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Preventing Youth Gang Involvement with G.R.E.A.T.

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Abstract

The G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education and Training) program is the most widely disseminated school-based gang prevention program in the United States. Following a 1995–2001 national evaluation revealing little program effect on key goals, the core middle school curriculum was revised extensively in the early 2000s. A second national evaluation of the revised curriculum is currently underway. In this chapter we discuss (a) the G.R.E.A.T. approach to youth gang and violence prevention; (b) potential benefits to youth, schools, and communities using short-term findings from the current national evaluation; and (c) limits of the approach.

Overview

The Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program is a gang and delinquency prevention program delivered by law enforcement officers within a school setting. The program was originally designed by Phoenix-area law enforcement agencies in 1991 to address local needs, but it was quickly adopted by communities across the United States. Following a 1995–2001 national evaluation revealing little program effect on key goals, the core middle school curriculum was revised extensively in the early 2000s. It is currently the most widely disseminated school-based gang prevention program in the United States. This chapter describes the G.R.E.A.T. program, including its foundation, evolution, and goals. It also presents short-term findings from the current national evaluation that provide initial evidence that the revised middle school curriculum is beneficial to youths, schools, and communities. Finally, limitations of the G.R.E.A.T. approach to youth gang prevention are discussed.
Importance of the Issue of Youth Gangs

When the G.R.E.A.T. program was initially developed in 1991, youth and gang violence were at “epidemic” proportions, having risen sharply since the 1980s (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). Although rates of youth violence have decreased substantially since their peak in the mid-1990s, youth gangs and gang members appear to have followed a different trend, decreasing in number from the mid-1990s until the early 2000s, but increasing since 2001 (National Youth Gang Center, 2009). Similarly, gang homicides, although more the purview of young adults than adolescents, increased during the 2000s (Egley, Howell, & Moore, 2010). The Bureau of Justice Statistics provides another indicator of gang problems, tracking students’ reports of gang presence in schools. From a low of 15% of students in 1989 reporting gang presence in their schools, the percentage rose to a peak of 29% in 1995, decreased through the late-1990s to 17% and then increased again in the 2000s, hovering between 20% and 24% (Baum, Cataldi, Dinkes, Kena, & Snyder, 2006; Chandler et al., 1998, 2001; DeVoe et al., 2003).

The youth gang problem has engendered a commensurate effort to alleviate gang prevalence and crime, including widespread implementation of school-based prevention programs (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 2001). The majority of these prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts, however, have not garnered strong empirical evidence of effectiveness (Klein & Maxson, 2006). Just one school-based program, the Montreal Preventive Treatment Program, received the highest rating of exemplary/model program by both Blueprints for Violence Prevention (www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/) and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP; www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/). This program was not designed for gang prevention, but program participants did have lower rates of gang involvement at age 15 than did youths in a control group (Tremblay, Masse, Pagani, & Vitaro, 1996). A few school-based gang prevention or intervention programs were rated effective (e.g., G.R.E.A.T.) or promising (e.g., Gang Resistance is Paramount; GRIP) by the OJJDP. Effective programs are those that had demonstrated a program effect on gang involvement in a study or studies with a strong research design; replications are required, however, to provide enough evidence to move them to the exemplary category. Promising programs are those that indicate positive findings, but with limited research designs; thus, additional studies using scientifically rigorous methods are required.

Given the plethora of school-based prevention programs that have been designed to reduce an array of adolescent behaviors and experiences (delinquency, bullying, victimization, gang membership), school administrators are challenged to select a program that is optimal in light of time and resource constraints. Thus, it is imperative this choice be guided by a well-informed sense of program effectiveness. The G.R.E.A.T. program and its associated evaluations demonstrate one example of the effort to produce evidence-based practice in youth gang prevention.

Conceptual Basis and Description: The Original G.R.E.A.T. Program and Revision

The original G.R.E.A.T. program was put together in a short time period in 1991 by Phoenix-area police officers trained in Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE; Winfree, Peterson Lynskey, & Maupin, 1999). As such, G.R.E.A.T. lessons and delivery were loosely modeled on the original DARE program and generally lacked a strong theoretical or empirical foundation. The original G.R.E.A.T. core curriculum was a cognitive-based program that taught students about crime and its effect on victims, cultural diversity, conflict resolution skills, meeting basic needs (without a gang), responsibility, and goal setting. As in DARE, uniformed law enforcement officers taught the curriculum in schools.

In contrast to intervention and suppression approaches that target gang-involved youths, G.R.E.A.T. is a primary prevention program, intended for all youth at entry to middle school. There is no assumption of risk of or actual gang involvement. Rather, all youth are “inoculated”
with G.R.E.A.T. lessons, with the goal of positioning them to resist gang membership and delinquency involvement. The original middle school curriculum sought to do this through the provision of nine 35–45 minute lessons that provided life skills (e.g., goal-setting, conflict resolution) and educated students on the dangers of gang involvement. Other optional components of the program included an elementary school curriculum and a summer program.

Despite the general lack of theoretical or empirical grounding, the G.R.E.A.T. program was well-received by parents, schools, and law enforcement officers, who expressed a high level of satisfaction in anonymous or confidential surveys (Freng, 2001; Peterson & Esbensen, 2004; Taylor & Esbensen, 2002). Although the program was intended solely for use in the Phoenix area, it spread quickly throughout the United States, as other communities and schools sought new avenues for gang and delinquency prevention and as federal funds, through the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF), became available to agencies seeking to implement the program. Given this interest and the infusion of government funds, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) awarded funding to the University of Nebraska at Omaha for a multisite, multiyear (1994–2001) National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T., focusing on the program’s core curriculum.

The evaluation design consisted of several components. The process evaluation, consisting of observations of G.R.E.A.T. Officer Training and delivery of G.R.E.A.T. in classrooms, determined that officers implemented the program with fidelity (Sellers, Taylor, & Esbensen, 1998). A cross-sectional outcome study of almost 6,000 eighth-grade students in 11 cities indicated small but positive program effects, including lower levels of delinquency and gang involvement, more prosocial attitudes, and better relationships with law enforcement among students who had received the program compared to those who had not (Esbensen & Osgood, 1999). Results from the more methodologically rigorous longitudinal outcome evaluation (referred to as G.R.E.A.T. I), however, failed to replicate the cross-sectional findings. This five-year panel study of over 2,000 students in six diverse cities found a few differences (5 of 32 outcomes) between G.R.E.A.T. and non-G.R.E.A.T. students, but these differences were largely attitudinal. Importantly, none of the program’s intended behavioral goals were achieved. Although G.R.E.A.T. students had lower levels of victimization and risk-seeking tendencies, more prosocial peers, more negative views about gangs, and more positive views of law enforcement, there were no differences between G.R.E.A.T. and non-G.R.E.A.T. students in levels of delinquency, violence, or gang membership (Esbensen, Osgood, Taylor, Peterson, & Freng, 2001).

Partially in response to these evaluation results, the G.R.E.A.T. National Policy Board convened a committee to review the core curriculum and provide recommendations for improvements in structure, content, and delivery (Esbensen, Freng, Taylor, Peterson, & Osgood, 2002). The review committee consisted of members of the evaluation team, G.R.E.A.T. officers, experts in school-based prevention or youth gangs, and representatives from NIJ and BATF. This committee provided numerous suggestions for revising the curriculum content and delivery to align more closely with known effective teaching methods, school-based prevention approaches, and gang prevention strategies. The revised G.R.E.A.T. program adopted some of the strategies from two school-based programs, the Seattle Social Development Model (SSDM; Catalano, Arthur, Hawkins, Berglund, & Olson, 1998) and Life Skills Training (LST; Dusenbury & Botvin, 1992). These strategies included emphasizing skill development rather than the assimilation of knowledge, and incorporating interactive and cooperative learning strategies such as problem-solving exercises.

The revisions to G.R.E.A.T. also incorporated findings from the literature on community, family, school, peer, and individual risk factors for gang-joining. Representative of these risk factors are the following: poverty, social disorganization, low parental monitoring, low attachment to parents, lack of involvement in conventional family activities, low school commitment and performance, association with and commitment to deviant peers, lack of empathy,
impulsiveness, and moral disengagement (e.g., Battin-Pearson, Thornberry, Hawkins, & Krohn, 1998; Esbensen, Huizinga, & Weiher, 1993; Fleisher, 1998; Hill, Howell, Hawkins, & Battin-Pearson, 1999; Howell, 2009; Maxson, Whitlock, & Klein, 1998; Thornberry, Krohn, Lizotte, Smith, & Tobin, 2003). While many studies treat gangs as a phenomenon distinct from the general study of delinquency, there is considerable overlap between risk factors associated with delinquency and gang membership (Esbensen, Peterson, Taylor, & Freng, 2010). Numerous studies, for example, suggest that while the gang environment facilitates an increase in delinquency during the year or years of gang membership, many gang members are already delinquent prior to joining the gang (Battin-Pearson et al., 1998; Esbensen & Huizinga, 1993; Gatti, Tremblay, Vitaro, & McDuff, 2005; Thornberry et al., 2003). This finding that delinquency generally precedes gang membership underscores the importance of universal gang prevention efforts that target the entire adolescent population.

Now in place is a substantially revised program containing 13 (rather than nine) lessons that focus more attention on skills-building through interactive and cooperative learning strategies. The lessons are more tightly connected and designed to address some of the known risk factors for gang involvement. In addition, the revised program is designed to be part of a more comprehensive school, family, and community approach. As such, greater involvement of classroom teachers in program delivery is promoted; law enforcement agencies are encouraged to partner with other community organizations, such as Boys and Girls Clubs; and there are optional program components available for agencies to adopt: an elementary school curriculum for third or fourth graders, a summer program, and G.R.E.A.T. Families, targeted at youths aged 10-14 and their families (see the G.R.E.A.T. program website at www.great-online.org for more information).

The revised program’s two main goals are to help youths (a) avoid gang membership, violence, and criminal activity; and (b) develop a positive relationship with law enforcement. The revised curriculum aims to teach youths the life-skills (e.g., refusal skills, conflict resolution, and anger management techniques) thought necessary to prevent involvement in gang behavior and delinquency (e.g., Hill et al., 1999; Maxson & Whitlock, 2002; Maxson et al., 1998). The core curriculum is intended for delivery at entry to middle school (i.e., usually sixth grade, but in some locations, seventh grade), in part to ease the transition from elementary to middle school and to reach youths before the prime age for gang joining (approximately 13–14 years old; Esbensen & Huizinga, 1993; Hill et al., 1999; Thornberry et al., 2003). This curriculum was piloted in 2001, with full-scale implementation occurring in 2003. Currently, the program is taught in middle schools across the country, as well as in other countries.

Like the original G.R.E.A.T. program, the revised program is delivered by law enforcement officers. In districts with school resource officers (SRO), the program is usually taught by the SROs. In other jurisdictions, G.R.E.A.T. is taught by officers in community relations divisions or by patrol officers on an overtime basis. All instructors must complete G.R.E.A.T. Officer Training and be certified prior to teaching in their local schools. Officers are introduced to the program and provided sections on gang trends, middle school student developmental stages, teaching and classroom management techniques, and issues associated with officers’ transition from an emphasis on enforcement to one of prevention. This intensive training is one week for officers with prior teaching experience. For officers who have not been in the classroom, a two-week training provides them additional practice at teaching the lessons.

Potential Benefits: Evidence from the Current National Evaluation

To determine whether curricular changes produced the desired benefits of preventing youth gang membership, violence, and delinquency and improving youth-law enforcement relationships, NIJ solicited proposals in 2006 to conduct a second national evaluation. The University
of Missouri–St. Louis was awarded funding to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of the revised G.R.E.A.T. core curriculum.

**G.R.E.A.T. II Research Design**

The Process and Outcome Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T. (or G.R.E.A.T. II, as this second national evaluation is called) began in summer 2006 and continues through 2012. The process evaluation consisted of (a) numerous observations by the research team of G.R.E.A.T. Officer Trainings to learn how officers are taught to deliver the program; and (b) hundreds of classroom observations in both experimental and control classrooms to assess implementation fidelity (Esbensen, Matsuda, Taylor, & Peterson, 2011). The outcome evaluation employs an experimental longitudinal panel design in which classrooms in each of the participating schools were randomly assigned to the treatment (i.e., G.R.E.A.T.) or control condition. Students are scheduled to complete six waves of face-to-face group–administered questionnaires (pretests and posttests followed by four annual surveys), following the students through their school experiences from sixth or seventh grade through tenth or eleventh grade. Also providing information useful for both process and outcome components were surveys of middle school personnel (Peterson, Panfil, Esbensen, & Taylor, 2009), surveys of G.R.E.A.T.-trained officers in the seven cities, and interviews with the study schools’ G.R.E.A.T. officers and their supervisors (Carson, Esbensen, Taylor, & Peterson, 2008). This chapter relies on results from the School Personnel and Student Questionnaires, but draws as well from the process evaluation and the Law Enforcement Interview.

Seven cities were selected for inclusion based on (a) the existence of an established G.R.E.A.T. program, (b) geographic and demographic diversity, and (c) evidence of youth gang activity: Albuquerque, New Mexico; Chicago, Illinois; Greeley, Colorado; Nashville, Tennessee; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Portland, Oregon; and a city located in the Dallas–Fort Worth (DFW), Texas area. In each of these seven cities, four to six public middle schools were selected with the goal of including schools that, as a whole, would represent district demographics. The final sample consisted of 31 schools in these seven cities. All students in the 195 classrooms ($N = 4,095$) at the G.R.E.A.T. grade level (sixth or seventh) in those schools were eligible to participate in the evaluation, and active parental consent procedures resulted in 78% ($N = 3,820$) of the students’ parents allowing their child’s participation (see Esbensen, Melde, Taylor, & Peterson, 2008, for more detail on active consent procedures and Esbensen, Peterson, et al., 2011, for more detail on the research design.)

**School Personnel Views**

Prior research has shown that the views of school personnel, particularly teachers, can be crucial to program implementation, continuation, and potential success (Donnermeyer & Wurschmidt, 1997; Flannery & Torquati, 1993; Peterson & Esbensen, 2004). To assess educators’ level of support for various aspects of the program, school administrators and teachers in the G.R.E.A.T. grade levels (sixth or seventh) in the 31 participating schools were asked to complete an anonymous School Personnel Questionnaire; 230 (62%) completed the surveys in spring and fall 2007 (see Peterson et al., 2009, for more detail).

Educators were supportive in general of having law enforcement officers in schools (91%) and believed that police play an important role in prevention (80%). In addition, school personnel were supportive of prevention programs in schools and the role of schools in prevention. Most agreed that such programs can deter youth from drugs, delinquency, and gang involvement (80%) and that it is part of a school’s responsibility to prevent students from becoming involved in these behaviors (81%). Sixty-four percent indicated that they would like to see more prevention
programs in their schools, and 56% agreed that teachers should incorporate prevention program lessons into their own curricula.

In regard to program content and delivery, school personnel were provided a list of 11 subjects commonly covered in prevention programs (including G.R.E.A.T.) and asked to provide their opinion about the importance of each in helping youths avoid drugs, delinquency, and gangs. Decision-making, problem-solving, communication skills, and conflict resolution were rated as “very important” by over 90% of school personnel, and over 80% gave this rating for goal setting, anger management, refusal skills, recognition of peer pressure, and social responsibility. School personnel were also asked to rate, on a 3-point scale from “not effective” to “very effective,” the effectiveness of different methods of delivering prevention program content. Active teaching methods used in G.R.E.A.T. (e.g., small group activities, role-playing) were rated as very effective by 70% or more of respondents, and class discussion was rated as such by 60%. Least likely to be rated effective were lecture (7%) and written homework (6%), methods from which the redesigned G.R.E.A.T. program has moved away.

School personnel who were familiar with G.R.E.A.T. had positive views of the program, with about 90% in favor of having the program in their schools. The G.R.E.A.T. officers were also viewed favorably by the majority of respondents, in terms of both preparation and delivery of program and their interactions with students in the classroom. In regard to specific statements about program materials and length, 90% reported that the curriculum is appropriate for students’ age and comprehension levels, but fewer agreed that G.R.E.A.T. program materials are appealing to students (77%), that the length of the G.R.E.A.T. curriculum (45–60 minutes a week for 13 weeks) provides enough time to cover the important, relevant topics (63%), or that officers teaching the G.R.E.A.T. program have enough time during the class period to sufficiently cover the educational materials for each lesson (62%). The majority of educators believed the program teaches students skills necessary to avoid delinquency and gangs (82%), addresses problems faced by their students (86%), and improves student-police relations (85%). Only about half, however, agreed that the program plays a significant role in reducing youth gang participation in their schools (54%) and communities (47%). This finding is discussed in the Critique section, below.

**Outcome Evaluation Results**

Observations of G.R.E.A.T. program delivery during the process evaluation determined that, overall, the program was implemented with fidelity (see Esbensen, Matsuda, et al., 2011, for a detailed discussion). If a treatment effect is detected in the outcome evaluation, it is therefore feasible to attribute this effect to the G.R.E.A.T. program. Preliminary outcome analyses of short-term program effects were conducted using pretest, posttest, and one-year follow-up data from the student surveys. Outcomes examined were those that tapped key program goals: G.R.E.A.T. and non-G.R.E.A.T. students were compared on their gang membership, level of delinquency, and attitudes toward the police. Also examined were a few of the risk factors or skills targeted by the program: empathy, risk-seeking, conflict resolution skills, resistance to peer pressure, and refusal skills.

Our multilevel analyses using MLwiN software revealed statistically significant program effects at the one year follow-up for five of the nine variables examined (Esbensen, Peterson, et al., 2011). Specifically, one year following program delivery, students receiving G.R.E.A.T. reported lower rates of gang membership (a 54% reduction in odds), more positive attitudes about police, less positive attitudes about gangs, more frequent use of refusal skills, and greater resistance to peer pressure than did students in the control condition. These findings address the two main program goals of reducing gang affiliation and improving youths’ relationships with law enforcement, but the same program effect was not found for delinquency. Although the direc-
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tion of the findings favored a program effect, the results for differences in self-reported delinquency did not reach statistical significance. Several program-specific skills-building objectives also appear to be met, especially refusal skills. There were no statistically significant differences between the groups on measures of empathy, risk-seeking, and conflict resolution.

Critique of the Approach

The revised G.R.E.A.T. core curriculum was designed to address shortcomings of the original program. It therefore utilizes active learning strategies to teach students skills to combat some of the known risk factors for delinquency and gang membership. The school personnel survey showed that G.R.E.A.T. incorporates lesson content thought by educators to be important to preventing youths from becoming involved in gangs, drugs, and violence and delivers it in a manner thought to be effective (Peterson et al., 2009). Classroom observations of G.R.E.A.T. delivery indicated that students are interested and active during the lessons. They appear to enjoy both their interactions with the officer and the opportunity to practice skills; they are very active and animated, for example, in role-playing exercises (Esbensen, Matsuda, et al., 2011).

Although the revised G.R.E.A.T. program is intended to be part of a larger approach in which other G.R.E.A.T. components are used to complement the core curriculum, the extent to which this occurs is questionable. For example, many law enforcement agencies do not have the resources to implement more than one component, so the focus in most jurisdictions is the core middle school curriculum. In addition, as noted in this and prior work (Peterson & Esbensen, 2004), getting more teacher involvement and integrating G.R.E.A.T. into schools’ mission and curricula may be a challenge. Although most school administrators and teachers support prevention programs in schools and believe that it is part of a school’s responsibility to prevent youth from becoming involved in gangs, drugs, and violence, almost half do not feel that teachers should incorporate prevention program content into their own curricula. This may be tied to increasing pressure to meet state and federal educational standards; indeed, 41% of educators agreed that meeting No Child Left Behind standards posed a “big problem” for their school (Peterson et al., 2009). Such concerns have led administrators and teachers to be increasingly reluctant to participate in programs (or evaluations) that reduce instructional time. Locating the G.R.E.A.T. program in content-relevant classes, as suggested by the review committee, may help to integrate lessons into class materials while also supporting mandated curricula (see Table 42.1). Almost half of teachers (45%) did not incorporate G.R.E.A.T. lesson content into their own curricula, mostly (49%) due to lack of time (a large concern was the amount of material to cover for mandated testing), but also because it was not relevant to their subject (30%). The other 55%, especially those in relevant courses such as social studies, language arts, and health, did cover or reinforce G.R.E.A.T. content, relaying such comments as, “I teach social studies and [the program] fit in naturally when talking about cultures and communicating.” The school personnel survey revealed that most educators played at least some role in the program. Although this was largely classroom management activities (31%), some teachers assisted the officer (20%) and others actively participated (20%). Many (31%) used the time for grading or other paperwork. These collective findings suggest that there are ways to better integrate G.R.E.A.T. with minimal inconvenience to teachers and mandated curricula. Greater teacher involvement may also improve G.R.E.A.T. implementation. Classroom observations indicated that students were more interested and better behaved when teachers were engaged in or assisting with program delivery, as opposed to using the period for class preparation (Esbensen, Matsuda, et al., 2011).

Despite these potential areas for improvement, preliminary analyses from the outcome evaluation are supportive of a one-year post-program effect. G.R.E.A.T. students have lower rates of gang membership than do control group students. Additionally, G.R.E.A.T. students report a
number of more prosocial attitudes and skills, including more positive views of the police, than
do control students. Interviews with G.R.E.A.T. officers support this latter finding. Officers
told interviewers that as the program progressed, students were more likely than before to come
to them with problems, to tell them about potential upcoming trouble in the school, and to
approach them on the streets to say “hello.” Because the program was implemented with fi del-
ity, and the evaluation utilized a randomized experimental design, there is confi dence that these
effects are due to the program and not to other outside infl uences.

Readers may notice that in the School Personnel Questionnaire, only about half of school
personnel agreed that the G.R.E.A.T. program signifi cantly reduces youths’ gang participation
in their schools and communities. Similarly, the offi cer survey revealed that just 29% of offi cers
believed the program to have reduced their community’s gang or crime problems (Carson et al.,
2008). This indicates that although educators and offi cers believe that G.R.E.A.T. is benefi cial
to students and is, in general, a valuable program, the majority do not believe that it is capable
of addressing larger community issues. This is a reasonable assertion because G.R.E.A.T. is
expected only to reduce a small portion of a community’s crime problems on an individual level.
In other words, it is not intended to resolve all of the community’s gang and/or crime problems.

To the extent that G.R.E.A.T. reaches the majority of a school’s population, lower rates of
gang involvement may be seen at the school level. For example, as sixth-grade students who
receive G.R.E.A.T. become seventh- and eighth-graders and new cohorts of sixth-graders are
trained, all students within a middle school will have received G.R.E.A.T. over the course of
a few years. This is not the case in the study schools, however, as only half of the classes in one
grade received the program.

In sum, there appears to be a good deal of support by educators for both the G.R.E.A.T.
program and offi cers. Aspects of the current educational climate, such as meeting standards set
forth in the No Child Left Behind act, provide challenges to delivery and reinforcement of the
G.R.E.A.T. program that can be addressed, in part, by locating the program in specifi c subjects

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Table 42.1 Implications for Practice: Preventing Youth Gang Involvement with G.R.E.A.T.

1. School-based gang prevention efforts should target known risk factors (e.g., malleable attitudes,
   skills, and behaviors) in multiple domains.

2. Building partnerships between law enforcement agencies and schools may hold promise for
   preventing youth gang involvement and improving relationships between students and law
   enforcement offi cers.

3. One promising avenue for a gang prevention partnership is Gang Resistance Education and Training
   (G.R.E.A.T.), a universal, primary prevention program taught by law enforcement offi cers to
   middle-school students in an effort to prevent gang membership, delinquency, and violence and to
   improve police-student relationships.

4. When implementing prevention programs such as G.R.E.A.T., educators should ensure that the
   programs are age appropriate, are of suf fi cient dosage to impact attitudes, skills, and behaviors, and
   utilize multiple teaching techniques that accommodate different learning styles (e.g., cooperative
   learning, interactive teaching.)

5. School-based gang prevention programs like G.R.E.A.T. should be incorporated into the larger
   school climate and reinforced in classroom curricula. Program implementers can gain administrative
   and teacher buy-in by demonstrating the ways in which state and federal teaching standards can be
   addressed through the prevention curriculum and encouraging schools to locate prevention
   programs in content-related courses such as civics, health, language arts, and social studies.

6. Schools’ participation in evaluation efforts such as the National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T. is imperative
to obtain much-needed evidence of short- and long-term effects of school-based gang prevention
programs. The evidence base is limited, and schools need scientifi cally-rigorous information on
which to base decisions about which programs to implement in a resource-limited environment.
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and through greater teacher involvement (see Table 42.1). The program also appears to be implemented as intended and to have short-term effects on several key program outcomes, although ongoing research will determine whether these effects will be sustained over time.

Note

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