

The following questions and answers are a follow – up to the presentation of the Monterey County Gang Violence Prevention Initiative (MCGVP) Action Plan – Iteration 2.

1. How does the Advisory Team (AT) connect with:
 - a. Business community
 - b. Education community

Answer: At this time the AT connects with the Business and Education Community via the MCGVP Coordinator. Important items, needs, recommendations presented to the MCGVP are communicated to the AT.

Once the Action Plan is approved by the HHS, the next step is to identify specific strategies where both Business and Education communities can become engaged (i.e. the indicators of Youth Employment and 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency). The backbone team will also be engaged in the interactions with the Business and Education communities, most visibly through design labs we will host as well as through continuous communication.

2. How does the inventory tie in with indicators?

Answer: the inventory tells us about County operated programs and services, the connection we will make is to match up the programs and services which have a direct or indirect impact with movement or progression of an indicator. For example, the inventory tells us of programs that OET offers and we can make a direct link to specific services that would move the needle on the Youth Employment indicator. Another example, the Libraries offer literacy programs for children and adults, we can then identify which of those have an impact on increasing reading proficiencies and have a connection to the 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency indicator. The same connections will be made with each of the indicators.

3. Would like to see a spelled out purpose for each of the groups- AT, BB, RN

Answer: We can certainly develop formal purpose statements for each of the mentioned groups. For the sake of explanations at this point the following describes the general purpose of each group:

AT: The Advisory Team serves to guide and advise the initiative based on data and information presented to them by the MCGVP Coordinator and the Backbone Team. Additionally, the AT will help to develop systemic changes and policy recommendations as identified by the MCGVP Coordinator and BB. When the initiative reaches points where budget recommendations can be made to the Board of Supervisors, based on data outcomes of the Action Plan implementation, the AT will advise the MCGVP Coordinator of the best method for framing the recommendations to ensure best impact on county or departmental budgets and most importantly, community impact as it relates to the indicators.

BB: The Backbone Team serves to assist the MCGVP in the process of development of the initiative, Action Plan and in the implementation of strategies identified in the Action Plan. Members of the BB consist of key staff that possesses expertise in areas that are critical to each of the indicators. Their insight in the development of the indicators is essential and their contribution to identifying strategies that would address each indicator, analyzing outcome data for existing programs and services as identified in the County Inventory. The BB also assists with remaining connected with other Collective Impact initiatives in the

county, since some of the BB members are just as involved in other CI initiatives. This is helpful to ensure that efforts are complimentary and not duplicative.

RN: The Regional Network serves the purpose of bringing leaders of all local gang violence prevention efforts, together. We have learned it is helpful to local municipalities which are also working with limited resources. This space we have created has already begun to reap its benefits (CalGRIP grant success for 2 out of 3 grants awarded). Making those connections with each other has assisted in sharing lessons learned, sharing supporting or opposing information about the County Action Plan's indicators, exploring opportunities together for grant seeking and campaign development. Training and technical assistance needs are also shared by the regional partners and together with the BB we are able to work towards meeting those needs. Additionally, connections are made with statewide networks that are also working to reduce gang violence (gangs are a statewide problem because of their own statewide networks).

4. Remove 2 co-chairs on the AT (Supervisors)

Answer: 2 co-chairs have been removed.

5. What are the elements of the steps to move the indicators? – too general now

Answer:

1. The next step is to draw direct connections between the indicators and the Inventory. We have existing county operated programs and services that have an impact on one or more of the indicators.
2. An important element of making these links will be to identify evaluation tools used to measure the effectiveness of such programs which will tell us more about the level of impact those programs.
3. Another element is to identify which systems and policies have an impact on the effectiveness of the programs/services or an impact on access.
4. By virtue of process, as we've seen up until now, community needs and gaps in services are made known to us organically. We have learned that we are able to meet some of these needs and fill the gaps by simply moving a few things around programmatically. In some cases we can anticipate more intense systemic changes need to occur. We will then need to do some detailed planning and in some instances, continuous relationship building efforts (to gain both internal and external support) in order to make that happen.
5. Data sharing systems are a great need, one we had already identified early on. Several county departments share client populations but rarely share any data, meaning that services and programs could be more impactful than they already are. This element will require time and a meticulous plan for getting such departments on the same page and on a data system that adequately facilitates a data sharing process. Ideas we have explored are building a county operated database or use of iResult (currently used effectively between certain school districts and Family and Children Services for serving foster youth).

6. Indicators:

- a. Are supposed to be all prevention and are currently too vague

Answer: The Action Plan follows the strategy as outlined in the Strategic Plan (May 2013) with use of the OJJDP Model for Gang Violence Prevention and Reduction. An effective prevention plan must address all areas of the spectrum, to include all populations. In reviewing plans for cities across the U.S., all include

primary, secondary and tertiary prevention (public health model) or as the OJJDP model calls for: Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement (Suppression) and Reentry (also known as PEER).

b. Youth employment – what do we aspire to do?

Answer: We understand both anecdotally and as studies would show, that youth who are facing challenges such as poverty, homelessness and/or involvement in the juvenile justice system could be better served with multipronged approaches, and one of those prongs includes employment opportunities paired with job skill training and mentorship. In many, if not most cases youth who are given opportunities at early stages have the propensity to not only complete high school but seek higher education to help fulfill goals they establish as a result of exposure to career fields. A local study conducted by NPS (Understanding Environmental Factors that affect violence in Salinas, Ca by Jason Clarke and Tracy Onufer – 2009), identified nine independent variables as environmental factors that affect violence in Salinas: one of them was Economy. In this study the opportunity to make money by joining a gang is one of the appealing factors for youth as they choose that path. As we have seen locally and as the same study hypothesizes: as unemployment rates increase, violence also increases.

c. Meaningful opportunities – what are we actually doing? What does this mean? Be more specific.

Answer: The definition of Meaningful Participation (as measured by CHKS) is; the involvement of the student in relevant, engaging, and interesting activities with opportunities for responsibility and contribution. Providing youth with opportunities for meaningful participation is a natural outcome of environments that convey high expectation. Participation, like caring and support, meets a fundamental human need: to have some control and ownership over one's life. Resilience research documents positive developmental outcomes, including reductions in risk behaviors and increases in academic factors, are associated with youth being given valued responsibilities, planning and decision-making opportunities, and changes to contribute and help others in their home, school, and community environments. CHKS data also shows racial and ethnic disparities for this indicator. White students in Monterey County have the most positive results for opportunities for meaningful participation in school and community, while African-American and Latino students' lowest rates for opportunities for meaningful participation in school and community, coincidentally showing highest rates for truancy and high school dropout rates.

As you are familiar with the Teen Center in Marina, that is an excellent example of the creation of opportunities for meaningful engagement for youth in their community. Here we can partner with local municipalities and schools to implement strategies that will move the needle on this indicator.

d. Truancy – what are we aiming for? Increase graduation rates? Bring truancy rates down?

Answer: The goal of the Truancy indicator is to dive deeper and further assesses the root causes for truancy. We may already know what those root causes are but we do not have the practices and strategies in place to address them. Current interventions include involving the youth in the juvenile justice system which barely touches the surface of the problem. We are aware that if students are not in school, they are more likely to become involved in gangs, crime and violence and are less likely to graduate. Increased graduation rates will certainly be an expected outcome of the focus on truancy.

e. Recidivism – not invest in tracking only watch it

- i. Look at youth recidivism from a distance

Answer: Recidivism is an opportunity to dig deeper and identify needs youth have and the challenges they are facing. The indicator gives the opportunity to assess current practices, programs/services, and policies, helping us determine whether they (independently or collectively) foster youth development, deterring them from further involvement in the juvenile justice system or further marginalize, oppress or institutionalize youth.

- ii. Look at adult recidivism from an even further distance

Answer: Adult Recidivism includes a parental factor. With formerly incarcerated adults returning to our communities, they are coming back and raising children and youth. If the adults who are genuinely seeking support and opportunities to steer away from gang involvement, crime and violence, the tracking of adult recidivism allows us to identify how our current practices are impacting the likelihood of adults reoffending.

Emailed follow up questions/concerns:

1. The Strategic Plan that the Board of Supervisors approved in May 2013 asked for an Action Plan, complete with goals, objectives, rationale, and action steps with timelines and lead agency to support the County's violence prevention strategy. Your office was tasked with this and the expectation was that it would take 6 months to develop. Over 18 months later, we still do not have that document.

Answer: A draft Action Plan was presented to the Advisory Team, of which Supervisors Parker and Armenta were co-chairs, in December 2013. (Please keep in mind, the MCGVP Coordinator came onboard in late August 2013.) The Action Plan was intended to be a guide from whom we would continue to build the initiative. The Action Plan was not approved for lack of indicators and considered to be underdeveloped. A process for selecting the indicators began shortly thereafter. In June 2014, a draft of the framework, which we have also set as the Action Plan's theory of change, was presented to the Board of Supervisors. In July of 2014, a new draft of the Action Plan was presented to the Advisory Team and it was again rejected because the selected indicators and context of the framework were deemed inadequate as presented by the MCGVP Coordinator and SPR Consultants.

It is imperative that we reach a common understanding that the Action Plan has gone through several iterations and will continue to be a living, breathing document, one which will continue to undergo modifications as we move along. At some point we need to reach a consensus on the context, purpose and core values of the Action Plan, accepting that the strategies, objectives (or aims) are elements that are to be developed in the next steps.

2. The outcomes listed (at the bottom of the power point pages) are a helpful start, but they lack detail. We need to be able to see the steps that should be taken to get to those outcomes, in the form of process indicators. This should include a timeline and who is responsible.

Answer: Developing process indicators can and will be done to show the progression of the initiative.

3. The indicators need targets.

Answer: All indicators will have targets. The process of further identifying strategies and practices that move the needle on each of the indicators will lead us **to** identifying feasible targets. All CI initiatives around the county

are also on the same path to identifying targets. ECDI, for example has indicators but none of which have targets at this time.

4. Importantly, the advisory team and backbone need to be comfortable with the indicators of the initiative. Let us remember that this is a prevention initiative and have the indicators be consistent with that. This is a key component of collective impact and I want to be sure we get it right.

Answer: The indicators have been vetted by the Advisory Team and all members have expressed their support. In September 2014, the Advisory Team advised that indicators be inclusive of the entire spectrum of prevention (Primary, Secondary, Tertiary and Remediation) as well as the prevention model defined by OJJDP (Prevention, Intervention, Suppression and Reentry).

5. I am not comfortable with the language at the end of the plan giving such broad resources to the coordinator. I would like that last sentence of the document to be removed. Yes, the backbone needs to be resourced, not just the coordinator.

Answer: The language has been modified to include support for the initiative, back bone and the coordinator. This is all a team effort and all should be supported.

6. I agree with the requests from the public that we remove the word "gang" and simply call this work "Violence Prevention".

Answer: We have connected with members of the public who voiced such concern (MILPA and BHC) and have confirmed that their recommendation is about changing the narrative of how we speak about gang violence, especially as it relates to youth. Language throughout the plan was criticized because it does not point fully to risk factors that lead to gang involvement and gang related crime and violence. Instead, the plan should speak to the challenges youth face and the County's goal to create opportunities that will address those root causes. Calling the plan something other than 'gang' violence prevention is only a start. We have wrestled with the challenge of framing this issue in a more positive lens while remaining focused on the issue of gang violence, the problem our office was tasked to focus on. An idea for the Action Plan's name change: Monterey County Violence Prevention and Opportunity Plan or A Plan for Safe and Thriving Monterey County. The content and focus of the plan remains on gang violence but will speak of opportunities.

7. I want to reiterate that the focus of this work must be prevention and I hope to see avenues for making the case for funding things like our libraries. Every community meeting I have attended that asked what's needed to prevent violence has resulted in our constituents asking for better libraries, more walkable streets, and places for our families to congregate.

Answer: The Action Plan's indicators were drawn from community input (4 forums throughout Monterey County in 2013). Added resources to improve libraries, pedestrian friendly streets and systems for changing street lights are all potential strategies that could help move the needle on a selected indicator. Some of these strategies will require systemic changes and as we continue to develop those strategies we will be able to identify which systemic changes we can begin to make. The types of changes our community wants and needs to see will take time. The process we are following allows for the time we need to arrive at those changes and the augmentation of programs that work and the redirection of resources of those that don't.