

# **Haywood County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council**

## **Gang Assessment Report**

December 1, 2010

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Dear Steering Committee Members:

This gang assessment report follows the guidelines of the OJJCP Comprehensive Gang Assessment Model manual with an executive summary, key findings identified, data sets with summaries for Chapters 4-7, a summary of existing resources, and a description of the methodology for conducting the assessment. The report contains multiple data sets that address questions posed in Chapters 4-8 in the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Assessment Model with preliminary analyses and summary of findings indicated within each area of study.

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Sincerely,

Phyllis Robertson  
Alvin Malesky  
Russell Binkley  
Julie Cummins

## **Executive Summary**

This report is a comprehensive summary of youth involvement in gang related activity as reported by various community constituents. Its purpose is to document perceptions of gang related activities across Haywood County and facilitate the implementation of suppression, prevention and intervention programs addressing these issues. Perceptual data is helpful in determining the type and level of prevention and intervention deemed necessary by community stakeholders. However, one should exercise caution when forming factual conclusions based on perceptual data.

The assessment of gang activity and youth involvement in Haywood County reveals the following keys findings. Gang membership and gang activity is perceived as not having a significant impact on the communities in Haywood County. Reasons for joining a gang and descriptions of gang activities were consistent across groups surveyed. Drug related offenses and violence were common concerns associated with gang activity in the community. Community input for dealing with gang activity encourages taking a proactive step in prevention and intervention. Suppression efforts by law enforcement were seen as a necessary step for dealing with juvenile crime, illegal drug/substance sale and use, and vandalism, while prevention and intervention suggestions focused on addressing drug and alcohol abuse, providing more structured after-school activities for building character and relationships, education, addressing poverty, and strengthening family relations.

Additional finding summaries are included in each section containing the various data sets for all of the areas of focus within the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem.

## Key Findings

### **Finding 1. The perception is held that gang activity is not having a significant impact on the communities in Haywood County.**

Fifty-eight percent of the community residents believe there are no gangs in their communities with only five percent identifying gangs as a top concern. Community resident survey.

Sixty percent of the community leaders are either unaware of a gang problem or do not perceive gangs to be a problem in their community. Community leader survey.

Seventy-seven percent of the school personnel believe there is no gang problem in schools. School personnel survey.

Eighty percent of the students are either unaware of gang activity or perceive gangs do not exist at their school. Student survey.

Three percent of the students surveyed were identified as gang affiliated or gang members. Student survey.

Law enforcement and school personnel report variable gang activity and membership. Law enforcement and school personnel survey.

Sixty-eight percent of school personnel and 76% of community members perceive the level of gang activity to be remaining the same with a majority having reported there is no gang activity. School personnel and community member surveys.

A majority of community members expressed limited knowledge of what is being done to deal with gang activity. *"I do not feel the community has responded because so many residents are not educated about the activity."* Community member survey.

School personnel see evidence of gang wannabes in the schools. *"We do not have gangs but periodically we have gang-like conversation and colors of "wanna be" individuals that are trying to identify with that lifestyle."* School personnel survey.

*"Not aware of gang activity other than hearsay." "I honestly don't know. Only know what's on the news and what I hear from other(s) with children involved in school."* Community member survey.

For the youth who reported gangs being in their schools, a majority reported not knowing what type of activity gang members were involved in at school. Student survey.

Juvenile delinquency complaints in 2009 showed a 47% decline since 2007. Law enforcement report.

**Finding 2. Reasons for joining a gang and descriptions of gang activities were consistent across groups surveyed.**

Seeking a sense of belonging, low parental/familial involvement, and movement of gang members into the community were identified as the reasons for gang involvement. Community leaders, members, and school personnel surveys.

Poverty and boredom (e.g. join a gang to have fun) were also identified as reasons youth join gangs. Community members, school personnel, and student survey.

Self-reported gang involved youth identified a desire for respect, fun, and providing protection for each other as reasons for being in a gang. Student survey.

Self-reported gang involved youth identified having fewer positive interactions with adults in school, at home, and in their communities than non-gang involved youth. Student survey.

School personnel perceived gang activity to occur outside of the school environment and community members see it in areas where groups of unsupervised youth gather. School personnel and community member surveys.

**Finding 3. Drug related offenses and violence were common concerns associated with gang activity in the community.**

Community members identified drug crimes, increased fear for safety, and an increase in violent crimes as the top three problems associated with gang activity. Community member survey.

Community leaders identified graffiti/vandalism, school disruption, and property crimes as the most common problems associated with gangs. Community leader survey.

School personnel identified problem behaviors within the school that can be associated with gang activity to include bullying, disruption, intimidation, fighting, drugs, and violent acts. School personnel survey.

School disruption through fighting and intimidation can be associated with gang activity as 64% of self-reported gang involved youth indicated having attacked

someone with the idea of seriously hurting them compared to 10% of the non-gang involved youth. Student survey.

The LEA has reported possession of a controlled substance as the primary offense by school age youth over the past three years. Law enforcement report.

Seventy-six percent of self-reported gang involved youth reported being drunk at school in the past 12 months compared to nine percent of the non-gang involved youth. Student survey.

Sixty-seven percent of self-reported gang involved youth reported using marijuana and 58% had sold illegal drugs in the past year. Student survey.

**Finding 4. Community input for dealing with gang activity encourages taking a proactive step in prevention and intervention. Suppression efforts by law enforcement were seen as a necessary step for dealing with juvenile crime, illegal drug/substance sale and use, and vandalism, while prevention and intervention suggestions focused on addressing drug and alcohol abuse, providing more structured after-school activities for building character and relationships, education, addressing poverty, and strengthening family relations.**

Law enforcement was seen as holding the primary responsibility for dealing with gang activity. Community leader and member surveys.

*"I think the police are doing a good job. I think we need more mentoring for children who come from bad homes."* Community member survey.

An increase in recreation and mentoring programs as prevention and intervention measures were identified. Community leader and member surveys.

Poverty was associated with gang activity and job training and provision were identified as strategies for dealing with gang activity. Community members and leaders and school personnel surveys.

Increased education and awareness programs were suggested to educate the community about gang activity. For example, leaders suggest, *"awareness/more public knowledge of the causes/problem"* Community leader and member surveys.

Community members identified neighborhood outreach as an area they would contribute to in dealing with gang activity. Community member survey.

Currently, there are six agencies/programs identified who could serve gang involved youth of Haywood County: Project Pursuit, Aspire, Hawthorn Heights, DJJDP, Project Challenge, and Eckerd Camp. Agency Inventories.

## Law Enforcement Report

### Identification of Resources

Gang trends in small towns and rural counties reveal variable problems where the presence of gangs is reported one or more years and then is absent in others. (Howell & Egley, 2005). Areas with variable gang problems report low numbers of gangs and gang membership with relatively minor impact in comparison with larger districts and metropolitan areas. Haywood County would qualify as a rural county according to the Howell & Egley (2005) report.

Approximately 2 years ago, Detective Russ Conner compiled a listing of known and suspected gang members in Haywood County. Two gang affiliations, Folk Nation and People Nation were identified with subgroups in each. Folk Nation consisted of the Crips, Rollin 60's, IGDC, and Young Gunz. At that time he listed 37 members or suspected members of the Crips. Many of these individuals were affiliated with the Rollin 60's, a set of the Crips. People Nation consisted of the Bloods and Piru. Thirty-four of these were identified as members or suspected members of the Bloods.

In 2008, Haywood County reported evidence of "one to nine gangs" with approximately "three to 74 gang members" to the North Carolina Criminal Justice Analysis Center (Yearwood & Hayes, 2010). The 2010 report did not include gang information for Haywood County for 2009 (NC Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, 2010, <http://www.ncgccd.org/pdfs/pubs/2010gangreport.pdf>).

Attempts were made to collect current data from resource officers at the middle and high schools in Haywood County regarding gang activity in and around the schools; however, this information was not received at the time of this writing. Law enforcement agencies were also contacted to provide information about current gang activity in Haywood County. This information was also not received at the time of this writing.

County and state 2007-2009 data from the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention reports is provided in Table 1. Overall, there was a 47% decrease in delinquent complaints from 2007 to 2009 in Haywood County. Juvenile violent complaints were a relatively rare occurrence in the past three years. The number of serious (Class F-I, A-1) and minor (Class 1-3) complaints dropped significantly (28% and 52% respectively) during this time period. It should be noted that Haywood County's downward trend of juvenile complaints was reflective of a general downward trend throughout the state during this time period.

The 2007-2009 NC Department of Public Instruction Crime and Violence Reports indicated the type of incidences reported by Haywood County Local Education Authorities (LEAs). Haywood County schools reported possession of a controlled substance as the most frequent incident over the past two years followed by possession of a weapon and possession of an alcoholic beverage. Possession of a controlled substance includes Marijuana, Heroin, LSD, Methamphetamine, Cocaine, or any other drug listed in Schedules I - VI of the North Carolina Controlled Substances

Act (G.S. §90-89 through 90-94). The unauthorized possession of a prescription drug is included under this offense. Breakdowns of acts identified in the NC DPI reports are in Table 2.

### **Characteristics of Gangs**

Based on the information collected by Detective Conner, most of the gang members in Haywood County are Caucasian and almost exclusively male. Although the vast majority of gang members in North Carolina are male, only nine percent are white (NC Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, 2010, <http://www.ncgccd.org/pdfs/pubs/2010gangreport.pdf>). The racial discrepancy between identified gang members in Haywood County and the State of North Carolina is likely the result of the demographic makeup of Haywood County. According to the 2000 census, 97% of Haywood County residences identify as white (US Bureau of Census, 2002).

### **Summary of Findings**

- There were limited data available for review; however, the available data suggested that a relatively small number of gang members are present in Haywood County. These individuals tend to affiliate with the Crips or the Bloods. The demographic makeup of these two gangs is predominately white males.
- Gang activity in Haywood County can be classified as variable in that gang problems appear to have minor impact on the communities and low gang membership numbers.
- Overall youth crime has been on the decline in Haywood County for the past three years. This is reflective of a general state wide trend.
- Possession of a controlled substance was the most frequently reported incident over the past two years in Haywood County schools.

**Table 1: 2007-09 NC Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Report**

POPULATION AGE GROUPS					
Location	Year	District	Juvenile Population Ages 6-17	Juvenile Population Ages 6-15	Juvenile Population Ages 10-17
Haywood	2009	30	7,646	6,147	5,301
Haywood	2008	30	7,877	6,601	5,286
Haywood	2007	30	7,857	6,612	5,270
State	2009		1,489,262	1,228,572	997,004
State	2008		1,485,946	1,234,241	981,222
State	2007		1,461,851	1,217,196	968,150

COMPLAINTS RECEIVED							
Location	Violent Class A-E	Serious Class F-J, A1	Minor Class 1-3	Infraction	Status	Total Delinquent Complaints	Total Complaints
Haywood (2009)	4	14	91	2	111	111	222
Haywood (2008)	4	35	132	4	113	175	288
Haywood (2007)	3	50	175	8	150	236	386
State (2009)	766	8,581	26,213	241	4,631	35,801	40,673
State (2008)	1,037	9,638	28,004	222	4,896	38,901	43,797
State (2007)	1,119	10,281	29,776	311	4,744	41,487	46,231

Location	Undisciplined Rate per 1,000 Ages 6 to 17	Delinquent Rate per 1,000 Age 6 to 15	SUPERIOR COURT TRANSFERS	DETENTION	
			Number of Juveniles Transferred to Superior Court	Distinct Juveniles Detained*	Detention Admissions**
Haywood (2009)	14.52	18.06	0	52	67
Haywood (2008)	14.35	26.51	0	60	81
Haywood (2007)	19.09	35.69	0	67	91
State (2009)	3.11	29.14	28	4,413	6,612
State (2008)	3.29	31.52	43	4,827	7,889
State (2007)	3.25	34.08	49	5,026	7,792

Location	YDC Commitments	YDC Commitment Rate Per 1,000 Ages 10 to 17	PROGRAMS					
			JCPC	JCPC Youth Served Rate Per 1000 Age 10-17	SOS Enrollment	Eckerd Camp	MPGH	One on One
Haywood (2009)	0	0	194	36.60	0	4	7	0
Haywood (2008)	0	0	133	25.16	64	0	2	0
Haywood (2007)	0	0	163	20.75	54	3	3	0
State (2009)	365	0.37	29,901	29.99	10,775	773	249	680
State (2008)	469	.48	24,425	24.89	14,333	411	90	513
State (2007)	437	.45	23,441	16.04	13,760	386	96	493

Source: <http://www.ncdjidp.org/statistics/databook.html> OR <http://www.juvjus.state.nc.us/statistics/databook.html>

**Table 2 NC Department of Public Instruction Crime and Violence Report  
Total Number of Acts for Each LEA 2008-09 and 2007-2008**

LEA 2008-09	AR	AW	AP	BT	BS	D	K	PA	PS	PF	PW	R	RW	RO	SA	SO	IM	Total Acts	ADM**	Total # of acts per 1000 students***
Haywood County	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	12	31	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	56	7,779	7.199

LEA 2007-08	AR	AW	AP	BT	BS	D	K	PA	PS	PF	PW	R	RW	RO	SA	SO	IM	Total Acts	ADM**	Total # of acts per 1000 students***
Haywood County	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	14	54	1	15	0	0	0	0	2	0	90	7,818	11.512

**\*Key:**  
 PW- Possession of a weapon  
 PS- Possession of controlled substance  
 PA- Possession of alcoholic beverage  
 AP- Assault on school personnel  
 AR- Assault resulting in serious injury  
 SA- Sexual Assault  
 AW- Assault involving use of a weapon  
 SO- Sexual Offense  
 PF- Possession of firearm  
 RO- Robbery without a dangerous weapon  
 RW- Robbery with a dangerous weapon  
 IM- Taking indecent liberties with a minor  
 R- Rape  
 D- Death by other than natural causes  
 K- Kidnapping  
 BT- Bomb Threat  
 BS- Burning of school building

\*\*Final Average Daily Membership

\*\*\*Derived by dividing each LEA's total number of all acts committed by ADM and then multiplying by 1000.

Retrieved October 27, 2010 from 2008-09 and 2007-2008 Annual Report on School Crime and Violence by NC DPI at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/research/discipline/reports>

## Community Perceptions

### Part I: Description of Area Included in Assessment

Haywood County is located in the Appalachian Mountains in Western North Carolina. The county population is 56,962 and includes the towns of Canton, Clyde, Maggie Valley and Waynesville. With a shift from manufacturing, the driving force of the economy has become real estate, construction, health care, tourism, education and services (Haywood County Chamber of Commerce, 2010). The Haywood County public school system includes two high schools and an alternative high school, three middle schools, and nine elementary schools. Demographic information on Haywood County is included in Table 3.

Category	Haywood County (2010)	NC
Total Population	56,962	9,505,218
% Males	48.1%	49.0%
% Females	51.9%	51.0%
% African American/Black	1.40%	12.4%
% Hispanic/Latino	1.9%	7.3%
% Caucasian/White	96.6%	69.7%
% Asian	0.20%	2.0%
% Native American/Indian	0.50%	1.10%
% Other/Biracial	1.30%	5.9%
<b>Age Groups</b>		
% Under 5	5.6%	6.9%
% 5-19	16.60%	19.9%
% 20-64	57%	60.1%
% 65 and Over	20.8%	13.2%
<b>Income and Education</b>		
Median Household Income	\$38,894	\$46,410
Average Household Income	\$53,374	\$63,012
% Families Below Poverty	14.5% (2008)	
Unemployment rate	8.7% (2010)	
% High School Graduates (25 years or older)	75.8% (2009)	
<b>Other Indicators</b>		
Teen Pregnancies	93 (2008)	19,398
High School Drop-Out Rate	3.96% (2009)	4.27%
Percentage of People Living in Poverty	11.5% (2009)	15.2%

**Sources:**

Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.ashevillechamber.org/economicdevelopment/PDFs/countydemographics.pdf>

Bureau of Labor Statistics: US Department of Labor <http://www.bls.gov/lau/laucntycur14.txt>

Haywood County Chamber of Commerce <http://www.haywood-nc.com/index.asp>

Manna Foodbank

<http://mannafoodbank.org/hunger-in-western-north-carolina/>

N.C. Department of Health and Human Services: State Center for Health Statistics

<http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/data/pregnancies/2008/preg1519.pdf>

North Carolina Public Schools

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/consolidated/2008-09/consolidated-report.pdf> and

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/statesuperintendent/office/commissions/meetings/20090612/grad-rate-by-lea.pdf>

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2002 Summary File 3 (SF 3)

[http://www.factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?\\_lang=en](http://www.factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_lang=en)

## **Part II: Community Leader Survey Results**

An eight item questionnaire was emailed to community leaders through the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council office. Thirty-two people responded to the first question regarding gangs being a problem in the community. Of these, 44% said no, 41% said yes, and 16% did not know. Of the initial 32 respondents, 20-24 continued the survey and responded to specific questions. Of the 23 community leaders who completed the question on personal experiences with gang members, 15 indicated having had none. Others indicated their work experiences had involved contact with gang members or family who had members involved in gang activity. One respondent knew of a child of a friend who seemed to have gang involvement.

In response to what kinds of problems gangs present in the community, participants identified an increase in graffiti/vandalism, school disruption, and property crimes as the top issues. See Chart 1 for a further breakdown of the problems identified.

**Chart 1 Top Three Problems N=12**

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Increase in property crimes		8	67%
2	Increase in vandalism/graffiti		11	92%
3	Increased fear in community		2	17%
4	School disruption		9	75%
5	Increase in drug crimes		7	58%
6	Public nuisance		3	25%
7	Family disruption		7	58%
8	Increase in violent crime against persons		4	33%
9	Increase in weapon crimes		3	25%
10	Increased fear for safety		5	42%
11	Other, please specify		0	0%

In response to why gang activity exists in the community, 23 respondents identified the following factors in rank order from highest to lowest with at least 5 respondents choosing the factor as a top three. Drugs was written in by one respondent.

- family problems
- to feel loved and a sense of belonging
- gang members move into community
- family/friends in gangs
- lack of activities
- poverty
- school problems
- power
- boredom

The perception of community response to gangs was addressed through an open-ended question. Community leaders gave law enforcement credit for working on ways to prevent gangs from becoming a problem. Others indicate they believe gangs may be a threat in Haywood County, but that the community is in denial: *"I fear that my community does not believe that there are gangs in this area."* There was also a call for a more offensive stance: *"Although I don't think gangs are a problem now, I can see them becoming one if we are not proactive."*

Of the 20 respondents who addressed the question about their level of satisfaction with the current response by law enforcement, social service agencies, schools and others, nine indicated

satisfaction, two unsatisfied, and others expanded on their responses. Many community leaders say they are “*satisfied*” with the current response because “*we’re beginning to address it,*” while a cautionary note is expressed by a few others: “*Intervention and response are important, but prevention is more so*”; and, “*it is a solid beginning but more money needs to be raised and obtained through grants or any means possible to combat the problem while it is still in early stages.*” Respondents expressed a desire for the schools to address the problem, focus on prevention strategies, and they recognized that resources are limited.

Further examination of responses to gang problems was provided in a question asking the participants to rank a list of prevention, intervention and suppression actions. Chart 2 indicates the respondents value more recreational programs, more parental involvement, and mentoring as methods for dealing with gang activity.

**Chart 2 Identified Responses to Gang Problem N=24**

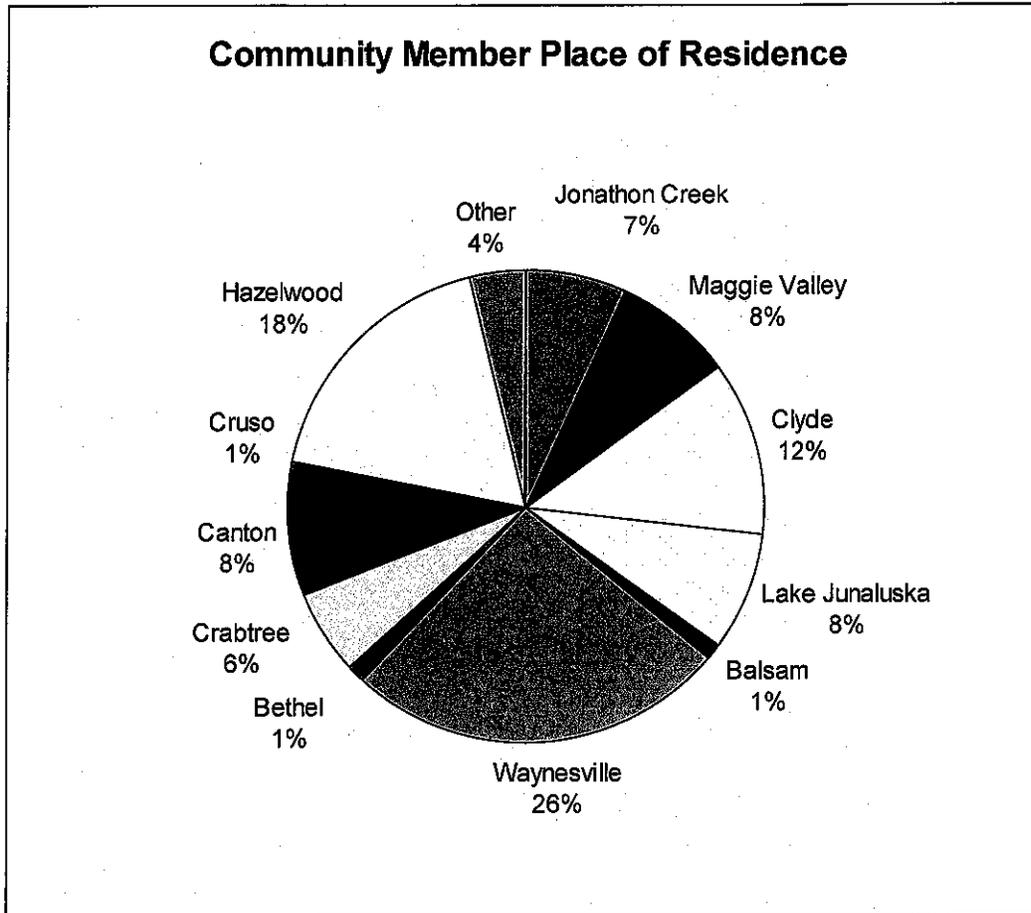
#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
10	There is no gang problem in my community		2	8%
1	Job and job training		7	29%
2	Tutoring		1	4%
3	Mentoring		12	50%
4	Recreation programs		16	67%
5	School programs		10	42%
6	More police presence		7	29%
7	More parental involvement		15	63%
8	New laws/ordinances		3	13%
9	Other, please specify		2	8%

The respondents provided further input into how the community could respond to gang problems. The suggestions focused on increasing education and awareness of problems presented by gangs in a community and educating others on risk factors, encouraging more parental/familial involvement, encouraging more after school activities that are structured, providing support and revenue for existing programs, and reporting problems. Leaders suggest that education means “*awareness/more public knowledge of the causes/problem*” and “*spreading the word about groups who are tackling the issue.*” Involvement means “*working closely with the family*”; “*adults becoming more ‘plugged in’ with youth*”; and, “*provide after school activities and places for kids to hang out*”.

**Summary of Findings from Community Leaders**

- Sixty percent of the community leaders were unaware of a gang problem or reported that there was not a gang problem in their community.

**Chart 3 Residency**



In direct response to their perception of gang activity in the community, 58% (93) of the respondents indicated they do not think gangs are in their community. Forty-two percent perceive there is a presence of gang activity. In the past year, a majority 76% (N=144) believe gang activity has remained about the same in the community with 22% indicating an increase and three percent a decrease.

In a broad question about top concerns about their communities, unemployment, drug dealing and burglary or robbery topped their rankings. Only five percent of community members ranked gang activity as a top concern, although drug dealing and burglary/robbery, which may or may not be gang-related, were the top concerns after the unemployment rate. See Chart 4 for further explanation of these responses.

**Chart 4 Top Concerns about Community (N = 150)**

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Unemployment		89	59%
2	Homicide		0	0%
3	Gang Activity		7	5%
4	Loud Music		10	7%
5	Unkempt property		47	31%
6	Drug dealing		72	48%
7	Burglary or robbery		60	40%
8	Graffiti		7	5%
9	Truancy		5	3%
10	Vandalism		25	17%
11	Domestic violence		28	19%
12	Insufficient street lighting		17	11%
13	Low police activity		27	18%
14	Other.		19	13%

As for feelings regarding their level of safety in the community, 35 (22%) of the respondents indicated that they felt at the same level as two years ago. Fifty six (35%) felt less safe and 33 (21%) felt safer. Explanations for the responses of less safe indicated that their feelings were attributed to an increase in drug traffic, people moving into communities and suspicion of neighbor's activities, an increase in crime, and the overall slump in the economy.

In regards to the top three problems the respondents attribute to gang activity, 48% identified an increase in drug crimes, 32% an increase in fear for safety, and 23% an increase in violent crime. Park areas were identified by several respondents as places of concern for gang activity. Furthermore, their perceptions on the occurrence of gang activity indicate that most find it remained the same in the past year (76%), 22% saw an increase, and three percent saw a decrease. Interpretation of this data requires the viewer to note that a majority of the respondents do not perceive gangs to be a problem in their community. Only two percent of the respondents reported believing their children were at risk for being in a gang.

The top reasons community members attributed to gang activity included boredom, lack of activities, gang members moving from other areas, and poverty. Drugs were identified in the "other" category. Again, 36% reported that gangs are not a problem. Chart 5 further explains their responses.

**Chart 5 Top Reasons for Gang Activity (N=158)**

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Gangs are not a problem here		57	36%
2	School problems		16	10%
3	Lack of activities		44	28%
4	Family/friends in gangs		18	11%
5	Police labeling		2	1%
6	Gang members move from other areas		44	28%
7	To feel love/sense of belonging		31	20%
8	Boredom		51	32%
9	Poverty		39	25%
10	Power		21	13%
11	Protection		8	5%
12	Family problems		34	22%
13	Other:		7	4%

From a list, the community members identified the top actions they believe should be taken toward gangs and gang activity. Programs and recreational activities, job provision and job training, and mentoring topped the list. See Chart 6 below. Additional suggestions included community leaders taking on more responsibility through greater involvement, more prevention education, and stronger enforcement of laws and correction.

**Chart 6 Response to gang activity N = 158**

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Gangs are not a problem here		57	36%
2	More police protection		37	23%
3	Jobs provision and job training		67	42%
4	Programs/recreation		83	53%
5	Mentoring		63	40%
6	Tutoring		24	15%
7	Other:		18	11%

The organizations community members believe have the responsibility for dealing with gangs and gang activity were ranked in the following order with most responsibility first:

1. Police
2. Family
3. Court/criminal justice system
4. Office of juvenile affairs
5. School
6. Church
7. Community Residents
8. Neighborhood Association
9. Office of Youth and Family Services
10. Treatment Providers
11. Service Providers
12. Housing Authority

In response to how the community has responded to gang activity, the responses again reflected the perception of little to no gang activity in Haywood County. There also were a significant number of respondents who indicated that they did not know what was being done to deal with gang related issues. They had identified that graffiti has been cleaned up and an increase in police presence in certain areas, but several indicated that people just “ignore it.”

As for satisfaction with the current response to gang activity 28 reported satisfied, 24 not satisfied and the majority of 50 did not state a level of satisfaction. Satisfaction with the community response is represented by the statements, “*I think the response probably reflects the level of activity*” and “*Police are trying to stop the activity.*” Dissatisfaction indicated a desire for greater visibility of police, more mentoring or positive outlets for youth, and more action by the court system. A desire for greater awareness was expressed by “*I do not feel the community has responded because so many residents are not educated about the activity.*” An example of a response that did not state a level of satisfaction is “*Honestly, I’m not aware of any response in the community of gang activity. One may assume that law enforcement is keeping track of it and intervening, but I believe that’s naïve and taking a lot for granted.*”

Respondents were asked what they would be willing to do about gang activity. Chart 7 shows their choices. Neighborhood outreach topped the list. The other category included adult involvement with youth through existing programs (Scouts, church), personal acceptance of parental responsibilities, and support of community awareness and law enforcement interventions.

**Chart 7 Response to personal action N = 137**

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Nothing		20	15%
2	Neighborhood outreach		49	36%
3	Become a youth group leader		21	15%
4	Tutor		16	12%
5	Form sports leagues/teams		13	9%
6	Mentor		33	24%
7	Teach skills (auto mechanics, crafts, music, computer skills, electronics, etc.)		13	9%
8	Other:		37	27%

**Summary of Findings from Community Members:**

- More than half of the 162 surveyed members denied gangs are a problem in Haywood County.
- Thirty-five percent of respondents reported feeling ‘less safe’ than they felt two years ago as evidenced by their awareness of community drug trafficking, new and suspicious people in their neighborhoods (such as Clyde Park), more crime, and the overall economy.
- Those who believe gangs to be a growing problem in Haywood County lay the blame on not enough structured activities for youth, an influx of gang members coming in from outside, and poverty. Drugs were also included as a factor.
- Respondents who perceived a gang problem in Haywood County identified the most effective agents for dealing with gangs as the police, families, and the courts.
- In answer to gang activity, community members expressed a willingness to work in neighborhood programs, step up as parents, and involve law enforcement.

#### **Part IV: School Personnel Survey Results**

The school personnel survey was an eight item questionnaire distributed through individual faculty and staff email addresses. Eighty-one personnel responded: 6 administrators, 63 teachers, 2 assistant teachers, 6 support personnel, and 4 staff members.

Six percent (5) of the respondents believe there is a gang problem in the schools while 77% (62) believe there is no problem, 16% (13) do not know, and 1% (1) gave no response. The five respondents that believe there is a gang problem identify gang presence by signs in the community and on student possessions, colors, fighting, self-identification, and hearsay. One respondent indicated the use of colors and tagging was done more by students wanting attention rather than true gang membership

In regards to when the respondents first became aware of gang problems in their school, only eight of the 44 who responded to the question gave a specific timeframe. The timeframe ranged from within the past year up to 10 years ago. In this question, the respondents referred to identification of gang “wannabes” and not true gang members. There perceptions are exemplified in the following statements: *“We do not have gangs but periodically we have gang-like conversation and colors of “wanna be” individuals that are trying to identify with that lifestyle,” “I THINK that students may talk about gangs, but I don’t think that a large number of students are ‘members’ of gangs,” “Approximately 10 years ago when I began to see gang symbols/colors. Still, I wouldn’t characterize it as gang problems,” and “Several years of wanna be gangsters in school-at least 6 years.”*

There was also an expression that there may be youth who would be tempted by gang membership but the structure does not exist for it to happen. This is represented by statements such as *“Very few kids here are into gangs, there aren’t (sic) enough individuals that are into that theme to form a gang”* and *“There are rough kids but they are not a part of a gang to my knowledge.”*

In regards to problems presented by gang members in or around school, 19 of 43 respondents provided input. An expression that represents the “variable problems” of gangs is *“Gang issues rise and fall within our school. We will have moments of students identifying with gangs and vandalizing school property.”* Bullying, disruption, intimidation, fighting, drugs, and violence were attributed to gang activity. Individual student traits were identified as problems including low academic motivation, absenteeism, poor social skills, and a lack of commitment toward school.

Areas the respondents identified as having the most frequent gang activity primarily focused on places outside of school including “the park area”, “Frog Level,” and before and after school. Within the school, less supervised areas such as the hallways, during lunch, and outside were identified by a few respondents as places where gang related activity may occur. These areas are also the ones where bullying behavior often occurs.

Forty-seven respondents identified issues they think contribute to gang activity. An examination of the data reveals 12 categories:

- Poverty/economic stress
- Poor parental involvement\*
- Lack of supervision
- Seeking a sense of belonging/attention\*
- Media
- Boredom/lack of afterschool activities
- Poor role models
- Drug involvement
- Need for power/protection
- Outside influences (people moving into area)
- Rebelliousness against authority
- Lack of education/poor grades
- Peer pressure
- Poor value system

\*Indicates high frequency of occurrence

In response to the question addressing the change in level of gang activity in the past year, 35 respondents provided their opinion. Of these perceptions, ten (28%) respondents see an increase, three (10%) see a decrease, and the majority 22 (68%) see no change attributing this to no evidence of gang activity in their school.

#### **Summary of Findings from School Personnel:**

- The majority of the school personnel respondents do not perceive gang activity as a problem at their schools.
- Gang activity is seen to occur outside of the school environment.
- Poor parenting and youth seeking a sense of belonging were identified as factors that contribute to gang activity.

#### **Part V: Student Survey Results**

##### **Characteristics of Students Completing Survey**

One thousand and sixty students, 552 males (52%) and 507 females (48%) provided data for this study. Students ranged in age from 12 to 18 ( $M=14.25$ ,  $SD=1.27$ ). The vast majority of the students were in the tenth (390, 37%), ninth (277, 26%), and eighth grades (251, 24%). Most students (85%) reported to be White, 9% reported to be Hispanic, 2% reported to be African American, 1% reported to be American Indian, 1% Multiracial, and 1% "other." English was the primary language spoken in the home of 96% of the students followed by Spanish in three percent of the students' households. Haywood County schools demographic information for 2008-2010 is provided in tables 4, 5, and 6.

**Table 4 2009 Year Ending Enrollment – Race and Sex Demographic Information**

African American	Asian	Latino	Native American	White	Totals
M = 119 (54%); F = 103 (46%)	M = 12 (38%); F = 20 (62%)	M = 164 (51%); F = 160 (49%)	M = 38 (50%); F = 38 (50%)	M = 3,759 (52%); F = 3,491 (48%)	M = 4,092 (52%); F = 3,812 (48%)
3%	.4%	5%	1%	92%	<b>Total : 7,904</b>

Source:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/resources/data/statisticalprofile/2009profile.pdf>

**Table 5 Data of LEAs and Charter Schools for FY10-11 Planning Allotment**

LEA	440	Haywood County	Free Lunch	Poverty	Population	% Poverty Population
			52.07%	1,672	8,401	19.90%

Note 1 Free Lunch as of Dec 2009

Note 2 Poverty

For LEAs, the poverty is the US Census Bureau's 2008 poverty estimates.

(see web site at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/district.html>)

Note 3 Population Ages 5-17,

For LEAs, the population is the population of age 5-17 from 2008 Census.

Source: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/allotments/planning/state/poverty.xls> and

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/resources/data/>

**Table 6 2008-2009 First Month Pupil Enrollment Per Grade Level**

School District	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Total Grades 7-11	Overall Total
Haywood County	601	649	728	589	565	3,132	7,937

\*Retrieved October 29, 2010 from

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/resources/data/statisticalprofile/2009profile.pdf>

Table 7 reflects the education of the student participants' parents. The students reported lower levels of education for their parents than the overall educational level of the community member respondents. Sixty percent of their mothers and 42% of their fathers completed some college.

**Table 7 Educational Level of Students' Parents**

Highest Level of Schooling	Father	Mother
Completed grade school or less	21 (2%)	13 (1%)
Some high school	125 (12%)	93 (9%)
Completed high school	272 (26%)	185 (18%)
Some college	116 (11%)	182 (17%)
Completed college	229 (22%)	336 (32%)
Graduate or professional school after college	95 (9%)	119 (11%)
Don't know	172 (16%)	114 (11%)

## Student Perceptions of Gang Activity in School Environment

Of 1049 students responding, 20% indicated that gangs are at their school. Sixty-six percent did not know and 15% said no gangs were at the school. When asked if students at the school belong to gangs, a similar percentage (24%) said yes. Twenty-three percent of the students reported seeing non-student gang members around their schools during the past six months.

When asked about delinquent activity in the past six months by gang members, 35% of the students reported the sale of drugs in the schools and seven percent believed handguns had been brought to school. The majority reported not knowing what gang activity occurred in the schools. Charts 8 through 11 provide further information about the students' perceptions of gang activity in their schools. The tables reflect the perceptions of students who indicated that gang members attend or come to their school thus N = 284.

### Chart 8

*Have gangs been involved in the sale of drugs at your school in the past six months?*

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	No		43	15%
2	Yes		100	35%
3	Don't know		141	50%
	Total		284	

### Chart 9

*Have any gang members brought guns to your school in the past six months?*

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	No		80	28%
2	Yes		20	7%
3	Don't know		183	65%
	Total		283	

### Chart 10

**How often have gangs been involved in fights, attacks, or violence at your school in the past six months?**

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Never		66	23%
2	Once or twice a month		51	18%
3	Once or twice a week		9	3%
4	Almost every day		9	3%
5	Don't know		149	52%
	Total		284	

In a forced choice response question, students identified gang member behavior around school. Chart 11 reports the perceptions of these behaviors.

### Chart 11

**Do the gangs around your school do the following things?**

#	Question	No	Yes	Responses
1	Help out in the community	251	30	281
2	Get in fights with other gangs	79	203	282
3	Provide protection for each other	71	212	283
4	Steal things	69	213	282
5	Rob other people	116	165	281
6	Steal cars	158	120	278
7	Sell marijuana	79	200	279
8	Sell other illegal drugs	82	198	280
9	Damage or destroy property	59	221	280

### Report of Delinquent Behavior of Overall Student Sample

In regards to delinquent behavior of the **entire student participant sample**, the most frequently reported delinquent behavior by the students was attacking someone with intentions of harm (138, 13%) and being drunk or high at school (130, 12%). Thirteen students (1%) reported to have taken a handgun to school on at least one occasion in the past year. Thirty one (3%) reported having stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle, 64 (6%) carried a handgun, 68 (6%) sold illegal drugs, and 57 (5%) had been arrested in the past 12 months. See Chart 12 for more details.

**Chart 12 Delinquent Behaviors -- All Students**  
**How many times in the past year (12 months) have you ...?**

#	Question	Never	1 or 2 times	3 to 5 times	6 to 9 times	10 to 19 times	20 to 29 times	30 to 39 times	40+ times	Responses
1	Been suspended from school?	882	118	24	10	4	2	1	8	1,049
2	Carried a handgun?	982	23	8	6	3	5	1	18	1,046
3	Sold illegal drugs?	979	29	10	5	6	1	2	15	1,047
4	Stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle such as a car or motorcycle?	1,014	17	4	0	1	0	0	9	1,045
5	Been arrested?	989	38	6	2	2	1	0	8	1,046
6	Attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting them?	909	85	21	12	4	4	0	12	1,047
7	Been drunk or high at school?	914	54	23	16	9	6	0	22	1,044
8	Taken a handgun to school?	1,029	3	2	0	0	0	1	7	1,042

**Data from Students Involved In Gangs**

One hundred fifteen students (11%) responded “Yes” to the following question, “Have you ever belonged to a gang?” Furthermore, 50 of these individuals reported that they are currently still in a gang. Students were monitored during the administration of this study; however, it is possible that not all students took their participation seriously. There is evidence that students who endorse a history of gang membership disproportionately engage in random responding (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 2001). Thus, these responses of gang membership are likely the result of random responding and do not reflect actual gang affiliation. In an attempt to control for random responding and to check for internal consistency, the responses to item number 35 (How old were you when you first belonged to a gang?) and item number 55 (Are you a gang member now?) were compared. Fifteen students (31%) responded that they were never in a gang to question number 35 and then stated that they are currently in gang to question number 55. These students were excluded from the current gang affiliated group due to their inconsistent responding. Thus, 34 students (three percent of the entire student sample) indicated positively to both questions and are identified as gang involved youth.

Given the relatively small number of self-reported gang members, direct statistical comparisons with non-gang members would not be appropriate. However, percentages in several behavioral categories for both of these groups are included in Table 8. In all categories, self-reported gang involved youth indicated higher percentages of involvement in risky or deviant behavior than non-gang involved youth.

**Table 8 Comparison between Gang and Non-Gang Member Behaviors**

<i>Smoked Marijuana</i>	<b>22/33 (67%)</b>	<b>160/967 (17%)</b>
<i>Suspended From School</i>	<b>24/33 (73%)</b>	<b>212/973 (22%)</b>
<i>Arrested</i>	<b>17/33 (52%)</b>	<b>43/969 (4%)</b>
<i>Carried a Handgun</i>	<b>20/33 (61%)</b>	<b>79/967 (8%)</b>
<i>Sold Illegal Drugs (Past 12 Months)</i>	<b>19/33 (58%)</b>	<b>12/169 (7.1%)</b>
<i>Stolen / Tried To Steal A Motor Vehicle (Past 12 Months)</i>	<b>10/33 (30%)</b>	<b>13/971 (1%)</b>
<i>Attacked Someone With the Idea Of Seriously Hurting Them (Past 12 Months)</i>	<b>21/33 (64%)</b>	<b>94/970 (10%)</b>
<i>Been Drunk Or High At School (Past 12 Months)</i>	<b>25/33 (76%)</b>	<b>85/968 (9%)</b>
<i>Taken A Handgun To School (Past 12 Months)</i>	<b>8/33 (24%)</b>	<b>1/965 (0.1%)</b>

For the youth who self-reported as gang involved, 76% were male and 24% were female with the majority (74%) reporting to be non-Hispanic. The grade distribution was as follows: 2 (6%) seventh, 9 (26%) eighth, 8 (24%) ninth, 14 (41%) tenth, and 1 (3%) eleventh grade. Additional self-reported gang involved youth related information is provided in Charts 13 through 16. The total number of responses may not equal 34 for some of these questions, as one or more students chose to not respond to some items. The information provides a view of gang member numbers, roles, characteristics, and behaviors.

**Chart 13**

*How many members are there in your gang?*

#	Answer	Response
1	Not in a gang	0
2	1 to 5	5
3	6 to 10	2
4	11 to 20	5
5	21 to 30	4
6	More than 30	18
	<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>

**Chart 14**

*If you are in a gang, do the following describe your gang?*

#	Question	No	Yes	Responses
1	You can join before age 13.	8	26	34
2	There are initiation rites.	7	26	33
3	The gang has established leaders.	3	31	34
4	The gang has regular meetings.	8	26	34
5	The gang has specific rules or codes.	2	32	34
6	Gang members have specific roles.	6	28	34
7	There are roles for each age group.	21	13	34
8	The gang has symbols or colors.	3	31	34
9	There are specific roles for girls.	15	18	33

**Chart 15**

*Why did you join the gang? Mark all that apply.*

#	Answer	Response
1	For fun	18
2	For protection	17
3	A friend was in the gang	16
4	A brother or sister was in the gang	8
5	I was forced to join	2
6	To get respect	21
7	For money	12
8	To fit in better	10
9	Other (specify)	16
10	Not in a gang	0

## Chart 16

*If you are in a gang, does your gang do the following things?*

#	Question	No	Yes	Responses
1	Help out in the community	<u>26</u>	<u>8</u>	34
2	Get in fights with other gangs	<u>5</u>	<u>29</u>	34
3	Provide protection for each other	<u>4</u>	<u>30</u>	34
4	Steal things	<u>12</u>	<u>21</u>	33
5	Rob other people	<u>15</u>	<u>17</u>	32
6	Steal cars	<u>14</u>	<u>18</u>	32
7	Sell marijuana	<u>11</u>	<u>22</u>	33
8	Sell other illegal drugs	<u>10</u>	<u>23</u>	33
9	Damage or destroy property	<u>9</u>	<u>25</u>	34

### Protective and Risk Factors as Identified by Students

When examining gang related behavior, it is important to consider protective factors as well as risk factors that may contribute or discourage one from engaging in delinquent activity. In regards to feeling safe, 89% of the students reported feeling safe at school while 93% of the students reported feeling safe in their neighborhood.

When looking at protective factors, 86% of all the students believe they have chances to talk one-to-one with a teacher. Parents were also identified by a majority of students as someone who acknowledges their accomplishments often (43%) or all the time (29%). A similar perception is held about teachers as 83% reported that their teachers let them know if they have done something well. It appears that youth receive less positive feedback from members of their neighborhood with 36% indicating that a neighbor notices when they do a good job and let them know about it. See Tables 9 and 10 for more information on these protective factors. Responses from self-reported gang affiliated students are included below the overall responses for each category.

**Table 9 Perception of Adult Relationships in School and Neighborhood**

Table 9 Perception of Adult Relationships in School and Neighborhood			
School	No	Yes	
There are lots of chances for students in my school to talk with a teacher one-on-one.	153 (14%)	897(86%)	1050
	11 (33%)	23 (67%)	34
My teacher notices when I am doing a good job and let me know about it.	178 (17%)	864 (83%)	1042
	11 (33%)	23 (68%)	34
My teacher(s) praise me when I work hard at school.	401 (39%)	644 (62%)	1045
	14 (42%)	20 (59%)	34
The school lets my parents know when I have done something well.	582 (56%)	466 (44%)	1048
	21 (62%)	13 (39%)	34
Neighborhood			
There are lots of adults in my neighborhood I could talk to about something important.	461 (44%)	578 (56%)	1039
	20 (58%)	14 (42%)	34
There are people in my neighborhood who encourage me to do my best.	384 (37%)	649 (63%)	1033
	13 (39%)	30 (61%)	33
There are people in my neighborhood who are proud of me when I do something well.	394 (38%)	647 (62%)	1041
	10 (30%)	24 (71%)	34
My neighbors notice when I am doing a good job and let me know about it.	667 (64%)	373 (36%)	1040
	21 (62%)	13 (38%)	33

**Table 10 Perception of Parental Relationship**

Question	Response		Total
	No	Yes	
If you drank some beer, wine or liquor without your parents' permission, would you get caught by your parents?	363 (35%)	661 (64%)	1024
	20 (62%)	12 (38%)	32
My family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use.	128 (13%)	900 (88%)	1028
	11 (35%)	31 (66%)	32
If you carried a handgun without your parents' permission would you be caught by your parents?	160 (15%)	865 (84%)	1025
	14 (44%)	18 (56%)	32
Would your parents know if you did not come home on time?	117 (12%)	902 (88%)	1019
	7 (22%)	25 (78%)	32
My parents give me lots of chances to do fun things with them.	214 (21%)	815 (79%)	1029
	16 (50%)	16 (50%)	32
If I had a personal problem, I could ask my mom or dad for help.	142 (14%)	886 (87%)	1028
	10 (31%)	22 (69%)	32

Question	Response				Total
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All The Time	
How often do your parents tell you they're proud of you for something you've done?	49 (5%)	238 (23%)	336 (33%)	400 (39%)	1023
	5 (16%)	15 (47%)	7 (22%)	5 (16%)	32
My parents notice when I am doing a good job and let me know about it.	55 (5%)	234 (23%)	299 (29%)	438 (43%)	1026
	6 (19%)	11 (34%)	8 (25%)	7 (22%)	32

There is a perceptual difference between self-reported gang involved youth and their non-gang peers in parental involvement in that gang involved youth believe their parents would be less likely to notice their risky behavior (substance use or carrying of a handgun). The majority (76%) of the gang involved youth also indicated it would be easy to get some beer, wine or hard liquor and 70% believe it would be easy to get marijuana. Eighty-eight percent of the same

youth believe they would not get caught by police if they drank some beer, wine or hard liquor, and 62% say crime and/or drug dealing occurs in their neighborhood. The majority believe their gang membership to be thirty members or greater. Further data on gang and non-gang involved youth is available in the appendices.

### **Summary of Findings for Student Survey**

- Most students were unaware of gang activity at their school; however, approximately a quarter (24%) of the participants in this survey reported that students at their school belong to a gang.
- All students reported feeling relatively safe at school and in their neighborhood.
- Three percent of the students in this survey reported with relative consistency that they are currently in a gang.
- Being drunk or high at school was reported by 76% of the self-reported gang members but “only” nine percent of the non-gang affiliated students.
- Self-reported gang involved youth indicated the top reasons for being involved were to get respect, for fun, and for protection.
- A majority of students involved with gangs perceived their gang membership to be large.

## Agency Inventory Results

The North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention listed in 2009 four service programs for youth of Haywood County. These are

Agency	Location	Service Type
Hawthorn Heights	Webster, NC	Temporary Shelter Care
Project Pursuit	Balsam, NC	Interpersonal and Life Skill Building, Tutoring
Aspire	Balsam, NC	Juvenile Structured Day
Project Challenge	Spruce Pine, NC	Restitution

In addition 5 Eckerd Camps located in North Carolina are listed. Seven youth were admitted to multipurpose group homes in 2009, up from 2 in 2008 and 3 in 2007. Source: [http://www.ncdjjdp.org/county\\_services/haywood.html](http://www.ncdjjdp.org/county_services/haywood.html) Retrieved October 2, 2010.

Information was submitted by seven agencies serving youth in Haywood County. Four of these agencies the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Court Services- District 30, Hawthorn Heights, Project Pursuit, and Aspire serve youth who have been involved in the juvenile court system and provide prevention and/or intervention services. All programs are non-profit; provide services that focus on individuals, families, schools, community, and peer relationships; and, work to reduce recidivism rates for court involvement.

The Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Court Services- District 30 provides supervision services for individuals and family of youth involved with Juvenile Court. DJJDP Court Services access area services for assessing mental health and substance abuse needs of youth. Hawthorn Heights is a residential facility that houses a maximum of nine clients. The facility provides substance abuse education; individual, family, and group counseling; and a behavior modification program. Project Pursuit provides counseling, skill building, tutoring and goal setting services at the client's school. Service learning projects and experiential learning opportunities are provided after school hours and on Saturdays. Aspire provides academic, mental health and substance abuse interventions for clients on site, at home, and at school locations. A further explanation of prevention and intervention services is provided in Table 11. Information from Project Challenge was not available at the time of this report.

Other programs and agencies that submitted the inventory were the Youth Environmental Stewardship (YES) Camp and Envirothon, the Learning Center, and the Community Living Program. YES and Envirothon are identified as voluntary prevention programs and serve people other than youth. The program works cooperatively with schools to provide youth access to services through special events and a summer camp. YES indicates it does not have the structure or funding to increase their capacity at this time. The Learning Center is a for profit organization that serves youth age 6-17 through academic enrichment and tutoring.

The Community Living Program serves people with developmental disabilities from age 3 to 23+ and provides independent living services for adults.

United Way of Haywood County indicates there are 4 supported programs that serve youth: Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Haywood County 4H.

Source: <http://uwhaywood.org/index.php?pr=Agencies>

As indicated through North Carolina's DJJDP report as of 2009, Support One Student (SOS) and One on One programs are no longer funded.

### **Summary of Findings of Agency Inventories**

- Free after-school and mentoring programs that provide prevention services to at-risk youth are limited.
- Project Pursuit and Aspire provide strong outcome evaluation processes for intervention services that require monitoring client behavior in multiple environments.
- All non-profit intervention programs and agencies except DJJDP need additional funding to expand their services to more youth.

Additional Resources for information on prevention and intervention programs.

Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere (STRYVE). Retrieved on October 21, 2010 from <http://www.safeyouth.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>

Gottfredson, G. & Gottfredson, D. (2001). *Gang Problems and Gang Programs in a National Sample of Schools*. Retrieved October 30, 2010 from <http://www.gottfredson.com/gang.htm>

**Table 11 Prevention/Intervention Services for Haywood County**

Criteria		Agency	
	DJJDP	Hawthorn Heights	Project Pursuit
Ages Served	6-17 years	6-17 years	6-17 years
Participation	Court ordered	Voluntary, court ordered, and other referred	Voluntary, court ordered, and other referred
Number Served	300 yearly	9 daily	12 daily
Avg. Length of Service	10-12 months Day services	45 days Residential facility	5 months Day program
Outcome based evaluation	Staff perceptions Recidivism rate	Court referrals, runaway behavior, MAS12, point values in Behavior Modification Program, Level D of MRT 12 step program, parental perceptions, school reports	School suspensions, attendance, grades, behavioral ratings, runaway behavior, recidivism rate, court referrals
Capacity for growth	Yes	No funding needed	No funding needed

## Methodology Overview

**Participants and Data Sources:** Six distinct Haywood County participant groups provided data for this report. These groups were: Students, Community Leaders, Community Residents, School Personnel, Law Enforcement, and Agency/Service providers.

*Students:* Student data were collected at Pisgah High School, Tuscola High School and Waynesville Middle School. All of the schools are part of the Haywood County School System. In all, 1060 students (52% male, 48% female) completed the online gang survey. Students ranged in age from 12 to 18 ( $M=14.25$ ,  $SD=1.27$ ). The vast majority of the students were in the tenth (390, 37%), ninth (277, 26%), and eighth grade (251, 24%). Most students (85%) reported to be White, 9% reported to be Hispanic, 2% reported to be African American, 1% reported to be American Indian, 1% Multiracial, and 1% "other." English was the primary language spoken in the home of 96% of the students followed by Spanish in three percent of the students' households.

*Community Residents:* One hundred sixty-four members of the community provided data for this report. The vast majority (96%) of this sample identified as Caucasian/White and most (75%) reported to be married. In addition, most of the community participants (91%) reported to have had "some college" or above.

*Community Leaders:* Community leaders were identified by the Gang Assessment Project Coordinator. Emails with a link to the online survey were sent to the following leaders: County Manager and Commissioners (6); Mayor and Aldermen of Waynesville (6), Clyde (4), Maggie Valley (5), and Canton (6); JCPC Committee Members Not Included Elsewhere (5); Interagency Members (23), Ministers (4); Newspaper Representatives (4), Tourism/Community Development Representatives (2), NC Legislature (2), School (3), & Government Agencies (3). Thirty two community leaders (44% response rate) provided data for this report.

*School Personnel:* School personnel were sent emails containing links to the online survey. Eighty-one school personnel provided data for this report including: six administrators, 63 teachers, two assistant teachers, six support personnel, and four staff members.

*Law Enforcement:* Limited archival law enforcement data were available for review.

*Agency/Service Providers:* The gang assessment survey inventories were distributed by the project coordinator to the agency/services providers.

Additional demographic information for the aforementioned sample groups can be found in their individual sections within the report.

*Archival Data:* Additional data used in this report were retrieved from the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Gang Problems and Gang

Programs in a National Sample of Schools report, North Carolina Gang Net, U.S. Census Bureau, and the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics.

Procedures:

The questionnaires used for this study originated from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem. Permission was granted by the Institute for Intergovernmental Research to adapt the questions to better fit an online computer format. Minimal changes were made to several questions and response options; however, the "spirit" of the questions (and response options) remained the same as in the original OJJDP version.

Data were collected via Qualtrics, an online software survey program and data collection platform. Qualtrics is a secure system that meets the privacy standards imposed by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Participants accessed web links to the survey and completed the questionnaire online.

This study received approval from the Internal Review Board (IRB) at Western Carolina University. No monetary incentives were offered for participation in this study.

*Students:* Students accessed the online survey questionnaire using computers in their school's computer labs. These participants were monitored to ensure minimal conversation occurred between students during the procedure as well as to answer questions. The monitor did not, however, view individual student responses. No identifying information was requested from the participants.

Letters requesting student participation were sent to parents/legal guardians. The parents or legal guardians could request that the student not participate in the study. In addition, students provided their assent to participate after the purpose and nature of the study were explained. Students could choose to participate or withdraw at anytime without penalty.

*Community Residents:* Announcements about the survey were sent to area newspapers. Also, emails with a link to the survey were sent to approximately 400 individuals identified by the JCPC Gang Assessment Project Coordinator.

*Community Leaders:* Individuals were identified as "leaders in the community" by the JCPC Gang Assessment Coordinator. The leaders included: County Manager and Commissioners (6); Mayor and Aldermen of Waynesville (6), Clyde (4), Maggie Valley (5), and Canton (6); JCPC Committee Members Not Included Elsewhere (5); Interagency Members (23), Ministers (4); Newspaper Representatives (4), Tourism/Community Development Representatives (2), NC Legislature (2), School (3), & Government Agencies (3). Emails with the links to the online survey were sent to the identified leaders.

*School Personnel:* The project coordinator sent individual emails containing a link to the online survey to school personnel.

*Law Enforcement:* Several attempts were made to meet with the resource officers at the high schools and middle schools in Haywood County. In addition, attempts were made to meet with the various law enforcement agencies in Haywood County. Unfortunately, the resource officers and representatives from the law enforcement agencies were unable to meet or provide perceptual data or arrest statistics on gang activity in Haywood County. The law enforcement data included in this report comes primarily from a gang intelligence file compiled several years ago (the exact date was undetermined).

Material:

As previously mentioned, the survey questionnaires utilized in this study come from OJJDP's "Comprehensive Gang Model: A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem". The community leader, community resident, and school personnel surveys were relatively brief and took approximately ten minutes to complete. The student survey was more detailed and took between 30 to 45 minutes to complete. The agency/program inventory was expanded to include items relevant to the matrix provided in the model. The surveys are included in the appendices. All surveys were completed online.

### Limitations:

The findings presented in this report need to be considered in light of several notable limitations.

First, the vast majority of the data was collected online. Although this was an extremely cost effective way to recruit a large number of participants in the community, it is likely that the segment of the population who did not use, or have access to the Internet was omitted from this study. This could include portions of the elderly, the homeless and low-income individuals with limited resources. Furthermore, high educational attainment and gender demographics of the community member respondents may have influenced the perceptual data.

Second, although attempts were made to collect student data from all middle and high schools in Haywood County, only three schools agreed to participate in this study. Therefore, some students did not have an opportunity to provide data for this report. Furthermore, given the data collection method employed in this study, responses were limited to those youth who were enrolled and attending school and not collected from youth who had dropped out of school.

Third, law enforcement data was extremely limited and did not include actual arrest statistics. Multiple attempts were made to contact actual arrest statistics and perceptual data from the law enforcement agencies in Haywood County; however, this information was not available for review at the time of this writing.

Fourth, the extremely low number of self-identified youth involved in gangs does not allow for detailed between-group analysis (gang v. non-gang members). Furthermore, as with all self-report surveys, it is possible that some participants were not entirely honest on their questionnaires.

Fifth, one of the JCPC funded programs did not complete the agency inventory. Therefore, the examination of services was not all inclusive of agencies serving Haywood County youth.

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#### Recommended Readings

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