



Project
MUSE[®]

Today's Research. Tomorrow's Inspiration.

The Violence Intervention and Prevention Team (VIP): Results of an Action Research Evaluation

Emily F. Rothman
Carol Ireland
Lori Curry
Allyson Baughman

More

Progress in Community Health Partnerships: Research, Education, and Action, Volume 4, Issue 3, Fall 2010, p. 169 (Article)

Published by The Johns Hopkins University Press
DOI: 10.1353/cpr.2010.0008



 For additional information about this article

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/cpr/summary/v004/4.3.rothman01.html>

The Violence Intervention and Prevention Team (VIP): Results of an Action Research Evaluation

Emily F. Rothman, ScD¹, Carol Ireland, RN, BSN², Lori Curry, MEd², Allyson Baughman, MPH¹, and Donald Thompson³

(1) Boston University School of Public Health; (2) Haverhill Public Schools; (3) Haverhill Police Department

What Is the Purpose of this Study?

- To assess the impact of a school-based gang membership and violence prevention program on outcomes of interest for students enrolled during the 2007–2008 school year, and to explore qualitatively program effects.

What Is the Problem?

- It is estimated that there are approximately 788,000 gang members in the United States. Of these, approximately 37% are estimated to be younger than 18 years old.
- Between 2001 and 2006, the percent of small cities in the United States with active youth gangs increased from 22.3% to 32.5%.
- Little research exists that describes the outcomes of school-based gang membership and violence prevention programs. The literature about school-based violence prevention programming in general includes few studies where the majority of student participants were non-white.

What Are the Findings?

- Participation in the Haverhill, Massachusetts-based Violence Intervention Program (VIP) was associated with a slight reduction in school absenteeism and an increase in employment readiness.
- VIP members expressed strong, positive feelings about the program. According to their reports, VIP fosters increased self-esteem, leadership skills, social connectedness, conflict resolution skills, and academic achievement.
- The program may need to focus more explicitly on particular violence-related attitudes and skills to produce additional behavior changes (i.e., reduced weapon carrying, reduced physical fighting) among participants.

Who Should Care Most?

- School-based wellness and violence prevention programs.
- City and town coalitions that organize to prevent violence.
- Legislators and other decision makers who need evidence regarding innovative school-based gang membership and violence prevention programming.

Recommendations for Action

- Continue to strengthen the VIP team program to produce behavior change, as well as knowledge and attitude change.
- Identify ways to facilitate data collection to improve the accuracy of the evaluation.
- Share information with other violence prevention practitioners who may have experiences with youth-directed programs.
- Provide funding for implementation and evaluation of innovative school-based gang violence prevention programs.