth to access recreation programming• Pilot Parent support circle• Increase opportunities for access to appropriate cultural programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look at expanding GAIN strategy to adults• Continue to publicize the strategy• Continue to engage in public education

GOVERNANCE

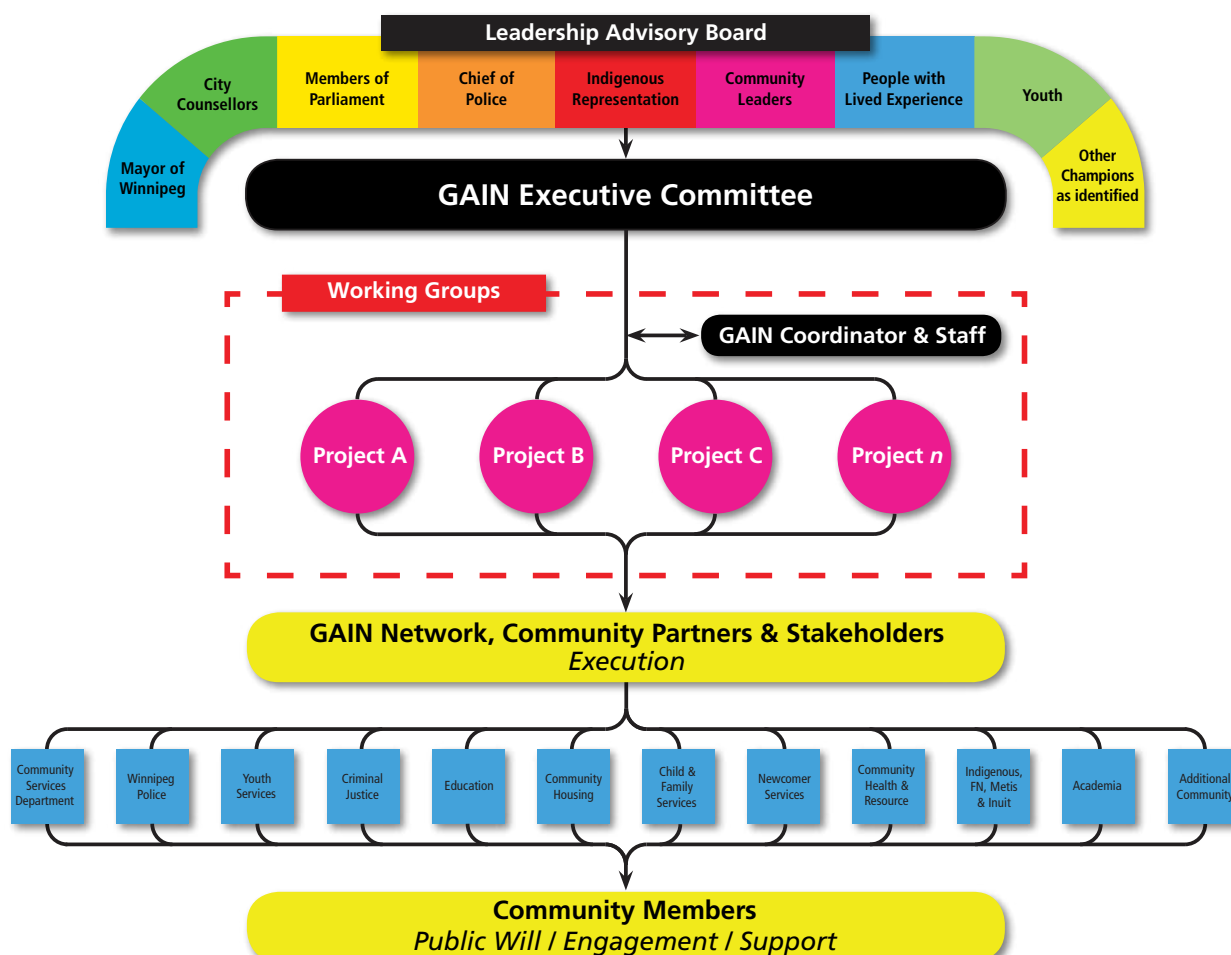
This strategy is built on broad community engagement. It brings together communities and non-governmental organizations, government, law enforcement, and individuals through a grassroots-informed approach. To coordinate the strategy's actions and achieve its goals, the GAIN Coordinator has been tasked with supporting the activities of Leadership Advisory Board and the GAIN Executive. Their key function includes:

- Guiding the strategy and work plan
- Assisting in the establishment of shared measurement practices
- Supporting community engagement
- Assisting with the mobilization of funding and resources

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE ACTORS:

Leadership Advisory Board: These are the champions of the strategy. They help to publicize the strategy, pushing for community and funder buy-ins. The role of the Leadership Advisory Board is to publicly support this strategy and act as its champion. Board members will attend biannual meetings to provide guidance to the strategy's implementation and receive feedback and updates on its progress. In addition, board members' role is to raise awareness of the strategy and the issue of gangs in Winnipeg in their respective field.

Figure 10: Governance Structure



The Leadership Advisory Board is comprised of the following people:

- Chief of Police Danny Smyth
- Addictions Foundation of Manitoba Chair Damon Johnston
- City Councillor Cindy Gilroy
- Abdikheir Ahmed

GAIN Executive: Oversee GAIN Coordinator and staff, provide guidance on day-to-day work, and guide the implementation of strategy.

GAIN Coordinator and Staff: Responsible for day-to-day work of GAIN and the gang strategy, and for coordinating the network and the implementation of the gang strategy.

Working Groups: Will be pulled together around specific action items and focused sets of tasks, and will evolve as action items and priorities roll out.

GAIN Network, Community Partners, and Stakeholders: Will populate the working groups and bring to the network's attention any gang-related issues/success stories.

Community Members: Provide feedback on the implementation of the strategy and its effect on the community at large, as well as participate in community initiatives and components of the strategy.

COMMON METRICS/EVALUATIVE FRAMEWORK

A critical component of the Gang Strategy and the work it will undertake is an evaluation framework with common metrics. This will help to better understand the impact of the actions outlined within the strategy on the issue of gangs in our city. A thorough evaluative framework will be developed after the launch of the plan (please see Appendix B.3 for a logic model that can be used as a starting point). The following metrics will guide the creation of an evaluative framework, as well as act as indicators to monitor and measure progress over time.

METRICS

- Enhanced cross-agency collaboration and service coordination
- Improved access and awareness to services
- Enhanced neighbourhood cohesion through strengthening relationships between community, police and other services
- Accurate portrayals of gangs in the local media
- Reduction in youth incarceration rates
- Reduction of overrepresentation of indigenous youth in the criminal justice system
- Increase in access to healing opportunities
- Increase in number of gang members exiting
- Effective prevention achieved

GANG STRATEGY ACTION STEPS:

The following charts outline in detail the action steps for each goal of the strategy with their expected timelines. The purpose of highlighting each goal's action steps is to ensure the strategy is founded in actionable activities and priorities. In order to ensure that the timelines stay on track, GAIN will meet biannually with the Leadership Advisory Board and quarterly with the full GAIN network to report on the strategy's progress.

YEAR ONE ACTION STEPS:

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE — ON GOING	
GOAL: Public Education To disseminate accurate information regarding gangs among youth and the public at large. As well as raising awareness of the various prevention and intervention programs and services within Winnipeg.	
TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
May 2017	Form Working Group (invite School Division Representation to sit on this working group)
August 2017	Actively work with Winnipeg Police (School Resource Officers) to create a joint presentation/joint message regarding gangs in Winnipeg
September 2017	Work with individuals with lived experience to create accurate messages that will be shared in presentations Get feedback from individuals with lived experience on joint Police Presentation
September 2017	Work with School Divisions to ease access into schools in order to present cohesive message with police
On Going	Actively present to community, schools and media information on gangs and what is being done by GAIN and others in response

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE — YEAR ONE	
GOAL 1: 24/7 Navigators Any youth at risk can pick up a phone and can connect with a navigator 24/7 and be connected to all the resources necessary to support that youth	
TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
May 2017	Form Working Group
May – July 2017	Develop 24/7 navigator structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many navigators are required • Meet with existing 24/7 phone lines (Ex: Klinik) to determine best practices • Job description/necessary training • Evaluative Framework
July – August 2017	Apply for funding
August 2017	Advertise and hire Navigators (dependent on funding)
Summer 2018	Publicize service (dependent on funding)
On Going after first year	Evaluate program

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE — YEAR ONE

GOAL 2: Mentorship

Fully functioning gang mentorship program (either a stand-alone program or building capacity within exiting mentorship programs – to be determined by working group and research).

TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
February 2017	Form Working Group
April 2017 March – April 2017	Develop Mentorship Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview key stakeholders • How many youth mentorship spots are there currently in Winnipeg • How many youth are on waitlists • How many mentors are required • Where will they be housed • Job description/necessary training • Evaluative Framework
May – June 2017	Apply for funding
Dependent on funding	Advertise and hire Mentors
Dependent on funding	Implement mentorship program
On Going after First Year	Evaluate program

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE — YEAR ONE

GOAL 3: Mental Health/Addictions Support

Appropriate mental health and or addictions services are made accessible to gang involved or affiliated or at risk youth.

TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
May 2017	Form Working Group
May 2017 – June 2017	Partner with existing mental health and addictions services to identify gaps in services for at-risk and gang involved youth
On Going	Work together to create culturally inclusive and appropriate supports
June 2017	Conducts a gaps analysis of existing programs that work with cognitively impaired youth
June – July 2017 July 2017 – August 2017	Work with Mental Health community to create a protocol/best practices for programs inclusivity Once created disseminate information
Immediately once completed	Share protocol with GAIN

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE — YEAR ONE

GOAL 4: Employment and education

Gang involved and at risk youth have access to meaningful employment opportunities.

TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
May 2017	Form Working Group
June 2017	Identify barriers to employment for at risk and gang involved youth
June 2017	Conduct round table with existing youth employment programs to develop mechanisms to break down barriers
September 2017	Work with School Divisions to ease access into schools in order to present cohesive message with police
July 2017 July – August 2017	Provide education/protocols/tool kits to employers to foster youth employment opportunities Disseminate 'tool kits'
On Going	Foster education and training opportunities within existing programs for gang involved and at risk youth

YEAR TWO ACTION STEPS:

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE — YEAR TWO

GOAL 5: Connections Among Youth and their Communities

Gang involved, affiliated or at risk youth feel connected to their community.

TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
April 2018	Form Working Group
On Going	Work with community and Winnipeg Police to foster relationship building through community events, activities etc... Ongoing, as events come up, information will be shared among the network and community
May 2018 – June 2018	Consult with community stakeholders and youth to determine ways to bring youth and their communities together (championing existing programs/services ex: community gardens, events etc...)
On Going	Promote, assist and highlight community initiatives and activities through network wide communication and public website
June 2017	In partnership with neighbourhood organizations, develop a post-incident neighbourhood support protocol
July 2017	Work with existing programs to identify areas where youth can serve their communities (for example graffiti removal, community beautification etc. —> to be determined by youth
As needed	Apply for small grants to pay for honorariums for youth's neighbourhood contribution

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE — YEAR TWO

GOAL 6: Access to Appropriate Cultural Programming

All gang involved, affiliated or at risk youth have access to cultural programming if they so desire.

TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
April 2018	Form Working Group
May 2018	Work with corrections to bridge cultural connections made in jail with cultural connections in the community
June 2018/On Going	Consult with Elders and community leaders on best practices for implementing cultural practices into programming or increasing the availability of cultural activities
July 2018/On Going	Assist existing programs and services in implementing/adopting appropriate cultural elements/activities

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE — YEAR TWO

GOAL 7: Access to Recreation

Eliminate barriers so that all youth in gangs, affiliated with gangs or at risk of gang involvement have access to recreation opportunities.

TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
April 2018	Form Working Group
May 2018	Identify recreation barriers
June 2018	Work with existing programs/services to create a tool kit for decreasing accessibility barriers
July 2018	Promote toolkit among network and all youth serving agencies
July 2018/On Going	Work with YAA and others to implement and eliminate barriers

GANG STRATEGY TIME LINE — YEAR TWO

GOAL 8: Parent Support Groups

Parents of youth in gangs or youth at risk of gang involvement have access to support.

TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
April 2018	Form Working Group
April 2018	Conduct gaps analysis of existing supports or resources for parents
May 2018	Determine partner organizations
June 2018	Pilot a parent support circle One for newcomers and one for indigenous caregivers/parents
July 2018	Based on demand/ success apply for funding to continue service

Year Three Timelines and Action Steps will be determined in the second year of the strategy.

SECTION FOUR – APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – ENGAGEMENT TABLE:

GANG STRATEGY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT		
Year	Event	Number of People
2012	City Wide Forum	137
2013	City Wide Forum	44
2015	Strategic Planning Session	14
2016	Strategic Planning Session	35
Gang Strategy Consultations		
2017	GAIN Full Network	25
	Youth Probation	9
	Community Services Department	4
	Councillor Orlikow	1
	Councillor Gilroy	1
	Winnipeg Police Service	1
	Leslie Spillett	1
	Social Justice Fair	33
	Youth Agencies Alliance	14
	Winnipeg Police Board (Including Councillor Eadie)	6
	Lived Experience	1
	Councillor Morantz	1
	Winnipeg Committee for Safety (Including Councillor Schreyer)	11
	Crime Prevention Branch	3
	Chief of Police	3
	Manitoba Status of Women's Secretariat	2
	Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg	2
	Minister of Justice and Minister of Indigenous and Municipal Relations Representatives	2
	Local Academics	2
	Assistant Deputy Minister of Families and Director of Child and Family Services	2
	City wide youth consultations	79

APPENDIX B – LITERATURE REVIEW

APPENDIX B.1: A TABLE OF REVIEWED GANG EXIT STRATEGIES

Strategies in this table include: Gang Strategy of Saskatoon, The Calgary Police Service's Four-Point Gang Strategy, Alberta Gang Reduction Strategy, Wraparound Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI), East Harlem Juvenile Gang Task Force (Harlem, NY), OJJDP Comprehensive Community Gang Model (Spergel Model), Oakland Unite (Oakland, CA), Florida Gang Reduction Strategy, Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (San Jose, CA), Gang Reduction Program (OJJDP), and Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (Sacramento, CA).

Most commonly cited:

GOALS	FOCUS	ACTION ITEMS
Decrease gang-related crime	Prevention	Community Awareness
Reduce gang/juvenile gang violence	Suppression	Develop community awareness
Reduce institutional-based care	Intervention	Determine youth needs, resources, and opportunities
Work with community partners	Education (awareness)	Integration of information and data analysis in law enforcement
	Crisis-intervention	Create a dialogue between police and youth
		Hotspot patrols
		Direct street outreach and interruption of violence

APPENDIX B.2: A TABLE OF REVIEWED GANG EXIT PROGRAMS

Strategies in this table include: Bimosewin Initiative (Stony Mountain, MB), Changing the Life Trajectory of Gang-Involved Aboriginal Youth who have Complex Needs and Co-Occurring Problems (BC), Regina Anti-Gang Services (Regina, SK), Youth Advocate Program (Halifax, NS), Gang Prevention Strategy (Hamilton, ON), Positive Alternatives to Youth Gangs Project (Toronto, ON), Youth At Risk Development (Calgary, AB), Youth Alliance Against Gang Violence – Warrior Spirit Walking (Prince Albert, SK), Breaking the Cycle Youth Gang Exit and Ambassador Leadership Program (Rexdale/Scarborough, ON), Durham Youth Gang Strategy (Durham, ON), Surrey Wraparound (Surrey, BC), Gang Intervention Through Targeted Outreach (Philadelphia, PA), Philadelphia's Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (Philadelphia, PA), Gang Rescue and Support Project (Denver, CO), Chicago Ceasefire (Chicago, IL), Boston Gun Project (Boston, MA), Gang Reduction and Intervention Partnership (Anaheim, CA), Safe Streets (Baltimore, MD).

Most Commonly Cited:

OBJECTIVES	APPROACH/MODEL	RESULTS
Reduce gang membership or activities	Wraparound Milwaukee	Obtained employment/improved education
Decrease criminal activity	Youth engagement/violence reduction partnership	Lowered offending behaviour/reduced recidivism
Decrease violence	Circle of Courage	Exited the gang/ended affiliations
Provide protective factors, support, and resources to gang members exiting/those at risk	OJJDP Spergel Model	Positive change in attitude and development of pro-social skills
Assist in gaining employment	Chicago Ceasefire	Decreased substance abuse or rehab
Improve/assist in attainment of education		Increased awareness of gangs and gang consequences
Provide guidance and support		Gained positive role models
Increase awareness		

**Only one program mentioned addressing Aboriginal youth needs and connection to culture in its objectives and results.*

APPENDIX B.3: MEASURABLE INDICATORS FOR SUCCESSFUL GANG EXIT PROGRAMS

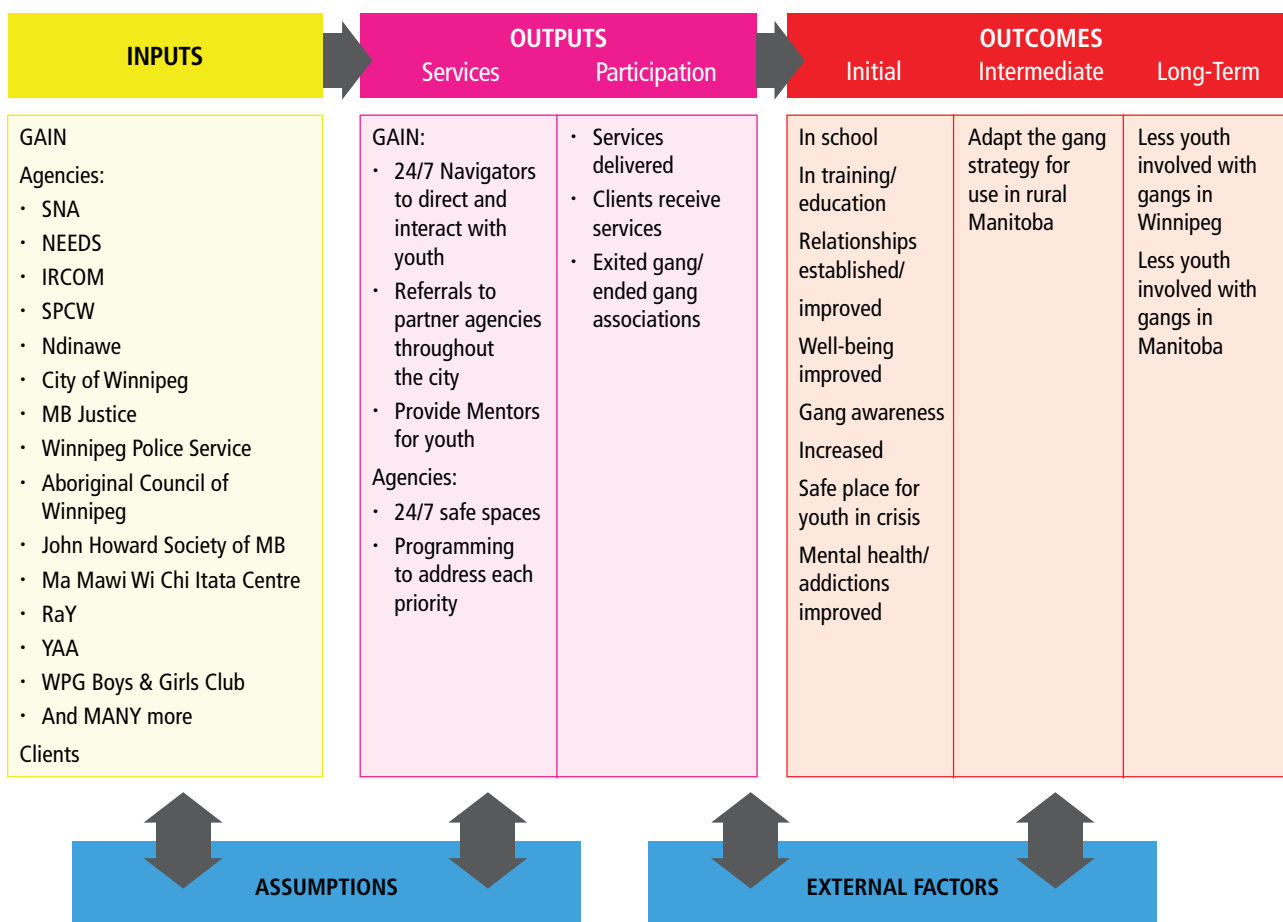
LOGIC MODEL: GANG ACTION INTERAGENCY NETWORK (GAIN) – “Bridging the Gap: Solutions to Winnipeg Gangs”

SITUATION

Youth gangs are a growing problem in Winnipeg that negatively affect the community, families, and youth themselves. The GAIN network focuses on a holistic strategy recognizing that a collective approach is required to tackle the complex social and individual contexts that contribute to youth becoming gang-involved.

PRIORITIES

24/7 Navigators
Mentorship
Mental Health/Addictions Support
Employment and Education
Connections among youth & Communities
Cultural Programming
Recreation
Parent Support Groups



ADDRESSING YOUTH GANG PROBLEMS: AN OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES

Public Safety Canada

This publication discusses six programs. One of them was unsuccessful – Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT). The other, more promising approaches discussed were OJJDP Comprehensive Gang (Spergel) Model, Boston Gun Project and Operation Ceasefire, Philadelphia’s Youth Violence Reducation Partnership, Wraparound Milwaukee. It is found that the multi-systemic therapy treatment model is the most effective treatment for serious, violent young offenders, and has been empirically proven. Detached worker programs, suppression, and incarceration have all been found to be ineffective in dealing with gangs (and in the case of the detached workers programs may actually increase gang cohesion).

GREAT was unsuccessful due to four factors:

1. Founded on conventional wisdom with no empirical basis that police officers delivering lessons in a classroom will be effective
2. Relied on conventional and untested wisdom that attitudinal variables and life skills trigger the attractiveness of gang membership program curriculum failed to incorporate the existing and growing knowledge about gangs
3. The program was not targeted at those most at risk of joining gangs

Key ingredients of promising strategies:

- Strategic Planning
 - The benefits of planning include: Improvements in coordination and cooperation, multidisciplinary or multisectoral analysis of youth gangs and related problems, more effective allocation of human and financial resources, and the establishment of clear program goals, objectives, and priorities.
 - Accurately identifies and prioritizes a given community’s needs and issues, which helps to reduce services and resources targeting the same issue.
 - An Accurate and Thorough Diagnosis of the Problem

- Knowledge about youth gangs in a given neighbourhood or community should be supplemented by information from local assessments of gang problems.
- Meaningful progress in developing and implementing a response relies on accurate information and diagnoses at the outset.
- The program must be well-matched to the agencies and personnel involved.
- Comprehensive and Integrated Approaches
 - Communities are diverse and youth gangs are multifaceted, meaning there is no quick fix solution.
 - The most effective approach in most cases is an integrated approach incorporating prevention, intervention, and suppression activities. This approach is supported by empirical evidence and a sound theoretical basis.
 - Community-wide approaches may not be practical for every community, and in these cases a strategic risk-based response is the best alternative. Strategic risk-based responses consist of three elements.
 - A general understanding of youth gangs combined with a thorough knowledge of local youth gang problems and related risks.
 - An understanding of how a variety of risk and protective factors relate to the early onset and persistence of local gang problems and youth violence
 - The implementation of policies and practices to respond to youth gangs.
- Multi-Sectoral and Multi-Agency Approaches
 - A cross-cutting approach that engages several community players is essential because of the multi-dimensional and overlapping factors that youth face in joining gangs. Partners and stakeholders could include: criminal justice actors, housing, recreation, social services, child welfare, education, health, community organizations, and more.
 - Interagency collaboration deals with possible fragmentation of services across agencies and consists of four key elements:

- Agreed upon and institutionalized mutuality and common goals
 - Jointly developed structure and shared responsibility for success
 - Shared resources and awards
 - Mutual authority and accountability
- **Establishing a Lead Agency and Coordination**
 - It is important that a central lead agency is identified at the outset to administer funds, co-ordinate program components, and monitor progress with respect to implementation and assessing effectiveness.
 - In the case of the Spergel model, the police were identified as the lead agency, although any partner could fill this role. One characteristic of the model is that it requires a competent and experienced on-site coordinator to manage the various individuals and agencies involved to be successful.
- **Proper Targeting and Different Levels of Intervention**
 - Targeting, from a prevention perspective, means to identify early the youth, groups, and communities that can reasonably be presumed to suffer from gang-related problems and tailoring services to their needs.
 - The more specific the defined targets are, the more effective the program becomes. Knowledge about gangs and local gang patterns is essential to correctly target areas and individuals.
 - Successful prevention, intervention, and suppression strategies recognize group processes in general, and more specifically the distinct elements of youth gang processes.
 - It is also important to distinguish between gang structures and typologies, and to address gangs at both the micro (individual gang members) and macro (gangs as entire units) levels. It is important to understand differences in order to structure effective programming.

APPENDIX C – ACTION PLANS

STRATEGY GOALS ACTION PLAN				
Best Practice	Goal	Rationale	Actions Required to achieved Goal	
Navigators	Any youth at risk can pick up a phone and connect with a navigator 24/7 and be connected to all the resources necessary to support that youth.	As identified from the early stages of GAIN, youth required access to 24/7 assistance. Currently this type of help exists, however, it is done in an uncoordinated, ad hoc, individual basis. Working with various community-based organizations as well as the provincial government will be key to creating a well-designed and lasting service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on existing Navigator Path Plan • Create a working group to drive this goal forward • Collect statistics and data to support the need for this project • Identify gaps in resources (using 211.ca) • Draft proposed plan for 24/7 navigators • Present to round table of frontline outreach workers for feedback • Adjust plan as necessary • Apply for funding to implement navigators 	
Mentorship	A fully functioning gang mentorship program (either a standalone program or building capacity within exiting mentorship programs – to be determined by working group and research).	Across a broad literature review of successful gang exit programs and strategies, mentorship was listed as a key component. As a result, this will be a large focus of the intervention component of this strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create working group to direct process • Conduct interviews with key stakeholders • Based on feedback, determine whether program should exist as standalone or within an existing program • Draft program • Hold roundtable/consultation with frontline mentorship workers to get feedback on proposed program (either standalone or to be housed within existing programs) • Apply for funding 	
Access to Recreation	Eliminate barriers so that all youth in gangs, affiliated with gangs, or at risk of gang involvement have access to recreation opportunities.	Recreation plays a large part in prevention, it helps youth create pro-social bonds, as well as positive attachments to their communities and hobbies. Therefore, it plays a significant role in preventing youth from engaging with gangs. It also creates opportunities for youth to exit gang life, therefore barriers that restrict gang-involved or affiliated youth from participating must be eliminated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine common barriers that gang-affiliated youth face when trying to access recreation opportunities • Form working group to create a tool kit or resource that recreation programs can utilize to allow high-risk youth to participate in their programming • Work with recreation programs individual to minimize access barriers while maintaining the safety off all their program participants 	
Access to Cultural Programming	All gang-involved, affiliated, or at-risk youth have access to cultural programming if they so desire.	As identified through youth consultations, identity, belonging, and healing were major factors in youth exiting gang involvement. One way to foster a sense of identity, belonging, and healing will be through access to cultural programming and opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct gaps analysis of current cultural programming • Hold roundtable/consultation with elders to identify how best to include cultural component into existing youth programming 	
Employment	Gang-involved and at-risk youth must have access to meaningful employment opportunities.	Gangs provide youth access to fast money. When exiting a gang, youth rarely have the essential skills, training, or education to obtain a job. Therefore, opportunities for education, training, and skill development are crucial to the intervention process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify existing barriers that gang-involved or at-risk youth face when looking for employment • Conduct roundtable with existing youth employment programs to develop opportunities/solutions to barriers • Foster education and training opportunities for gang-involved and at-risk youth 	

	Partners	Anticipated Result/s	Measurements	Timeline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Crisis Unit; Spotlight; TERF; Osborne House; community-based organizations; GAIN network members; all levels of government; Winnipeg Police; First Nations Leadership; OPK; Eagle Urban Transition Centre; 211.ca 	The development of a 24/7 navigator program, as well as grants Identified and applied for.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of consultations done on the proposed plan • # of partners engaged • # of grants applied for • Once funded • # of youth who access service 	Year one goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2017: develop 24/7 navigator structure • Implementation dependent on funding
	Mentorship experts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitch Bourbonniere; • NEEDS (Matt Fast); • IRCOM (Mandela Kuet); • YAA (Karen Farris); • Big Brothers Big Sisters (Greg Unger); • Turnabout (Muuxi Adam); • GAIN network members 	Gang-involved youth have access to positive adult role models via mentorship program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of youth participating • # of referrals to program • # of partners engaged • # of grants applied for 	Year one goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft of plan completed by March 2017 • Depending on funding, implementation in summer of 2017
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 211.ca • Community-based organizations • GAIN network members 	Decrease barriers in order to create more accessibility to recreation options for youth involved in gangs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of barriers identified • # of barriers eliminated • # of organizations GAIN worked with in order to eliminate barriers • # of youth who now have access to recreation opportunities 	Year two goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be completed 2018/2019
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Steering Committee • Indigenous community leadership • Newcomer community leadership 	Cultural programs or components of existing programs implemented where deemed appropriate by Indigenous Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of consultations done • # of programs approached about implementing cultural components to existing programing 	Year two goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be completed 2018/2019
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth-serving agencies who have employment programs (SNA, NEEDS, IRCO, for example) • Youth Employment Services • YAA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in access to employment, education, or training opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of consultations done • # of recommendations made • # of gang-involved youth who have interviews • # of gang-involved youth who get jobs • # of gang-involved youth are provided training opportunities 	Year one goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be completed 2017/2018

STRATEGY GOALS ACTION PLAN

Best Practice	Goal	Rationale	Actions Required to achieved Goal	
Parent Support Group	Parents of youth in gangs or youth at risk of gang involvement must have access to support.	Family engagement is essential to assisting youth in exiting gangs. Parents dealing with this situation require support from other parents going through the same ordeal. Support circles can offer that assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps analysis of existing supports or resources • Research partners for this project • Pilot a parent support circle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one for newcomers and one for Indigenous parents • Based on demand/success apply for additional funding to continue service 	
Connections among Youth & Their Communities	Gang-involved, affiliated, or at-risk youth must feel connected to their community.	A connection to one's community can act as an insulating factor against gang involvement. By highlighting and encouraging youth community involvement, we can foster relationship building among gang-involved, affiliated, or at-risk youth and their communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with community stakeholders and youth as to how young people can and do give back to their communities • Identify additional areas where youth can serve their communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example, graffiti removal and community beautification (to be determined by youth) • GAIN to promote, assist, and highlight community initiatives and activities • Develop a post-incident neighbourhood support protocol • Foster relationship building among newcomer communities/Indigenous communities and the police/criminal justice system 	
Mental Health and Addictions Supports	Appropriate mental health and/or addictions services must be made accessible to gang-involved, affiliated, or at-risk youth. Challenges of cognitive impairment are recognized and programs adapt as necessary to be inclusive.	Many youth suffer from addictions or various mental health issues, for example cognitive impairments, which can make exiting gangs very difficult. By shortening wait times for mental health or addictions services, youth will have an increased opportunity to heal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps analysis of existing programs that work with cognitively impaired youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine if they allow gang members or gang-affiliated youth to participate • Address any barriers that would hinder gang-involved youth to participate • Work with CMHA, FASD's Life's Journey to determine best way of creating inclusively in exiting programs • Provide input to Manitoba's new Mental Health and Addictions Strategy 	
Public Education	To disseminate accurate information regarding gangs among youth and the public at large, as well as raise awareness of the various prevention and intervention programs and services within Winnipeg.	So often the media glorifies gang culture and life, which can draw youth towards it. Therefore, it is paramount that accurate information is portrayed in the media as well as at the community level. By working with the police to create a cohesive message and sharing that message with Winnipeg's youth, they will have an accurate representation of the dangers of gang involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Winnipeg Police Service to create a joint presentation and a joint message regarding gangs in Winnipeg • Present accurate information to schools and community • Challenge misinformation regarding gangs in the media by having GAIN become their go-to outlet for accurate information from the community's perspective 	

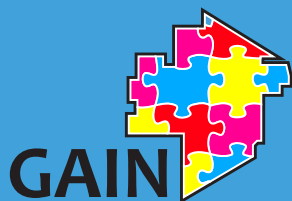
	Partners	Anticipated Result/s	Measurements	Timeline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YAA • Youth-serving agencies • Winnipeg Police • GAIN network • Karen Beaudin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot of parent support circle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of pamphlets/ invitations handed out • # of parents who attend • # of circles held during pilot phase • Feedback from parents on the helpfulness of support circle 	Year two goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be completed 2018/2019
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community organizations • YAA • Community centres • Winnipeg Police • Criminal justice system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of community activities and events • Create better understanding of the criminal justice system by newcomer and Indigenous communities • Foster better relationships between police and Indigenous/newcomer communities • Reduce negative impact of major incidents on neighbourhoods • Build trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of community events publicized by GAIN 	On Going Year two goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be completed 2018/2019
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMHA; FASD's Life's Journey; • community-based programs; AFM; Klinik; WRHA; Department of Health, Seniors and Active Living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase accessibility of program access for gang-involved or at-risk youth with cognitive impairments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of programs who expand to include cognitively impaired gang members into their programs 	Year one goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be completed 2017/2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winnipeg Division 1 schools/ principals • Winnipeg police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of joint presentation between GAIN and the Winnipeg police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of presentations given to schools • # of presentations givens to community • # of media stories that GAIN has the opportunity to comment on/contribute to 	On Going

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