

CHOICE 2010-11
Community Forum Overview

Two community forums were conducted from FY 2010-11 for the CHOICE grant program needs assessment process for Cycle V (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011), involving 25 youth and 30 Burbank Housing property managers. Information combined from the FY 2009-10 and FY 2010-11 community forums, was used to assist in creating the Request for Qualifications to identify gang prevention and intervention qualified and funded agencies for Cycle V.

The youth and Burbank Housing forum participants were asked similar questions about their perception of gang violence, needs for their community, and types of programs for youth and families.

Youth Focus Group Synopsis: Overall, youth were aware of the various programs and services available for teens, identified other programs and services they would like to have offered for teens, barriers to reaching these programs and services, as well as why youth join gangs, and what has helped to keep them personally out of gangs. Below are responses to the focus group questions that received multiple votes.

1. What programs and services are you familiar with for teens in our community?
 - Santa Rosa Junior College classes
 - Community Action Partnership – Project Safe, DIG Leaders
 - Teen Advocacy Group
 - Youth Build
 - Martial Arts Youth Institute
 - Recreation, Parks & Community Services programs
 - School sports and clubs
 - MECHA – college prep outreach
 - Boys & Girls club
- 1.a. What do you think keeps some youth from coming to these programs and services?
 - Busy – chores, watching siblings
 - Peer pressure
 - School clubs – don't want to give-up lunch
 - Want to be with friends
 - Grades
 - Gangs – associations, safety
 - Transportation
2. What types of programs and services would you like to see for teens in our community?
 - Collaborate with other health agencies
 - How to get a job?
 - Collaborate with schools
 - Field trips
 - Volunteer opportunities and Internships
 - Teaching about gangs at younger age level
 - Sports (soccer, dance, basketball, etc)
 - Clarity around Police
 - College prep programs (after school)
 - Clubs for girls and boys

2.a. Where would you like to see these programs and services offered?

- Neighborhood programs
- Senior Center
- Weekend park events
- Skate park in SW
- Gym for teens
- Schools

3. Why do people join gangs?

- Fun
- Graffiti is cool
- Cool to claim territory
- Get respect – fighting, won't mess with you, scare others
- Family members – Culture / tradition
- Cars & money
- Sense of family / belonging
- Peer pressure – Influence from others
- Status – more up in hierarchy
- Drugs – to acquire
- Money
- Don't see positive future for self

4. What has kept you out of gangs?

- Why be involved if it doesn't involve you?
- Mind my own business
- Think about my family and future
- Involved in positive groups
- Informed about consequences of gangs
- Desire to go to college
- High expectations for yourself
- Self discipline and Self confident
- Mentor, positive adult who believes in you
- Witness other people's experiences
- Good, diverse friends
- Knowing right vs. wrong
- More work to be in one than not be in one
- Can't be yourself
- Active in programs that keep me busy

Burbank Housing Managers Focus Group: Although each property has different locations and residents, their feedback and needs were remarkably similar. Below is a synopsis of their responses to the questions.

1. Tell us about some of the needs you hear about or see in your neighborhoods. What are some of the challenges related to youth and families?

- Tagging/Graffiti
- City lights out – dark in areas of complexes
- Unsupervised children – young children and teens

- Bike safety
 - Education for parents about resources and responsibilities
 - Language barriers
2. What types of programs are needed for youth, adults, and parents?
- Child care
 - Resources and education for parents
 - Teen programs
 - Sports and activities for youth
 - Food distribution program
 - Community events
 - Employment – How to get a job?
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - Closer relationship with law enforcement