



Community Leaders to Tackle Gangs and Youth Violence in Winnipeg

Workshop participants to discuss methods of reducing and preventing youth crime in city

March 21, 2011 (Winnipeg, MB) – When it comes to youth, prevention is one of the key components in reducing violence and involvement with gangs. Tomorrow, community leaders will come together to explore the nationally acclaimed *Gang Prevention through Targeted Outreach* model, an approach that can potentially be the next step in decreasing youth crime in Winnipeg.

Youth Violence and Gang Prevention Specialist, David Reid, will work with over 100 participants from government, youth-serving agencies and schools at the Winnipeg Gang Prevention workshop, hosted by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg. The workshop will highlight the model's comprehensive approach that directs at-risk youth towards positive activities and mentorship, and how Winnipeg can pool its resources to adopt a similar method.

With over 25 years of experience in youth services and training, Reid sees great potential in executing the model in Winnipeg, which has seen success in other areas across Canada, and the United States.

"My goal is to facilitate a process where the community can—in a collaborative way—assess the youth gang and delinquency challenges in the community," says Reid. "From there, we can implement a comprehensive approach to offer high-risk youth with life-changing programs and services."

Youth at risk of joining gangs or engaging in violence are typically from groups that suffer from high levels of inequality and social disadvantage, a demographic that many workshop participants work with on a daily basis.

According to the National Crime Prevention Centre's Canadian Police Survey on Youth Gangs, almost 50% of all youth gang members are under the age of 18, with 39% of them being between 16 and 18 years of age. There is also a growing percentage of female gang membership in western Canadian Provinces, with Manitoba at 10%.

President and CEO of Boys and Girls Clubs, Ron Brown, is eager to learn more about the model, and looks forward to hearing others speak about their experiences in dealing with troubled youth. "David has done exemplary work in this field," says Brown, "this community workshop will bring key partners together to share and exchange dialogue, and in the end, come up with integrated solutions that allow for the youth we serve to achieve their full and positive potential."

When: Tuesday, March 22, 2011
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Where: Door 5 – Freight House
200 Isabel Street
Winnipeg, MB

About Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg:

Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg is one of the city's youth-serving agencies, operating 10 community-based clubs and numerous youth development programs for over 30 years. Our mission is to provide a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships and develop confidence and skills for life.

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