

GRYD PREVENTION SERVICES: A SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANTS AND SERVICES

Between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020, 5,684 young people enrolled in GRYD Prevention services and participated in over 169,000 program sponsored activities.

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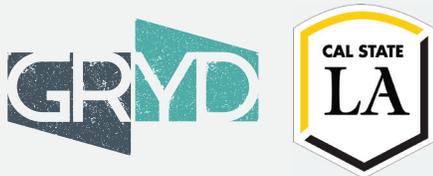
GRYD RESEARCH & EVALUATION BRIEF NO. 11

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The GRYD Research Brief Series highlights the accomplishments of the GRYD Office and its community partners as they implement the GRYD Comprehensive Strategy.¹ The current research brief provides an overview of the extent to which young people and families were served by GRYD Prevention services. GRYD Prevention plays an essential role in the GRYD Comprehensive Strategy because it disrupts gang membership before it begins. GRYD utilizes tools such as the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET), problem-solving and family support strategies, and intentional youth development activities to make services more strategic and purposeful. This brief captures the reach of GRYD Prevention by describing the participants served and the types of services they received. It compliments GRYD Research Brief No. 12, which takes a closer look at the ability of GRYD Prevention services to reduce connections to gangs by building participant resilience.

REGINALD ZACHERY
 GRYD DIRECTOR



The City of Los Angeles Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development's (GRYD) Comprehensive Strategy strives to create communities that are healthy, peaceful, and thriving. GRYD invests in this vision by hosting community engagement events; contracting with community-based agencies to deliver gang prevention and gang intervention; and partnering with the community and the Los Angeles Police Department to reduce violence.² These activities and programs provide a pathway for improving the overall health and well-being for young people and emerging adults, families, and their communities.

One primary gang prevention goal of GRYD's mission is to increase protective factors and resilience for young people and their families while reducing gang joining among young people between the ages of 10 and 15. In this brief, the GRYD Research & Evaluation Team at Cal State LA explores how GRYD Prevention services contribute to this goal. The current brief provides an overview of how many young people were served by GRYD Prevention providers, summarizes their sociodemographic characteristics, and reports how many services they received. GRYD Research Brief No. 12, *Increasing Resilience to Prevent Association with Gangs: Assessing the Impact of GRYD Prevention Services*, builds on this work by assessing the impact of GRYD gang prevention services on reducing risk and involvement in delinquency.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF GRYD PREVENTION SERVICES

GRYD Prevention services are designed for young people between the ages of 10 and 15 who have a significant presence in a GRYD Zone and are identified as high risk for gang joining. The primary objectives of GRYD Prevention services are to engage and support at-risk youth to (1) provide the services they need to increase protective factors against gang joining and develop critical youth development

life skills and (2) strengthen the family/support systems and build resilience. GRYD Prevention services are delivered across 23 GRYD Zones by community-based organizations contracted through the GRYD Office (See Appendix A for a list of agencies contracted during this period to provide GRYD Prevention services).

To be eligible for GRYD Prevention services, a referred young person must be between 10 and 15 years old, have a significant presence in a GRYD Zone, and score above a particular risk threshold for gang membership on the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET). The YSET is an assessment tool that is completed as part of the referral and intake process and after every six months of services. Young people who exhibit four or more elevated risk factors based on the YSET are eligible for GRYD Prevention services.^a GRYD Prevention participants receive prescribed programming across six service phases that begin following the referral and intake process.

Once enrolled in GRYD Prevention services, participants are required to attend one individual meeting with their case management teams and two family meetings during each phase of programming. Additionally, they must participate in at least ten intentional youth development activities during each cycle of services.³ The GRYD Prevention case manager and a supervisor work as a "strategy team," meeting regularly with participants and their families to review the participants' progress and adjust service plans accordingly. Throughout programming, the GRYD case manager and team provide case management, address basic needs by making service referrals and providing supportive services, connect the participant and their family to resources based on their identified needs, provide on-going support, and deliver positive youth development activities in order to promote social-emotional learning.^{4,5}

Figure 1 illustrates the GRYD Prevention services process. The completion of a full cycle of services (i.e., all phases of the program) requires approximately six months, and participants can continue for an additional cycle of services if deemed necessary and appropriate.

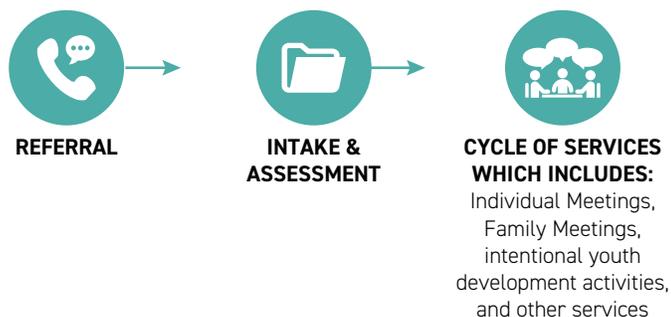


Figure 1: GRYD Prevention Structure of Services

^a Young people who exhibit 2-3 elevated risk factors based on the YSET can be placed in GRYD Primary Prevention services, a less intensive service model that includes fewer monthly contacts. Enrollments into GRYD Primary Prevention services are not included in this report.

^b In order to include five complete years of data in this report, the timeframe begins January 1, 2016 which overlaps with the last few months which were included in the 2017 GRYD Prevention services evaluation report.

PREVIOUS EVALUATION FINDINGS

In 2017, the GRYD Gang Prevention Services Evaluation Report presented process evaluation results on all GRYD Prevention referrals and participants between September 1, 2011 and March 31, 2016. This evaluation found that 9,098 young people were referred to GRYD Prevention services, with the largest source of the referrals coming from parents and caregivers (33%). Approximately half (54%, n=4,945) of the young people were eligible for GRYD Prevention services based on the results of Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET), and a majority (76%, n=3,781) of the young people eligible for services enrolled. Of the 3,781 young people and families who enrolled in services, over half of the participants were male (61%); approximately three-quarters were Latino/a (73%); and approximately one-quarter were Black (23%). Their sociodemographic characteristics included the following:

- 79% lived at home with at least one biological parent
- 92% were enrolled in school
- 31% had received disciplinary actions at school in the six months prior to enrollment
- 15% had an individualized education plan (IEP) at the time of enrollment
- 20% had current or previous Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) child welfare involvement
- 4% had been arrested within six months prior to enrollment
- 5% were currently or previously under Probation supervision

GRYD Prevention services were successfully completed by 37% of those who exited from services during this timeframe. Analysis of program activities showed a positive relationship between program engagement and completion. Participants who participated in a greater number of services were more likely to complete the program successfully (only 3% of participants who attended 1-10 activities completed the program successfully, while 64% of participants who attended more than 100 activities exited successfully).

This brief builds on the 2017 GRYD Prevention services evaluation report by analyzing data for all referrals and participants between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020 to summarize how many young people were referred to services; how many participated; participant characteristics; and the types of services they received.^b

DATA AND METHODS

The data used for this study were drawn from the GRYD Database, a web-based case management system built on Bonterra's Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) software. It includes all GRYD Prevention referrals and participants enrolled in services between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020. The GRYD Database includes sociodemographic information, all services and activities led by GRYD providers once participants are enrolled, and multiple measures to assess change over the duration of services.

GRYD providers are contractually required to document all service provision activities in the GRYD Database. Data are entered into the database anonymously using a generic identification number for tracking; thus, participants included in the analysis are not necessarily unique individuals because some participants may return to services over multiple enrollments.

To meet contractual data obligations, GRYD providers must assign a designated staff person to oversee data entry and management. All GRYD provider staff who use the GRYD Database are required to complete a training and earn their GRYD Database certification prior to delivering any GRYD services. Additional training certification is required for GRYD provider staff who administer the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET). Over time, such protocols have enhanced the quality of GRYD Prevention service data by reducing data entry errors and missing data.

RESULTS

WHO REFERS YOUNG PEOPLE TO GRYD PREVENTION PROGRAMMING?

The GRYD Prevention service model begins with the referral and intake processes. Referrals for services are made by parents and caregivers, school counselors, self-referrals, and from other sources such as GRYD's Summer Night Lights (SNL) program and other school sources. Between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020, a total of 13,280 young people were referred to GRYD Prevention services and completed the YSET (see Figure 2). Parents and caregivers were the largest source of referrals (42%, n=5,578). Approximately a fifth of referrals were made by school counselors (18%, n=2,386), and 16% (n=2,161) were youth walk-ins.

HOW MANY REFERRALS ENROLLED IN GRYD PREVENTION PROGRAMMING?

As soon as a referral is received, GRYD provider staff (typically case managers or intake specialists) engage with the young person and their family to assess their eligibility and interest in GRYD Prevention services. They gather information regarding the young person's behaviors from the family and assess eligibility for the program using the Youth Services Eligibility Tool (YSET). Young people deemed eligible are invited to participate in GRYD Prevention services.

Out of the 13,280 referrals, 6,538 (49%) were eligible for GRYD Prevention services. Of those eligible for services, 5,684 young people and their families (87%) enrolled in and received services. On average, enrollment into GRYD Prevention services occurred within 34 days of the date of referral to the program.

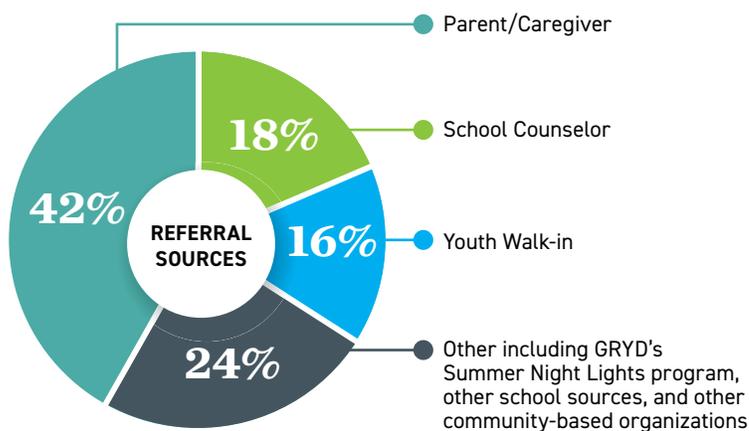


Figure 2. Referral Sources

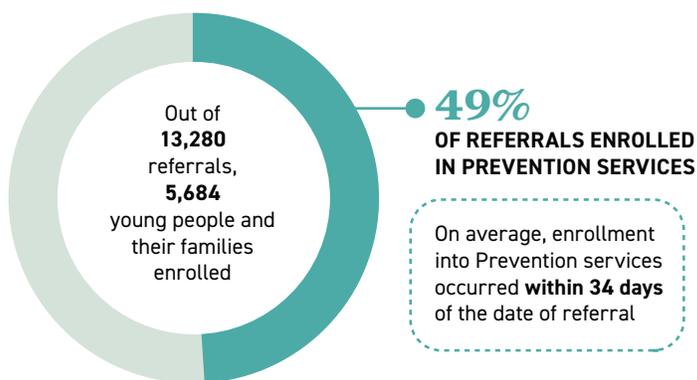


Figure 3. Referrals and Enrollments

WHO WAS SERVED BY GRYD PREVENTION SERVICES?

GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY, AND AGE

Participants who enrolled in GRYD Prevention services between 2016 and 2020 were mostly male (61%) and were between 10 and 15 years old (99%). Three-quarters of participants were Latino/a, 21% were Black, and the average age of participants was 12 years old. Ages ranged from 8 to 16 with an average age of 12 years old, but only less than 1% were younger than 10 and only less than 1% were older than 15.

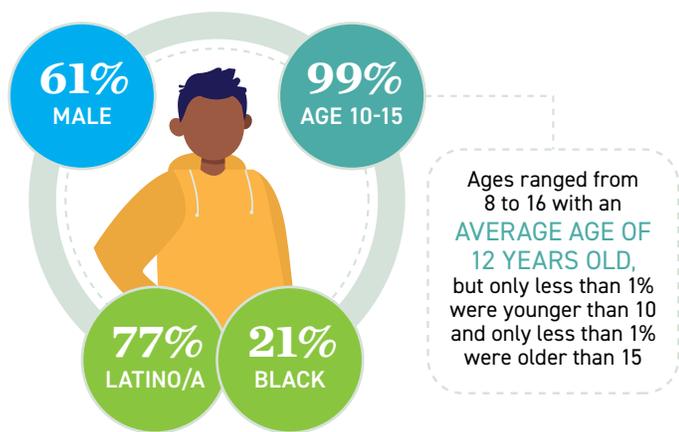
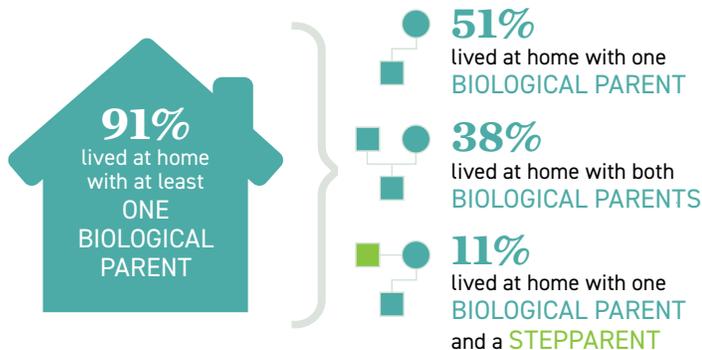


Figure 4. Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Age

LIVING SITUATION AND FAMILY CONNECTIONS

At enrollment, most participants (91%, n=5,147) lived at home with at least one biological parent. Of these, 51% (n=2,629) lived with one biological parent only, 38% (n=1,963) lived with both biological parents, and 11% (n=555) lived with one biological parent and a stepparent. The 3,528 participants who created strength-based genograms during the first phase of GRYD Prevention services identified, on average, 1.84 positive relational lines with family members.



PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED 1.84 POSITIVE RELATIONAL LINES WITH FAMILY MEMBERS

Figure 5. Living Situation and Family Connections

EDUCATION

All participants (100%, n=5,684) were school aged at the time of enrollment, and nearly all (97%, n=5,510) were enrolled in school. Approximately a quarter of participants who were enrolled in school (25%, n=1,358) reported that there was some type of disciplinary action taken against them in school within the past six months, and 14% (n=763) had an Individual Education Plan (IEP) at the time of enrollment.

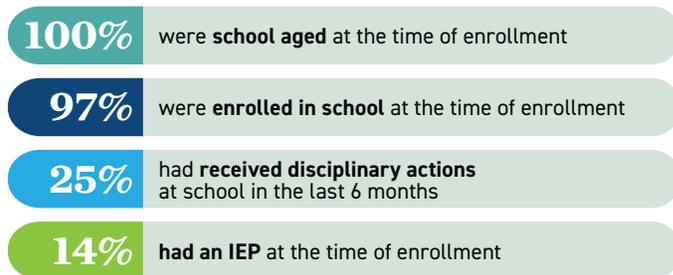


Figure 6. Education

PREVIOUS SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT

At least 20% (n=1,144) of participants were currently or previously involved with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) as a victim of maltreatment. In the six months prior to enrollment in services only 3% (n=186) had been arrested, and 3% (n=164) were currently or previously had been under the supervision of Probation.

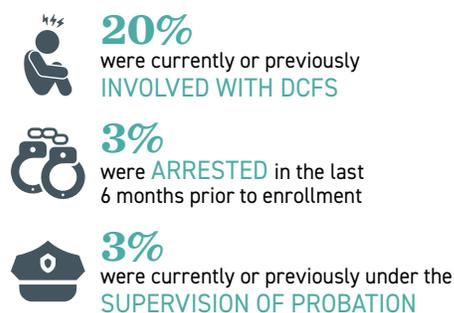


Figure 7. Previous System Involvement

HOW MANY AND WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES DID GRYD PREVENTION PARTICIPANTS ENGAGE IN?

During the study timeframe, 5,684 participants attended a total of 169,209 activities while enrolled in GRYD Prevention services, which translates to 199,878 hours of programming. Contractually required meetings, individual and family meetings, comprised 65% (n=110,093) of these activities, and 35% (n=59,116) were youth development activities.

HOW MANY GRYD PREVENTION PARTICIPANTS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THEIR PROGRAMMING?

Of the 5,684 participants who enrolled in GRYD Prevention services between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020, 4,405 (77%) participants exited the program while 23% remained active in the program. Of those who exited programming, 52% (n=2,269) completed the program successfully while 48% (n=2,136) formally dropped out/refused services, needed a different type/level of service, or were removed due to long-term non-attendance. Overall, the average length of time for all participants who completed services was 10.5 months.

ARE PARTICIPANTS WHO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED GRYD PREVENTION SERVICES DIFFERENT FROM THOSE WHO DID NOT COMPLETE SERVICES SUCCESSFULLY?

The characteristics and experiences of the 2,269 participants who successfully completed GRYD Prevention services were compared to the characteristics and experiences of the 2,136 participants who exited services before program completion using data collected at intake.

When comparing the two groups on their intake responses at the time of enrollment, participants who successfully completed programming were more likely to:^c

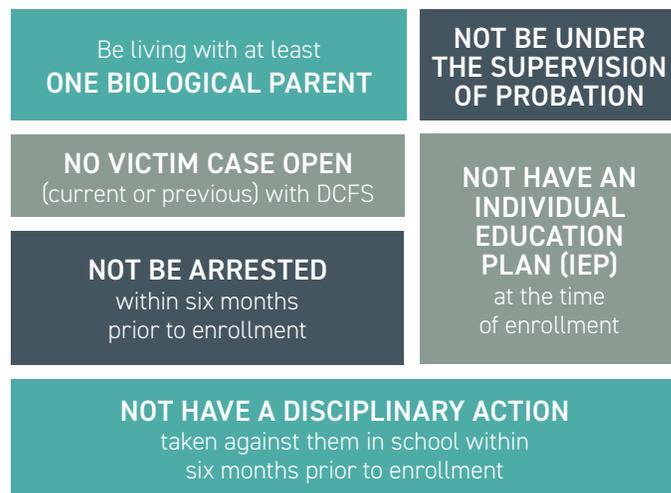


Figure 8. Characteristics of Participants Who Successfully Complete Programming

PARTICIPATION IN GRYD PREVENTION SERVICES

With regard to experiences in programming, participants who successfully completed programming were more likely to:

- Be enrolled approximately 5.4 months longer than participants who exited services before program completion
- Spend more time engaged and participating in contractually required activities
- Spend more time engaged and participating in other programming offered within GRYD Prevention services

These findings show a persistent pattern underscoring the importance of participant engagement in program activities. Successful completion of GRYD Prevention services occurred more often for participants with stronger family and school connections and for participants who were more engaged in programming activities.

^c Chi-square tests were used to assess for statistically significant differences between groups.

A COMPARISON OF FINDINGS WITH THE 2017 GRYD PREVENTION SERVICES EVALUATION REPORT

When these results are compared with those from the 2017 GRYD Prevention services evaluation report, several similarities and a few differences were found. Participants in both studies had comparable rates for their referral source and demographics. The largest source for all referrals was a parent or caregiver, approximately two-thirds of GRYD Prevention participants were male, three-quarters were Latino/a, and a quarter of participants were Black. With regard to differences, enrollment rates were slightly higher in the current study (87%) than in the 2017 study (76%). Participants were 12% more likely to be living at home with at least one biological parent and more likely to be enrolled in school at the time of enrollment compared to participants in the 2017 study. Moreover, participants were less likely to have received disciplinary actions taken against them at school compared to participants in the 2017 study.

Comparisons also revealed improvements in programming over time. The number of referrals and enrollments increased by approximately half from the 2017 numbers. This increase reflects the expansion of GRYD Zones offering GRYD Prevention services from 16 areas to 23 (a 44% increase) starting July 1, 2015. It also reflects the ongoing capacity of GRYD Prevention providers to identify eligible youth and engage them in programming.^d In addition, participants were more likely to complete GRYD Prevention services successfully. In the 2017 report, only 37% successfully completed programming compared to 52% between 2016 and 2020. A strong predictor for successful completion was the same across timeframes, with higher completion rates for participants who engaged in more activities.

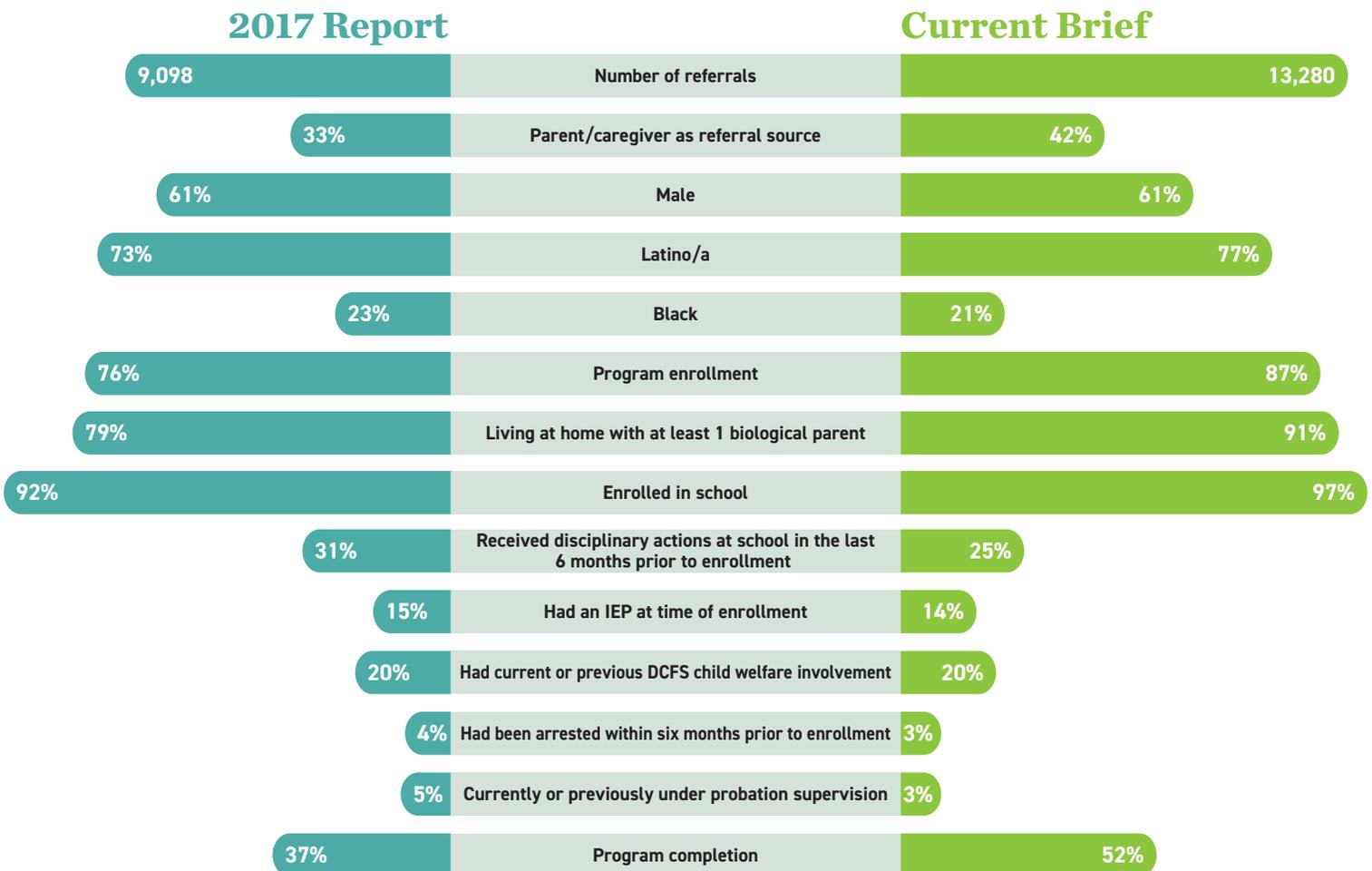


Figure 9. Comparison of Findings with the 2017 Evaluation Report

^d GRYD services began in 2009 in 12 GRYD Zones offering gang prevention, gang intervention, and violence interruption. An additional eight secondary areas offered more limited programming: four implementing only gang prevention and four gang intervention and violence interruption. GRYD Prevention services under the GRYD Comprehensive Strategy began September 1, 2011. As of July, 2015 GRYD has expanded to 23 GRYD Zones in which all prongs of the GRYD Comprehensive Strategy are employed.

SUMMARY

Between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020, a total of 13,280 young people were referred to GRYD Prevention services and completed the YSET. Of those, 6,538 young people were eligible for GRYD Prevention services and 5,684 young people (87% of all referrals who were eligible) enrolled in GRYD Prevention services. Participants were mostly male, Latino/a, and between the ages of 10 and 15. While enrolled in GRYD Prevention services, participants and their families attended 169,209 contractually required meetings and youth development activities. Of all activities attended, over one-third (35%, n=59,116) were youth development activities. In 2019, the process to transition all youth development activities to intentional activities began. Between Spring 2019 and Fall 2020, the GRYD Office provided Activating Intentional Youth Development Approach (AIYDA™) trainings to all GRYD Prevention staff. This shift in focus ensured youth development activities engage young people and intentionally connect to learning social, emotional, physical, and cognitive skills.⁶ To date, GRYD maintains a library of over 200 AIYDA approved activities.

On average, GRYD Prevention participants were enrolled in services for 10.5 months. Approximately half of the participants who enrolled in services completed programming successfully. Participants who successfully completed programming were more connected to family and school, and they were more likely to be engaged in more programming activities.

In sum, the results presented in this brief are consistent with findings from the GRYD Gang Prevention Services 2017 Evaluation Report and the GRYD Data Feedback Loop Training Project and provide valuable insights for continually improving the delivery of gang prevention services to young people and emerging adults involved in gangs.⁷

MOVING FORWARD

Evaluation of participant and service data promotes the continuous improvement of gang prevention services by helping providers identify innovative programming solutions based on insightful program data and results. To this end, the findings presented in the current brief lead to the following considerations for providers delivering gang prevention services to young people:

1. Intake and assessment are keys to success: Intake and assessment are critical components in prevention programming in order to gain insight into participants' risk levels for gang joining. This process allows providers to confirm program

eligibility and establish rapport with the participant and family. Outlining the requirements of the program to ensure that families are committed to the family-centered programming that is focused on addressing the identified risk factors ensures successful program engagement.

2. Build case plans that address risk factors for gang joining: Case plans should target the participants' identified risk factors and address the basic needs of the young person and their family. A tailored service delivery plan will lead to higher levels of program engagement, which is related to increased likelihood of successful program completion, decreased likelihood of gang joining, and reduction of risk factors during this critical period of development in participants' lives.
3. Embrace new approaches of service delivery that improve youth outcomes: Be open to identifying new approaches around youth development that are shown to improve participant outcomes. Adopting research-based approaches that target social-emotional learning during youth development activities increases resilience in young people and reduces risk, leading to successful outcomes.
4. Prioritize and value the data feedback loops: Integrating data and practice through the implementation of data feedback loops allow for the identification of best practices and gaps or challenges in programming to be addressed for ongoing program development. This requires a comprehensive and easy to use data infrastructure combined with the consistent provision of on-going training for staff and application of quality assurance measures for data.
5. Integrate evaluation into programming: Utilize data to assess the impact of prevention services on the young people. Data collection is valuable for documenting what programs are doing, but it is also instrumental in testing whether programs are achieving their goals. Ensuring appropriate measures are collected within program data systems is instrumental to facilitating evaluation in a regular and consistent way.

The current study documents the delivery of GRYD Prevention services to inform the continuous improvement of prevention services in the City of Los Angeles as well as nationally. The GRYD Research Brief No. 12, Increasing Resilience to Prevent Association with Gangs: Assessing the Impact of GRYD Prevention Services, builds on this work by evaluating the impact of GRYD Prevention services on building resilience against the risk factors for gang involvement.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Vera, L., & Diep, J. (2022). *GRYD Prevention services: A summary of participants and services* (GRYD Research Brief No. 11). Los Angeles, CA: California State University, Los Angeles.

⁶ Intentional youth development activities are developed and delivered by GRYD Prevention Contractors using the Activating Intentional Youth Development Approach (AIYDA™), which provides a platform to foster skills in six (6) Social Emotional Learning (SEL) domains: (1) emotion management; (2) empathy; (3) teamwork; (4) initiative; (5) responsibility; and (6) problem solving.

Appendix A: List of Agencies Contracted between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2020 to Provide GRYD Prevention Services

ZONE CODE	PREVENTION AGENCY
77th 1	Asian American Drug Abuse Program
77th 2	Community Build
77th 3	Asian American Drug Abuse Program
Devonshire-Topanga	New Directions for Youth
Foothill	El Nido Family Center
Harbor	Toberman Neighborhood Center
Hollenbeck 1(a)	Alma Family Services (July 2018-present)
Hollenbeck 1(b)	Barrio Action Youth and Family Center
Hollenbeck 2(a)	Alma Family Services
Hollenbeck 2(b)	Legacy LA (July 2018-present)
Hollenbeck 3	Alma Family Services
Hollywood	Youth Policy Institute (July 2015-June 2019) El Centro Del Pueblo (April 2020-present)
Mission	New Directions for Youth
Newton 1	Soledad Enrichment Action
Newton 2	Soledad Enrichment Action
Northeast	El Centro Del Pueblo
Olympic	Bresee Foundation
Pacific	HELPER Foundation
Rampart 1	El Centro Del Pueblo
Rampart 2	El Centro Del Pueblo
Southeast 1	Watts Labor Community Action Committee
Southeast 2	St. Francis
Southeast 3(a)	Watts Labor Community Action Committee
Southeast 3(b)	St. Francis (July 2018-present)
Southwest 1	Community Build
Southwest 2	Brotherhood Crusade

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