

2012

**SOUTH COUNTY
YOUTH TASK FORCE**

SOUTH COUNTY YOUTH TASK FORCE – COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

This document provides an assessment of data collected and of stakeholder input of current conditions regarding youth, juvenile delinquent behaviors and gang issues in South Santa Clara County.

In January 2012, the City of Gilroy brought together a formal collaboration between Gilroy, the City of Morgan Hill and the Santa Clara County unincorporated area of San Martin to address the affects of gangs on our youth and in our community. This collaboration is called the South County Youth Task Force and (SCYTF) is now engaged in a community assessment and strategic planning process to define the magnitude of the existing problems, identify desired outcomes for positive change and determine what actions should be taken to achieve this change.

The Task Force is comprised of city, county, and state government; community-based and faith-based organizations, GPD and MHPD, schools; and other community stakeholders. It is envisioned the SCYTF will become a vehicle for results oriented collaboration and capacity building, enabling agencies to work together to develop one another's ability to best serve the target population.

The Task Force will focus efforts on an identified population of youth ages 10 – 18 exhibiting high-risk behaviors; youth committing intentional acts of violence; youth exhibiting high-risk behaviors related to gang lifestyles; youth identified as gang members and/or arrested for gang-related incidents or acts of gang violence; in addition to families (including parents and children) and friends of youth involved with gang lifestyle or incarcerated for gang-related crimes.

It has been shown that gangs are a product of disorganized and distressed neighborhoods that have the disadvantage of low socio-economic status, street socialization of youth and segregation for the youth and families that live there.

Neighborhood Characteristics

1. Poverty
2. Unemployment
3. Absence of meaningful jobs
4. Absence of career track

Individual and Family Demographics

1. High rate of poverty
2. Mobility
3. Welfare dependency
4. Single parent households
5. Areas not diverse

Personal Attributes

1. More socially inept; low self esteem, social isolation
2. Exhibits anti social/delinquent behaviors
3. More committed to peers – delinquent behaviors
4. Less committed to school

Peer Group and School

1. High level interaction with anti-social peers
2. Low level interaction with pro-social peers
3. Exposure to and influence of delinquent peers
4. Commitment to delinquent peers
5. Less/low commitment to school
6. More likely to check out/drop out of school

The indicators above are consistent with studies and publications on the emergence and prevention of gangs in urban areas and show consistencies with small town/rural communities as well. Per the notion that gangs are more likely to evolve and impact distressed neighborhoods, we need to use data to validate the existence of “risk factors” in the targeted areas identified from interviews with, community members, law enforcement and agencies serving the community. The Task Force will use the much proven Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Comprehensive Gang Model as the foundation for the research and development of a response to the issues facing the South County Communities.

The OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model explains that “Neither social disorganization, underclass, nor the poverty theory alone explains the scope and nature of delinquent or criminal gang association and gang crime. Social disorganization or lack of integration of essential elements of a local community system provides the basic stimulus for the formation of youth gangs. Lack of legitimate opportunity and the presence of alternative criminal opportunities are more likely to explain the character and scope of gang behavior” (Spergel, 1995).

Problem Statement

There are 10 documented Norteño gangs with over 1,500 members in South Santa Clara County, according to Task Force records. There are currently seven documented Norteño Gangs operating in Gilroy with approximately 600 members/associates, 200 of which are validated members: Outside Posse, Brown Pride Kings (BPK), East Side Gilas, Norteños, Northern Structure, Abstract Minds, and Nuestra Familia. Morgan Hill has four Norteño Gangs with approximately 300 members/associates, 77 of which are validated members: Varrío Morgan Lomas, Village Boys, Northerners and Nuestra Familia.

Intelligence reports reveal an increase in Sureño gang members coming to Santa Clara County from Southern California; this is causing a rise in more sophisticated southern gang members challenging the northern gang structure for local dominance, which is fueling an increase in gang activities, including violence.

While the South Santa Clara County Law Enforcement Authorities do not discount the issues associated with the identified Gang Members and the risk they pose to the communities through their behavior, what has been identified as a key component of the problem is the impact these gangs are having directly and indirectly on the youth in the communities.

A specific population of “at-risk” youth has been identified within the South Santa Clara County, those children between the ages of 10-18 years, some are siblings of or children of gang members, some are neighbors of gang members and some are just children looking for a place where they feel they belong. Statistically, the South Santa Clara County area is a prime recruiting ground for youth gang members. High truancy rates, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, high number of single parent households or where parents are working long hours leaving youth unsupervised with unstructured time on their hands make them extremely vulnerable to the risk factors that lead to gang involvement.

Further, there appears to be some disconnect between many of the service providers in the various disciplines with regard to strategies and objectives to serve the “at-risk” youth in the South County. There are several studies and strategies in motion and some instances of funding bringing various providers together. Most of these efforts however, by nature of the funding source, target a specific service, discipline, and audience. The lack of a master strategy that “connects the dots” of all services and strategies that would serve to create safe and healthy schools and neighborhoods as a whole is a significant contributing factor when evaluating the problem that faces the South Santa Clara County Area.

Assessment Approach:

The Community Assessments was done in a two part approach, one for the City of Gilroy and one for the City of Morgan Hill. The intention was to capture the input and information from each city independently and then include the data gathered from the County of Santa Clara for San Martin to provide a comprehensive strategic plan to move forward with the South County Youth Task Force Initiatives.

Target Areas

In general, gangs and associated activities are not concentrated consistently into specific areas. This condition may likely be due to various and recent suppression actions by law enforcement agencies. However, distressed neighborhoods with “high risk factors” where concentrated activities formerly existed remain and some areas continue to see activity with some areas still considered “hotspots” or experiencing high calls for service. There have been consistent references by all stakeholders that have led to the identification of key geographic areas in both cities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill. Though the blatant gang activities may have disbursed from these areas, the pre-existing conditions, vulnerable populations and other neighborhood characteristics that originally attracted this activity still remain. As such, these areas can be targeted for coordinated and focused prevention and intervention efforts.

For the purposes of this assessment the Task Force has identified the following areas within the South County community as our target area of influence:

City of Gilroy

1. East Side Boundaries – IOOF (N), 8th Street (S), HWY 101 (E), Monterey Street (W)

2. Glenview (includes Fairview)

Boundaries – 6th Street (N), 10th Street (S), Monterey Street (E), Princevalle(W)

City of Morgan Hill

1. Village Avante Apartments Complex and Barnell Ave.

Boundaries – W. Dunne Avenue (N), Tenant Avenue (S), Church Street (E), Barnell Avenue (W)

2. Crest Avenue

Boundaries – Wright Avenue (N), W. Main (S), Hale Avenue (E), Peak (W)

The South County Area

The South County area can be described as small town/suburban with a rural influence due to the agricultural industries in the area. While there is a “bedroom community” feel in much of the South County area, there is also a portion of the population that is struggling to make ends meet. As indicated in the 2010 census data, the persons below the poverty line in our target areas range from 8.7%-14%, on track with the statewide statistic of 13.7%.

The South County population has a greater Latino/Hispanic presence (41%) than the California average of 37% and approximately 41% of the residents speak a language other than English at home.

The South County has a significant population of youth under the age of 18, at roughly 28 %, and the high school graduation rates, in Gilroy and San Martin, are nearly 5% points behind the state average.

2010 South County Census

2010 Census Data	California	Gilroy	Morgan Hill	San Martin
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010	25.00%	30.70%	28.60%	25.30%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2010 (b)	37.60%	57.80%	34.00%	46.20%
Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2006-2010	43.00%	46.10%	35.10%	42.50%
Persons below poverty level, percent, 2006-2010	13.70%	8.70%	10.00%	14.10%
High school graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 2006-2010	80.70%	75.90%	85.20%	74.90%

The Santa Clara County Mental Health Department performed asset mapping and needs assessment in determining which parts of the county to concentrate Prevention and Early Intervention services. Table 1 below summarizes the relative risk scores for the three South County zip codes in eight areas (Poverty, Substance Abuse, Child Removals, Juvenile Justice Entries, School Dropouts, Single Parent Households, Felony Arrests, Teen Mothers, Low Test Scores) Gilroy fell into the top third for risk in each category. Morgan Hill is in the top third in 6/8 and San Martin in 4/8.

Table 1: South County Mental HAS Prevention and Early Intervention Plan Asset Mapping

Zip Code	City	Population	Child Population (0-24 yrs)	Risk Rating Average	Poverty	Substance Abuse	Child Removals	Juvenile Justice Entries	School Drop-Outs	Single-Parent Households	Teen Mothers	Low Test Scores
95020	Gilroy	59,911	24,331	5.30	6	6	6	6	5	4	6	5
95037	Morgan Hill	45,551	17,169	4.60	3	5	4	6	4	4		4
95046	San Martin	5,689	1,981	4.00	3	6	5	2	4	2	4	4

(From: Appendix A - HRA Map, Matrix & Methodology, Santa Clara County MHS Prevention and Early Intervention Plan)

Note: 4.0 and above indicates that zip code has met the threshold whereby they fall into the top third of risk compared with all Santa Clara County zip codes

Student and School Data

The School Accountability Report Cards (Table 2)¹ for the South County target schools (Middle and High Schools) tell a somewhat different story than the overall census data for the region. In the Gilroy schools more than 72% of the students are identified as Hispanic or Latino and 34% are classified as English Learners. In the Morgan Hill schools, 51% of the students are identified as Hispanic or Latino and 25% are classified as English Language Learners. What is a notable statistic is that 57 % of the middle and high school students in the Gilroy Unified School District and 37% of the students in the Morgan Hill Unified School District are identified as socioeconomically disadvantaged. According to the California Department of Education, "Socioeconomically Disadvantaged" is defined as: a student whose parents both have not received a high school diploma **OR** a student who participates in the free or reduced-price lunch program, also known as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). "English Learners" are defined as: English learners (ELs) **OR** Reclassified fluent-English-proficient (RFEP) students who have not scored at the proficient level or above on the CST in ELA for three years.

Table 2: School Accountability Report Card Information 2010/11

School	Enrollment and Demographic Data		Student enrollment by group		Other
	Hispanic/Latino	White	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	English Learner	
Ann Sobrato High (MH)	41.3%	42.3%	26.7%	17.3%	767:1
Central High (Continuation)(MH)	70.8%	22.2%	52.6%	32.7%	171:<1
Live Oak High (MH)	44.6%	46.1%	33.4%	25.4%	621:1
Britton Middle (MH)	51%	39%	41.7%	30.8%	705:1
Martin Murphy Middle (MH)	50%		35.3%	23.8%	592:1
Christopher High (G)	60%	28%	37.4%	21.4%	402:1
Mt Madonna (Continuation) (G)	87%	11%	67.1%	42%	283:1
Gilroy High (G)	72%	20%	58.3%	34.9%	740:1
Solarsano Middle (G)	62%	30%	48.1%	27.8%	1174:2.4 (Social /Behavior Counselor)
Brownell Middle(G)	66%	28%	54.5%	31.3%	640:1.6
South Valley Middle (G)	87%	8%	78.8%	47%	702:1.8

¹ California Department of Education-<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>

Following the theory that socioeconomically disadvantaged youth are more likely to seek out or be influenced by the “benefits” associated with gang participation or activity, it is clear that with more than half of the area’s students identified as such, it is important to ensure that the task force is aware of their circumstances and that it will be working towards providing them with safe and healthy alternatives.

Another key factor that has been identified in susceptibility to gang participation is truancy and graduation rate. The graduation rate for both High School Districts is also a key statistic, with a slight increase in the total dropout rate between 2009/10 and 2010/11. There was not only a larger increase in the Hispanic demographic, but their dropout rate was 18.7% in Gilroy in and 21% in Morgan Hill in 2010/11, the highest of any demographic over the two year period.

Table 3: High School Drop Out Rates 2009/10 and 2010/11 (2011/12 not yet available on www.CDE.ca.gov)

	GUHSD		MHUSD	
	2009/10	2010/11	2009/10	2010/11
Total Cohort Population	769	753	762	684
Total Dropout Rate	12.9%	14.6%	12.1%	14.6%
Caucasian	5.8%	8.3%	6.8%	7.6%
Hispanic	15.8%	18.7%	17.8%	21.0%
African American	6.7%	6.3%	18.8%	10.5%
Asian	0	3.8%	9.5%	13.7%

Definition of the 4-year adjusted cohort per the California Dept. of Education: 4-year Adjusted Cohort forms the basis for calculating graduation rates, dropout rates, and other related rates. The cohort is the group of students that could potentially graduate during a 4-year time period (grade 9 through grade 12). The 4-year Adjusted Cohort includes students who enter 9th grade for the first time in the initial year of the 4-years used for the cohort.

When we looked at the discipline specific data from both the Gilroy and Morgan Hill Unified School Districts, we specifically requested they provide information on what incidents could be directly related to gang activity or involvement. While both districts capture that information, it is important to remember that the definitions of gang involvement are loose and subject to interpretation. So for the purpose of this assessment, and because we want to address the needs of all “at risk” youth and not just the ones already categorized as “gang involved”, we want to highlight the overall discipline information.

Gilroy Unified School District:

The following tables, provided by the Gilroy Unified School District, shows the discipline issues specific to the Gilroy Unified School District for students between the 6th and 12th grade. The code references are from the California Education Code.

Table 4: GUSD Disciplinary Data

Discipline Category	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
GUSD Enrollment	11,116	11,077	11,290
*Alcohol / Drug Poss 48900 (c)	89	56	63
*Alcohol / Drug Use 48900 (c)	72	72	66
*Property, Deface/Tag/Graffiti	24	34	41
*Theft 48900 (g)	36	32	49
Behavior, Disruptive 48900 (k)	1590	1868	1504*
Fighting 48900 (a)	280	224	181
Harassment 48900.4	76	83	108
Weapons/Dangerous Object	56	63	55
Threatening 48900 (a) (1)	87	60	68
Tobacco, possess/use 48900 (h)	28	22	9

*These incidents represent 690 students

*Half of these incidents were committed by 130 students

Of the incidents listed above, when asked if any could be directly related to gang activity, the school district was able to provide the following information:

Table 5: Gang Related Discipline Incidents in Grades 6 – 12

Discipline Category	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
*Alcohol / Drug Poss (E) 48900 (c)		1	1
*Alcohol / Drug Use (E) 48900 (c)	1		
*Property, Deface/Tag/Graffiti (S) 48900 (f)		1	
Behavior, Disruptive (S) 48900 (k)	9	6	2
Fighting (S) 48900 (a)	15	9	5
Other Gang Related	60	38	35
Harassment (E) 48900.4	10		1
Weapons/Dangerous Object	9	1	1
Threatening (S) 48900 (a) (1)	7	1	1
Tobacco, possess/use (S) 48900 (h)			1

Gilroy has seen a decrease in fighting and weapons related incidents but an increase in Graffiti, Theft, Harassment and Threats. Much of the feedback received from the Community Forums and interviews indicated that negative behaviors were occurring after school hours, so the increase in harassment and threats during school could very well be leading to physical altercations after school hours that are not being captured in the school discipline data. Morgan Hill Unified School District:

The following table, provided by the Morgan Hill Unified School District, shows the discipline issues for students between the 6th and 12th grade. The second set of numbers displayed indicates what was noted as “gang involved”.

Morgan Hill Unified School District			
Selected Categories of Discipline Data 2009-2012			
Discipline Incidents All MHUSD Students in Grades 6-12			
Discipline Category	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
MHUSD Enrollment	9,076	9,005	8,752
Possession, Use, Sale or Furnishing a Controlled Substance	44	55	71
Property Damage	22	10	25
Property Theft	44	18	37
Disruption, Defiance	440	398	593
Caused, Attempted or Threatened Physical Injury	60	63	72
Harassment or Intimidation	17	31	38
Possession, Sale, Furnishing a Firearm or Knife/Dangerous Object	8	6	11
Tobacco, possess/use	9	10	6
Possession, Use, Sale or Furnishing a Controlled Substance	0	0	0
Property Damage	0	0	0
Property Theft	0	0	0
Disruption, Defiance	7	4	4
Caused, Attempted or Threatened Physical Injury	0	3	1
Harassment or Intimidation	0	0	0
Possession, Sale, Furnishing a Firearm or Knife/Dangerous Object	0	1	0
Tobacco, possess/use	0	0	0

Morgan Hill data for 2011-12 shows an increase in every area except tobacco possession, and in most cases a significant increase from 2010-11. When coupled with the increased dropout rate, and the feedback from the community meetings and interviews it indicates there is cause for concern in Morgan Hill about how resources are being connected and communicated to the population that needs them.

Law Enforcement Data:

The SCYTF sought Crime data from the Gilroy and Morgan Hill Police Departments to aide in the assessment of the impact gangs may be having in the neighborhoods. We looked at the data from two perspectives, the number of crimes committed by juveniles and, the number of crimes that were identified as “gang related”.

City of Gilroy: The information, while the overall crimes being committed is trending in a positive direction since 2009, shows that the percentage of crimes being committed by juveniles has increased each year (2009- 15%, 2010-16%, 2011-17%) and the percentage of “Gang Related” incidents has also increased from 2% in 2009 and 2010 to 4% of the total in 2011.

	2009			2010			2011		
	All Crime	Juvenile Crime	Gang Related Incidents	All Crime	Juvenile Crime	Gang Related Incidents	All Crime	Juvenile Crime	Gang Related Incidents
Violent Crime									
Homicide	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Aggravated Assault	113	42	52	112	25	43	130	25	46
Rape	4	0	0	14	2	2	8	5	1
Robbery	58	18	7	77	27	4	57	19	13
Attempted Robbery	1	0	0	1	0	1	8	2	1
Simple Assault	336	87	16	349	77	15	341	70	10
Total Violent Crime	513	147	75	554	131	65	545	121	71
Non-Violent Crime									
Disturbances	89	36	16	100	27	8	73	30	4
Narcotics	194	73	1	190	69	0	199	65	2
Resisting Arrest	45	11	0	33	8	1	53	10	3
Suspicious	13	2	0	9	0	0	15	4	2
Threats	30	6	0	22	8	0	39	1	1
Vandalism	246	50	4	321	60	3	235	36	4
Weapons	48	28	10	60	41	14	65	25	16
Probation/Parole Violations	115	15	0	76	15	0	63	12	4
Theft	1097	104	0	1126	128	0	1006	118	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	185	4	0	192	15	0	169	6	0
Burglary	280	26	0	237	31	0	207	35	0
All other non-violent crime	1267	119	4	1184	142	4	824	174	8
Total Non-Violent Crime	3609	474	31	3550	544	30	2124	342	44
Total All Crime	4122	621	106	4104	675	95	2669	463	115
Info Reports									
Misc. Info	247	171	1	224	0	0	202	0	2

* Due to data collection limitations, GPD is unable to determine which gang related incidents were committed by Juveniles vs. Adults

City of Morgan Hill: Similar to the picture in Gilroy, the statistics in Morgan Hill show a steady decline in the overall crimes being committed but the trend for “all crimes” being committed by juveniles has shown little change staying between 7-8% since 2009. What is also a concern is that in 2011, nearly 20% of the total violent crimes were committed by juveniles.

	2009			2010			2011		
	All Crime	Juvenile Crime	Gang Related Incidents	All Crime	Juvenile Crime	Gang Related Incidents	All Crime	Juvenile Crime	Gang Related Incidents
Violent Crime									
Homicide	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Aggravated Assault	50	5	9	36	3	6	17	3	7
Rape	13	1	1	9	0	1	8	0	0
Robbery	25	4	2	9	2	0	16	2	0
Attempted Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Simple Assault	222	32	5	216	26	6	115	25	6
Total Violent Crime	311	42	18	270	31	13	157	31	14
Non-Violent Crime									
Disturbances	31	16	5	25	21	12	23	7	4
Narcotics	27	3	1	20	1	1	21	2	6
Resisting Arrest	45	20	3	51	7	1	40	8	3
Suspicious	38	8	0	32	4	2	17	4	0
Threats	39	6	0	33	5	2	22	5	0
Vandalism	178	16	3	160	13	5	186	21	6
Weapons	11	2	3	17	8	5	8	2	0
Probation/Parole Violations	24	3	1	17	4	3	24	0	2
Warrant Arrests	446	0	0	340	0	0	329	0	0
Theft	427	21	0	430	16	0	470	18	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	71	0	0	66	1	0	82	4	0
Burglary	141	13	2	146	8	0	138	8	0
All other non-violent crime	782	74	9	832	76	20	749	50	13
Total Non-Violent Crime	2260	182	27	2169	164	51	2109	129	34
Total All Crime	2571	224	45	2439	195	64	2266	160	48
Info Reports									
Misc. Info	59	9	4	70	18	1	77	17	1

Another information source, the Juvenile Justice Accountability Report, 2011, which was produced by the Santa Clara County Model Courts Project, shows that while the City of Gilroy makes up 2.7% of the population within Santa Clara County, it accounts for 6% of the citations and arrests by youth in the County, Morgan Hill makes up 2.1% of the population it accounts for 3% of the citations and arrests by youth in the County and San Martin accounts for 1% of the Citation and arrests by youth in the County.

Stakeholder Input

In many instances, the community members are not active participants in working on solutions in their neighborhoods. Furthermore, parents of high-risk youth may not be aware of how or feel empowered to identify juvenile delinquent and/or gang behaviors. Parent education that is language and culturally appropriate is needed along with support services. In general, there is a need for an education and awareness campaign regarding gangs and the issues and conditions that create the problem.

A significant contributing factor that prevents engaging the community as “partners for solutions” appears to be fear; fear of criminal elements within their neighborhoods, and fear and reluctance to work with law enforcement. Bridging relationships between residents of the community and police has been cited as a key need. Some actions identified as potential solutions are education on how to call 911 emergency services, alleviating fears of calling police because of immigration status, maintaining anonymity, and building relationships between patrol officers, youth and residents.

There is a desire amongst stakeholders to work together towards serving the needs of youth and their families. With respect to the relationship between schools, law enforcement, and service providers, communication in some instances is very good. However, in almost all instances communication practices are based on relationships as opposed to formal systems and protocols. Consequently, ongoing communications are at times inconsistent and infrequent, and don’t facilitate engaging all stakeholders into a coordinated “safety net” for serving youth and their families. A statement at the June 27th Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting was, “We tend to be meeting rich, but action and results poor.” The TAC has identified this area of communication and formal protocol as the key area they want to start immediate work on.

Community Surveys/Forums

The SCYTF has worked with neighborhood groups and school based groups to facilitate surveys of residents and to host a series of Community Forum (both with Spanish translation available) where there was a facilitated dialogue about neighborhood conditions, concerns and an opportunity to share ideas for collaboration. More than 100 people attended the Gilroy Forum, held at the Glen View Elementary School on September 13th. While there was a low turnout at the East Gilroy Neighborhood meeting on September 27th, staff has identified this as an opportunity to directly engage the community and address fears as well as the apathetic reaction towards the past attempts at addressing these issues. Morgan Hill had more than 60 residents participate in a Community meeting held at Britton Middle School on October 25th and 37 participants at a Morgan Hill Parent Advisory Council Meeting on November 7th. There was open and honest dialogue between the residents and the community leaders who participated. As with all of the feedback that has been gathered during this process, the resounding issues continue to be a lack of coordination between service providers and a lack of understanding among the community about what resources are out there or a feeling that there are not adequate resources for the youth and their families.

Current Climate Conditions

Community Climate

During the Community Feedback process, we were fortunate to have interested community members come out in support of the effort. There was a great deal of pride in neighborhood ownership expressed during the meetings paired with frustrations about a perceived lack of interest from the business community in the safety of youth and some feelings of the “Not my problem” attitude held by many of the businesses and residents who are not directly affected by the gang impacted youth. While some say there are obvious gang activities going on in the streets and Drug Dealers and drug and alcohol use is prevalent in the neighborhoods they say there is a sense of apathy to call the police. Others said the reluctance comes from fear, fear of retaliation by the perpetrators, fear and distrust of law enforcement, and fear because of immigration status. Another argument for resistance to participating in the problem solving is that the community is not well informed on how to participate or how to be a partner. South County has many hard working blue collar families that are low income, non/limited English speaking, and or may have only one parent in the household. Consequently, many parents lack the tools and capacity to understand their youth’s issues and have no ability deal with their problems. Bi-lingual parenting programs and subsequent family support services are needed in our schools and community to help these parents. They shared that there is a lack of culturally competent communication for families about what programs and services are available for youth in the communities. The parents and families need to be provided information early, when the children are in elementary school and they need tangible alternatives, not just words.

Identifying, Aligning and Coordinating Services

During both the Community Feedback sessions and the stakeholder interviews, there was much discussion about the lack of coordination among all of the elements that make up the “continuum of care”, and a strong desire to “connect the dots”. There is a need to establish protocols for communication, intervention and referrals between schools, law enforcement and service providers. Realizing that the South County has little to no capacity to address intervention, supervision or family support services for dissuading high risk youth from juvenile delinquent and gang behaviors not to mention, focused services for re-entry, there is a significant need for coordinated options that will engage youth in positive alternatives.

Safe and Accessible After School Options for Youth

The South County lacks adequate funding to provide youth and children access to safe places and safe recreation and enrichment alternatives, particularly in low income neighborhoods impacted by the influences of gangs. Funding cuts have

eliminated most programs and services that provide prevention curriculums for developing youth competencies in the areas of decision making, goal setting, anti-bullying and anger management. There are coordinated afterschool efforts in the City of Gilroy , however few options in the City of Morgan Hill. Many of the recreation options are “pay to play” and even with the tuition assistance or scholarships, they are out of reach for many of our “at risk” youth either because of transportation issues, responsibilities at home or lack of cultural understanding of the programs by the families. Another significant concern is the lack of employment opportunities and job training opportunities in the South County precluding youth from finding meaningful employment to keep them occupied and assist them financially.

Specific Points from the Community Meetings: (English and Spanish (translated))

1. Gangs are disbursed
 - a. Distressed neighborhoods with high risk factors exist
 - b. Some hot spot areas still exist
2. Drug Dealers and drug and alcohol use is prevalent in the neighborhoods
3. In many cases, the community is not an active participant
4. Fear does exist in the community with respect to both gang members and law enforcement
 - a. Fear of retaliation
 - b. Some distrust for law enforcement
 - c. Fear because of immigration status
 - d. Community not well informed on how to participate or how to be a partner
5. Some parents lack involvement
6. Parents may not be aware or empowered on how to identify gang and juvenile delinquent behaviors or address them
7. Parents need to be educated, especially at the elementary level
8. When working with parents, schools and law enforcement must have something for them, provide support and/or services, not just words
9. Referrals from schools need to be linked to a “safety net”, currently no formal system or protocol
10. Some safety net services not effective – need to evaluate. In some instances, no or inconsistent monthly reporting and/or communications. Coordination is sometimes a problem
11. General community may lack education and awareness of the issues and conditions that create the problem.
12. There is some coordination of afterschool recreation/service components
13. In some/many instances children and youth from high risk neighborhoods do not frequent city recreation services and activities

14. In many instances various service providers operate independent of each other with no connection
15. Youth are looking up to people who are on the wrong path...no positive role models
16. There is a need for connecting the school based services and educators and recognizing the cultural sensitivity
17. There are obvious gang activities going on in the streets and there is a sense of apathy to call the police
18. There is an increase in fighting and violence among students particularly afterschool, with no one reporting it (parents or students)
19. There is a lack of employment opportunities for youth
20. There is a generational disconnect between youth and parents/teachers, lack of respect
21. There is an notable increase in reports of bullying and students feeling “targeted” for not identifying with “gangs”
22. Parents feel there is a lack of cultural sensitivity within the schools, that teachers/administrators don’t understand how their families operate.
23. There is a lack of interest from the business community in the safety of youth/need better lighting and security around businesses

As a result of input and dialogue, the following areas have been identified as service capacity and condition deficiencies to be considered in crafting potential solutions for addressing the affects of gangs on youth, their families and their communities in the south county.

1. South County lacks intervention capacity and service components for dissuading high risk youth from juvenile delinquent and gang behaviors and engaging them into positive alternatives.
2. South County lacks funding to provide youth and children access to safe places and safe recreation and enrichment alternatives in low income neighborhoods impacted by the influences of gangs.
3. South County has many hard working blue collar families that are low income, non/limited English speaking, and or may have only one parent in the household. Consequently, many parents lack the tools and capacity to understand their youth’s issues and have no ability deal with their problems. Bi-lingual parenting programs and subsequent family support services are needed in our schools and community to help these parents.
4. Funding cuts have eliminated most programs and services that provide prevention curriculums for developing youth competencies in the areas of decision making, goal setting, anti-bullying and anger management. Program components

that are language and culturally competent are needed to provide early prevention services to children and youth in our schools and community.

5. The South County has little to no capacity to address intervention, supervision or family support services to work with juvenile re-entry. Street level and school intervention/support capacity is needed in schools and community to assist with successful re-entry.
6. The key to making our neighborhoods safer and sustaining the success of suppression efforts will be through engaging the residents in our impacted neighborhoods as partners with our cities and law enforcement agencies. At present we have very limited capacity via our CalGRIP grant to initiate outreach to these affected communities. As we will not be able to arrest our way out of this problem, we would need to expand and sustain our ability to build neighborhood capacity for residents to take control of their communities.
7. Formal systems and protocols that facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration are absent. There is a need to establish protocols for communication, intervention and referrals between schools, law enforcement and service providers.
8. In many instances prevention and intervention activities are not coordinated or aligned to a common mission and objective. Creation of action/coordination bodies with action plans are needed to establish a “continuum of services” for children and youth services.
9. The lack of employment opportunities and job training opportunities in the South County are precluding youth from finding meaningful employment to keep them occupied and assist them financially.
10. More community members and local business owners need to take an interest in the youth as members of the whole community, not take the “Not my problem” attitude.
11. There is a lack of culturally competent communication for families about what programs and services are available for youth in the communities.

12. Many of the “pay to play” options are not feasible for the lower income families to participate in, leaving them few alternatives to engage their children.