



Centre for
Newcomers

Welcoming People from Around the World

The Playing Field is not Level: Serving Youth at Risk

Centre for Newcomers
Youth Gang Project

Presenter: Paras Persad

Project History

Project Intent: to reduce and prevent gang involvement of immigrant youth in the City of Calgary through:

- Community mobilization
- Provision of Social Intervention and Social Opportunities
- Suppression
- Organizational Development and Change



Collaborative Action Inquiry Established

- Participatory learning and action network established (multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder)
- Research conducted on 25 gang involved immigrant youth or former gang members
- Emerging learning of research
- Mobilization strategies



Project Activities

Provision of Social Intervention and Opportunities

- Stepping Out
- Youth Quest



City-wide symposium held

- Symposium “Intersections” a Multi-sectoral symposium on Gang-involved Immigrant Youth held in October 2010.
- Research presented by Dr. Hieu Van Ngo
- Working groups where participants would (1) share information and (2) offer suggestions for next steps

Next Steps

Community Engagement Project for at-risk Youth



Problems with Uneven Playing Field

- hurt yourself physically
- under-developed potential
- little self-fulfillment/satisfaction
- good players refuse to play with us
- not motivated to improve life for ourselves



Issues Facing “At-Risk” Youth

- Connectedness to the Community (ethnic and larger community)
- Lifestyle Issues (substance abuse, many have experienced trauma due to war or dislocation experience)
- Education (early school leaving, experiencing failure in school, illiteracy, English as a second language)
- Social and Cultural Isolation (peers, culture shock)



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- The Centre for Newcomers has been providing Youth Programs to immigrant youth for over ten years.
 - Youth Programs based on experiential learning, skills for life to develop skills that will lead to success in the workplace and at school.



Stepping Out

works with high-risk youth
vulnerable to criminal activity
and gang involvement



It's a wrap around program
which focuses on

- Outreach Activities
- Case Management
- Skills for Life



Experiential Programming

Youth Quest offers
Skills for Life
Fear Facing
Teamwork Development



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The Intervention Process

- Establish Relationship
- Perform Assessment
- Set Goals
- Life Course Tracking
- Support Client to Achieve Goals



Wrap Around Resources

Works because of good buy-in from
Stakeholders:
City Police, Corrections, Probation,
Community, Agencies, School Boards



Case Management and Ongoing Support/Follow-up



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Program Outcomes

Ultimate Outcome

Participants are not gang-involved and follow a positive life course.



Short Term/Ongoing Outcomes:

- Increased educational qualifications
- Improved family functioning
- Improved peer associations
- Increased constructive use of time and community engagement
- Improved physical well-being
- Improved emotional well-being/mental health
- Decreased delinquent beliefs/attitudes
- No criminal activity



Call or visit

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Centre for
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Centre for Newcomers

- We welcome newcomers, and help them settle and integrate.
- Our culture is founded on respect, co-operation and trust.
- We work collaboratively, and in partnership.

Together, we make a positive difference in the lives of all Calgarians.



Mission

To achieve integration of newcomers in the community, through services and initiatives that promote diversity, participation and citizenship.

