Comprehensive Gang Assessment

A report from the Assessment Work Group to the GRACE Task Force

Albemarle – Charlottesville
Commonwealth of Virginia

prepared by
Partnerships for Strategic Impact
Leveraging collective expertise for impact.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

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Comprehensive Gang Assessment

**A report from the Assessment Work Group to the GRACE Task Force
Albemarle – Charlottesville, Commonwealth of Virginia**

Executive Summary

Background In January 2012, Albemarle Police Chief Colonel Steve Sellers, along with his counterpart in the City of Charlottesville, Chief Tim Longo, convened a multidisciplinary task force to address the growing evidence of and concerns about gangs in the area with a collaborative, preventative approach. Part of the initiative led by the Chiefs is to implement the Comprehensive Gang Model endorsed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). In June 2012, the task force adopted by-laws and the name Gang Reduction through Active Community Engagement (GRACE).

GRACE has adopted the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model, which is considered a "best practice" for social intervention. It contains critical elements that distinguish it from typical program approaches to gangs. The Model's key distinguishing feature is a thorough strategic planning process that empowers communities to assess their own gang problems and create a complement of anti-gang strategies and program activities. The first step of this approach is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of gang activity.

The assessment process outlined by OJJDP consists of three general steps:

1. lay the groundwork by assembling those individuals who will oversee the entire process and provide direction for the data collection efforts,
2. collect and interpret the data on a range of indicators in multiple domains, and
3. prepare findings and final reporting.

This overall assessment process aims to build a fact-based understanding that supports informed strategic and action planning.

What is Known about Gangs Nationally Research compiled by the National Gang Center shows that risk factors known to increase the likelihood of gang membership include the following (the presence of more risk factors further increases the likelihood of gang membership):

> prior and/or early involvement in delinquency, especially violence and alcohol/drug use;

> poor family management and problematic parent-child relations;

> low school attachment and achievement and negative labeling by teachers;
> association with aggressive peers and peers who engage in delinquency; and/or
> living in neighborhoods in which large numbers of youth are in trouble and in which drugs and firearms are readily available.

Nationally, the two biggest reasons youth give for joining gangs are: (1) the desire to be around friends and family members who are already in the gang, and (2) safety and protection. There are only a few longitudinal studies of youth gang membership, and those were conducted in communities with an emerging gang problem. In these studies, youth report being part of the gang for one year or less; other, emerging research shows long-term involvement of youth in gangs in areas where gangs have become intergenerational.

The National Gang Center reports that compared to gangs 20 to 40 years ago, gangs today use firearms more and that there has been substantial growth of prison gangs. The most frequently identified groups in prisons are the Crips, Bloods, Gangster Disciples, Latin Kings, and Aryan Brotherhood.

Additionally, the 2011 National Gang Threat Assessment study by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) noted a shift of gang activity, beginning in 2009, from urban to suburban and rural areas so that gangs could hide from law enforcement and expand into new territory. The study also notes that gangs are becoming more sophisticated in their structure and crime (including engaging in "white-collar" and cybercrime, infiltrating sensitive information systems, and targeting and monitoring law enforcement), and have changed or stopped using typical gang signs, colors, tattoos or hand signs.

GRACE Assessment Workgroup　　An Assessment Work Group (AWG) was appointed by the GRACE Task Force to manage the gathering, compilation, and analysis of the comprehensive assessment data. A contracted research partner (Partnerships for Strategic Impact) assisted with data collection and analysis, writing of this final report, and presentation of the results.

AWG drew on nine existing data sources and interviewed 141 people in the community between September 2013 and January 2014. Detailed data and data summaries are presented in the body of the report.

Data Summary　　Overall, there was great consistency across the nine data sources and 141 interviewees included in this report. Albemarle and Charlottesville are relatively young, primarily white, relatively educated communities. Nonetheless, across the area, about 1 in 5 families are single-mother households that have experienced poverty in the last 12 months. Unemployment hovers around the state average of 5.9%. There are roughly 17,000 students across both the Albemarle (APS) and Charlottesville (CCS) public schools, with CCS having about one-third the population of APS, twice the proportion of racial/ethnic diversity, and nearly twice the proportion of economically disadvantaged students.

When looking at youth behavior in general, behavioral offenses in public schools have generally gone down over the last three years, with disruption, defiance, obscene language, and altercations being the most frequent offenses receiving discipline/referrals. CCS has a higher proportion of discipline incidents than APS; however, APS experienced twice the raw number of fights and more drug offenses than CCS in the last school year. The case records of 131 youth placed on probation in 2010 and 2011 were reviewed (including 98 Albemarle and 25 Charlottesville youth). Their average age was 15, and they most often had zero to two felony petitions and/or one to three criminal petitions.

There was consistent consensus that the gang problem in Albemarle-Charlottesville pales in comparison to those of larger cities, with many residents unaware that there are even gangs in the area. Nonetheless, when surveyed within the last 18 months, between 40% and 50% of residents in largely lower-income neighborhoods near downtown Charlottesville reported gangs were a problem. Law enforcement and other members of the criminal justice system expressed concern that the general lack of knowledge about gangs—coupled with gang members moving in from other localities and gangs becoming increasingly quiet and less likely to outwardly demonstrate gang affiliation—puts the community at increased risk for gangs to grow larger and stronger without generally being noticed. Both police departments express an urgent need for increased, dedicated resources to keep gang activity at bay and concern that without additional resources, gang activity will rise and become increasingly dangerous.

The Extent of Gang Activity in Albemarle-Charlottesville

> Between 2006 and 2013, 183 residents of Albemarle-Charlottesville have been validated as being in a gang; an average of 29 people have been validated per year.

> Gang validations[1] peaked in 2007 as the initial backlog of potential gang members was validated. The precipitous drop in validations in 2013 is due to moving key detectives off gang-related activities due to staffing vacancies; nonetheless, the regional jail had submitted nearly 30 individuals for review for validation.

> There are 16 gangs in Albemarle-Charlottesville with verified members. As is consistent with state data, Bloods are the most populous gang, followed by the Crips. Other nationally identified gangs with a local presence are 5%ers, Aryan Brotherhood, Gangster Disciples, ICP (or Insane Clown Posse), Latin Kings, MS-13, Sureños, Vice Lords, and White Power. Gangs local to Albemarle-Charlottesville (called "neighborhood sets" which may have members who also affiliate with national gangs) are 6N0, 13th St (Eastside Locos), Eastside, G-Square, Southside, and Westside/PJC or Project Crud. Zoo of Goons (ZOG) is a local-

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[1] The process of validating gang members is described in detail in the full report. The validation process is outline in the Code of Virginia § 52-8.6, and is conducted by law enforcement.

gang not associated with a specific neighborhood; ZOG emerged from a local middle school.

> Between January 1, 2010, and September 1, 2013, there were 14,959 offenses in Charlottesville and Albemarle, and 480 of these involved validated gang members, including 193 unique victims and 96 unique arrestees. The Bloods, Crips, and MS-13 are responsible for the largest share of arrests in Albemarle, while Charlottesville has substantial activity by both national gangs and neighborhood sets including Bloods, Westside/PCJ, Crips, and ICP.

> Assault, larceny, burglary, and forgery are the most common gang-related arrests across both localities, followed by weapons offenses and vandalism. The most common offenses for gang involved youth were aggravated assault, assault, and weapons offenses; the most common offenses for all other youth were larceny and non-aggravated assault.

> Overall, streets in downtown Charlottesville, as well as around Prospect Avenue and South 1st Street, have the most incidents and offenses involving gang members (however, it is not known how many of these incidents and offenses were related to gang-activity, *per say*). In Albemarle, arrests are clustered in the urban ring (primarily on the north side) and extend up Rt. 29 North.

> Some interviewees reported that the number of gang members is growing and that new gang members may be coming from other localities and states. Correctional facilities are common recruiting grounds.

> There is strong consensus that people join gangs to fill voids in their lives. Most interviewees spoke primarily of a desire for sense of family and belonging, but also for income, opportunity, power, leadership, and even a sense of the greater good that some feel gangs provide (e.g., community building, anti-bullying, etc.).

> The full extent of gang activity within the Hispanic community and primarily within Hispanic neighborhoods is still unclear. Due to the close-knit Hispanic community, as well as concern about personal safety, it was difficult to identify people willing to talk about gangs. What was reported was fear and intimidation by gangs in the Hispanic community, as well as assaults, intimidation, drugs, and human trafficking/prostitution. Hispanic residents are also afraid to go to the police to report gang activity, in part due to experiencing discrimination, and in part due to fears of being deported. These challenges further isolate a community already isolated culturally and linguistically.

Gangs and Youth

> Gangs actively recruit young children and youth; gangs recruit youth who are disconnected from family and school, youth who are looking for a sense of belonging, youth who lack supervision, and/or youth who are rebellious.

> Last school year, about 1,100 6th to 12th graders reported that there were gangs in their school (a higher percentage of middle school than high school students reported gangs). The gang problem in school was rated as moderate or big by 341 students; 6th, 7th, 9th, and 10th grade students reported more of a gang presence and/or more problems associated with gangs at school.

> Between 2009 and 2013, 13 Albemarle-Charlottesville youth were verified as gang members in Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention Center. There also were three Albemarle-Charlottesville youth in Juvenile Correctional Centers in October 2013 verified as gang members and two additional youth suspected of gang membership. The gang validation process for youth is much stricter than for adults, resulting in fewer youth being validated than may claim gang membership or engage in gang-related activities.

Additional Community Comments on Gangs and Needed Interventions

> Many people see neighborhood sets and gangs as different in important ways. Neighborhood sets are based on where a person lives, do not always require people to formally join, and do not always have the same structural hierarchy as national gangs. Interviewees report that the primary function of the sets are "brotherhoods" to defend neighborhood reputations, and that as many as 50% of the youth in a neighborhood may be associated with sets. Nonetheless, neighborhood sets are considered recruiting grounds for national gangs, and can be involved in gang-type activities.

> Interviewees expressed substantial concern about discrimination and stereotyping in general and by police, as well as the fact that youth cannot gather together without being called a gang (especially non-Caucasian youth).

> Most gang-involved interviewees were not actively involved in a gang and wanted productive lives outside of their gang. They spoke of significant barriers to successful re-entry and job attainment when leaving jail and prison. Most gang-members interviewed regretted earlier life decisions including getting involved in gangs, and several spoke of wanting to help youth avoid getting involved in gangs.

> Some neighborhood communities have banded together and explicitly do not tolerate gang activity. Residents and ex-offenders have asked to be meaningfully included in the process of addressing youth development and for the policy

makers to direct anti-gang funding and resources to community residents, who best know their children and what they need to thrive.

> Interviewees generally called for more resources to strengthen families, more activities and opportunities for youth—including opportunities for leadership and paid employment—more non-traditional policing, and greater involvement of residents and reformed offenders in helping to engage youth and reduce the gang presence.

Ways Forward

Overall, there was a strong call to action from those interviewed, as well as the need for long-term solution. It is clear that there is no single, straightforward program or sole community entity than can address the gang problem locally; a coordinated, multifaceted approach is needed.

Based on interviewees' input, long-term solutions must:

> be lasting—resources must be committed long-term,
> examine and address underlying issues facing children and families,
> focus on addressing the specific community issues that enable gang recruitment and activity, and
> address the economic and social barriers gang members face when trying to leave the gang.

The OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model This report represents the **first step** in strategic planning to reduce gang activity and support positive youth development. As such, the comprehensive assessment aimed to answer the following questions.

1. **What are the most serious and prevalent local gang-related problems?**

Both arrest records and interviewees reported the following are the most prevalent gang-related problems: assaults, fighting, stealing, intimidation. Drugs were consistently reported as the central gang-related activity in the area; however, there are no gang-related arrests for drugs during the time period studied.

2. **In which communities and neighborhoods does gang crime most often occur?**

Lower-income City neighborhoods have neighborhood sets. Set involvement ranges from hanging out with neighborhood friends to activities that attract the attention of national gangs. When surveyed in the last 18 months, 40-50% of residents in two lower-income City neighborhoods reported that gangs were a problem.

Overall, streets in downtown Charlottesville, as well as around Prospect Avenue and South 1st Street, have the most incidents and offenses involving gang members. In Albemarle, arrests are clustered in the urban ring (primarily on the north side) and extend up Rt. 29 North.

3. What are the potential factors contributing to the local gang problems?

As described above, the factors contributing to the local gang problem are multifaceted. The community conditions that likely promote growth in gang activities include (in no particular order):

> Lack of visibility and knowledge of gang activities, as well as lack of knowledge about sets
> Lack of understanding of the dangerousness of gangs and what is needed to suppress gang growth
> Gang members moving to Albemarle-Charlottesville from other localities or visiting from other states
> Discrimination
> Lack of positive connections/relationships between lower-income neighborhoods
> Lack of dedicated gang-related police resources
> Lack of educational and work opportunities for youth and adults (including people leaving detention jail and prison)
> Lack of fun, supervised places for youth to hang out
> Truancy and graduation rates
> Families where parents cannot get adequate employment, as well as those unable to provide adequate structure and supervision for youth for any reason

Youth may be vulnerable to gang-involvement for different combinations of reasons including the following (in no particular order):

> Youth who need or want to make money
> Youth who do not feel like they have a family, who are isolated and/or bullied
> Youth who are bored
> Youth looking for leadership and respect
> Youth involved in neighborhood rivalries
> Youth who are truant and/or at risk for not graduating

4. **What are the organizational or systemic issues that should be addressed toward long-term effects on gang related problems?**

   > Community perceptions about the differences and overlaps between gangs and neighborhood sets, as well as education of service providers and community members about these differences and overlaps.
   > The role of, not only about gang violence and crime, but also intimidation and how it can affect the way people live.
   > Multiple levels of isolation of the Hispanic community, including fear of police and deportation.
   > Gang involvement in jails and correctional facilities.
   > Gang involvement and employment are key issues in adult and youth re-entry from jail, detention and corrections.
   > Law enforcement buy-in and coordination around gang identification and submitting people for verification.
   > Neighborhood identity and between neighborhood and community relationships.
   > Understanding of gangs and gang recruitment in schools.
   > Ensuring families with children have needed resources to support positive youth development.

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Starting in March/April, GRACE will begin the strategic planning and action planning processes outlined in the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model. The **next step** of this process is to develop recommendations based on the data and conclusions in this report. To this end, GRACE may seek to answer the following questions.

1. **What are the current and needed efforts needed within Albemarle County and Charlottesville City to reduce gang activity and youth violence?**

2. **To whom should prevention, intervention, and suppression activities be targeted?**

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Background

History of GRACE

In January, 2012, Albemarle's Chief of Police, Colonel Steve Sellers, along with his counterpart in the City of Charlottesville, Chief Tim Longo, convened a multidisciplinary task force to address the growing evidence and concerns about gangs in the area with a collaborative, preventative approach. The initiative aims to implement the Comprehensive Gang Model endorsed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). In June 2012, the task force adopted by-laws and the name Gang Reduction through Active Community Engagement (GRACE). GRACE membership includes, or will include, those roles listed in Table 1.

2006 – 2011
- Charlottesville Area Gang Enforcement Team (CAGE) is established
- Gang member validation begins
- Joint Police Department enforcement and information sharing

- Chiefs resolve to develop a comprehensive community prevention approach

January 2012
- Gang Reduction through Active Community Engagement (GRACE) Task Force is established

- Member recruitment
- Briefings of public officials
- Public education presentations

- Focus on prevention
- Specific collaborations
- Capacity building

- Review of best practices for addressing gangs

August 2013
- GRACE Assessment Work Group and assessment begin
- Existing data collected

Sept. 2013
- Interviews/focus groups held through January 2014

March 2014
- Comprehensive gang assessment results released
- GRACE action planning begins

Comprehensive Gang Model

GRACE has adopted the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model, which is considered a "best practice" for social intervention. It contains critical elements that distinguish it from typical program approaches to gangs. The Model's key distinguishing feature is a thorough strategic planning process that empowers communities to assess their own gang problems and create a complement of anti-gang strategies and program activities. The first step of this approach is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of gang activity.

The assessment process outlined by OJJDP consists of three general steps:

1. lay the groundwork by assembling those individuals who will oversee the entire process and provide direction for the data collection efforts,
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This overall assessment process aims to build a fact-based understanding that supports informed strategic and action planning.

GRACE Gang Definition

A criminal street gang is any group, organization, or association of three or more persons, whether formal or informal,

> which has as one of its primary objectives or activities the commission of one or more criminal acts,

> which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol,

> whose members, individually or collectively, have engaged in the commission of, attempt to commit, conspiracy to commit, or solicitation of two or more predicate criminal acts, at least one of which is an act of violence, and

> which may create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

Table 1. GRACE Membership

Stakeholder	Representative(s)
Staff Coordinator	Jenna Easton,* Albemarle County Police Department
Public and Private Schools	Matt Haas, Albemarle County Public Schools Adam Hastings, CATEC June Jenkins,* Safe Schools/Healthy Students Amy Laufer, Charlottesville City Schools Gary McCool,* Albemarle County Public Schools Phil Stinnie, St. Anne's Belfield School Cecil Thompson, Charlottesville City Schools Dean Tistadt, Albemarle County Public Schools
Youth Development Organizations	James Pierce, Boys & Girls Club of Central Virginia Robert Shiflett, Stonewall Jackson Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America Clinton White,* Boys & Girls Club of Central Virginia Francesca Zavacky, National Association for Sport and Physical Education
Community-Based Youth Agencies	Diane Kuknyo, Charlottesville Department of Social Services Anne Ternes, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville
Law Enforcement	Tim Aylor,* Albemarle County Police Department Jim Hope, Albemarle County Police Department Tim Longo, Charlottesville City Police Department Karen McGee, Charlottesville City Police Department Ronnie Roberts,* Charlottesville City Police Department Steve Sellers,* Albemarle County Police Department Jennifer Zawitz,* Albemarle County Police Department
Prosecution	Ron Huber, US Attorney's Office Darby Lowe, Albemarle County Commonwealth Attorney's Office Brian McGinn, US Attorney's Office
Adult Probation/ Parole	Nicole Ocheltree,* Adult Probation and Parole Michael McHugh, US Probation
Juvenile Probation/ Parole	Mary Donald, 16th District Court Services Unit
Adult Corrections	Gary Clore,* Virginia Department of Corrections
Juvenile Corrections	Art Daniels, Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention Center
Medical and Mental Health	Jeff Aaron, Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents Javier Figueroa-Ray, Region Ten Community Services Board
Drug and Alcohol Prevention and Intervention	Lori Wood, Region Ten Community Services Board
Evaluation and Research	Jonathon Earl, Albemarle County Police Department Jennifer Zawitz, Albemarle County Police Department
Government	Diantha McKeel, Albemarle County Board of Supervisors Gretchen Ellis,* City of Charlottesville Kathy Galvin, Charlottesville City Council Maurice Jones, City of Charlottesville Matt Reges,* Albemarle County

Table 1. GRACE Membership, continued

Stakeholder	Representative(s)
Faith Community	Lehman Bates, Ebenezer Baptist Church
	Margarete Gillette, Broadus Memorial Baptist Church
Parents	Michelle Busby, Community Policy Management Team, Parent Representative
	Jillian Dankle, Community Representative
	Terry Knizner, Community Representative
Funder	Albert Stokes, Department of Criminal Justice Services

* Assessment Work Group members, in addition to Shawn Bayles, Charlottesville Police Department; Jonathon Earl, Albemarle County Police Department; Ron Lantz, Albemarle County Police Department; and Maryfrances Porter, Partnerships for Strategic Impact.

What is Known about Gangs

OJJDP and the Office of Justice Programs/Bureau of Justice Assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice maintain a National Gang Center website[2] containing national data, research, resources, and best practices. The following information from the National Gang Center is provided as basic background and national context for understanding gang activity in Albemarle-Charlottesville. The following FAQ hyperlinks refer back to the National Gang Center. A few key points are summarized below.

National Gang Center FAQ
1. What is a gang?
2. What community conditions enable gangs to take root?
3. Is the gang problem growing?
4. How is the gang problem changing?
5. Are gang homicides increasing?
6. Is gang migration a common problem?
7. What factors contributed to the proliferation of gang activity in the 1970s–1990s?
8. Are gangs involved in organized crime?
9. Are today's gangs different from gangs in the past?
10. What proportion of adolescents join gangs?
11. What is the racial and ethnic composition of gangs?
12. Is female gang involvement increasing?
13. What proportion of serious and violent crime is attributable to gang members?
14. What is the impact of gang membership on individual offending levels?
15. What are the major risk factors for gang membership?
16. How do youths become involved in and leave a gang?
17. What are the consequences of gang membership?
18. What can be done about youth gangs?

There are four community conditions that tend to allow gangs to develop:

> typical structures that socialize youth (such as families and schools) are ineffective and alienating, and supervision is largely absent;
> youth having a lot of unstructured free time;
> adults having limited access to jobs and careers that are appealing and well-paid; and
> young people frequently hang out in unstructured and supervised places.

Based on 1997 data, is it estimated that up to 8% of youth aged 12 to 17 belong to a gang by age 17, including about 12% of Hispanic and black youth, and 7% of white youth. In 2009, the

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[2] http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/, accessed 2/13/14.

National Gang Center reported that larger cities typically see more adult gang members, while smaller cities and rural counties see more juvenile gang members. Gang membership of white youth is substantially higher, on average, in rural counties.

Risk factors known to increase the likelihood of gang membership include the following (the presence of more risk factors further increases the likelihood of gang membership):

> prior and/or early involvement in delinquency, especially violence and alcohol/drug use;
> poor family management and problematic parent-child relations;
> low school attachment and achievement and negative labeling by teachers;
> association with aggressive peers and peers who engage in delinquency; and/or
> neighborhoods in which large numbers of youth are in trouble and in which drugs and firearms are readily available.

The two biggest reasons youth give for joining gangs are (1) the desire to be around friends and family members who are already in the gang, and (2) safety and protection. There are only a few longitudinal studies of youth gang membership, and those were conducted in communities with an emerging gang problem. In these studies, youth report being part of the gang for one year or less; other, emerging research shows long-term involvement of youth in gangs in areas where gangs have become intergenerational.

The National Gang Center reports that compared to gangs 20 to 40 years ago, gangs today use firearms more, and that there has been a substantial growth of prison gangs. The most frequently identified groups in prisons are the Crips, Bloods, Gangster Disciples, Latin Kings, and Aryan Brotherhood.

Additionally, the 2011 National Gang Threat Assessment[3] study by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) noted a shift, beginning in 2009, of gang activity from urban to suburban and rural areas to better hide from law enforcement and expand into new territory. They also note the following:

> "Gang members are becoming more sophisticated in their structure and operations and are modifying their activity to minimize law enforcement scrutiny and circumvent gang enhancement laws. Gangs in several jurisdictions have modified or ceased traditional or stereotypical gang indicia and no longer display their colors, tattoos, or hand signs. Others are forming hybrid gangs to avoid police attention and make to it more difficult for law enforcement to identify and monitor them…. Many gangs are engaging in more sophisticated criminal schemes, including white-collar and cybercrime, targeting and infiltrating sensitive systems to gain access to sensitive areas or information, and targeting and monitoring law enforcement."

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[3]   http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/2011-national-gang-threat-assessment/2011-national-gang-threat-assessment, accessed 2/13/14.

Assessment Process

Assessment Work Group

An Assessment Work Group (AWG) was appointed by the GRACE Task Force to manage the gathering, compiling and analysis of the comprehensive assessment data. A contracted research partner (Partnerships for Strategic Impact) assisted with data collection and analysis, writing of this final assessment report, and making presentations. Over the course of data collection and analysis, as well as the report writing processes, the AWG met a total of 9 times (between 8/30/13 and 2/12/14).

This assessment consisted of the collection of specific data in five areas (including demographic and community-level data, school and juvenile justice data, law enforcement data, community youth, adult and gang member perceptions, and community resources), and was collected with the goal informing the following questions:

1. **What are the most serious and prevalent local gang-related problems?**

2. **In which communities and neighborhoods does gang crime most often occur?**

3. **To whom should prevention, intervention, and suppression activities be targeted?**

4. **What are the potential factors contributing to the local gang problems?**

5. **What are the organizational or systemic issues that should be addressed toward long term effects on the gang related problems?**

6. **What are the current and needed efforts within Albemarle County and Charlottesville City to reduce gang activity and youth violence?**

Data Sources

> US Census, 5-year estimates (2007–2011)[4]
> Albemarle and Charlottesville Division School Climate Surveys, School Year 2012–2013[5]
> Virginia Department of Education, School Report Card, 2007–2012[6]
> Review of juvenile 16th District Court Service Unit case files, 2010–2011 cohort[7]
> Juvenile Justice System Point-in-time Data, Wednesdays in September, 2009–2013[8]
> Gang Validation Data, 2006–2013[9]
> Albemarle and Charlottesville Police Department Arrest Records, 2010–2013
> City of Promise Neighborhood Survey, July 2012
> Friendship Court Neighborhood Survey, September 2013
> Interviews with stakeholders,[10] held between 2/24/13 – 1/29/14
> Focus groups with Albemarle and Charlottesville youth,[11] held between 10/5/13 – 1/21/14
> Focus groups with Albemarle and Charlottesville adults, held between 10/5/13 – 1/23/14
> Focus groups with Albemarle and Charlottesville officers and supervisor, held 10/27/13 and 1/28/14
> Interviews with adult probationers,[12] held between 9/6/13 – 12/10/13
> Interviews with youth probationers, held between 9/6/13 – 12/16/13

The interview and focus group scripts can be found in Appendix B. All individuals at least 18 years old signed (or gave verbal) consent to participate, and guardians signed consent for all under-age participants. Interviewers reviewed confidentiality verbally, in-person before all

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[4] Data from the American Community Survey. Extracted from American FactFinder, http://www.factfinder2.census.gov

[5] Safe Schools/Health Students Albemarle/Charlottesville Project, http://safeschoolscville.org/

[6] Virginia Department of Education, https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/reportcard/

[7] This research was conducted by a review of 131 juvenile case files was conducted by the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families (CCF), Albemarle/Charlottesville Safe Schools/Healthy Students, and the Charlottesville Department of Human Services, and funded by a Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) grant to the local Safe Schools/Healthy Students Albemarle/Charlottesville Program. The 16th District Court Services Unit (CSU) identified all youth placed on probation in calendar years 2010 and 2011. Two research assistants reviewed all the information generated in case files by probation staff and other individuals working with the juveniles from the time of initial contact with the CSU. Data was primarily drawn from social history documents found in the case files, which are generated from interviews with the juvenile offender, parents, and sometimes friends or teachers. Interventions were made during the course of a juvenile's court involvement, which may have affected the same risk/protective factors reviewed for the study. There was no control group. Every effort was made to ensure consistency; however, some discrepancies in interpretation may have occurred.

[8] Collected and reported by the 16th District Court Services Unit, Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention Center and the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice.

[9] Compiled by Albemarle County Police Department

[10] Stakeholders are identified as service providers or community leaders. There were 29 interviews with 40 individuals.

11 One focus group included both adults and youth, and one adult focus group had the children of some of the participants present.

[12] Adults and youth identified were sometimes gang members and other times were believed to have experiences with gangs. None of the probationers were required to participate in the interviews and participation was not reported back to Probation and Parole or the Court Services Unit.

interviews and focus groups; all participants understood that their participation was voluntary and that they could stop their participation at any time. AWG and participants agreed that, for everyone's privacy and safety, no individuals should be able to be singled out.[13] All probationers/parolees and focus group participants were told that their identity would remain completely confidential and that all information would be combined so that no one person's comments were identifiable. Police focus group participants were asked to participate between shifts. The service provider/law enforcement interviewees agreed to have their identify known, but were also told that all the content of the interviews would be combined so that no one person's comments were identifiable.

Adult and youth probationers/parolees were given a $50 gift card, and focus group participants were given a $20 gift card for their participation (the police participating in focus groups were not given gift cards). All interviews were transcribed and focus group notes were written before being analyzed for content.

Importantly, recruitment of probationers/parolees and focus group participants was challenging even with the incentives, and there were a number of people who refused to participate, even when guaranteed confidentiality. This was especially true for youth probationers/parolees and for Hispanic community members. Two focus groups were held with Hispanic adults, but no Hispanic youth focus groups could be organized. One long-time Hispanic resident agreed to participate in the service provider interview under the condition of complete anonymity.

This report represents the **first step** in strategic planning to reduce gang activity and support positive youth development. Starting in March, GRACE will begin the strategic planning and action planning processes outlined in the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model. The **next step** of this process is to develop recommendations based on the data and conclusions in this report.

> "I think [the community has] a long ways to go as far as coming up with solutions. We could talk about it all day long but fixing it, taking action is what's really hesitant….[W]e can talk about it. We can think about it. We can form groups and committees and there's plenty of that. But I see very little action. It really doesn't make any sense if a person has dangerous affiliations…. Take action on it. I mean don't just talk about it and form committees and subcommittees and you know like I said I think for the most part you know there's a lot more that can be done. But [the community] tends to spend a lot more money spinning their wheels…"

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[13] Quotes from interviews and focus groups are used throughout this report to help bring the data to life. While each quote specifically reflects only one person's perspective, quotes are used to illustrate more generally held opinions that may be voiced many different ways.

Assessment Results

Demographic and Community Data

Demographic and community-level data were gathered so that GRACE could understand the characteristics of and economic conditions in the Charlottesville-Albemarle. The full demographic and community-level data may be found in Appendix C. A summary of the data is presented here.

> About 15% and 12% of residents in Albemarle and Charlottesville, respectively, are between the ages of 10 and 19. Almost 20% and a little more than 40% of residents in Albemarle and Charlottesville, respectively, are between the ages of 20 and 34. Charlottesville has almost three times the percentage of young adults between 20 and 24 years of age that Albemarle has; this is likely due to students at the University of Virginia.[14]

> Both Albemarle and Charlottesville residents primarily identify as white, non-Hispanic (84.4% and 71.8%, respectively), and Charlottesville has a substantially higher population of residents identifying as black than Albemarle.[15]

> Residents in Albemarle and Charlottesville graduate from high school and college at rates roughly similar to the state average. About 90% and almost 86% of Albemarle and Charlottesville residents, respectively, have at least a high school diploma (compared to 86.6% across the state).[16]

> While the mean household income in Albemarle County ($65,934) is slightly higher than the state average ($63,302), the mean income in Charlottesville ($43,980) is much lower than the state average (this is likely influenced by students at the University of Virginia). Similarly, compared to the state average (7.5%), fewer Albemarle families (5.1%) and more Charlottesville families (8.2%) experienced poverty "in the past 12 months." Both Albemarle (18.1%) and Charlottesville (22.9%) have single-mother households experiencing poverty "in the past 12 months" at a slightly lower rate than the State

Race and Ethnicity

The Census uses the racial labels "black" and "non-Hispanic white." Various data sources use other race and ethnicity labels. Throughout the rest of the report, **black** will be used to identify all individuals identifying as black or African American. **White** will be used to identify both Hispanic and non-Hispanic Caucasians, **Caucasian** will be used to refer to non-Hispanic Caucasians. **Hispanic** will be used to refer to any individual identifying as Hispanic or Hispanic Caucasian.

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[14] Data from the American Community Survey. Extracted from American FactFinder, http://www.factfinder2.census.gov
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

(23.9%); however, both localities' percentage is higher than the state average for single-mother households with children under the age of 5.

> Unemployment in the area hit a low point in 2007 of between 2% and 3% and then climbed to a peak of between 5% and 7% in 2010. In the last three years, unemployment rates have begun to decrease again.[17] In 2012, the state unemployment rate was 5.9%; it was 4.8% in Albemarle, and 5.9% in Charlottesville.[18]

> The teen pregnancy rates in 2012 were highest for girls identifying as black: 16.4 per 1,000 in Albemarle, 43.3 per 1,000 in Charlottesville, and 26.3 per 1,000 statewide. Charlottesville's total teen pregnancy rates, as well as the rates for white and black teens, are higher than the state rates. Charlottesville's overall rate was 29.1 per 1,000), versus 16.7 per 1,000 statewide. Meanwhile, teen pregnancy rates in Albemarle are well below the sate average, with an overall rate of 7.5 per 1,000. Overall, since 2009, teen pregnancy rates have decreased.[19]

Summary – Demographics and Community Data

Albemarle and Charlottesville are relatively young, primarily white, relatively educated communities. Charlottesville has more racial and socioeconomic diversity than Albemarle County. Charlottesville has many more young adults and more black residents than Albemarle. Unemployment for the City is at the state average of 5.9%, while in the County it is lower (4.8%). Both Albemarle (18.1%) and Charlottesville (22.9%) have single-mother households experiencing poverty "in the past 12 months" at slightly lower rates than the state (23.9%). Both localities have lower rates of single mothers with children under five than the state average (Albemarle: 18.1%, Charlottesville: 22.9%, state: 23.9%). While the teen pregnancy rate is decreasing overall, the rate in Charlottesville is much higher than in Albemarle County and almost twice that of the state; the pregnancy rates for black teens in Charlottesville is almost twice the state average.

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[17] 2012 Average Annual Unemployment. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. At http://www.bls.gov/lau/laucnty12.txt Accessed January 4, 2014.

[18] 2012 Average Annual Unemployment. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. At http://www.bls.gov/lau/laucnty12.txt Accessed January 4, 2014.

[19] 2012 data: http://www.vdh.state.va.us/healthstats/documents/2010/pdfs/TeenPregRace12.pdf
2011 data: http://www.vdh.state.va.us/healthstats/documents/2010/pdfs/TeenPregRace11.pdf
2010 data: http://www.vdh.state.va.us/healthstats/documents/2010/pdfs/TeenPregRace10.pdf
2009 data: http://www.vdh.state.va.us/healthstats/documents/2010/pdfs/TeenPregRace09.pdf

School Data

School Demographics. Albemarle Public School (APS) served nearly 13,500 students in the 2013–2014 school year, and Charlottesville City Schools (CCS) served a little more than 4,300. The racial and ethnic breakdowns by school district are shown in Table 2, below. CCS has many more non-white students (59.3%) than APS (31.9%) or the state average (47.8%). Increasing the City's diversity, Charlottesville is home to an International Rescue Committee (IRC, http://www.rescue.org/us-program/us-charlottesville-va), which settles refugees in the area; as a result, there are more than 45 languages spoken in the City schools.

Table 2. APS and CCS Demographics

2013–14 Fall Enrollment			
	Virginia	**Albemarle**	**Charlottesville**
Total Enrollment	1,273,211	13,420	4,340
White[20]	52.2% (*n*=664,370)	68.1% (*n*=9.137)	40.7% (*n*=1,768)
Black	23.2% (*n*=295,942)	11.5% (*n*=1,538)	37.3% (*n*=1,617)
Hispanic	13.1% (*n*=166,269)	10.1% (*n*=1,356)	9.7% (*n*=420)
Other	11.5% (*n*=146,630)	10.3% (*n*=1,382)	12.3% (*n*=534)

The free and reduced lunch rate has been relatively stable in both APS and CCS for at least the last four school years (2012–2013: APS, 27.28%; CCS, 54.05%). Truancy,[21] in both school divisions, was at a high in 2009–2010, but lower and relatively stable since 2010–2011 (2011–2012: APS, 0.7%; CCS. 4.2%); the truancy rate for APS is substantially below that of the state average. In school year 2012–2013, white students in both localities had the lowest drop-out rates. Hispanic students in Charlottesville had a 20% drop-out rate, compared to 10.9% in Albemarle and 13.6% on average in the state. The overall drop-out rates in Virginia, Albemarle, and Charlottesville have been relatively stable since 2010.

More details, graphs, and tables regarding economic disadvantage, school attendance, and graduation rates may be found in Appendix D.

School Safety and Discipline. As can be seen in Graph 1, overall over the last three school years, both Albemarle County and Charlottesville City school offenses have decreased. Table 3 shows a breakdown of offenses by school division and by offense over the last three school years.[22] Overall, CCS has a higher proportion of incidents than APS. Since the 2010–2011 school year,

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[20] Racial/ethnic descriptions used by the Virginia Department of Education.
[21] A truant student is defined by the Virginia Department of Education as the number of students who had a conference with the school after accumulating six absences during the year.
[22] Virginia Department of Education, https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/reportcard/

weapons offenses have been relatively stable in CCS, but in APS they went up between 2010–2011 and 2011–2012; offenses against other persons have been decreasing in CCS over the last three school years, and both property offenses and disorderly or disruptive behavior offenses have been decreasing in both districts. Technology offenses have been rising in APS, as have "all other offenses" (which have been going down in CCS).
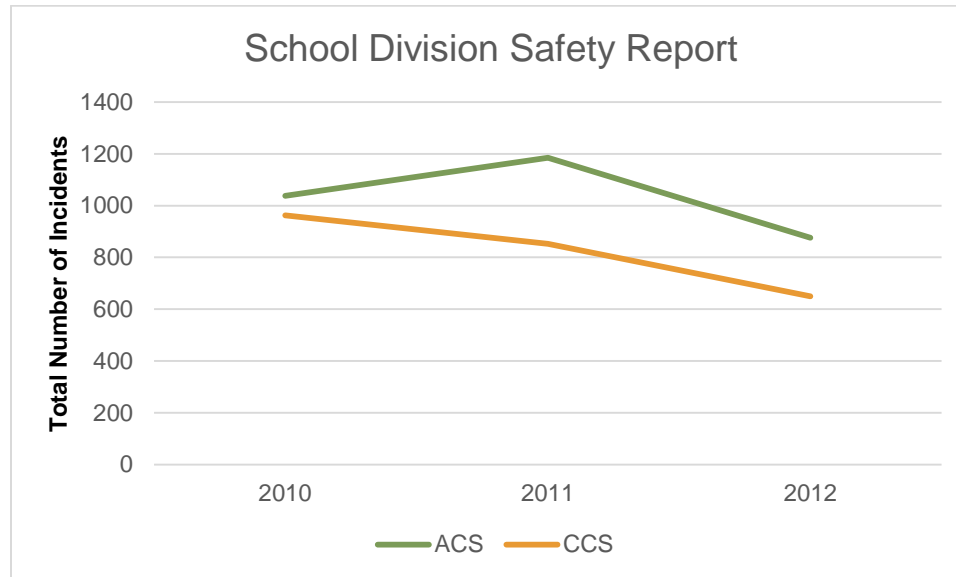
Graph 1.

Table 3. Rate of School Division Safety Incidents

	2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013	
Rate per 1,000 students*	APS	CCS	APS	CCS	APS	CCS
Weapons Offenses	3.92	10.27	5.23	<	5.19	10.03
Offenses against Student	15.18	29.08	18.92	54.86	14.82	28.43
Offenses against Staff	<	19.67	6.72	22.44	2.72	12.54
Other Offenses against Persons	76.89	218.99	89.62	182.04	60.77	132.94
Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Offenses	23.75	34.22	30.12	13.30	14.33	23.41
Property Offenses	9.79	23.10	9.71	13.30	5.93	8.36
Disorderly or Disruptive Behavior Offenses	114.10	451.67	106.30	395.68	91.90	311.87
Technology Offenses	2.69	<	4.48	<	7.16	<
All Other Offenses	7.84	36.78	23.90	27.43	13.59	15.89

* Rate is per 1,000 secondary students, based on average daily membership at the end of the school year
< Indicates a number too small for public release
APS: Albemarle Public Schools; CCS: Charlottesville City Schools

CCS had more than twice the proportion of discipline incidents than APS in the 2011–2012 school year. In both divisions, discipline for disruption, defiance, obscene language, and altercations were the most frequent offenses receiving discipline/referrals. Altercations were the number one offense in Albemarle, occurring about twice as often than in CCS. Fighting was among the top 10 issues for both divisions (there were nearly twice the number of fights reported in APS than CCS). Additionally, there were 44 drug violations in APS, while drug violations were not in the top 10 issues for CCS (see Table 4).

Table 4. Incidents of Discipline, Violence, and Crime, 2011–2012

	Virginia	Albemarle	Charlottesville
Overall rate per 1,000 students	144.2 (n=176,112)	80.1 (n=1,030)	207.1 (n=809)
Top 10 issues	Defiance Classroom/Campus Disruption Obscene Language/Gestures Altercations Disruptive Demonstrations Disrespect Minor Insubordination Fighting w/o Injury Threat Other School Violations	Altercations (n=125) Defiance (n=120) Obscene Language/Gestures (n=116) Classroom/Campus Disruption (n=72) Threat (n=61) Fighting w/o Injury (n=58) Other School Violations (n=56) Disrespect (n=53) Drug Violations (n=44) Bullying/Cyberbullying (n=43)	Classroom/Campus Disruption (n=159) Defiance (n=150) Obscene Language/Gestures (n=70) Altercations (n=65) Threat (n=63) Disrespect (n=59) Bullying/Cyberbullying (n=43) Fighting w/o Injury (n=34) Attendance (n=33) Disruptive Demonstrations (n=24)

School Climate. In spring 2013, middle (n=3,225, including grades 6 to 8) and high (n=2,987, including grades 9 to 12) school students in APS and CCS took a school climate survey sponsored by the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Albemarle/Charlottesville Project.[23] A few questions on the school climate survey were related specifically to gangs. As shown below, the definition of gangs used in the survey was long and written at a high reading level; therefore, students may or may not have read or understood the definition.

School Climate Survey Gang Definition

A gang is defined as any group, organization, or association of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, 1) which has as one of its primary objectives or activities the commission of one or more criminal acts; 2) which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol; and 3) whose members individually or collectively have engaged in the commission of, attempt to commit, conspiracy to commit, or solicitation of two or more predicate criminal acts, at least one of which is an act of violence, and/or creates fear or intimidation.

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[23] Breakdowns by School Division or individual schools are not provided. To view the entire report, go to http://www.safeschoolscville.org/files/OverallMSReport_Spring_2013_Updated.pdf and http://www.safeschoolscville.org/files/HS_Overall_SSHS_2013-2.pdf.

As can be seen in Graphs 2 and 3, 19.9% (*n*=642) of middle school students and 16.6% (*n*=496) of high schools students reported there are gangs at their school; over half of all middle and high school students said they did not know if gangs were present (52.6%, *n*=1,696 and 53.9%, *n*=1,610, respectively). The highest percentages of students reporting "yes" were in the 6th, 9th and 10th grades (see Graph 13).
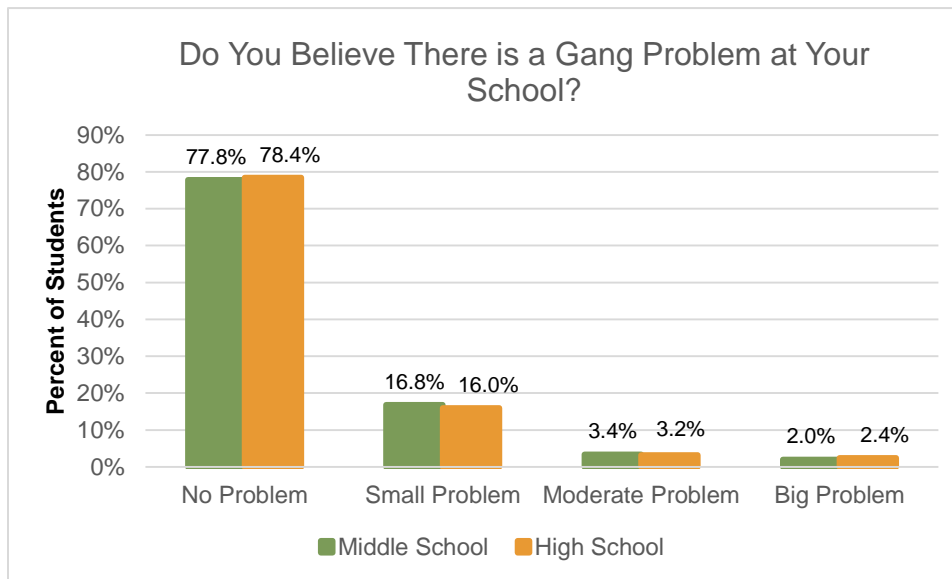
Graph 2. Are There Gangs in Your School?
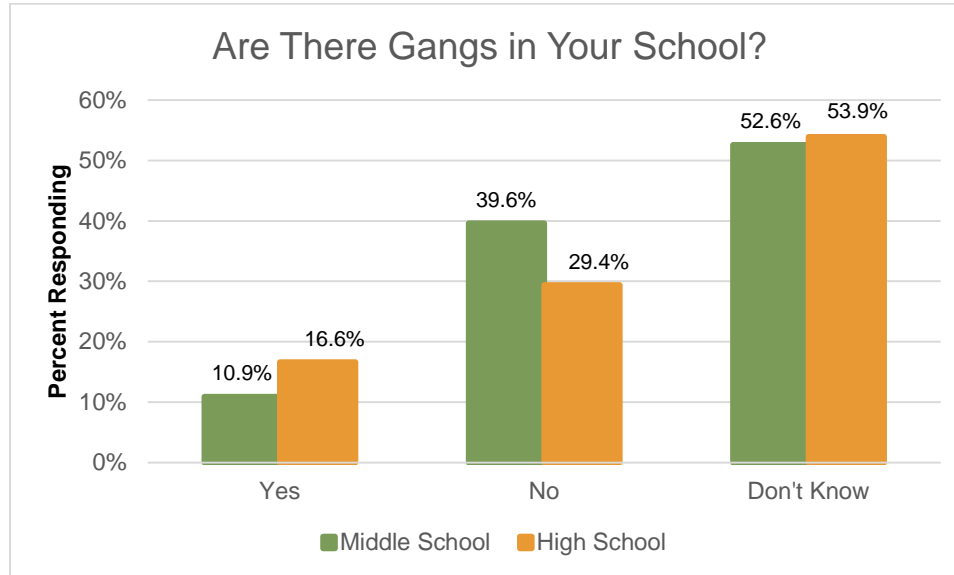
Graph 3. Grade Breakdown of "Yes" Responses: Are There Gangs in Your School?
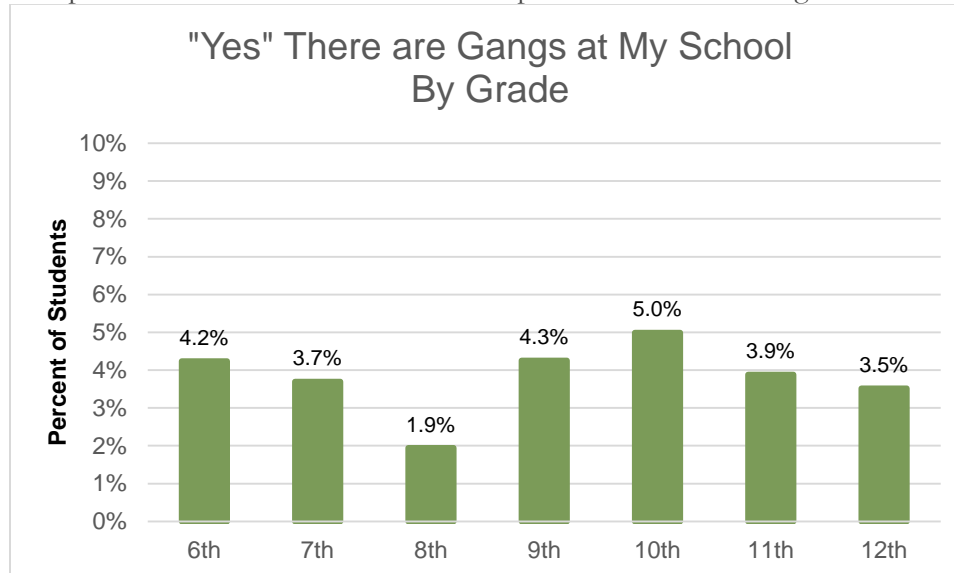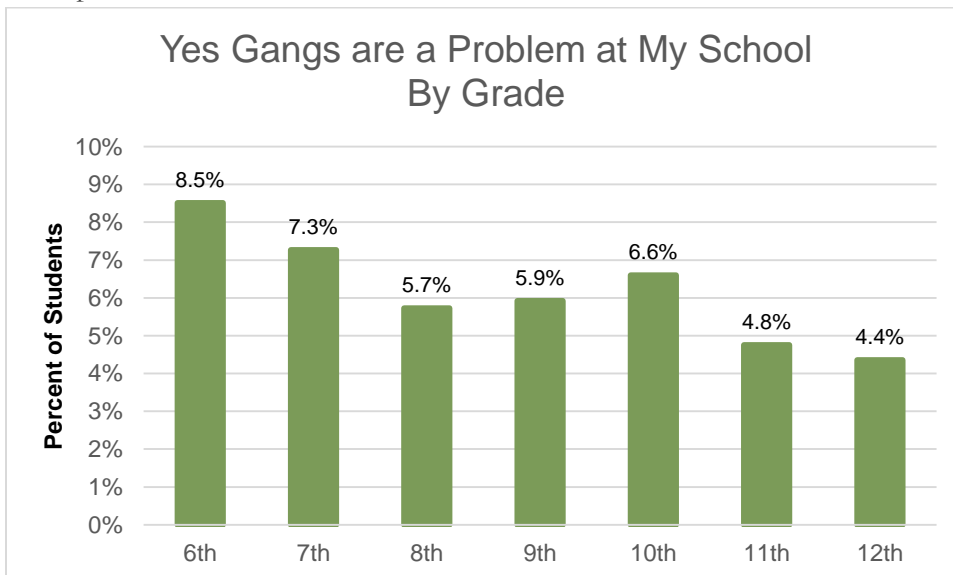

Over three-quarters of middle and high school students reported there was not a gang problem at their school (78.4%, *n*=2,528 and 77.8%, *n*=2,324, respectively). The gang problem was rated as a moderate or big problem by 5.4% (*n*=174) of middle school students and 5.6% (*n*=167) of high school students. Of the students who reported that gangs were a small, moderate or big problem,

the highest percentages were from 6th, 7th and 10th grades. (See graphs 4 and 5.)

Graph 4.

Do You Believe There is a Gang Problem at Your School?

Percent of Students

	No Problem	Small Problem	Moderate Problem	Big Problem
Middle School	77.8%	16.8%	3.4%	2.0%
High School	78.4%	16.0%	3.2%	2.4%

■ Middle School   ■ High School

Graph 5.

Yes Gangs are a Problem at My School By Grade

Percent of Students

6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
8.5%	7.3%	5.7%	5.9%	6.6%	4.8%	4.4%

When asked who they knew in a gang, 15.1% of middle school students and 15.2% of high schools students reported having friends, close associates, and/or family members in a gang. Extrapolating from the percentage of students who said they knew no one in a gang, an estimated 290 middle school students and 275 high school students know at least one person in a gang. (See Graph 6.)

Graph 6.

Who Do You Know in a Gang.......
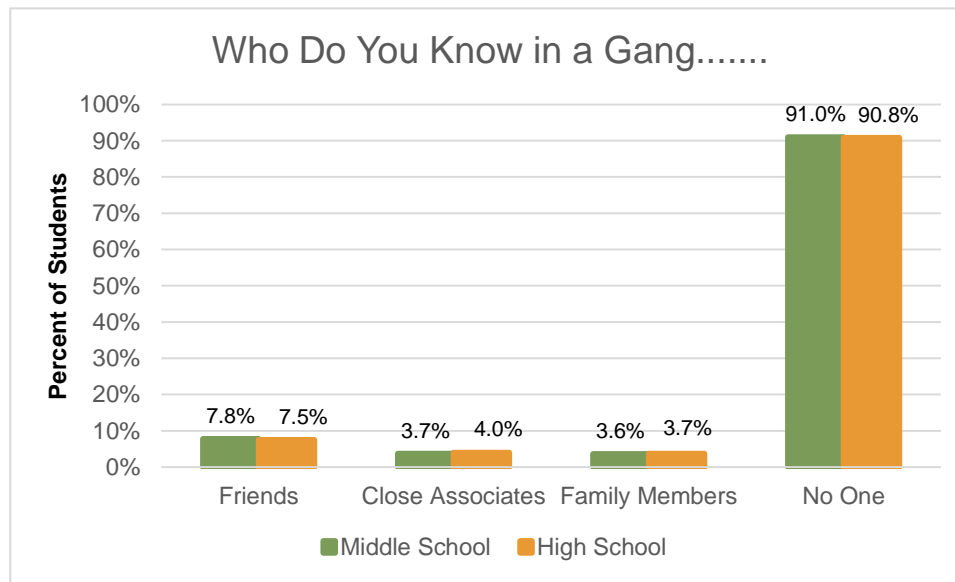
As can be seen in Table 5, over 90% of middle and high school students reported having had no experience with gangs (93.9%, n=3,028 and 94.6%, n=2,926, respectively). Therefore, it is estimated that about 197 middle school students and 161 high school students had been approached to be in a gang, been recruited to participate in a gang and/or participated in gang activity (note that an additional 35 middle school students and 40 high school students checked that they both had no experience with gangs, and that they had been approached, been recruited and/or participated in gang activity—therefore the number of students with gang experience may be a little higher than estimated).

Table 5. Student Report Participation in Gang Activity

You have.....	Middle School	High School
	% Yes	
Been approached to be in a gang.	4.7%	4.1%
Been recruited to participate in a gang.	2.6%	2.7%
Participated in gang activity.	1.9%	2.0%
No experience with gangs.	93.9%	94.6%

Summary – School Data

There are roughly 17,000 students across both the Albemarle (APS) and Charlottesville (CCS) Public Schools, with CCS having about one-third the population of APS, twice the proportion of racial/ethnic diversity and nearly twice the proportion of economically disadvantaged students. Over the last three school years, behavioral offenses have decreased in both APS and CCS. While CCS has a higher proportion of discipline incidents than APS, because of the difference in the sizes of the school divisions, APS sometimes has a higher raw number of offenses than CCS. In both divisions, disruption, defiance, obscene language, and altercations were the most frequent offenses receiving discipline. Fighting was one of the top 10 discipline issues for both divisions, but, there were twice the raw number of fights reported in APS than CCS. There were 44 drug violations in APS, while drug violations were not in the top 10 issues for CCS.

In the 2012–2013 school year, about 1,100 6th to 12th graders reported that there were gangs in their school (a higher percentage of middle school than high school students reported gangs). While it is unclear that students defined a "gang" the same, 341 students rated the gang problem moderate or big. Sixth, 7th, 9th, and 10th grade students reported more of a gang presence and/or more problems associated with gangs at school.

Juvenile Justice Data

Characteristics of Juvenile Probationers. Charlottesville and Albemarle youth placed on probation (see Graph 7 and Table 6) in the calendar years 2010 and 2011 shared many patterns of risk and protective factors. The average age of initial offense was 15 years old, ranging from ages 10 to 18 (see Graph 8); 75% of the youth were male. Ninety-eight (98) of the youth were living in Albemarle County, and 25 were living in Charlottesville. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the youth were detained by the Department of Juvenile Justice at some point during their court involvement. Law enforcement verified one youth as a gang member; however, there are the 11 case files with notes about potential gang involvement.
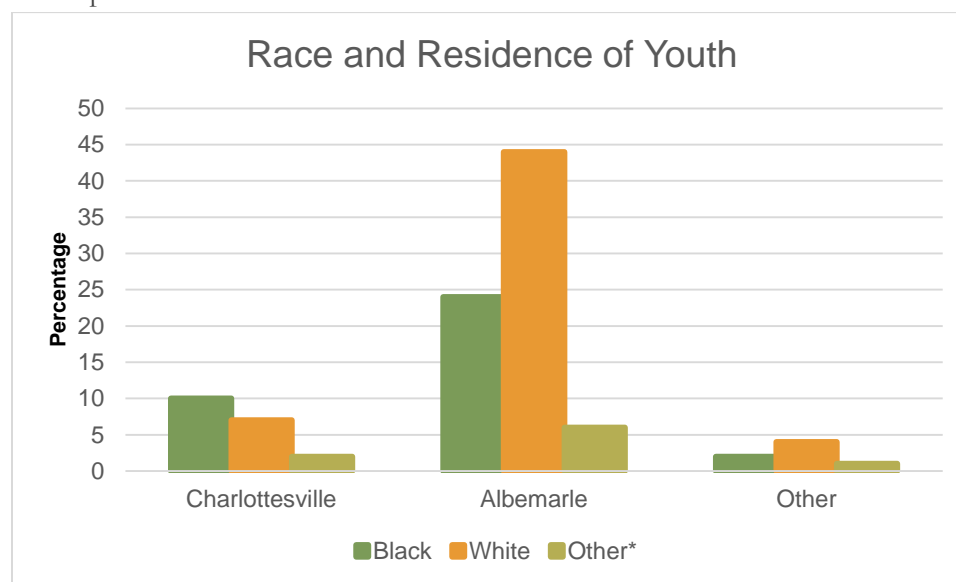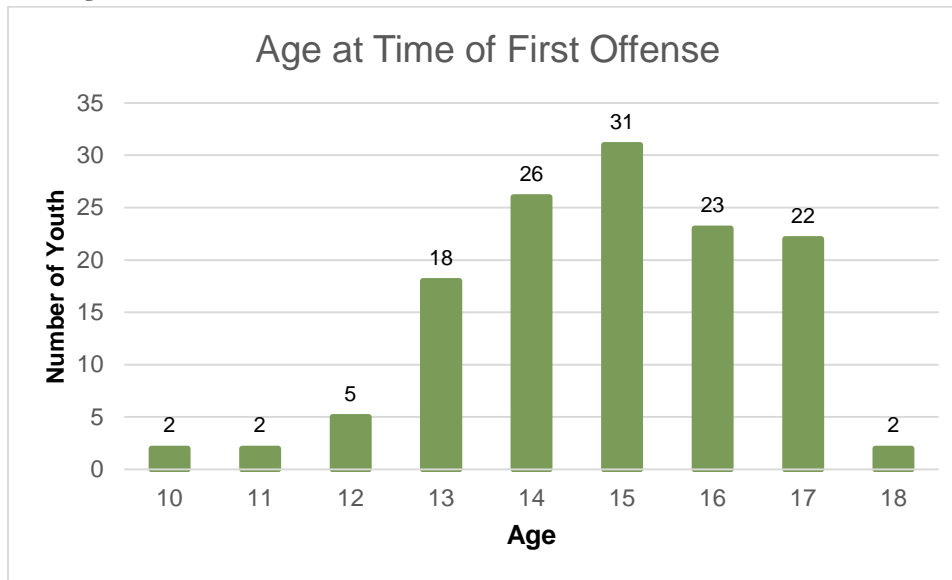
Graph 7.

Table 6. Percent and Number by Race and Residence of Youth

	Black	White	Other*	Total
Albemarle	24	44	6	75
	(*n=32*)	(*n=58*)	(*n=8*)	(*n=98*)
Charlottesville	10	7	2	19
	(*n=14*)	(*n=9*)	(*n=<*)	(*n=25*)
Other	2	4	1	6
	(*n=<*)	(*n=5*)	(*n=<*)	(*n =8*)

* 1 individual identified as biracial, 10 as Hispanic

< indicates a number too small for public release

Graph 8.

Youth who commit felony (as opposed to misdemeanor) or criminal (as opposed to status) offenses, are committing the most serious offenses. As reflected in Graph 9, youth most often had zero to two felony petitions and/or one to three criminal petitions. Overall, a small percentage of youth had as many as five to 15 criminal petitions.
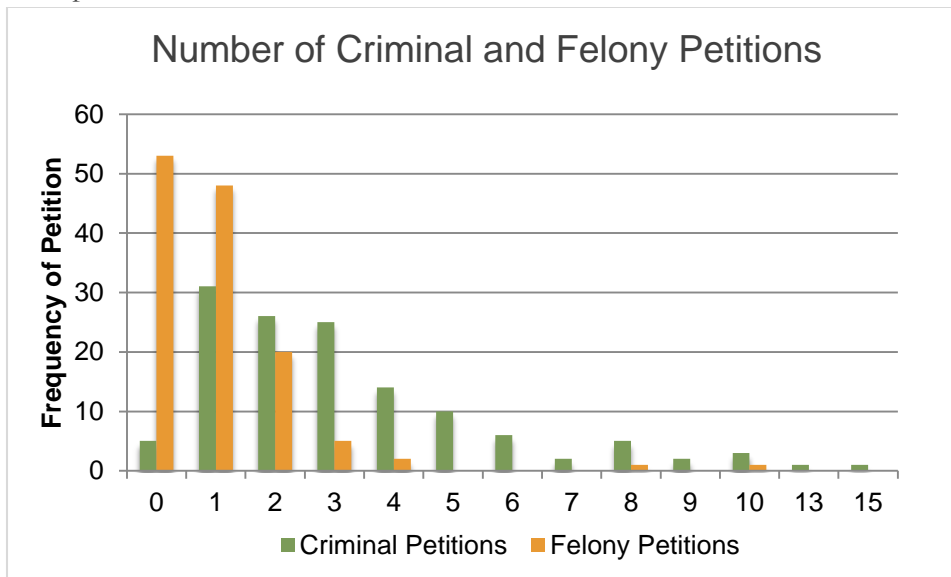
Graph 9.

Table 7. Percentage of Youth with Petitions

Type of Petition	Percent All Juveniles
Criminal	96.2%
Violent	42.0%
Probation Violation	70.3%
Weapon	13.0%
Felony	59.9%
Truancy	35.1%
Drug Possession/Conspiracy	35.9%

Risk and protective factors were determined using the Department of Juvenile Justice's Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI). "The full YASI instrument examines and generates risk and protective scores for each of 10 domains, as well as overall risk classifications. These domains are legal history, family, school, community and peers, alcohol and drugs, mental health, aggression, (pro- and anti-social) attitudes, (social and cognitive) skills, and employment and free time."[24] One youth may have multiple risk and protective factors. The following tables show individual risk and protective factors identified in the case files (as a note, much of this data reflects the opinion of the probation officer completing the YASI).

As shown in Tables 8a-c, most youth placed on probation were facing multiple challenges major life transitions[25] (75%), had parents who used alcohol or drugs (25% to 27%), received special education services (23.6%), and/or had a mental health diagnosis (42.7%).

Table 8a. Risk and Protective Factors for Youth

Family Risk Factors	Percent of Youth
Major Life Transition	75%
Witnessed Domestic Violence	34%
Parent Drug Use	27%
Parent Alcohol Use	25%
Parent AND Sibling on probation, parole or incarcerated within 2 years	17%
Parent OR Sibling on probation, parole or incarcerated within 2 years	8%

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[24] http://www.djj.virginia.gov/Initiatives/YASI.aspx
[25] Major life transitions included probation officers' assessment of family disruption, frequent moves, death of family or friend and homelessness.

Table 8b. Risk and Protective Factors for Youth

Personal Risk Factors	Percent of Youth
Mental Health Diagnosis	42.7%
Special Education	23.6%
Learning Disability	15.3%
Emotional Disability	11.5%
Intellectually Disability	9.9%
Other Disability	8.4%

Table 8c. Risk and Protective Factors for Youth

Protective Factors	Percent of Youth
Structured Activity	17%
External Support System	8%
Peer Group (Parents Opinion)	50% Positive

Point-in-Time Counts of Juveniles. Staff from the Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention Center (BRJDC) and the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) provided point-in-time data regarding youth verified or suspected of gang membership. BRJDC looked at the daily count of youth on each Wednesday in September in the years 2009, 2010, and 2011 (see Table 9). All gang-involved youth at BRJDC were males between the ages of 12–17, with an average age of 15.8. Eleven of 13 gang-involved youth at BRJDC were African American, one youth was Caucasian, and one was Hispanic.

Table 9. Point-in-Time Data from BRJDC

Year	Number of Gang-Involved Youth	Location of Crime	Total Mid-Month Population*	Percent Gang-Involved
2009	3 (1 Blood)	1 Charlottesville 2 Albemarle	16	19%
2010	4	1 Charlottesville 3 Albemarle	15	26%
2011	3 (1 Crip, 1 ZOG)	1 Charlottesville 2 Albemarle	8	38%
2012	1	1 Albemarle	33**	na
2013	2	2 Albemarle	14	14%

* Dated between 9/12 – 9/15 each year.
** 2012 population count includes up to 10 juveniles from the Richmond region

DJJ provided point-in-time data for youth held in Juvenile Correctional Centers for October 2013. There were three verified gang members: two Bloods from Charlottesville, one Gangster Disciple from Charlottesville, and two possible gang members, one from Charlottesville and one from Albemarle. All five youth were African American males, and they made up 2% of the verified or possible gang members in juvenile corrections statewide.

Summary – Juvenile Justice Data

The case records of 131 youth placed on probation in 2010 and 2011 were reviewed (including 98 County and 25 City youth). Their average age was 15, and they most often had zero to two felony petitions and/or one to three criminal petitions. Most youth placed on probation were facing multiple challenges including major life transitions (75%), parents who used alcohol or drugs (25% to 27%), receiving special education (23.6%), and/or a mental health diagnosis (42.7%). Law enforcement verified one youth on probation as a gang member. Between 2009 and 2013, 13 Albemarle-Charlottesville youth were verified as gang members in Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention Center. They were all males between the ages of 12–17, with an average age of 15.8 (11 Black, 1 White, 1 Hispanic). There were three Albemarle-Charlottesville youth in Juvenile Correctional Centers in October 2013 verified as gang members and two additional youth suspected of gang membership. These five youth made up 2% of the verified or possible gang members in juvenile corrections statewide.

Law Enforcement Data

Gang Validation Data. From January 1, 2006 to September 1, 2013, the Charlottesville and Albemarle police departments made 186 gang validations (see Graph 10 and Table 10 for annual breakdowns). The definition of a gang in Virginia code and used by law enforcement includes an ongoing group of people, who gather primarily to engage in criminal activities, who have a name or signs or symbols. Virginia code also outlines a process by which individuals are "validated" as being in a gang, which is then entered into the Organized Criminal Gang File of the Virginia Criminal Information Network.[26]

Locally, the validation process for adults starts with a committee (including representatives from Albemarle County Police Department, Charlottesville City Police Department, the University of Virginia Police Department, and the Albemarle Charlottesville Regional Jail) that reviews and votes on all submitted validation requests. If the majority of the committee votes to endorse validation, the City Service Division enters the individual into the National Crime Information Center/Virginia Criminal Information Network database as a gang member. Each person submitted for validation is reviewed individually. Validation is based on State Code and National Crime Information Center/Virginia Criminal Information Network requirements for validation. A person is validated if two or more of the following indicators are present, or the person claims membership at the time of arrest:

> Self-admission at a time other than arrest or incarceration;
> Identified as a gang member by a reliable informant or individual;
> Identified as a gang member by a person of unknown reliability;

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[26] "Criminal street gang" means any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, (i) which has as one of its primary objectives or activities the commission of one or more criminal activities; (ii) which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol; and (iii) whose members individually or collectively have engaged in the commission of, attempt to commit, conspiracy to commit, or solicitation of two or more predicate criminal acts, at least one of which is an act of violence, provided such acts were not part of a common act or transaction. Code of Virginia, § 18.2-46.1

Criminal street gang reporting. When it is determined, by a State or local law-enforcement agency, regional jail, the Department of Corrections, or a regional multijurisdictional law-enforcement task force, that a person is a member of a criminal street gang, as defined in § 18.2-46.1 by means of (i) an admission of membership in a gang; (ii) an observation by a law-enforcement officer that a person frequents a known gang area, associates with known gang members and demonstrates gang style of dress, tattoos, hand signals, or symbols; or (iii) being arrested on more than one occasion with known gang members for offenses consistent with gang activities, the agency shall enter the person's name and other appropriate gang-related information required by the Department of State Police into the information system known as the Organized Criminal Gang File of the Virginia Criminal Information Network (VCIN), established and maintained by the Department pursuant to Chapter 2 (§ 52-12 et seq.) of this title, and the Violent Criminal Gang File of the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The entry shall be made as soon as practicable after determining that a person is a member of an organized criminal gang. All records contained in these information systems shall be entered, retained, and validated in accordance with established VCIN and NCIC policies. § 52-8.6

Code of Virginia, http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+18.2-46.1

> Frequents documented gang areas, associates with documented gang members and/or effects gang dress, hand signals, tattoos, or symbols; and/or
> Has been arrested with known gang members for offenses consistent with gang activity.

An individual might not be validated for several different reasons, which might include concern about the validity of any statements made by the individual, the age of the individual making the admission of gang membership, or other circumstances. In situations where validation is not clear, the submitting officer/agency may choose to produce further evidence/information of the persons suspected involvement and then re-submit that person for validation.

Critical to the validation process is for patrol officers and investigators to be vigilant in identifying and documenting encounters with known or suspected gang members. For example, officers must document (either in a report or field contact card) that they observe an individual hanging out or associating with validated gang members. The report and contact card documentation are also necessary for re-validation, which occurs every five years to ensure that individuals are not labeled for life or unfairly. Law enforcement must show that a person continues to participate or associate with gangs to retain their validation in the national system. If continued gang involvement cannot be shown, the person is removed from the system.

Gang validation for youth is stricter than for adults, although the process is the same. The Department of Juvenile Justice has its own validation committee for committed youth and continues to refine the process because the youth perspective about gangs can be sensationalized enough that a youth could give all of the correct indicators of gang involvement but not actually be involved. The current process for screening, evaluating, and validating committed youth begins at intake, where a gang investigator will conduct a preliminary screening of each newly committed resident. The current process has been in effect since September 2012.

There have been 186 validations (including 3 youth) in Albemarle-Charlottesville since 2006, when gang validations began. People are revalidated every five years; however, only three of the people validated in Albemarle-Charlottesville have been validated more than once. This may be because people stopped participating in gang activity, because they moved out of the area, or because they did not come to

Gang Validation Process for Detained Youth

At intake, the youth is asked a series of questions and observations are made to begin the process of identifying gang signs, symbols, language, etc. Any initial sign of gang behavior is made known to the staff at that facility for safety of staff and the resident.

Once a potentially gang-involved youth is placed in a correctional center, the gang investigators assigned to that facility get the initial screening paperwork and begin to conduct an investigation. The investigation includes interviewing the juvenile, any staff that may have had direct contact with the youth prior to commitment, sometimes includes talking with local law enforcement from the locality the youth is from, and anything else the investigator feels will give him the clearest view and most accurate details about the juvenile's possible gang involvement. In the end, the investigator makes a presentation to a committee of other gang investigators and a supervisor to determine if the juvenile will be validated as a gang member, not gang involved, or placed in the possible gang affiliation category.

the attention of the police again.

As can be seen in Graph 10 and Table 10, on average, about 29 people have been validated per year. Gang validations peaked in 2007 as the initial backlog of potential gang members were validated. In 2008, with the backlog taken care of, the number of new validations dropped. Albemarle County Police Department (ACPD) also reports that in 2008 there was a spike in local shootings. While many of these shootings were gang-related, resources were directed to the ATF Gun Violence Task Force. The Charlottesville Police Department (CPD) reports that the precipitous drop in validations in 2013 is due to the validation committee's records keeper (a City detective) being reassigned to a different unit due to staffing vacancies. Additionally, the City detectives' ACPD counterpart was taken off gang investigations and reassigned to a different unit—also due to staffing vacancies. The City and County detectives who were reassigned in 2013 provided the following additional notes related to the drop in validations in 2013.

1. At the writing of this report, the jail had submitted almost 30 individuals for review for validation, which had not yet been vetted or sent to committee.

2. CPD reduced the number of gang operations[27] conducted in 2013, and the ACPD gang team was declined funding to assist the CPD in gang operations.

3. There is a lack of agency-wide buy-in and consistency by patrol officers and their supervisors in documenting gang activity when they investigate a call and then submitting a gang validation request.

4. The CPD and ACPD gang investigation teams are under-resourced. The members of the teams are on the gang teams on a voluntary basis, and it is not part of their core police department responsibilities. This reduces the amount of time available to conduct investigations; spend time documenting members, numbers, hierarchy, activities, and associates; and investigate criminal activities.

> "We are often compared to the valley and our numbers are not as high as their numbers in regards to validated gang members. Our gangs are older, historically more violent, and I believe larger in numbers. The difference is that ...[the valley police department] created a full time, five-person gang team that documents and investigates gang members. Where they take action, we continue to talk and debate whether there is even a problem.... Both chiefs understand and support the gang initiative, but they have restrictions due to money and manpower."

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[27] Gang operations refer to law enforcement activities and investigations by law enforcement when there are immediate concerns regarding the gangs areas or specific situations which hold a high potential for gang violence. All necessary local, state, and federal law enforcement partners may participate (including Charlottesville Police Department, Albemarle County Police Department, the University of Virginia Police Department, the Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Charlottesville Sherriff's Office, Albemarle County Sherriff's, Probation and Parole, Virginia State Police). Gang operations include patrolling areas with historical gang issues and arresting gang members who are currently wanted or who are violating the law. Gang operations also include making personal contact with residents, gathering intelligence and developing partnerships with the law abiding residents, and monitoring of known gang parties, concerts, or gatherings.
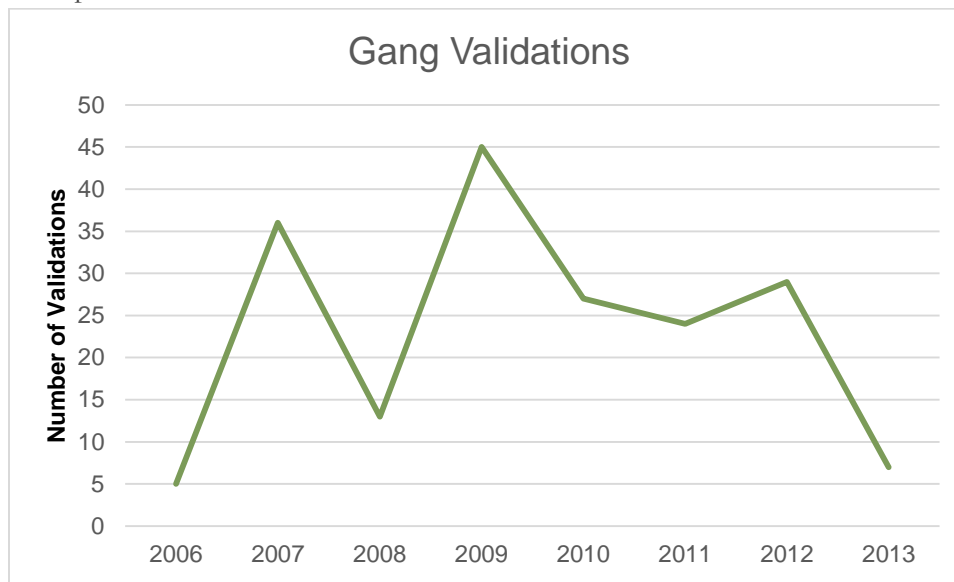
Graph 10.

Gang Validations

Number of Validations

[Line graph showing Number of Validations from 2006 to 2013: 2006=5, 2007=36, 2008=13, 2009=45, 2010=27, 2011=24, 2012=29, 2013=7]

Table 10. Number of Gang Validations by Year

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013*
5	36	13	45	27	24	29	7

2013 data run from 1/1/2013 – 9/1/2013. Data include 3 double-counted individuals who were validated more than once for 186 validations across 183 unique individuals.

A total of 16 different gangs have verified members. As is consistent with state data, Bloods are the most common gang, followed by Crips (see Table 11). Other nationally identified gangs with a presence in the Albemarle-Charlottesville area are 5%ers, the Aryan Brotherhood, Gangsta Disciples, ICP (or Insane Clown Posse), Latin Kings, MS-13, Sureños, Vice Lords, and White Power. Gangs local to Albemarle-Charlottesville (which are usually referred to as "neighborhood sets" may also have members who affiliate with one of the national gangs) are Westside/PJC or Project Crud, Southside, 13th St (Eastside Locos), and Eastside. Other neighborhood sets include G-Square and 6N0. Zoo of Goons (ZOG) is a gang local to Albemarle-Charlottesville, but is not associated with a specific neighborhood; ZOG emerged from a local middle school. By the definition used by law enforcement, national gangs and neighborhood sets both qualify as "criminal street gangs." However, as will be explained in the interview/focus group data later in the report, many residents (including youth) consider gangs and neighborhood sets to be different in several ways.

Table 11. Verified Gang Member Affiliation

Gang Name	Number	Percent
Blood	79	42.5%
Crips/Folk	30	16.1%
Westside , PJC	19	10.2%
ICP	10	5.4%
Zoo of Goons (ZOG)	9	4.8%
5%ers	6	3.2%
MS-13	6	3.2%
Southside	6	3.2%
White Power	6	3.2%
Gangster Disciples	4	2.2%
Latin Kings	3	1.6%
Sureños	3	1.6%
Vice Lords	2	1.1%
13th St (Eastside Locos)	1	0.5%
Aryan Brotherhood	1	0.5%
Eastside	1	0.5%

The average age of all validated gang members is 29.6, including three juveniles. The vast majority are male (97%), and 70% are black. It is important to note that non-Hispanic Caucasians and Hispanics are categorized as "white" in the gang validation data. Tables 12a-e show the demographic breakdowns for all validated gang members, as well as the four most frequently validated gangs (i.e., Bloods; Crips/Folk; Westside, PJC; ICP).

Table 12a. Gang-Member Demographics

Total Validated Members (n=183)		
Race	Age (avg 29.6)	Gender
Black 70% (n=129)	Minor: 3 Age 18–29: 139 Age 30 plus: 41	Male: 177 Female: 6
White 30% (n=54)		

Table 12b.

Bloods (*n*=79)		
Race	**Age (avg 26.1)**	**Gender**
Black 86% (*n*=68)	Minor: 0 Age 18–29: 56 Age 30 plus: 12	All male
White 14% (*n*=11)	Minor: 0 Age 18–29: 10 Age 30 plus: 1	All male

Table 12c.

Crips/Folk (*n*=30)		
Race	**Age (avg 26.9)**	**Gender**
Black 60% (*n*=18)	Minor: 0 Age 18–29: 15 Age 30 plus: 3	Male: 17 Female: 1
White 40% (*n*=12)	Minor: 0 Age 18–29: 10 Age 30 plus: 2	Male: 11 Female: 1

Table 12d.

Westside, PJC (*n*=19)		
Race	**Age (avg 26.1)**	**Gender**
Black 100% (*n*=19)	Minor: 0 Age 18–29: 15 Age 30 plus: 4	Male: 17 Female: 2
White (*n*=0)	--	--

Table 12e.

ICP (*n*= 10)		
Race	**Age (avg 26.7)**	**Gender**
Black (*n*=0)	--	--
White 100% (*n*=10)	Minor: 0 Age 18–29: 7 Age 30 plus: 3	Male: 9 Female: 1

Albemarle and Charlottesville Gang-Related Offenses. Between January 1, 2010 and September 1, 2013, there were 14,959 offenses leading to an arrest in Charlottesville and Albemarle. 480 of these offenses involved a known gang member as either a perpetrator or a victim. This reflects 3.2% of overall offenses and 2.7% of overall arrests (*n*=153) in the combined area.[28] The 153 gang-involved arrests over the three years involved 193 victims and 93 arrestees. The Bloods, Crips, and MS-13 are responsible for the largest share of gang-activity in Albemarle, while Charlottesville has substantial activity by both national gangs and neighborhood sets (see Table 13).

As shown in Table 14, in Albemarle, arrestees in gang-involved incidents ranged in age from 12 to 46, 86% ranging in age from 16–30 (*n*=50). In Charlottesville, arrestees in gang-involved incidents ranged in age from 14 to 48, with 85% ranging in age from 16–30 (*n*=103).[29] In Albemarle, 98% of arrestees in Albemarle were male, and 93% of the arrestees in Charlottesville were male. In Albemarle, 78% of arrestees were black and 22% were white; in Charlottesville, 65% of arrestees were black and 35% were white. Again, it is important to note that non-Hispanic Caucasians and Hispanics are categorized as "white" in the arrest data.

Table 13. Number and Percent of Gang-related Offenses by Locality

Gang	# Offenses			Percent of Gang Activity
	Total	**Albemarle**	**Charlottesville**	
Blood	176	39	137	36.7%
Crips/Folk	117	66	51	24.4%
Westside, PJC	51	7	44	10.6%
ICP	30	5	25	6.3%
MS-13	27	27	0	5.6%
Zoo of Goons (ZOG)	18	12	6	3.8%
White Power	17	3	14	3.5%
Southside	15	0	15	3.1%
Eastside	15	3	12	3.1%
Vice Lords	8	0	8	1.7%
Aryan Brotherhood	4	4	0	0.8%
Gangsta Disciples	1	0	1	0.2%
Latin Kings	1	0	1	0.2%
Total	**480**	**166** (35%)	**314** (65%)	

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[28] A single incident may involve more than one victim, arrestee, or offense.
[29] Therefore, a total of 153 arrestees were validated gang-members at the time of arrest.

Table 14. Demographics for Verified Gang Arrestees

	Albemarle	Charlottesville
Age	Range: 12 – 46	Range: 14 – 48
Race	Black: 78% (39 of 50)	Black: 65% (67 of 103)
	White: 22% (11 of 50)	White: 35% (36 of 103)
Gender	98% male (49 of 50)	93% male (96 of 103)

In Albemarle, 14 of the arrests were of Bloods, and 16 were of Crips/Folk. Albemarle has an additional three arrests perpetrated against known gang members. In Charlottesville, 37 of the arrests were of Bloods, 13 of Westside/PCJ, 12 of Crips/Folk, and seven of ICP. Charlottesville has an additional 17 arrests perpetrated against known gang members (see Tables 15 and 16).

Assault, larceny, burglary, and forgery are the most common gang-related arrests across both localities, followed by weapons offenses and vandalism.

Table 15. Most Common Gang-related Offenses in Albemarle

Offense	Number of Offenses
Larceny (except motor vehicle)	52
Assault, other than aggravated	32
Burglary	20
Aggravated assault	13
Vandalism	11
Disorderly conduct	5
Embezzlement	2
Drug abuse violations	2
Robbery	1
Weapons: carrying, possessing, etc.	1

Table 16. Most Common Gang-related Offenses in Charlottesville

Offense	Number of Offenses
Assault, other than aggravated	79
Larceny (except motor vehicle)	68
Curfew and loitering	35
Weapons: carrying, possessing, etc.	23
Aggravated assault	12
Drug abuse violations	11
Vandalism	7
Robbery	6
Fraud	5
Sex offenses	5

Youth accounted for 7.4% of total offenses (n=1,113) leading to an arrest over the time period; only 4.8% of offenses (n=23) involving gang members included youth gang members. The most common offenses for gang-involved youth included aggravated and other assault and weapons offenses; the most common offenses for all other youth included larceny and non-aggravated assault (see Tables 17 and 18).

Table 17. Offenses Involving Youth in Gangs

Offense	Share of Offenses
Aggravated assault	35% (n=8)
Assault, other than aggravated	17% (n=4)
Weapons: carrying, possessing, etc.	17% (n=4)
Larceny (except motor vehicle)	9% (n=2)
Vandalism	9% (n=2)
Unspecified	13% (n=3)

Table 18. Top Offenses Involving Other Youth

UCR Offense	Share of Offenses
Larceny (except motor vehicle)	46% (*n=423*)
Assault, other than aggravated	23% (*n=210*)
Curfew and loitering (minors)	4% (*n=39*)
Aggravated assault	4% (*n=38*)
Robbery	4% (*n=32*)
Vandalism	4% (*n=32*)

Arrest data were also examined to determine at what times and where arrests were occurring. Most gang-related offenses are happening between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m., while all other offenses are relatively evenly divided across the day (see Table 19).

Table 19. Offenses by Time of Day

Time of Day	Gang-related Offenses (*n=480*)	All Other Offenses (*n=14,479*)
8 a.m. – 3 p.m.	18.5% (*n=89*)	24.9% (*n=3,607*)
3 p.m. – 7 p.m.	17.9% (*n=86*)	22.0% (*n=3,187*)
7 p.m. - midnight	30.8% (*n=148*)	24.9% (*n=3,602*)
midnight – 8 a.m.	32.7% (*n=157*)	27.9% (*n=4,083*)

Overall, crimes leading to arrest are more likely to occur on the weekend, with nearly 20% of total incidents occurring on Saturdays. Gang-related incidents most commonly occurred on Thursdays (22% of offenses) and Sundays (19% of offenses).

Youth were involved in nine gang-involved incidents. Six of these incidents occurred on a Thursday (*n=2* juveniles) or a Friday (*n=4* juveniles); these incidents involved 20 of the 23 total offenses of gang-related offenses leading to arrest for which youth were responsible (see Graph 11 and Table 20).
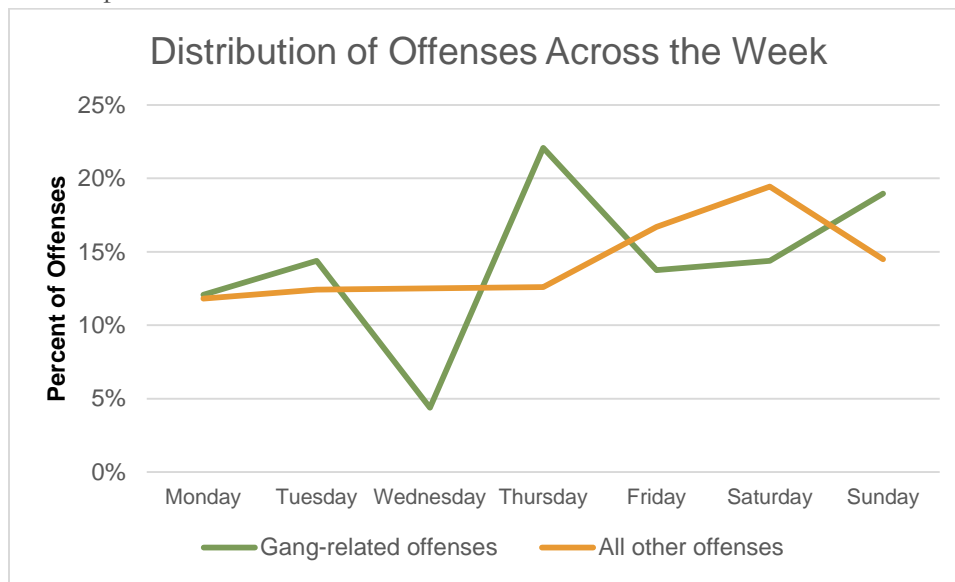
Graph 11.

Distribution of Offenses Across the Week

Table 20. Distribution of Offenses (Gang-related and Other) Across the Week

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednes.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Gang-related	58	69	21	106	66	69	91
All other	1,711	1,798	1,813	1,825	2,417	2,816	2,099

Non-gang-involved offenses are distributed across spring, summer, and fall fairly equally. Gang-involved offenses are most prevalent in the summer and spring (see Table 21).

Table 21. Distribution of Offenses (Gang-related and Other) Across Seasons

Season	Gang-involved offenses (*n*=480)	All other offenses (*n*=14,479)
Winter (Jan – Mar)	21.5% (*n*=103)	23.5% (*n*=3,397)
Spring (Apr – Jun)	28.1% (*n*=135)	26.2% (*n*=3,799)
Summer (Jul – Sep)	31.7% (*n*=152)	25.9% (*n*=3,746)
Fall (Oct – Dec)	18.8% (*n*=90)	24.4% (*n*=3,537)

Geographically, incidents were spread across 153 streets (see Tables 22 and 23), with 26 streets having two or more recorded offenses. Streets in downtown Charlottesville, as well as around Prospect Avenue and South 1st Street, have had the most gang-related incidents and offenses.

Table 22. Incidents by Street

Street	Locality	# of Incidents
E Main St	Charlottesville	7
Prospect Ave	Charlottesville	7
E Market St	Charlottesville	5
Hardy Dr	Charlottesville	5
Garrett St	Charlottesville	4
Preston Ave	Charlottesville	4
South 1st St	Charlottesville	3
Ridge McIntire	Charlottesville	3
West Main St	Charlottesville	3
Peregory Ln*	Albemarle	3

* Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail is on this street.

Table 23. Offenses by Street

Street	Locality	# of Offenses	Distributed across incidents
E Main St	Charlottesville	22	7
Prospect Ave	Charlottesville	21	7
Hardy Dr	Charlottesville	15	5
E Market St	Charlottesville	12	5
Garrett St	Charlottesville	23	4
Terrell Rd	Albemarle	20	2
Tennis Dr	Albemarle	12	2
Chancellor St	Charlottesville	32	1
Fin Ct	Albemarle	24	1
Rose Hill Dr	Charlottesville	15	1
2nd St NE	Charlottesville	12	1
Wilton Pasture Ln	Albemarle	10	1

The following three maps show (1) all arrests in Albemarle (September 2010 – August 2013), (2) all arrest in Charlottesville (September 2010 – August 2013), and (3) the residences of validated gang members in Septembers 2011, 2012, and 2013. As can be seen in the first map, gang-related arrests (shown in green) in Albemarle were clustered in the urban ring (primarily on the north side) and extend up Rt. 29 North. In the second map, gang-related arrests (shown in green) in Charlottesville were clustered in the City center and southern part of the City. The third map shows that the residences of validated gang members tend to be in the urban ring, up Rt. 29 North, and in the central and southern portions of Charlottesville.

Summary – Law Enforcement Data

Between 2006 (when validations began) and 2013, 183 residents of Albemarle-Charlottesville have been validated as being in a gang; for an average of 29 people being validated per year. The average age of all validated gang members is about 29, ranging from 12 to 49 years of age; three are youth. The vast majority of validated gang members are male, and 70% are black. By the state code definition of a "criminal street gang" used by law enforcement, national gangs and neighborhood sets both qualify as gangs; however, as will be explained in the interview/focus group data later in the report, many residents (including youth) consider gangs and neighborhood sets to be different.

Gang validations peaked in 2007 as the initial backlog of potential gang members was validated. The precipitous drop in validations in 2013 is due to moving key detectives off gang-related activities due to staffing vacancies elsewhere; nonetheless, in 2013 the jail had submitted nearly 30 individuals for review for validation. There are 16 gangs in Albemarle-Charlottesville with verified members. As is consistent with state data, Bloods are the most common gang, followed by Crips. Other nationally identified gangs with a presence in the Albemarle-Charlottesville area are 5%ers, the Aryan Brotherhood, Gangster Disciples, ICP (or Insane Clown Posse), Latin Kings, MS-13, Sureños, Vice Lords, and White Power. Gangs local to Albemarle-Charlottesville (called "neighborhood sets" which may have members who also affiliate with one of the national gangs) are Westside/PJC or Project Crud, Southside, 13th St (Eastside Locos), Eastside, G-Square, and 6N0. Zoo of Goons (ZOG) is a gang local to Albemarle-Charlottesville, but is not associated with a specific neighborhood; ZOG emerged from a middle school.

Between January 1, 2010 and September 1, 2013, there were 14,959 offenses leading to arrest in Charlottesville and Albemarle, and 480 of these involved validated gang members. The Bloods, Crips, and MS-13 are responsible for the largest share of gang-activity in Albemarle, while Charlottesville has substantial activity by both national gangs and neighborhood sets including Bloods, Westside/PCJ, Crips/Folk, and ICP. Assault, larceny, burglary, and forgery are the most common arrests across both localities, followed by weapons offenses and vandalism. Youth gang members accounted for 4.8% (or 23) of the total gang-related offenses. The most common offenses for gang involved youth included aggravated and other assault and weapons offenses, while the most common offenses for all other youth included larceny and non-aggravated assault.

While overall, offenses occur most often on Friday and Saturday and equally across the day and across seasons, gang-related offenses are happening between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m, and occurred most often on Thursdays and Sundays, and in the summer and spring. Overall, streets in downtown Charlottesville, as well as around Prospect and South 1st Street, have the most gang-related incidents and offenses. In Albemarle arrests are clustered in the urban ring (primarily on the north side) and extend up Rt. 29 North. When surveyed within the last 18 months, between 40% and 50% of residents in largely lower-income neighborhoods near downtown Charlottesville rated gangs as a problem.

All Arrests* in Census Blocks
Sept 2010 - August 2013

*Points are 94% match

○   **Victim Gang Member**

○   **Arrestee Gang Member**

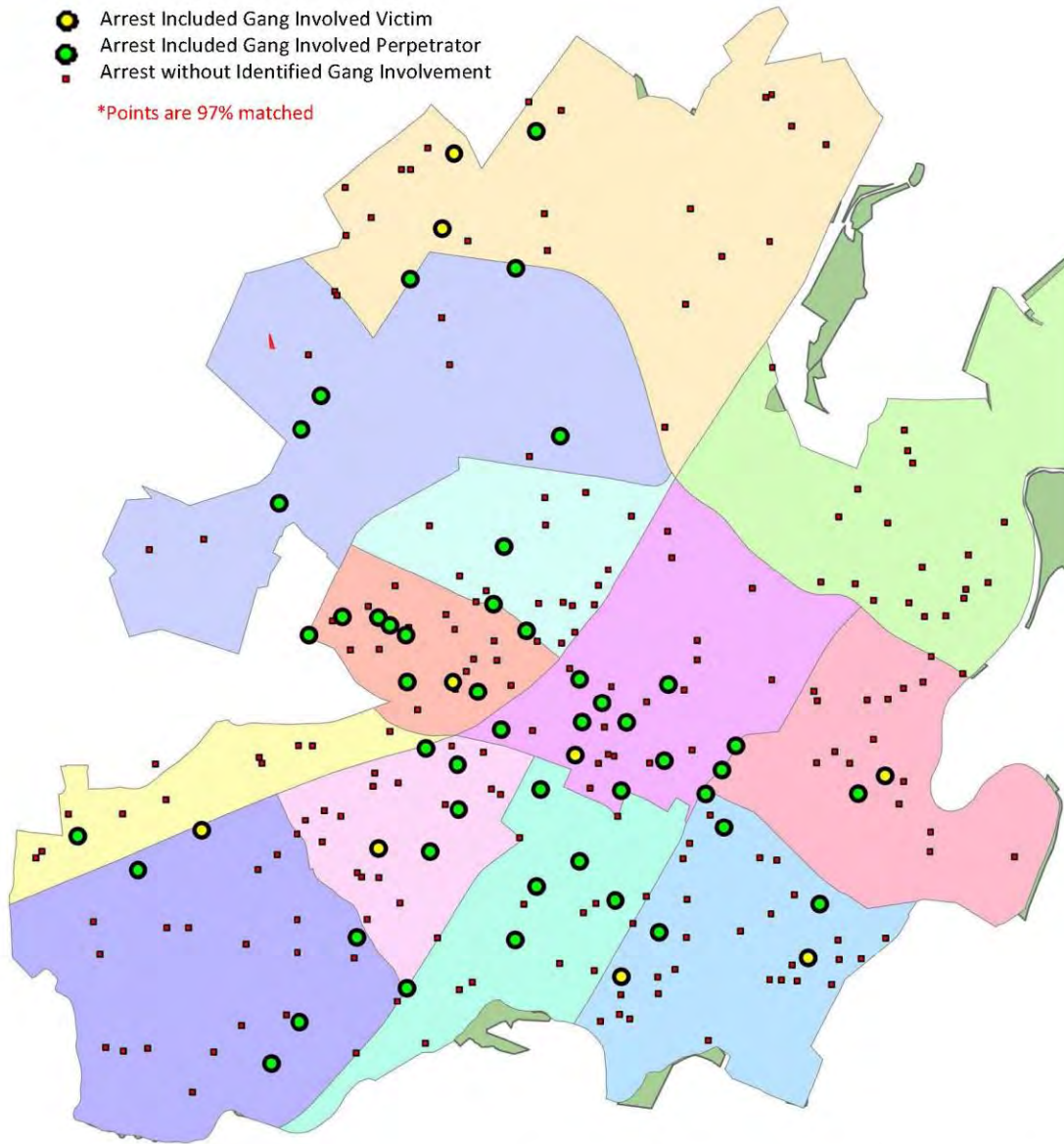•   Arrest without Identified Gang Involvement
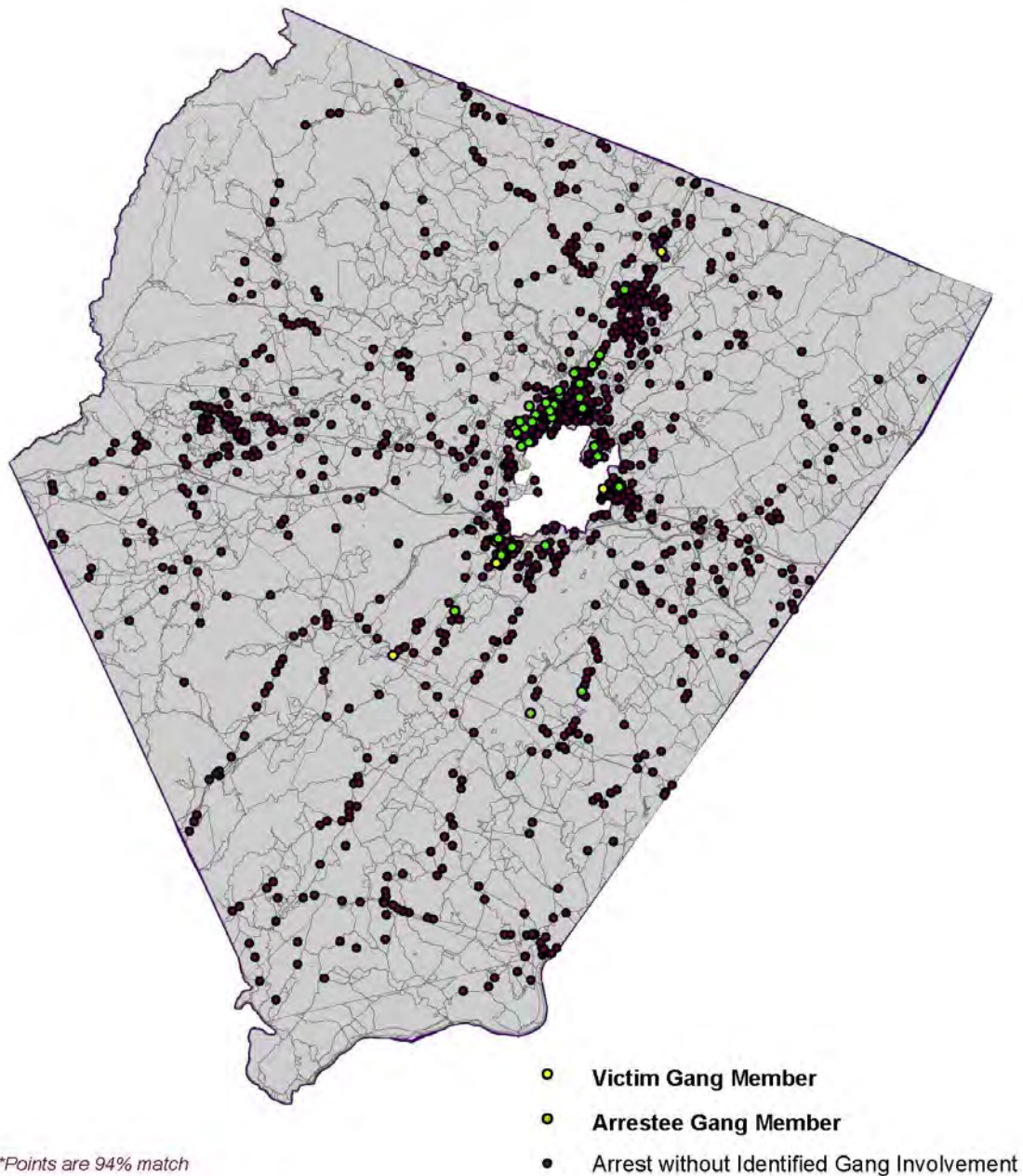
Charlottesville Police Department
Gang Data All Arrests in Census Block
Sept 2010 - Aug 2013

⬤ Arrest Included Gang Involved Victim
⬤ Arrest Included Gang Involved Perpetrator
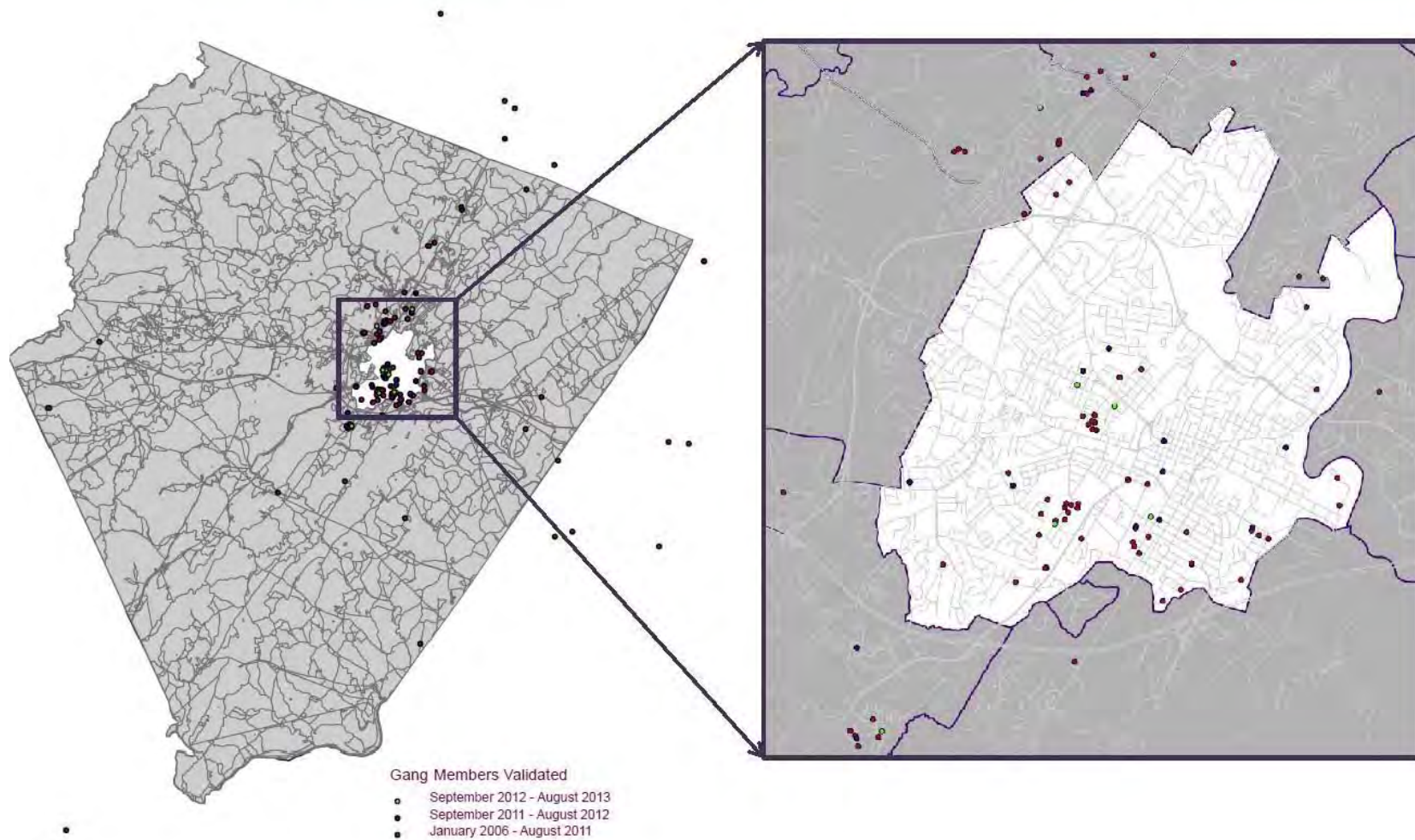▪ Arrest without Identified Gang Involvement

*Points are 97% matched

Data Source: City of Charlottesville
Crime Analysis Unit: 434-970-3276

0   0.225   0.45   0.9   1.35
                                    Miles

Active Gang Member Residents

Gang Members Validated
- September 2012 - August 2013
- September 2011 - August 2012
- January 2006 - August 2011

Community Perceptions

City of Promise and Friendship Court Neighborhood Surveys. In the spring/summer of 2012, the City of Promise conducted a comprehensive survey of neighbors living in the City of Promise footprint (including Starr Hill, Westhaven and 10th & Page); 90 households participated. In the spring/summer of 2013 a similar survey was conducted in Friendship Court; 46 households participated. Only one question in both surveys address gang activity specifically: "How big of a problem are the following issues in your neighborhood: gangs" Respondents rated the problem as "not a problem," "a small problem," or "a big problem." In the City of Promise 43% of respondents rated gangs as a small or big problem, and in Friendship Court 53% of respondents rated gangs as a small or big problem.

Service Provider and Criminal Justice System Interviews. Between 9/24/13 and 1/29/14, 29 interviews were held with a total of 40 individuals who had a role in the service community or the criminal justice system (see breakdowns of participants in Tables 24 and 25). Each person who participated in an interview voiced their personal experiences and perspectives and not necessarily those of the organization which employed them. All interviewees had been working and/or living in the Albemarle-Charlottesville area for several years (in one or more positions) and were judged by the GRACE Assessment Work Group as having sufficient knowledge about one or both localities to provide reliable and valid information. All interviewees were asked to provide information about what they knew about gangs in Albemarle-Charlottesville, and were asked not to provide any names, reveal any crimes, or break any confidentiality with the people they serve. Additionally, one long-time Hispanic resident agreed to do an interview under the condition of complete confidentiality; information from this interview is also included below.

Interviewees were asked what they knew about gang activity in Albemarle and Charlottesville (including which gangs were known, how wide spread activity is, the biggest reasons for gang activity, etc.), how dangerous the neighborhoods they worked and lived in were (including the biggest gang-related problems), how gang activity has changed in the last five years, what could be done to reduce gang activity, as well as what the community response to gangs have been and what could be done to improve that. Additionally, stakeholders were asked what specific programs or resources were available to help gang-involved youth and what makes the difference between a youth who joins a gang and a youth who does not.

Local gang presence: Interviewees agreed that the community is quite safe overall—especially in comparison to larger cities—and that local gang activity is comparable to other areas of similar size.

Interviewees agreed that most residents are largely unaware of, or unwilling to accept, the

local presence of gang activity. One individual described a community meeting in an area with gang graffiti and meeting places; the police officer's explanation of the symbols shocked the gated community's residents. Interviewees indicated while only a small proportion of residents may be formally in a gang, many more residents live among gang activity. One interviewee working with offenders noted that Albemarle-Charlottesville does not have gang warlords, but it does have a number of gang members. There are 270 gang validated adult probationers regionally in District 9.

Table 24. Demographic Breakdown of Interviewees

Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Service Community	Locality
Male: 26	Caucasian (non-Hispanic): 26	Criminal Justice System: 15	City/County: 16
Female: 16	African American: 12	School Resource Officer: 15	City: 10
	Hispanic: 4	School: 9	County: 14
		Other Community: 9	State: 2
		Faith Community: 3	

Location and reach of gangs: There was agreement among interviewees that the following neighborhoods have experienced the most gang activity:

> Prospect (16 mentions)
> Friendship Court (12 mentions)
> 10th & Page (9 mentions)
> South 1st Street (7 mentions)
> Hardy Drive (6 mentions)
> Downtown Mall (6 mentions)
> Fashion Square Mall (5 mentions)
> Southwood (5 mentions)
> Westhaven (4 mentions)

Interviewees reported that gangs are spread out across Albemarle and Charlottesville and are most concentrated in the City's public housing and neighborhoods with concentrations of Section 8 housing. The gangs most commonly referenced were Westside/PJC (9 mentions), Bloods, G-Square and 6N0 (8 mentions each), ZOG (7 mentions), Crips, MS-13 and/or Hispanic gangs generally (6 mentions each), Belmont (5 mentions), white supremacists, P-spect, Southside, and Eastside (4 mentions each). Gangster Disciples and Tiny Rascal Gangsters were each noted by one stakeholder as having a presence in the area.

"Even though Charlottesville's a city by definition, I mean it's still, I mean it's still suburban; it's rural. So when people hear the word 'gang' or the term 'gang' here, they think of what they see on television or what they see in larger cities…but [neighborhood sets] don't do the true actual gang activities."

Table 25. Service Provider Organizational Employer

Stakeholder Organizational Employer	
Schools	**Other Service Providers**
Albemarle County Public Schools, English as a Second Language Program	Adult Probation and Parole
Buford Middle School (CCS)	Albemarle County Police Department, Gang Unit
Burley Middle School (APS)	Albemarle-Charlottesville NAACP*
Cale Elementary (APS)	Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail
Charlottesville High School (CCS)	Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention Center
Enterprise Alternative Education Center (APS)	Charlottesville Abundant Life Ministries
Henry Avenue Learning Center (CCS)	Charlottesville Police Department, Gang Unit
Monticello High School (APS)	Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville
St. Anne's Belfield	Juvenile Probation and Parole
University of Virginia	Hispanic Resident (Anonymous)
Walker Upper Elementary School (CCS)	Downtown Mall Ambassador
Western Albemarle High School (APS)	Public Housing Association of Residents
	Region Ten Community Services Board
	The Women's Initiative
	Virginia Department of Corrections
	Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice

Complete list of interviewees may be found in Appendix A.
APS: Albemarle County Public Schools; CCS: Charlottesville City Schools
* The representative of the NAACP declined to be interviewed saying "I have had all kinds of discussions for many years with a wide variety of people of all ages and backgrounds here in Charlottesville. Not once has the subject of gang activity come up. This does not mean that it does not exist here, but I am not personally aware of it."

Gang visibility: Ten interviewees noted that gangs seem less visible than they were five years ago. When specific gangs were identified, interviewees felt that Hispanic gangs were even less visible than the other gangs. Several interviewees attributed decreased gang visibility to gang leadership conducting quieter operations so as not to draw the attention

of law enforcement. Interviewees reported that gang members may be in public schools, but that they do not see flagging or gang-related activity on school campuses. Interviewees also report that there are fewer individuals were "repping"[30] on street corners, wearing flags, and displaying other typical signs of gang affiliation than in the past. Additionally, interviewees talk about not seeing large groups of gang members hanging out together, but rather one or two at a time.

Several interviewees noted that individuals who boast and make a show of gang involvement are not always in gangs, but are building up their image out of a desire to belong with a gang or look "hard." Interviewees added that these flashier "wannabes" are potentially dangerous because they can be rash in their actions to look more like a gangster. The "wannabes" perpetuate the image that being in a gang is desirable.

These same interviewees stated that real gang members are more subtle and do not feel the need to publicly "rep" their affiliation. These interviewees felt that the real gang members were shrewd about the business of being in a gang. One stakeholder expressed the view of gang members as follows: "Why do you think I should go get in trouble? I don't want to get in trouble. I want to make money. I want to be successful."

<u>Youth interaction with gangs</u>: There was consensus that youth come in contact with gangs more often in their neighborhoods than in schools. One interviewee familiar with area gang membership patterns indicated that once youth join a neighborhood set, they always retain that affiliation, even after they join a national gang. For example, a youth may affiliate with the Bloods while his friend from the same neighborhood set may join the Crips; foremost they retain their neighborhood set affiliation. Stakeholders agreed that in Albemarle-Charlottesville, neighborhood sets and the Bloods have the largest number of youth members.

Sometimes youth are raised where older siblings, neighbors, and/or friends are members of gangs. Interviewees believe that gang influence can begin with elementary school students who are unsupervised at night or in the early morning. They believe that children and youth who are raised in the presence of gangs can find themselves choosing between two worlds: (1) pursuing success through education, and (2) pursuing success

> "...they see successful people, they see people moving on, they see people getting an education and they know they aren't part of that model—at least they've been trained that they aren't part of that model. And they are part of a different model and the model for success here is you need to be hardened, you need to be tough, you need to be able to do this, and you need to have no fear when you do this, and you need to move it forward, and that's the way you do it and that's how you become a man..."

through the gang world where individuals are tough, fearless and hardened. If youth feel

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[30] This means showing gang membership either verbally or by wearing specific colors or showing hand signals.

they will not be successful through education, gangs present an attractive alternative. For example, one interviewee noted that Hispanic youth who lack legal status are susceptible to this gang model, given their historic lack of access to college.

Interviewees stated that gangs also reach youth through media and culture, glorifying the gangster lifestyle. Musicians and professional athletes demonstrating gang identifiers (such as walks and signs) on national television give youth that being in a gang is an image that should be pursued.

Several interviewees expressed concern that because youth are not validated as gang members until they have a long record of activity, by the time they are validated they are so immersed in gangs it is nearly impossible to get them out. For example, one interviewee said the following:

> "we've seen kids coming [into juvenile detention] two or three times; you see what their crimes are and you hear them talk about it and they're like 12 or 13 years old. And then the next thing you know, they're 17 years old, they got the tats on, full blown tats, and it's too late now."

Recruitment: Stakeholders agreed that gangs actively target young members for a variety of reasons. Youth are desirable recruits because:

> - youth often have clean records and can get away with more than adults before getting locked up,
> - if caught committing a crime, juveniles spend much less time in corrections than adults (and when they return, they earn extra rank and feel they are important to the gang),
> - gangs view middle school students as easier to control than older youth, and
> - youth are more easily impressed by the promise of nice tennis shoes, money to run gang errands, and free drugs.

> "They have to recruit 12, 13, 14, 16 year old kids because if the adults do the crimes then they have to pull the time….Juveniles get a smack on the wrist and a few months, and after that they get a little bit of rank and some money, so they feel they're important."

Interviewees reported that gangs also target youth who feel a need for a sense of belonging that they lack elsewhere, who are unsupervised (especially late at night), and who have lower self-esteem or trouble fitting in with peers and/or might be bullied by others. Some gangs will target youth who lack strong family relationships, who lack consistent supervision, and/or who struggle financially.

> "...they find out what you're missing and that's what they provide."

There was consensus recruitment occurs through word of mouth. A substantial number of youth actively seek gang membership, and some receive unsolicited invitations to join. In order to join a gang, a person may have to demonstrate loyalty to the gang by committing a specified act, often criminal, be beaten in, "sexed in" (i.e., have sex with one or more gang members; this method generally applies to female members), or "blessed in" (i.e., avoiding beatings or sex due to kinship or other affiliation with a gang leader). Interviewees indicated that recruitment in Albemarle-Charlottesville is generally unseen, and that gangs do not make the specifics of their recruitment methods widely known.

Prisons and jails also are considered active areas for gang recruitment. Interviewees reported that joining a gang in jail or prison is often a necessity for personal protection. An individual can go in without an affiliation and come out a validated gang member with rank and access to older, higher ranking members with wide national networks.

One stakeholder expressed concern about the unique vulnerabilities of immigrant Hispanic youth, stating, "[Gangs] can go to schools and hover around. Usually they have a member that goes to a particular school to identify people they can recruit. Like traits— like do they have friends? are they alone?—make them more vulnerable to be recruited because they just moved in, don't speak the language, don't have any friends." Immigrant youth may be particularly susceptible to gang recruitment if they lack a connection to the new cultural environment. Gangs also are thought to offer a surrogate family, sense of connection to a community, and opportunities for advancement and influence they otherwise may lack.

Reasons youth join gangs: Interviewees nearly universally agreed that the biggest reasons why youth join gangs relate to lack of family connections and the need for belonging (see Table 26). When parents must work multiple jobs that keep them away from home, adults are absent from the home and/or supervision is inadequate for any reason, gangs will insert themselves and present the missing structure for vulnerable youth. Conversely, strong family relationships with higher levels of supervision, communication and involvement in groups or activities that give youth a sense of belonging are all considered protective factors. Other common explanations for the local gang problem involved lack of resources and the allure of media and peer celebrations of gang culture.

Table 26. Most Common Reasons for Gang Involvement

Most Common Reasons for Gang Involvement	
Parenting/family issues	24 mentions
Need for purpose/belonging	20 mentions
Economics	13 mentions
Not busy/unsupervised	12 mentions

One interviewee related a story that illustrates some of the gang-related challenges faced by youth and their families in Albemarle-Charlottesville: Two boys from supportive homes living in the same apartment complex were each targeted for membership by ZOG. The first boy had no interest in joining the gang and was "scared to death" of being jumped in. One day as he walked to school, his older brother and the brother's friends scared off the ZOG members targeting the boy; he did not join the gang. The interviewee recalled the second youth was jumped into ZOG; his mother was so concerned that she sent him out to a surrounding county to live with his father. The second youth's mother was unable to be there with him when he gets home from school and she feared losing her son to the gang.

Gang-related crime: As shown in Table 27, drug sales and usage were the most commonly identified criminal gang activities (mentioned by 22 interviewees), followed by robbery and theft (mentioned by 20 interviewees), and assaults (mentioned by 11 interviewees). Human and arms trafficking, including prostitution, were not noted as local gang activities. There was speculation that Hispanic gangs might be involved in prostitution. One interviewee indicated hearing that there is a prostitution ring running in Fluvanna.

Table 27. Most Commonly Gang-Related Criminal Activity

Content Analysis of Stakeholder Interviews (most common responses)	
Drugs	22 mentions
Robbery/theft	17 mentions
Assaults	11 mentions

Police-community relations: Eight interviewees indicated that addressing local gang activity requires improvements in police interaction and relationships with the community—especially with minority and lower-income community members. Interviewees stated that people were less likely to report activity or share relevant information with authorities when they felt apprehensive about police officers. One interviewee reflected on an experience that illustrated how some kids may form expectations about police because the only time they encounter them is when they are arresting someone in their home.

Some Albemarle interviewees noted that the Albemarle Police they knew were doing a good job, but the Charlottesville Police could not be trusted; conversely Charlottesville residents felt that Charlottesville Police do a good job, but they do not trust the Albemarle Police. This reflects community members having greater trust in the local officers with whom they have a relationship.

> "[F]rom their first formative memories, [some kids] have memories of blue lights outside of their car, and [police] kicking in the door… I went into a house one time … and I walked by this little boy doing his homework in his bedroom and I looked in and I said, 'Hey little guy' and he said 'Hey.'… [I said] 'Hey man, I'm proud of you' and with these big eyes he looked up and said 'Are you going to search my room now?' So [some] 8 and 9 year-old kids are growing up with the expectation that [police] are going to come in and turn over all of their stuff and all of their belongings and maybe haul mom and dad away and that maybe they're going to be left to pick up the carnage. And I think that is a huge piece of the societal piece."

Two ideas presented for improving police-community relations were to:

> - begin building relationships with young children through lunches or other activities, and
> - institute a policing model in which a specific officer is familiar with a particular neighborhood and everyone knows they can talk to one specific person who has built a relationship with them.

Race-relations in the community: Interviewees spoke of cultural and racial divides in the area. Several individuals stated that people who do not join gangs have a strong sense of community and personal identity. Interviewees identified several barriers that stand in opposition to this protective factor for non-Caucasian individuals, including:

> - A lack of understanding of African American and Hispanic culture.
> - Assumptions by individuals, police, and community members that non-Caucasian youth in groups are hoodlums and likely gang members.
> - No safe places for non-Caucasian older youth and young adults to hang out with peers.
> - Criminalization of youth banding together, especially Black and Hispanic youth.

Interviewees generally agreed that improved community discourse about culture would help improve the area's gang problems. One individual pointed out that one barrier to such communication results from criminalization of banding together, saying:

> "we can create greater discourse with the heads [of the systems/agencies] and everybody else if we just didn't criminalize them banding together….But if we could open up discourse that would be the key thing. You can't open up discourse when there's a constant threat that someone's going to cream you just for being entangled or embedded. Um, you actually probably need to be caught in the action, but up to that point, [it would help to create] a discourse without fear of being penalized by the system."

Re-entry: Issues facing people exiting jail and prison are important to address as ex-offenders work to re-integrate into the community. One interviewee illustrated the problem very well in the following statement, talking about how lack of opportunities keeps people from turning their lives around.

> "[Ex-offenders are] oftentimes stereotyped and even when they do try and turn their lives around, things are very… very hard for them here. Charlottesville is a town in which there's very few jobs for individuals who … don't have a certain amount of education…. And for those individuals, they kind of feel defeated. I mean, when you're trying to do the right thing, when you come and try to do the right thing, and that still doesn't work, and you try again, it doesn't work. And you try again, and it doesn't work. Or someone won't give you a chance. And there's very few places to go to in which who will [emphasis] help you. Then you know, you just kinda revert to the things and what you've done but, and what you did, rather, to get you in the very situation that got you where you are in the first place."

Issues unique to the Hispanic community: Four interviewees had extensive experience with the area's Hispanic community, specifically; these interviewees noted that the Hispanic community faces additional barriers to addressing gangs in their neighborhoods, including increased susceptibility to gangs among youth lacking legal status (because they may see college and other traditional avenues to success as closed to them), long working hours for parents (i.e., less adult supervision of youth), and tense race relations between the Hispanic community and the police. Additionally, interviewees indicated that the Hispanic community is unaware of programs available to help.

> "I think [the Hispanic community is] more afraid of the police than they are of the gangs, because Hispanic people have been dealing with gangs for a long time….If you see something, you keep it quiet….you have two choices: You get in trouble with the gang, who might beat you up. Or if you go to the police, they will beat you up and deport you….As long as the Albemarle and Charlottesville police force…don't treat under-connected immigrants like human beings, this problem is going to continue on and probably grow."

One interviewee told the following story to illustrate the experience of some Hispanic youth may find it hard to seek out assistance: two undocumented Hispanic immigrants were assaulted by members of ZOG on their walk home from school. The youth were "very fearful of getting involved in law enforcement and they were fearful of any kind of bringing their names, filing a report, having their names out" in any way. The interviewee explained that the act was likely planned at school, many kids at school knew about the situation, and the youth were openly afraid to return to school. However, because the activity occurred off grounds, the school did not want to get involved and urged the students to report it to the police. Because the kids did not feel safe approaching the police and the school declined to take any steps itself, "we sort of left them with nowhere to go with it."

Several interviewees indicated that Hispanic gangs, in particular, can entangle children from a young age, presenting a particular problem for prevention and response:

> "With that Hispanic gangs, with MS-13, with Sureños, with that—that's your family. I mean your kid can be 4-years-old, your kid could be 8-years-old and [the gang decides] they're ready to be a part of the family. ... And they start in doing little things that you do in the gangs to earn your way up. And then that kid grows up and all of a sudden he's 26 years old and that's all he's known since he was a kid, that's his family. That's who his community is, that's a part of what he is. And how would you get someone out of that?"

Suggested community response: Interviewees acknowledged that Albemarle-Charlottesville is rich in resources and already has a number of programs and organizations in place to combat the spread of gangs; stakeholders most commonly referenced the Boys & Girls Club in Charlottesville as an example of a protective resource for youth. Even so, many stakeholders expressed a need for increased activities to keep young people involved in supportive activities with adult role models, especially male role models. Interviewees expressed concern that community efforts needed to be more coordinated and comprehensive and intervene among young children. Several interviewees also noted that there is no quick and lasting fix to community gang problems, and that enforcement alone is an insufficient response to the problem—either gang members will come back from prison, or others will fill the gap. For example, several years ago the police swept Westside/PJC, and new gang members filled the resulting void within a matter of months.

> "You would think, in a community as small as Charlottesville—we're not a big community—that if you took 36 pretty hardcore gang members out of one of the gangs in Charlottesville, that it would make a huge impact, and it didn't. It took less than a month, and four other people moved in."

Several stakeholders indicated that schools are a useful entry point for reaching all of the community's youth and reducing gang problems. One stakeholder spoke specifically of the value of schools in preventing gang activity among immigrant Hispanic youth, saying

"[W]hat is the reason why Latinos come here? It is to support their family, so they take a risk to cross the border. The second [reason] is to give the kids what they didn't have. So they really make an effort to make sure the kids go to school….It's not that we want to give more stuff for schools to do, but we should create some portal where [youth] feel safe."

Based on interviewees' input, long-term solutions must:

> be lasting—resources must be committed long-term,
> examine and address underlying issues of children and families,
> focus on addressing the specific community issues that enable gang recruitment and activity, and
> address the economic and social barriers gang members face when trying to leave the gang.

One interviewee, dissatisfied with the community's current response to area gangs, stated that resources put toward fighting gangs are a temporary solution: "throw a little money temporarily in hopes the problem will fix itself." This stakeholder summarized what many voiced about the need for a comprehensive solution to gang activity:

"We're not doing squat compared to what we [could] be doing. It's suppression, prevention, and intervention. And all we're doing is we're just continuously doing the same thing. We're not stepping outside the bubble, you know? [Gangs are] the ugly thing that nobody wants to deal with… Nobody wants to deal with it. They acknowledge it—they see it's there, but nobody wants to deal with it."

Specifically, interviewees expressed a need for:

> Prevention efforts that reach young children and their families, ensuring that area families have the resources and employment opportunities to meet basic needs and promote positive youth development.

> Programs and policies that strengthen parent-child relationships and allow for increased parental involvement with their children.

> Early intervention when youth gang involvement is suspected. One interviewee expressed the need to focus on younger children and youth who have multiple contacts with law enforcement.

"We're seeing that [youth are] being contacted with law enforcement four and five times before they ever [get] to detention or serious probation and parole stuff. And by that time they're so immersed in culture of gangs and the criminal side of it there's not much to work with. There's not enough early interventions; you know, kids 10, 11, 12—'cus you know [juvenile detention centers] hold kids at 10 years old and have had a few. But if [we] would start actively working with kids at 10, 11, 12…we may be able to start working at a larger scale at that point."

> Support specifically for parents in areas with concentrated gang activity. Parents may struggle alone with the issues of what to do when a child becomes involved in a gang or how to protect that child's younger siblings from following an older sibling's path. Families may need support in identifying and accessing resources.

> Leadership roles, work, and activities that enable youth to put leadership skills to constructive use. Do not require youth to relinquish their gang affiliation in order to participate in activities—compete with the gangs for the youth's interests.

> Improved police-community relationships and alternative policing methods, such as neighborhood police assignments and activities that engage children and youth with police in positive activities.

> Community education—including parents, the faith community, service providers and educators—in recognizing gang identifiers (hand signs, colors, etc.) and signs of youth gang involvement.

> Increased linkages between school resource officers and community resources. One stakeholder stated that "there was a real sort of division between the school and the police" that left gang activity unresolved and students feeling unsafe in both their schools and the community.

> Resources and support for female gang members seeking to leave gangs and find supportive employment or education; the area currently lacks assistance tailored for female gang members.

> Address discrimination, including recognizing that youth banding together is not criminal, and address gang-related issues on re-entry after imprisonment.

> Improved understanding of the Hispanic family and increased cultural competence of counselors and others working with Hispanic youth and their families.

"I think [the community has] a long ways to go as far as coming up with solutions. We could talk about it all day long but fixing it, taking action is what's really hesitant….[W]e can talk about it. We can think about it. We can form groups and committees and there's plenty of that. But I see very little action. It really doesn't make any sense if a person has dangerous affiliations…. Take action on it. I mean don't just talk about it and form committees and subcommittees and you know like I said I think for the most part you know there's a lot more that can be done. But [the community] tends to spend a lot more money spinning their wheels…"

Officer Focus Groups. Focus groups were held with patrol officers in Albemarle and Charlottesville during shift change, as well as with some detectives and supervisors.[31] As can be seen in Table 28, most officers had served three years on the force, ranging from six months to 23 ½ years. Twenty-three of the officers were Caucasian, eight were black, two were Hispanic and six were female.

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[31] Additional focus groups were held to additionally include African American and Hispanic perspectives. The initial groups held at shift change were all Caucasian.

Table 28. Demographics of Police Focus Group Participants

Police Focus Group (n=31)	
Albemarle: 16	ave 10.5 years on force
Charlottesville: 15	ave 5.6 years of force
Overall: 6 months – 23 ½ years on force	
Female: 6	
Caucasian: 23 Black: 6 Hispanic: 2	

The officers and supervisors in the focus group were asked only how widespread gangs were in Charlottesville and Albemarle, including what gangs do, where gang activity is concentrated, how they recruit, what their main crimes are, who is most affected by gangs, and how has gang activity changed over the last five years.

Gang reach: Officers' knowledge of gangs and gang activity varied a great deal, ranging from literally no knowledge at all (mostly patrol officers) to deep knowledge (mostly detectives). It was noted twice that they believed that gang activity is much more wide-spread than is generally known or typically acknowledged by the community at large. Patrol officers generally reported never encountering groups of individuals hanging out as a gang or typically responding to calls that were explicitly gang-related. One officer thought that a lot of youth involvement was based on curiosity, and noted that he had noticed an increase in City youth with gang-related "knowledge" (i.e., secret code books, posters, rule books, etc.).

Known gangs and where they are concentrated: The following gangs were mentioned at least once: Bloods (City and County), Crips (mostly City), Sovereign Citizens, White Supremacists (mostly in the Scottsville area, Northern and Western part of the County), MS-13 (Southwood and Keene), Sureños, neighborhood sets like Project Crud/PJC and Westside in the lower-income neighborhoods in the City (there were no neighborhood sets noted for the County), and the local gang ZOG (in the County). One officer wondered if younger youth hanging out together might be getting labeled as gangs. One officer wondered if it was easier to get into a set than a gang. The officers also reported that gangs as most concentrated in the north side (urban ring) of the County, Mallside, Rio Hill, Trophy Chase, Townwood, Crenshaw Court, and Pen Park Lane. One focus group noted that University of Virginia football games brought in gang members from all over the country, and that there were gang members in neighboring localities and states that either moved here or came here to settle disputes with local gang members.

Gang recruitment: The officers in the focus groups thought that schools were primary places to recruit gang members (e.g., friends recruiting friends) and wondered if some larcenies might be gang recruiting activities. It was noted twice that gangs are reaching out

to very young youth, and are targeting youth lacking a sense of belonging. One officer said, "Kids are looking to be part of something, and something bad is better than nothing." The officers also reported younger youth who are unsupervised are prime candidates for recruiting.

Gang-related crimes: The majority of officers reported petty larceny, drug dealing, and vehicle break-ins as main gang-related crimes; they also reported assaults and aggravated assaults. Two officers reported that prostitution and human trafficking in the Hispanic community was "epidemic" and that prostitution also was part of other gangs' activities. Officers, especially familiar with the Hispanic communities, expressed concern that these communities were living in daily extreme fear and intimidation due to gangs.

There was consensus that the gangs commit crimes based on opportunity and that specific people or groups of people were generally targeted. The one exception was older, Hispanic adults who tend to carry their money on them in cash.

Changes in the last five years: There was consensus that gangs are not showing colors and signs or tagging as much as they were in the past. Some officers think the gang members have gotten smarter. Due to laws in Virginia that make gang membership a crime,[32] fewer people are willing to come forward and "claim" gang membership. One focus group

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[32] § 18.2-46.2. Prohibited criminal street gang participation; penalty.

A. Any person who actively participates in or is a member of a criminal street gang and who knowingly and willfully participates in any predicate criminal act committed for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association with any criminal street gang shall be guilty of a Class 5 felony. However, if such participant in or member of a criminal street gang is age eighteen years or older and knows or has reason to know that such criminal street gang also includes a juvenile member or participant, he shall be guilty of a Class 4 felony.

B. Violation of this section shall constitute a separate and distinct offense. If the acts or activities violating this section also violate another provision of law, a prosecution under this section shall not prohibit or bar any prosecution or proceeding under such other provision or the imposition of any penalties provided for thereby.

Code of Virginia, http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+18.2-46.2

§ 18.2-46.3. Recruitment of persons for criminal street gang; penalty.

A. Any person who solicits, invites, recruits, encourages or otherwise causes or attempts to cause anotherds to actively participate in or become a member of what he knows to be a criminal street gang is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. Any person age 18 years or older who solicits, invites, recruits, encourages or otherwise causes or attempts to cause a juvenile to actively participate in or become a member of what he knows to be a criminal street gang is guilty of a Class 6 felony.

B. Any person who, in order to encourage an individual (a) to join a criminal street gang, (b) to remain as a participant in or a member of a criminal street gang, or (c) to submit to a demand made by a criminal street gang to commit a felony violation of this title, (i) uses force against the individual or a member of his family or household or (ii) threatens force against the individual or a member of his family or household, which threat would place any person in reasonable apprehension of death or bodily injury, is guilty of a Class 6 felony. The definition of "family or household member" set forth in § 16.1-228 applies to this section.

Code of Virginia, http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+18.2-46.3

noted an increase in "homegrown" gangs (i.e., neighborhood sets), as well as an influx of national gangs like the Bloods, Latin Kings, and MS-13 (primarily from New York). Another focus group noted that they felt that the national gangs were less centrally organized and that the activity of the members was more independent.

<u>Additional important topics.</u> The officers in the focus groups were all asked if there was anything else they thought would be important for GRACE to know as part of this assessment. The following things were each noted once:

> Residents need to be involved and knowledgeable about gangs; for example, Southwood does not want to admit that there are gangs.
> Lack of knowledge about gangs needs to be addressed, even within the police departments.
> Sometimes when police go in to try to warn people or inform people about gangs, they will get brushed off.
> The uptick in child-on-child sex crimes should be explored as possibly gang related.
> The unusual number of nail salons and massage parlors should be looked at as possible avenues for human trafficking.
> Police need to build relationships and trust—especially in the Hispanic community—in order to help redirect the youngest youth vulnerable to joining gangs; one officer told a story about being able to help a youth redirect his energy into more productive activities, saying that "we need to train, teach and empower when [youth] are very young."
> There really needs to be dedicated gang units that can build relationships with resident, gather knowledge (especially since there are fewer overt gang signs), and support early intervention.

Adult and Youth Focus Groups. Focus group participants were recruited primarily from the neighborhoods and streets that were associated with the most gang-related arrests. In order to make sure that different areas of gang activity were not overlooked, all service provider/law enforcement interviewees—as well as the probationers interviewed—also were asked where gangs were concentrated. As can be seen in Table 29, 83 residents participated in nine focus groups (including one combined adult/youth focus group). Fifty-two percent (52%) were under the age of 19, and 43% were over 19. Most participants were black (70%), and 17% were Hispanic; 61% were female; 52% were residents of Albemarle County. Participants were asked in which neighborhood, area, or street they lived. This information is missing for 22 participants; however, of those who listed where they lived, most lived in Parks Edge Apartments, in Westhaven, and in the Prospect area. Overall, there was representation from at least 15 different parts of the Albemarle urban ring and Charlottesville (see Table 30). Between and within focus groups, some participants were very informed and provided a lot of information about experiences with gangs and other participants had no knowledge of gangs at all.

Table 29. Demographics of Resident Focus Group Participants

Resident Focus Groups (*n*=83)			
Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Locality
under 19: 43	Female: 51	Black: 58	Albemarle: 43
age 19-56: 30	Male: 32	Hispanic: 14	Charlottesville: 31
Adults, age unknown: 10		Caucasian: 8	Unknown: 9
		Unknown: 3	

Table 30. Residences of Focus Group Participants

Neighborhood/Street	Number of Participants
Parks Edge	23
Westhaven/Hardy Drive	9
Prospect/Gardenwood	7
Wilton Farms	7
Cherry Ave	2
McElroy Drive	2
University Area	2
11th and Little High	1
Greenbrier	1
Jefferson Square	1
North Berkshire	1
North Downtown	1
Rio Road	1
Riverside Ave	1
Trophy Chase	1

Adults (including 24 parents, 8 non-parents, 8 unknown) participated in five focus groups. The parents had between one and six children ages 2 to 40. Seven adults were in married/committed relationships, seven were separated/divorced, 13 were single, and 13 did not specify. There were 43 youth who participated in focus groups; the last grade they completed is shown in Graph 12. As can be seen in Table 31, most youth were from Charlottesville and Albemarle High Schools, as well as Buford and Jouett Middle Schools.

Graph 12.

Youth Participation in Focus Groups
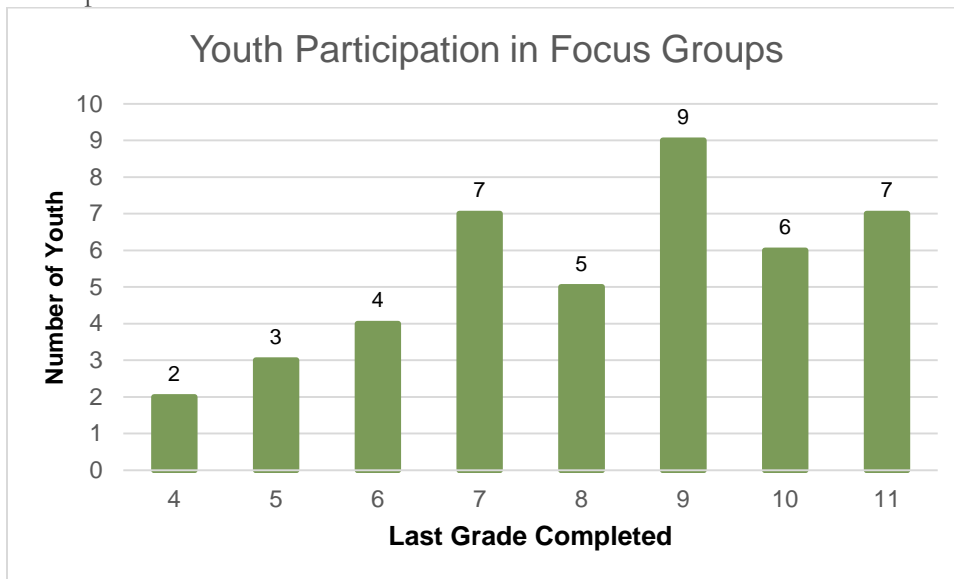
Table 31. Focus Group Youth School Representation

School	Number of Youth
Albemarle High School (APS)	14
Charlottesville High School (CCS)	13
Jouett Middle School (APS)	7
Buford Middle School (CCS)	4
Burley Elementary School (APS)	1
Ivy Creek (K-12) (APS)	1
Monticello High School (APS)	1
Walker Upper Elementary (CCS)	1
Walton Middle School (APS)	1

APS: Albemarle County Schools; CCS: Charlottesville City Schools

All focus group participants were asked the same four questions: (1) how widespread are gangs in Charlottesville and Albemarle; (2) how do gangs affect your life or the lives of people you know; (3) what programs, resources or individual people are there to work with and help youth who are involved in gangs; and (4) what, if anything, could be done to reduce the gang problem in the community? In response to these questions, several key points came up across focus groups. One focus group did not respond to the specific questions presented because they started the discussion with concerns about how the assessment information was going to be used, and the conversation evolved from there.

Gangs and neighborhood sets. Most people in the focus groups did not take the gangs in the area very seriously, either because they do not have any experience with gangs or because they do not consider the gangs threatening (noted eight times across focus groups); youth in two focus groups said they would not consider there to be a gang

problem until people started getting killed. Most people with any contact with gangs do <u>not</u> consider the neighborhood sets to be "gangs," and many of those who claim gang membership are considered "wannabe's" or "just playin'" (this was noted five time across focus groups). One individual described membership in national gangs as "like a hobby— I'm cool and trying to fit in." Several youth talked about gang membership being higher several years ago when it was more glorified by rappers and on T.V., and before the police presence in the neighborhoods increased. Zoo of Goons (ZOG) was the only local gang specifically mentioned as being a "gang" and causing trouble due to fighting.[33] While members of neighborhood sets can also be associated with national gangs, young people in sets do not typically consider themselves part of a gang. Neighborhood sets are considered brotherhoods based on who you grew up with and consist of the people you hang out with the most. Youth can hang out with a neighborhood set and be associated with the set without formally claiming membership (i.e., "repping") in the set, and youth are not disrespected for not participating in set activities. Two of the youth focus groups and two adult focus groups explained that set members usually end up getting into trouble when the kids get bored, smoke marijuana, fight with other neighborhood sets or have members who are attention seeking and trying to look "hard." One young man explained that neighborhood sets are not trying to take over new territory, but that sets are standing up for their neighborhoods. It also was stated that sets do not have centrally organized ways of making money. There are drugs, and some people sell drugs for money, but criminal activities are not considered the organizing activity of sets. In one focus group, the participants said that the youth are typically in sets, and then if young adults do not see that they have any other opportunities in life, they may join a national gang. Nonetheless, when one youth focus group was asked where gangs are most often located, they said "in the sets."

Gang activity in the Hispanic community was described very differently. The Hispanic gangs (e.g., MS-13, MS-18, Sureños, Latin Kings, Southside) were only mentioned in a couple of the non-Hispanic focus groups, and their activities were not mentioned at all. As noted at the beginning of this report, it was very difficult to recruit Hispanic individuals to participate in focus groups. Attempts to pull together a Hispanic youth focus group was met with concern that the youth might expose themselves to the retaliation of the Hispanic gangs if they participated. One of the two Hispanic focus groups said that the gang presence was growing, that there was an increase in alcohol and drug addiction and prostitution in the community. The participants in this focus group reported not feeling safe, that businesses cannot grow, and that children do not want to finish school.

<u>Reach of gangs</u>: The degree to which people considered gangs to be "widespread" depended on their perspective; it is clear that gang and neighborhood set activity is focused primarily in public housing, in neighborhoods or streets with more Section 8

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[33] ZOG originated in a middle school rather than as a neighborhood set.

housing, and the one University of Virginia student in the focus groups noted that there was some gang activity behind 14th Street and around Washington Park. Southwood, Georgetown Road, Parks Edge, and Treesdale were all mentioned one time. There seemed to be consensus that gang activity was concentrated in the City (especially in the Prospect and South 1st Street areas), but that it is moving to the County. In two focus groups, it was estimated that 50% or more of youth in lower-income neighborhoods are in sets. The number of people estimated to be in gangs varied substantially from 20% to 70%. One focus group said that gang members come to Charlottesville from New York and Chicago.

When asked what gangs were known, the following gangs were mentioned across focus groups: Crips/Folks (6 times), Bloods (5 times), MS-13 (2 times), and Sureños, Prospect, 10th & Paige, G-Square, ZOG, Westside, Eastside, Southside, Latin Kings were all mentioned once.

Visibility of gangs: Focus group participants reported that the gang activity was much more problematic 5 to 10 years ago, and that now it has either gone quiet or has reduced (people suspected this might be due to gang members aging, becoming less brash, police presence and monitoring, and gang members being in prison). There was consensus that now, as compared to at least 5 years ago, there are fewer people showing gangs signs, flagging, and claiming to be in national gangs. Similarly, people reported more gang activity in schools about five years ago, while now it is reported to be essentially non-existent in schools and rather neighborhood based (there was only one mention in one focus group that gangs have a presence in schools). Participants in one focus group reported being concerned that the gangs were just underground, gaining strength and/or that the national gangs were beginning to take stronger root. Based on the lack of discussion of Hispanic gangs in the non-Hispanic focus groups, the activities of Hispanic gangs appears to be focused in the Hispanic community. One individual volunteered that gang and set activity is much more prevalent in the summer when it is warm and people are outside.

Reasons to join gangs and sets. As noted before, participants reported that being associated with a neighborhood set is extremely common and based on where you live. Some youth may "claim" or "rep" a set and others may not. One youth said it depended on what kind of status and power a person wanted to have in the neighborhood. This same youth said that the "mentality" in the sets and gangs are the same, but that the sets are "not necessarily doing gang activities." Therefore, some youth may be involved in sets due to the brotherhood and identity and others may be acting more like they are in a gang, fighting and causing trouble (this type of trouble was referred to as "mischief" or "causing a nuisance" in two of the adult focus groups).

Nearly all the participants said people join gangs or act like a gangster due to boredom and a lack of attractive alternative ways to spend time, lack of other opportunities, youth

rebellion, desire for the gangster lifestyle, curiosity/youthful exploration, lack of strong family, role models who are in gangs, and neighborhood rivalry/loyalty.

Recruitment into gangs or gang activities: There was consensus that some people seek out gang membership and that others may be recruited (sometimes without even realizing it). One focus group noted that recruitment happens in schools, another focus group said it did not happen in schools and was focused in neighborhoods; none of the other focus groups mentioned schools. One focus group spoke about how gangs may also look for people you would never expect to be associated with a gang (like someone in a wheelchair or a preteen), so that they can move drugs or guns around without suspicion.

(1) People who seek out gang membership have family or friends in the gang already. They may have grown up together and already feel a loyalty to each other or their neighborhood. (This type of recruitment was mentioned seven times across focus groups, and overlapped with descriptions of reasons to join sets.)

(2) The second group who may seek out gang membership are youth who are rebellious or "looking to get into trouble" or want "power, money, guns and girls." This group of young people may look up to gang members and the lifestyle and may start getting in trouble by skipping school and progress to getting recruited in jail/corrections. According to one youth, at some point, they may want out, but have no other way of living. (This type of recruitment was mentioned seven times across focus groups.)

There also appears to be two kinds of youth that are vulnerable to being recruited.

(1) The first group targeted for recruitment are younger youth, age 11 to 15 (especially males) who are large, strong, or who may have demonstrated a willingness to stand up for themselves or fight. One mom, whose son fit this description, reported that her son had to actively avoid gangs and even hide at home when there were fights because he was being encouraged so heavily to take sides. (This type of recruitment was mentioned three times across focus groups.)

(2) The second group likely to be recruited are more vulnerable individuals, maybe youth who need money, protection from bullying, or who are looking for acceptance or a surrogate family. These youth may be more subtly recruited by being asked to run errands, keep secrets, have small jobs, etc. These youth end up being absorbed into or indebted into the gang, sometimes without knowing that it is happening. (This type of recruitment was mentioned seven times across focus groups.)

Impact of Gangs. In each focus group, participants were asked what crimes gangs were most involved in. Table 32 shows all the crimes mentioned. Drugs,

fighting/assault/neighborhood defense, and stealing/robbery were mentioned much more often than other crimes, including guns, homicide and vandalism. Prostitution was not mentioned as a gang-related, but people in one focus group thought it might have been so in the past. One Hispanic focus group mentioned an increase in prostitution, but did not name it specifically as a gang-related activity.

Table 32. Gang-related Crimes Mentioned in Focus Groups

Crime	Number of Mentions
Drug-related (not always gang-related)	7
Fighting/jumping/neighborhood defense	7
Stealing/robbery	5
Gun-related	3
Homicide	1
Vandalism	1
Prostitution (maybe in the past)	1

While one focus group felt they were not affected at all by gangs, and another dismissed any gang activity as "nuisances," gangs were sometimes described as having impacts other than crimes or intimidation in communities. As noted above, participants in one of the two Hispanic focus groups said there was an increase in alcohol and drug addiction and prostitution in the community. The participants in this focus group reported not feeling safe, that businesses cannot grow, and that children do not want to finish school. Participants in this same group reported also being afraid of the police. Participants in another focus group said that often the police will accuse the residents who called about gang/community issues. Youth in one focus group said that they did not have anywhere to hang out, and could not hang out on the Downtown Mall, because if you were with friends you were labeled as a gang.

> "[Gangs] affect me because it stereotypes me because I'm young, African American, and live in a rough neighborhood."

Keeping gangs at bay: Five of the focus groups stated that the gangs were less visible and/or less active, and one stated they had learned from the police that it was growing; the larger of the two Hispanic focus groups reported that gangs were growing. Participants believed that the reasons for the reduction in gang visibility had to do with:

> increased neighborhood cohesion, a collective intolerance for gang activity, and a willingness to call the police (mentioned two times),

> strong apartment management (mentioned one time), more police presence in lower-income neighborhoods (two groups stated that Charlottesville bears down

quickly on gang activity),

> people in gangs having grown up or sent away to juvenile placements or jail (mentioned three times), and

> gang-related rap music being less mainstream (mentioned two times).

The youth in particular spoke readily about the importance of youth sports (mentioned six times), other extracurricular activities (mentioned six times), strong family connections or someone to look up to and/or church (mentioned five times), the CCS WALK[34] program (mentioned twice), and doing homework (mentioned once) as things they thought kept youth out of gangs. One youth focus group noted that if someone is able to graduate, that opens up opportunities, and not getting a high school diploma is specifically related to joining gangs. Across focus groups, participants reported that if youth are busy enough, they are too tired and it is too late to get into trouble. The only specific programs mentioned as being particularly helpful were the Boys & Girls Club[35] and City of Promise[36] (each mentioned once).

What needs to be done: Focus group participants spoke most often of needing to strengthen families and to ensure that youth have positive activities to engage in, including summer programming (when gangs were most active) and sports. Two focus groups spoke of needing "scared straight" programming to deter gang involvement. Participants noted that programming needs to be located where youth can easily access it (there was a specific request from youth for programming, gyms, and pools located specifically in the County), activities that are free or very low cost, and more focus on older youth. Programming for youth not interested in sports needs to be included. Participants also talked about the need to serve youths' specific interests, to create hangouts (mentioned twice; one youth participant spoke of not being able to be on the Downtown Mall with more than one other friend for fear of being labeled as a gang), and to reduce discrimination by police and in the community (mentioned three times).

Discrimination and stereotyping of the Hispanic and African American communities were specifically mentioned in five focus groups as something that needs to be addressed both in policing and across the community. The cultural and linguistic isolation of the Hispanic community was evident, including the fear of police and deportation. One focus group mentioned wanting police to intervene more quickly when called, not just to drive through the neighborhood, but get out of the car and check in on people. One focus group spoke of wanting police to develop more relationships with residents built on trust.

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[34] http://www.ccs.k12.va.us/schools/chs/WALKProgram.html

[35] http://bgclubcva.org/

[36] http://cityofpromise.com/

Two focus groups spoke specifically about the need for more collaboration and cohesion between neighborhoods. There was a concern that the separateness was contributing to the gang rivalries.

> "There's no helping the gang problem. As long as there is money to be made there will be gangs. The money's too fast and it's tax free."

Probationer/Parolee Interviews. Adults and youth on probation or parole were recruited based on known or suspected gang membership, or because they were believed to potentially have some knowledge about gangs. In total, 12 black (10 male, 2 female), 3 white (all male), and 3 Hispanic (all male) individuals were interviewed (see Table 32). They ranged in age from 15 to 49, and represented seven Bloods, three Crips, two White Supremacists (one ICP, one Aryan Nation/KKK), one Gangster Disciple, one Vice Lord, one Sureño, and one Latin King. Three interviewees belonged to neighborhood sets (Westside, Southside, and P-Spect Finest) and were also members of a national gang and included in the counts above. Two interviewees did not have a gang affiliation. Interviewees had different levels of desired and actual involvement with the gangs they affiliate:

> 2 considered themselves active gang members;
> 3 considered themselves inactive members;
> 9 had unofficially left the gang, meaning they did not consider themselves members any longer but they had not officially left;
> 2 officially left their gang with the knowledge and approval of the gang leadership; and
> 2 did not have any current or prior gang affiliation.

Four gang members reported having held high rank in their gang; two led or were second in command of their set, and two others had, or were offered, top rank across the state or entire East Coast.

Table 32. Demographics of Probationer/Parolee Interviewees

Gender	Race	Age	Gangs and Sets
Male: 16 Female: 2	Black: 12 Caucasian: 3 Latino: 3	18 and under: 6 age range: 15 to 49	Bloods: 7 Crips: 3 Neighborhood sets: 3 White Supremacists: 2 No affiliation: 2 Gangsta Disciples: 1 Vice Lords: 1 Sureño: 1 Latin Kings: 1

<u>Interviewee educational experiences</u>: Three youth interviewees were still in high school, two interviewees had completed high school, and 13 had dropped out of high school. Other than the three still attending high school, every gang member interviewed had a difficult secondary school experience, including expulsion for fighting and gang activity, school transfers due to behavioral problems, dropping out and/or incarceration mid-school year. Five of the 13 interviewees who had dropped out of school had earned or were in the process of earning their GED; one interviewee was at the community college.

Across all ages, every individual interviewed expressed a lack of engagement with their school and teachers by secondary school. Common themes included feeling bored and unchallenged, getting into trouble for fighting or acting up in class, being disciplined for involvement with gang activity, and a lack of personal connection to teachers. Several indicated that the only value they found in school was the social aspect, as illustrated by the following quote.

> "I didn't really do nothing. All I did was wanna fight and it was like a fashion statement. Just wanna go in there dress to impress, wanna mess with all the girls, all the fly girls, and if somebody was on some other stuff we got to fighting, that's what it was. That was basically school for me."

<u>Reach and visibility of gangs</u>: Interviewees generally indicated that gangs are geographically widespread in the area. They also agreed that there is diversity in the gangs with a local presence (see Table 33). Nonetheless, no interviewees considered Albemarle-Charlottesville particularly dangerous. Many interviewees indicated that the area's gang activity is not "real" like it is in cities with entrenched gangs, that local gang members "aren't real" like they are in California and New York, and that members from rival gangs may even hang out with each other due to the smallness of the community. One Blood related:

> "This is f***ing Charlottesville. You don't need any gangs out here. For what? What are you protecting? For what? You running around here because it's a fashion statement. They see this as a f***ing joke."
>
> "I got a couple friends that's Crips. We cool. We chill. I respect them, they respect me….If we was in Cali or New York or like in the big city, things might be different…Everybody knows each other. So it's hard to beef with somebody you knew your whole life."

Interviewees also stated that the area is experiencing growth in numbers of gang members, if not obvious growth in activity. One Hispanic interviewee did speak about gangs in general, but asked to skip the questions about Hispanic gangs. One gang member said that in Charlottesville-Albemarle, "everybody knows everybody, but at the same time, everything is on the down low," with activity hidden from view even among

acquaintances. Activity is further hidden from community members who are not part of the gang.

> "Obviously there's other people that live there, there's white people that live there in brand new homes, but they don't get disrespected...Like, you show respect—when they are outside in their yard or garden, or they got their kids outside or they're just enjoying their day—you don't disrespect them. You say, "Hey, how you doing?" You make them feel welcome, you...keep [the gang involvement] within."

Table 33. Gangs Mentioned in Albemarle-Charlottesville

Gangs Mentioned as Having a Local Presence	
National Gangs	Neighborhood Sets
Aryan Brotherhood	P-spect Finest
Bloods	Southside
Brim Bloods	Westside/Project Crud
Milla Bloods	
Crips	
Ten One Mafia	
Gangsta Disciples	
ICP	
KKK	
Latin Kings	
Mother Chapter	
MS-13	
MS-18	
Nature's Eternal Religion	
Sureños	
Vice Lords	

Growth in gang membership was reported as being due to both local recruits and people moving to the area from out of state. Several interviewees expressed a belief that the activity can be controlled, but that there would always be gangs at some level. Interviewees said that if one gang is removed from the streets, another will move in.

> "You know how roaches have been here since dinosaurs? That's how it's gonna be. You may be able to contain it, control it every now and then, but the person in the neighborhood who brought roaches here moves, and then they breed again...and you can mark my words on that. That's how it always happens."

Neighborhood sets: Interviewees described important differences between the neighborhood sets and "real gangs." Specifically, the neighborhood sets are based on neighborhood allegiance and there is not necessarily the organizational structure of the national gangs. For example, one gang member explained that Southside does not have rank. They stand up for their territory and for each other in the group, such that if one

person gets in a fight, the whole gang will quickly retaliate. Some interviewees felt that neighborhood sets were thought to be bad when really they were not; one interviewee expressed:

> "[all the neighborhood] people that you grow up with… you hang with them, [and] if anything happens they're not going to let you see you hurt yourself, but society considers that gangs. I consider it you helping a friend out, but they consider it a gang."

Nonetheless, neighborhood sets were also described as places where Bloods or Crips handpick new recruits based on their presence in and activities with a particular set. Gang members described their experience with neighborhood sets as follows:

> "Basically those [local] types of gangs here is way different from a real gang. Here is not a real gang. Because kids fight and do dumb stuff, but at the end of the day, it's just you. These people, they watch out for you but at the end of the day it's just you. It's not like you got a rank or anything. Anything is you all are the same. This person is part of this side and this person is part of that side. Not like…it's just where you live at. Where you live at is where you fall in with."
>
> "Kids here…they don't get what it is to be in a real gang, the little stuff they do around here."

Recruitment occurs in a variety of situations. Interviewees declined to discuss specifics of the recruitment process, but they did describe locations where recruitment occurs. Four individuals were recruited in jail, and two of them joined out of allegiance to friends or significant others. The others joined through friends or family, generally in their neighborhoods. Several were recruited out of the area—New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Pennsylvania, Harrisonburg—and subsequently moved to Charlottesville-Albemarle. One was recruited by New York Crips visiting a local neighborhood. Taken as a whole, interview responses indicated that the Bloods and the Latin Kings appears to be focused on growth. The interviewees tended to join gangs as teenagers, and one joined as a 6-year-old.

> "Right now, they're looking for numbers, so the larger the number the better. They're starting to recruit… it was supposed to be a Hispanic gang. Now they got white, black. Just to multiply the number. Anybody."

Jails/Prison. There was strong consensus that gang recruitment occurs in jails and prisons. One individual reported that recruitment in jail is like a draft pick: gang leaders assess the new inmates and determine who they wanted on their "team." A white supremacist said the Aryan Brotherhood only recruits inside the prisons. Interviewees described the pull to join gangs in jail or prison as follows:

"In jail, gangs are in your face; on the street, you can get up and leave, but in prison it draws you in, you get used to it, and then you're a full-fledged member."

"Inside is what benefitted you from being in it—in the gang itself. It's prestige, all the extras—the money, the control you had over your environment, and the respect that you had from everybody in there."

"I was wild. They thought I was a Blood since I was young. I wasn't really a blood then—I wasn't nothing then. I was just me. I was wild, though. I did what I wanted to do, you know what I'm saying? I punched whoever I wanted in they face. … I was the one that wilded, but I wasn't Blood till I got out here—till I got locked up. I got locked up. Went down the road. I got with some New York n***. I got with some people that was official. That was getting money, you know what I'm saying? I was feeling it."

All but two of the gang-member interviewees had left the gang or were inactive, showing that many people who join gangs in prison do not continue being active once they get out. However, one interviewee spoke of some people coming out of prison and acting like they have rank and power when they do not. (Note that law enforcement confirms that most people exiting prison have not joined a gang.)

"The recruitment [in the neighborhoods] happens more when someone in a neighborhood knows someone who comes home from prison. Because for some reason, everybody here who comes home from prison is either a Blood, Crip, or [Gangster Disciple]. And they come home, get with their friends. This person might not even have rank in prison… but …they go to prison, and then they get under someone, and they go recruit, and they don't even have the leeway to even be recruiting. So that leads a bunch of people [in the neighborhood] who follow someone who they shouldn't even be following. Because they feel this person went to prison….so they think if he survived in prison, they think great, it's all right. Because gangs come from where? Prison."

Families and neighborhoods. Interviewees who were recruited into national gangs somewhere other than jails frequently joined through family, friends or neighborhood relationships. Individuals connect to gangs via word of mouth or social relationships. Some interviewees did not consider recruitment of neighborhood youth to be formal recruitment, but simply part of life. Children and youth in members' families and neighborhoods are recruited because police do not expect them to carry weapons or drugs. In the case of the Latin Kings, there is

"See I can say these little kids out here be 'repping the Projects, the West Havens. They might be 'reppin Garrett Square, Sixth Street, First Street."

even a name for youth members of the gang—the Pee Wee Kings. In talking about neighborhood sets, one interviewee said that as a kid, you either "live the neighborhood set" or not, so there is no recruitment *per se*.

Schools. Although no interviewees indicated they themselves had been recruited to gangs at school, recruitment in schools was reported as often as recruitment in jails/prison. One interviewee reported that he hung out with gang members during and after school. One interview said that recruitment would occur, for example, in a school bathroom stall, and another mentioned that school activity was limited to getting jumped and getting in fights. One gang member stated that a general gang recruitment strategy was to "hang out at schools, talking to kids." Another gang member reported that all the gangs are involved in recruiting out of schools, that the gangs want recruits to finish high school—not drop out for the gang—because members can do more and bring in more money if they finish school.

> "It came about either to me it's either you gonna be the weak person or you gonna be the strong person. Either you gonna be the bully or you gonna be the victim and I'm not gonna be the victim."
>
> "That's when I was young. I was doing sports, baseball, basketball, city leagues type thing. I was doing that...Yeah there was a couple teachers, you know I'm saying, that looked out was trying that helped me better my life. But I liked to get high, I liked to drink, I liked to do me so that's what I was. It didn't matter I guess. "

Reasons to join gangs: Reasons for joining gangs vary and include desiring a "family;" wanting to belong to something; personal or neighborhood protection; desiring to have leadership, money, power, or respect; desiring to look "hard;" joining because the next person is doing it; ignorance of actual gang life and consequences; desiring to party or be locally famous; out-of-state gang members bringing money and gang structure to the area; boredom; lax patrolling and punishment by law enforcement; and recruitment in prisons.

By far, the most common reasons stated for joining and growth in gangs was the desire for a sense of purpose and belonging as illustrated by the quotes to the right.

Benefits of gang membership: The most commonly described benefits were having power and respect, being feared by peers and others in the community, and getting

> "Little boys that wanted to be a part of something, they wasn't a part of nothing [before the gang]."
>
> "It was like a family. Like family you've never had."
>
> "I was getting love [from the gang]. It felt like family for real....It felt like family because when I was younger, me and my poppa used to argue all the time. And we argued, and I'd just go hang with them on the strip bar thing."
>
> "'Cause when I was growing up, for real, I ain't had nothing til I met the [gang]."
>
> "Either you're in a gang or you're a family member."
>
> "I [had a lot of anger toward] I guess my family, because I didn't have one."

money. A couple of interviewees talked about the benefits of gang memberships, such as being an organization to improve the community for everyone, or building an organization on loyalty, respect, and knowledge, as well as being anti-bullying. One interviewee said that he appreciated "the love we have for one another," and said his gang is "supposed to be for our community… [providing] fundraisers or community cookouts or just anything. Anything that could raise money…for the community. That's what we're supposed to be doing." Another interviewee described his gang as "just people…it ain't like they out there hurting anybody…we got morals….[gang] are really misunderstood…They just a group of people who, you know, they do anything—they help you, but don't cross them." This interviewee emphasized unity, learning knowledge, territorial neighborhood protection, and a strong anti-bullying stance. Some gang members saw membership as an opportunity for personal gain and advancement. One interviewee described it as follows:

> "At first, I fell back first [and hesitated joining the gang]. I was like 'that ain't me; nobody going to tell me what to do. I don't take orders from anyone. I don't like people telling me what to do.' So I viewed it like if I get down he going tell me what to do I ain't going for it. But then I saw them getting money. They ran stuff….See what I got some older n***, some New York n***, it's about us black people getting together, getting this money. You know what I'm saying? …. It was mostly about running things for me. I liked the power."

Leaving a gang: The gang members interviewed provided a complex picture of leaving their gangs. They unanimously agreed that technically, the only way to leave a gang is death, though a couple indicated that some might just get a serious beating. For example, the New York Bloods might require death, but local gangs would not go so far. Two gang members formally left their gangs with no repercussions. One wanted to leave for his kids, explaining to his gang leader that he wanted to focus on being a husband and father; it took the agreement of his leader and fellow gang members to permit his leaving. The other decided to change his life around while in prison and return to his family's religious roots. He found a mentor to help him broach the subject with his gang. In both cases, the gang member had built up rank and respect prior to leaving the gang. In both cases, the gang member indicated that he could never go back.

> "They was like man, go all the way. Don't come back. If you're gonna leave, and you're gonna go with God, go all the way with God. But if you decide that you want to come back, we're going to feel like you disrespected us."

Of the 14 gang-member interviewees that are still technically members of their gang, six consider themselves inactive, five say they would never leave the gang, and three would leave if their kids wanted to get into the gang lifestyle. Interestingly, many of the gang members who consider themselves inactive also indicated that they would never truly leave their gang. They talked about how gang affiliation is part of an individual's identity and sense of self. Some individuals who said they would never leave indicated that "there's only one way out" and they did not plan to take it, but others stated that "it's who I am" and "I'm always gonna be Crip," even when they choose not to affiliate and follow the lifestyle.

> "I'm not really out. I just like, took myself out. So if one of my [gang leader] was to ever show up, I'd have to do what they say 'cause I'm not really, I'm not out. I just self-proclaimed myself out, but I'm not really out."
>
> "[If I said I was out], for the official people I would be in big trouble. The people down here they probably wouldn't even care….[The official people will] probably wanna get at me. But the people down here, they ain't like that."
>
> "There's no way [leaving the gang is] possible. By living in [other state], by taking my children so we can start over with my fiancée, this is the best way of starting over. There's no way I can go back to [big city]."

Several gang members who considered themselves no longer members of their gang felt that in order to stay out of the gang lifestyle, they needed to lie low. If a higher ranking member asked them to do something, they would comply. One individual joined the Bloods in a bigger city. He took himself out of the situation by moving to Charlottesville, where he knows no other Bloods from that city. He joined a neighborhood set through a friend, and has tried to keep his Blood membership quiet, lying low and covering up his tattoos.

> "There ain't no way out. If you get in, you're always gonna be in it forever. But like, see me. I'm in it forever, but I'm not, um, affiliated….[y]ou fold your flag, basically. And that's what I did—like they don't come to me for nothin', like, 'oh yeah I need you to do this and that.' They don't do that no more, because I'm not with it. I'm with it, but I'm not with it."

Many interviewees expressed regret about their gang involvement. Gang members entering their late 20's wanted to settle down, or those who had kids who were old enough to start flashing gang signs specifically wanted to leave their gang. However, wanting to leave the gang did not always mean wanting to give up everything else resulting from membership in a gang. Some members who unofficially left their gangs missed the affiliation, they expressed loneliness and felt they lacked a place to belong. Even gang members who left or wanted to leave valued their membership in the sense

that they had a place and a purpose and a people who had their back. The desire to leave the gang and difficulty of integrating into regular society meant these individuals were not accepted in either world.

"I liked school. It was fun, you know what I'm saying? I should've took it for what it was worth. You know what I'm saying because at the end of the day when I couldn't go back to real school I regretted it. I regretted what I did how I was acting. Cus [the school I ended up going to was] just not like real school…. I regretted it. I regretted a lot of things I did, you know what I'm saying? But I guess you learn. Guess it was a lesson learned."

"I couldn't do all that s**t no more. I'm done with it. I'm almost 30. I have no pension, no IRA, no dental plan, no one writes me. If my mail gets screened, there's not one [gang member] that writes me. The only one that writes me is my girl and she says, 'Stay away from the [other gang], they're going to get you in trouble, blah blah blah. Stay away from this person, they're going to get you in trouble. Just work out.' But this is the most inactive I could ever be."

"Street life ain't what it's cracked up to be. Because it only lasts for so long."

Looking to the future: Every person interviewed had a realistic vision for future of his or her life without gangs in it. Goals generally focused on making a comfortable living for their families and often included owning their own business, generally in the occupations in which they were already employed. Making money was still a top priority for many. Some interviewees expressed frustrated with the barriers they faced in reaching their goals.

Some interviewees had altruistic ideals, saying, "As much as I've taken away, I'd like to try to give back," and one wanted to be rich so he could take care of the people he cared about before he joined the gang and had money. One interviewee wanted to be a counselor working to keep youth away from gangs. One gang member in particular had three specific goals in mind:

> First, to open a gourmet food truck with double chocolate almond coffee and rosemary mozzarella bread. He wished to incorporate local ingredients and hire people who are homeless and/or gang-involved.
> Second, to create "a program that has gang members that want to be out, or say they out and try to live a better life and … get they gang tattoos removed from they face, because I tried to get mine removed from my face, not because I was scared or because I'm done, but because in society, regardless of how much you change or how much you try to change, you're always going to be ink."
> Third, to begin a program to reduce violence, stand up against abuse of women in any form and provide shelter to women in need. His interest in this program stems from watching his mother experience domestic violence.

<u>Preventing youth gang involvement</u>: Over and over again, the interviewees stated that they got involved with gangs to have a sense of family and belonging that they otherwise lacked. One gang member indicated that the best way to fight gang growth from the inside is to start at home with families. Family support was recognized as an important preventive factor, with interviewees stating that families were responsible for being positive, present examples in children's lives and showing children that their dreams might be compatible with reality. Two interviewees suggested making family counseling available to kids and parents who are not getting along, school counseling available to kids experiencing problems at home, and giving kids mentors.

> "[Focus] on the families. That's really [where] a lot of the gang problems start, 'cause you got a family problem going on at home and you looking for love....if the moms and dads really looked at they kids before they looked at theyself...if [the kids] ain't getting love there, they're gonna find another family to get love."

Interviewees also strongly and consistently supported the idea of former members coming to educate children in elementary schools, middle schools, and neighborhoods where youth are especially likely to have gang involvement. One member took a less optimistic view, stating that, "nobody can stop [gangs]…no matter how hard you try. The U.S. can't stop drugs from getting from Mexico to the U.S….You can't stop it. You can try to prevent it, but it's always going to be there. It's basically, for kids, you can talk to them, try to show them the right way. Give them some real people, with real life experience to talk to them." Outreach ideas included the following:

> The community needs "somebody like me tell these little n*** out here like sit you ass down and do right and don't go to prison like me."

> "If you could find a way to come up with a community outreach program that kids can be a part of—like teenage kids, 9th graders, that they can be part of that don't involve the police or them being affiliated with the police—then I'm sure you could cut out a whole bunch of children being recruited. Because everybody's afraid of being called a snitch."

> "I don't think kids just get into it. I think to prevent that, there could be like gang prevention classes or something like that. Teach kids how to identify it... it's no secret. I want to prevent kids from going through what I went through….Tell them it might look fine in the beginning, but it brings a lot of negativity and you have to do things that you don't want to do."

Interviewees additionally said that education alone would not suffice as a deterrent, and they advocated for more places for youth to go and activities for them to participate in, as well as opportunities to earn money for themselves.

"Help people out to where they have a better form in life and you're not just like check, and [pee] in this cup, pay for this f***ing class and pay your court fines or you go to jail. What is that? It's frustration. We're already aggravated. We went to f***ing prison— nobody wants to give us a f***ing chance. So what do we do? We gang bang and we sell drugs."

Summary –Community Perceptions

One-hundred-and-forty-one (141) diverse service providers, law enforcement, youth, adults, and probationers contributed their experiences and perspectives to this assessment with the assurance of confidentiality. Their stories are diverse and add depth and richness to the other data presented in this report. There is no way to summarize all the uniquenesses between interviewees, so only the most common experiences and perspectives are summarized here.

(1) There was consistent consensus that the gang problem in Albemarle-Charlottesville pales in comparison to those of larger cities, with the many residents unaware that there are even gangs in the area.
(2) There are many national gangs, one local gang, and many neighborhood sets in the area.
(3) The police and Hispanic interviewees generally perceive the gang problem as being more severe than others, including assault, intimidation, drugs, and human trafficking/prostitution.
(4) The police express a significant need for increased, dedicated resources to keep gang activity at bay, and concern that without additional resources gang activity will rise and become even more dangerous.
(5) Many people see neighborhood sets and gangs different in important ways. Neighborhood sets are based on where and individual lives and do not always require individuals to formally join, do not always have the same structural hierarchy as national gangs, and may include as many as 50% of the youth in a neighborhood. Sets' primarily function is to defend the neighborhood reputations and the reputations of the youth living in the neighborhood. Nonetheless, neighborhood sets are considered recruiting grounds for national gangs, and can be involved in gang-type activities.

Community Resources

The community resources listed below are not exhaustive, but reflect all the resources known to the GRACE Assessment Work Group. All resources with websites are hyperlinked.

Planning and Policy Bodies

Albemarle Board of Supervisors
Albemarle County School Board
Charlottesville City Council
Charlottesville Public School Board
Charlottesville/Albemarle Coalition for Healthy Youth (CACHY), contact Lori Wood, Prevention Director, Region Ten Community Services Board
City of Charlottesville Youth Council
City of Promise
Community Policy and Management Team (CPMT) for Charlottesville and Albemarle
Friendship Court Steering Committee, organized through the Piedmont Housing Alliance
GRACE Task Force
KidsWatch (focused on children exposed to domestic violence), organized through the Shelter for Help in Emergency
Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (mostly focused on adults), the coordinator is employed by the AIDS Services Group (ASG)
Pinwheel Coalition (focused on child abuse prevention)
Public Housing Association of Residents (PHAR)
Safe Schools/Health Students Albemarle/Charlottesville Program (this is a Federal project funded July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2014)
The Haven/Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless

School-related Resources

Albemarle County Public Schools, including specialized educational and graduation opportunities, clubs and sports, career counseling, guidance, student assistance, truancy reduction, bullying prevention, threat assessment and discipline practices (a sample of evidence-based programs listed below)

Charlottesville City Public Schools, including specialized educational and graduation opportunities, clubs and sports, career counseling, guidance, student assistance, truancy reduction, bullying prevention, threat assessment and discipline practices (a sample of evidence-based programs listed below); see also Safe and Drug Free Communities Program website

Charlottesville Albemarle Technical Education Center (CATEC)

Charlottesville Check and Connect

Family Support Workers (Charlottesville and Albemarle)

Responsive Classrooms (all CCS and APS elementary schools trained)

Restorative Practices (CCS and APS High Schools)

Threat Assessment

Virginia Rules

Youth Programming

100 Black Men of Central Virginia

Albemarle Parks and Recreation

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Central Blue Ridge

Boy Scouts of America, Stonewall Jackson Area Council

Boys and Girls Club of Central Virginia

Charlottesville Abundant Life Ministries

City of Charlottesville Parks and Recreation

City of Promise

Community Attention Youth Internship Program (CAYIP; primarily serving City youth)

Computers4Kids

Faith-based Programs and Services

Free and Low Cost Guide to Afterschool Activities in the City (available through City of Charlottesville, Department of Human Services)

Girls Scouts of Virginia Skyline

Helping Young People Evolve (HYPE)

Lighthouse Studios

Madison House

Music Resource Center

Region Ten Community Services Board, Strengthening Families

Piedmont Family YMCA

Young Women Leaders' Program

Other Resources

16th Court Services Unit

16th District Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court

Albemarle County Police Department

    Apartment Coalition

    Gang Task Forces

    Gang Validation Committee

    School Resource Officers

Area Children and Youth

Area Parents and Community Leaders

Central Virginia Restorative Justice

Charlottesville Police Department

Community Attention Teens' Give

Department of Social Services Family-Group Conferencing

Ex-offenders and gang members

Family Assessment and Planning Team (Albemarle and Charlottesville)

Probation and Parole District #9

Region Ten Community Services Board Access and Adult Clinical Services

Region Ten Community Services Board Child and Family Center

Conclusions

Overall Data Summary

Overall, there was great consistency across the nine data sources and 141 interviewees included in this report. Albemarle and Charlottesville are relatively young, primarily white, relatively educated communities. Nonetheless, across the area, about one in five families are single-mother households which have experienced poverty "in the last 12 months." Unemployment hovers around the state average of 5.9%. There are roughly 17,000 students across both the Albemarle (APS) and Charlottesville (CCS) Public Schools, with CCS having about one-third the population of APS, twice the proportion of racial/ethnic diversity and nearly twice the proportion of economically disadvantaged students.

When looking specifically at youth behavior in general, behavioral offenses in public schools have generally gone down over the last three years, with disruption, defiance, obscene language, and altercations being the most frequent offenses receiving discipline. CCS has a higher proportion of discipline incidents than APS; however, APS experienced twice the raw number of fights and more drug offenses than CCS in the last school year. The case records of 131 youth placed on probation in 2010 and 2011 were reviewed (including 98 County and 25 City youth). Probationers' average age was 15, and they most often had zero to two felony petitions and/or one to three criminal petitions.

There was consistent consensus that the gang problem in Albemarle-Charlottesville pales in comparison to those of larger cities, with many residents unaware that there are even gangs in the area. Nonetheless, when surveyed within the last 18 months, between 40% and 50% of residents in largely lower-income neighborhoods near downtown Charlottesville rated gangs as a problem. Law enforcement and other members of the criminal justice system expressed concern that the general lack of knowledge about gangs—coupled with gang members moving in from other localities and gangs becoming increasingly quiet and less likely to outwardly demonstrate gang affiliation—puts the community at increased risk for gangs to grow larger and stronger without anyone's knowledge. Both police departments express an urgent need for increased, dedicated resources to keep gang activity at bay, and concern that without additional resources gang activity will rise and become even more dangerous.

> "You would think, in a community as small as Charlottesville—we're not a big community—that if you took 36 pretty hardcore gang members out of one of the gangs in Charlottesville, that it would make a huge impact, and it didn't. It took less than a month, and four other people moved in."
>
> "We are often compared to the valley and our numbers are not as high as their numbers in regards to validated gang members. Our gangs are older, historically more violent, and I believe larger in numbers."

The GRACE Task Force was brought together by the Albemarle Police Chief Colonel Steve Sellers, along with his counterpart in the City of Charlottesville, Chief Tim Longo, to address the growing evidence of, and concerns about, gangs in the area. GRACE is using the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model, which is a flexible framework for developing and organizing a continuum of prevention, intervention and suppression programs and strategies. The first step in this model is to conduct a comprehensive assessment that fully describes local gang activity.

The Extent of Gang Activity in Albemarle-Charlottesville

> Between 2006 and 2013, 183 residents of Albemarle-Charlottesville have been validated as being in a gang; an average of 29 people have been validated per year.

> Gang validations peaked in 2007 as the initial backlog of potential gang members was validated. The precipitous drop in validations in 2013 is due to moving key detectives off gang-related activates due to staffing vacancies; nonetheless, the jail had submitted nearly 30 individuals for review for validation.

> There are 16 gangs in Albemarle-Charlottesville with verified members. As is consistent with state data, Bloods are the most populous gang, followed by the Crips. Other nationally identified gangs with a local presence are 5%ers, the Aryan Brotherhood, Gangster Disciples, ICP (or Insane Clown Posse), Latin Kings, MS-13, Sureños, Vice Lords, and White Power. Gangs local to Albemarle-Charlottesville (called "neighborhood sets" which may have members who also affiliate with one of the national gangs) are Westside/PJC or Project Crud, Southside, 13th St (Eastside Locos), Eastside, G-Square, and 6N0. Zoo of Goons (ZOG) is a local-gang not associated with a specific neighborhood; ZOG emerged from a middle school.

> Between January 1, 2010, and September 1, 2013, there were 14,959 offenses in Charlottesville and Albemarle, and 480 of these involved validated gang members including 193 victims and 83 arrestees. The Bloods, Crips, and MS-13 are responsible for the largest share of gang-activity in Albemarle, while Charlottesville has substantial activity by both national gangs and neighborhood sets including Bloods, Westside/PCJ, Crips/Folk, and ICP.

> Assault, larceny, burglary and forgery are the most common arrests across both localities, followed by weapons offenses and vandalism. Youth gang members accounted for 4.8% (or 23) of the total gang-related offenses. The most common offenses for gang involved youth included aggravated and other assault and weapons offenses; the most common offenses for all other youth included larceny and non-aggravated assault.

> While overall, offenses occur most often on Friday and Saturday and equally across the day and seasons, gang-related offenses are happening between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m., and occurred most often on Thursdays and Sundays, and in the summer and spring.

> Overall, streets in downtown Charlottesville, as well as around Prospect and South 1st Street, have the most gang-related incidents and offenses. In Albemarle arrests are clustered in the urban ring (primarily on the north side) and extend up Rt. 29 North.

> Some interviewees reported that the number of gang members is growing and that new gang members may be coming from other localities and states. Jails are also primary recruiting grounds. Below is a perception from an adult probationer; note that law enforcement confirms that most people exiting prison have not joined a gang.

"The recruitment [in the neighborhoods] happens more when someone in a neighborhood knows someone who comes home from prison. Because for some reason, everybody here who comes home from prison is either a Blood, Crip, or [Gangster Disciple]. And they come home, get with their friends. This person might not even have rank in prison... but ...they go to prison, and then they get under someone, and they go recruit, and they don't even have the leeway to even be recruiting. So that leads a bunch of people [in the neighborhood] who follow someone who they shouldn't even be following. Because they feel this person went to prison....so they think if he survived in prison, they think great, it's all right. Because gangs come from where? Prison."

> There is some evidence that gang members in Albemarle-Charlottesville have less centralized leadership, and that some gang members function independently.

> People join gangs to fill voids in their lives. Most interviewees spoke primarily of a desire for sense of family and belonging, and also for income, opportunity, leadership, and even a sense of the greater good that some feel gangs provide (e.g., community building, anti-bullying, etc.).

"Little boys that wanted to be a part of something, they wasn't a part of nothing [before the gang]."

"...they find out what you're missing and that's what they provide."

> The full extent of gang activity within the Hispanic community and primarily Hispanic neighborhoods is still unclear. Due to the close-knit Hispanic community, as well as concern about personal safety, it was difficult to identify

people willing to talk about gangs. What was reported was fear and intimidation by gangs in the Hispanic community, as well as assaults, intimidation, drugs and human trafficking/prostitution. Hispanic residents are also afraid to go to the police to report gang activity, in part due to discrimination, and in part due to fears of being deported. These challenges further isolate a community already isolated culturally and linguistically.

Gangs and Youth

> Gangs recruit young children and youth; it is unclear how much recruitment occurs on or near school grounds and how much occurs in neighborhoods. Gangs recruit youth who are disconnected, youth who are looking for a sense of belonging, youth lacking supervision and/or youth who are rebellious.

> Last school year, about 1,100 6th to 12th graders reported that there were gangs in their school (a higher percentage of middle school than high school students reported gangs). The gang problem in school was rated as moderate or big by 341 students; 6th, 7th, 9th, and 10th grade students reported more of a gang presence and/or more problems associated with gangs at school.

> Between 2009 and 2013, 13 Albemarle-Charlottesville youth were verified as gang members in Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention Center. There also were three Albemarle-Charlottesville youth in Juvenile Correctional Centers in October 2013 verified as gang members and two additional youth suspected of gang membership. The validation process for youth is much stricter than for adults, resulting in many fewer youth being validated than may claim gang membership or engage in gang-related activities.

Additional Community Comments on Gangs and Needed Interventions

> Many people see neighborhood sets and gangs as different in important ways. Neighborhood sets are based on where and individual lives and do not specifically always require individuals to formally join, do not always have the same structural hierarchy as national gangs, and may include as many as 50% of the youth in a neighborhood. Interviewees report that the primary function of the sets are "brotherhoods" to defend neighborhood reputations, and that as many as 50% of the youth in a neighborhood may be associated with sets. Nonetheless, neighborhood sets are considered recruiting grounds for national gangs, and can be involved in gang-type activities.

> "[all the neighborhood] people that you grow up with... you hang with them, [and] if anything happens they're not going to let you see you hurt yourself, but society considers that gangs. I consider it you helping a friend out, but they consider it a gang."

> Interviewees expressed substantial concerns about discrimination and stereotyping in general and by police, the fact that youth cannot gather together without being called a gang (especially non-Caucasian youth).

"Charlottesville is a very progressive town, but it's also a town that keeps its social underclass at an arm's length. African Americans in this town have no cultural equity whatsoever....You know, name a place where, you know you are 28 years-old and you are African American and you want to take your girlfriend out on a date—where can you go where like-minded and like-looking people will be gathered in a safe environment?"

"[Gangs] affect me because it stereotypes me because I'm young, African American and live in a rough neighborhood."

> Most gang-involved interviewees were not actively involved in their gangs and wanted productive lives outside of their gang. They spoke of significant barriers to successful re-entry and job attainment when leaving jail and prison. Most gang-members interviewed regretted earlier life decisions including getting involved in gangs, and several spoke of wanting to help youth not get involved in gangs.

"[Ex-offenders are] oftentimes stereotyped and even when they do try and turn their lives around, things are very... very hard for them here. Charlottesville is a town in which there's very few jobs for individuals who ... don't have a certain amount of education…. And for those individuals, they kind of feel defeated. I mean, when you're trying to do the right thing, when you come and try to do the right thing, and that still doesn't work, and you try again, it doesn't work. And you try again, and it doesn't work. Or someone won't give you a chance. And there's very few places to go to in which who will [emphasis] help you. Then you know, you just kinda revert to the things and what you've done but, and what you did, rather, to get you in the very situation that got you where you are in the first place."

"Help people out to where they have a better form in life and you're not just like check, and [pee] in this cup, pay for this f***ing class and pay your court fines or you go to jail. What is that? It's frustration. We're already aggravated. We went to f***ing prison—nobody wants to give us a f***ing chance. So what do we do? We gang bang and we sell drugs."

> Some neighborhood communities have banded together and explicitly do not tolerate gang activity. Residents and ex-offenders have asked to be meaningful included in the process of addressing youth development and for the policy makers to direct funding and resources to the residents, who best know their children and what they need to thrive.

> Interviewees generally called for more resources to strengthen families, more activities and opportunities for youth including leadership opportunities, more non-traditional policing, involve or give leadership to residents and reformed

offenders in helping to engage youth and reduce the gang presence.

> "[Focus] on the families. That's really [where] a lot of the gang problems start, 'cause you got a family problem going on at home and you looking for love….if the moms and dads really looked at they kids before they looked at theyself…if [the kids] ain't getting love there, they're gonna find another family to get love to."

Ways Forward

Overall, there was a strong call to action from those interviewed, as well as the need for long-term solutions. It is clear that there is no single program than can address the gang problem locally, but rather a coordinated, multifaceted approach is needed.

Based on interviewees' input, long-term solutions must:

> be lasting—resources must be committed long-term,
> examine and address underlying issues child and family,
> focus on addressing the specific community issues that enable gang recruitment and activity, and
> address the economic and social barriers gang members face when trying to leave the gang.

> "We're not doing squat compared to what we [could] be doing. It's suppression, prevention, and intervention. And all we're doing is we're just continuously doing the same thing. We're not stepping outside the bubble, you know? [Gangs are] the ugly thing that nobody wants to deal with… Nobody wants to deal with it. They acknowledge it—they see it's there, but nobody wants to deal with it."

OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model Questions

OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model suggests that the comprehensive assessment answer the following questions as a base on which a flexible framework for developing and organizing a continuum of prevention, intervention, and suppression programs and strategies. This report represents the **first step** in strategic planning to reduce gang activity and support positive youth development. As such, the comprehensive assessment aimed to answer the following questions.

1. **What are the most serious and prevalent local gang-related problems?**

Both arrest records and interviewees reported the following are the most prevalent gang-related problems:

- > Assaults
- > Fighting
- > Stealing
- > Intimidation

Drugs were consistently reported as the central gang-related activity in the area; however, there are no gang-related arrests for drugs during the time period studied.

Additionally, it is still unclear the extent to which prostitution and guns are primary gang activities. Interviewees reported that guns were very easy to obtain, but that it was not a central money-making venture. Most people denied prostitution as being gang related; but law enforcement reported that human-trafficking was "epidemic" in the Hispanic community.

2. **In which communities and neighborhoods does gang crime most often occur?**

Lower-income City neighborhoods have neighborhood sets. Set involvement ranges from hanging out with neighborhood friends to activities that attract the attention of national gangs. When surveyed in the last 18 months, 40-50% of residents in two lower-income City neighborhoods reported that gangs were a problem.

Overall, streets in downtown Charlottesville, as well as around Prospect Avenue and South 1st Street, have the most incidents and offenses involving gang members. In Albemarle arrests are clustered in the urban ring (primarily on the north side) and extend up Rt. 29 North. This report did not explore who was buying drugs from sets or gangs.

3. **What are the potential factors contributing to the local gang problems?**

As described above, the factors contributing to the local gang problem are multifaceted. The community conditions that likely promote growth in gang activities include (in no particular order):

> Lack of visibility and knowledge of gang activities, as well as lack of knowledge about sets
> Lack of understanding of the dangerousness of gangs and what is needed to suppress gang growth
> Gang members moving to Albemarle-Charlottesville from other localities or visiting from other states
> Discrimination
> Lack of positive connections/relationships between lower-income neighborhoods
> Lack of dedicated gang-related police resources
> Lack of educational and work opportunities for youth and adults (including people leaving detention jail and prison)
> Lack of fun, supervised places for youth to hang out
> Truancy and graduation rates
> Families where parents cannot get adequate employment, as well as those unable to provide adequate structure and supervision for youth for any reason

Youth may be vulnerable to gang-involvement for different combinations of reasons including the following (in no particular order):

> Youth who need, or want, to make money to help their family
> Youth who do not feel like they have a family
> Youth who are isolated and/or bullied
> Youth who are bored
> Youth looking for leadership and respect
> Youth involved in neighborhood rivalries
> Youth who are truant and/or at risk for not graduating

4. **What are the organizational or systemic issues that should be addressed toward long-term effects on the gang related problems?**

In order to effectively deal with gangs and keep gangs from growing in number and influence, individual programs are not enough. There are systemic or community-wide issues that need to be addressed in order to reduce gang activity and gang growth in the long term. The following list comes from the data collected in this report.

> Lack of visibility and knowledge of gang activities, as well as lack of knowledge about sets

> Lack of understanding of the dangerousness of gangs and what is needed to suppress gang growth
> Gang members moving to Albemarle-Charlottesville from other localities or visiting from other states
> Discrimination
> Lack of positive connections/relationships between lower-income neighborhoods
> Lack of dedicated gang-related police resources
> Lack of educational and work opportunities for youth and adults (including people leaving detention jail and prison)
> Lack of fun, supervised places for youth to hang out
> Truancy and graduation rates
> Families where parents cannot get adequate employment, as well as those unable to provide adequate structure and supervision for youth for any reason

****

Starting in March/April, GRACE will begin the strategic planning and action planning processes outlined in the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model. The **next step** of this process is to develop recommendations based on the data and conclusions in this report. To this end, GRACE may seek to answer the following questions.

1. **What are the current and needed efforts needed within Albemarle County and Charlottesville City to reduce gang activity and youth violence?**

2. **To whom should prevention, intervention, and suppression activities be targeted?**

Appendix A

Service Provider and Criminal Justice System Interviewees

Rush Bailey	Joy Johnson
Wes Bellamy	Paul Jones
Phil Brown	Latino Resident (Anonymous)
Joe Brown	Jeff Lenert
Linwood Bundy	Todd Lucas
Elaine Ceclski-Ayala	Gary McCool
Tammy Chiclet	Nicole Ochiltree
Gary Clore	John Page
Cory Culbreth	Rhonda Pedigo
Art Daniels	Earl Pendleton
Mary Donald	Laura Proffit
Alvin Edwards	Kim Rambow
Staci England	Ingrid Ramos
Javier Figueroa-Ray	Chris Root
Josh Foskett	Dylan Rosenthal
Wendy Goodman	Anne Ternes
Claudette Green	Phil Stinnie
Hamlett Hood	Michael Waller
Jim Hope	Allen Watson
Ryan Jacoby	DE William
Angela Jamerson	
Cindy Joe	

Appendix B

Service Provider and Criminal Justice System Interview Script

1. What is your name?

2. We are interviewing you today in your capacity as _____.
   a. *[If needed]* Can you please state your title?

3. Do you live in Charlottesville or Albemarle?
   a. What community(ies), town or neighborhood do you/did you live and work in?

4. How do you describe your race or ethnicity?

5. Are you raising - or have you raised - any children in Charlottesville/Albemarle?

6. Tell me about any experiences in your community(ies) with gangs you have had – either personally or professionally.

7. To the best of your knowledge, how wide spread are gangs in Charlottesville/Albemarle?
   a. Where is it concentrated?
   b. Which gangs are the biggest or most active?
   c. Which have the most youth under 18 in them?
      i. How big of a percentage of all members are under the age of 18?
   d. How do they recruit?
      i. What type of people (age, gender, school-related characteristics, relationship to current members) do they target?
      ii. What recruitment methods (incentives, etc.) do they use?
      iii. Where does recruitment occur (schools, businesses, homes)?
   e. What businesses are they in?

8. What do you think are the three biggest reasons for any gang problem that there is?
   You do not need to ask about each of these, but these are the kinds of answers we are looking for.
   a. Poverty , no jobs, need money, easy money
   b. School problems
   c. Police labeling
   d. Gang members move to community from other places
   e. Boredom
   f. Family problems
   g. Power
   h. Lack of better things to do
   i. Prejudice or discrimination
   j. Family/friends in gangs
   k. To feel loved/sense of belonging/to be in a family

l.   Other _____

9. How dangerous is your community or neighborhood/parts of Charlottesville/Albemarle?
   If you are interviewing a resident ask about "your community or neighborhood," if you are
   interviewing a service provider ask about "parts of Charlottesville/Albemarle."
   a. Would you walk alone?
       a. Tell me about that.
   b. How safe is it for children?

10. What are the biggest gang-related problems or crimes in your community or
    neighborhood/ parts of Charlottesville/Albemarle caused by gangs?
    If you are interviewing a resident ask about "your community or neighborhood," if you are
    interviewing a service provider ask about "parts of Charlottesville/Albemarle."

    You shouldn't go through each of these, but you do what to make sure that you understand what
    the 3 to 5 biggest problems/crimes are.
    a. Vandalism/graffiti
    b. Burglary
    c. Car theft
    d. Robbery
    e. Threats/intimidation
    f. Gang to gang confrontations
    g. Other street fighting
    h. Drug dealing
    i. Alcohol use
    j. Drive-by shooting
    k. Possession of knife
    l. Possession of gun
    m. Firearms use
    n. Firearms dealing
    o. Arson
    p. Assault/battery
    q. Homicide/murder
    r. School disruption
    s. Prostitution/selling sex
    t. Kidnapping/ransom
    u. Other _____

11. How have gangs around here changed in the last 5 years?

12. What, if anything, could be done to reduce the gang problem in the community?

13. What is the general community response to gangs by law enforcement, parents, educators, other community leaders, etc.?
    a. Are you satisfied with these responses to gangs?
    b. How can the community's response to gangs be improved?
        i. By Families
        ii. By Community/Neighborhoods
        iii. By Faith Community
        iv. By Schools
        v. By Service Providers
        vi. By Law Enforcement
        vii. By City/County Government
        viii. Other _____

14. What specific programs, resources or individual people are there to work with and help youth who are involved in gangs?

15. In your opinion, what makes the difference between a young person who joins a gang and a young person who does not?

16. We are just about done talking today. Is there anything that I didn't ask you about that you would like GRACE to know?

I really appreciate you taking the time to talk with me today. I know you're busy and I appreciate your time. Do you have any questions for me before we end?

Probationer/Parolee Interviewee Script

1. How old are you?

2. How do you describe your race or ethnicity?

3. Do you live in Charlottesville or Albemarle?
    a. What community, town or neighborhood do you/did you live in?

4. Do you have any children?
    a. I'd really like to hear about them.
       We are looking for ages and who they live with and something about how close the interviewee is to them (sees them often, live with them, never sees them).

5. How do you describe your marital or relationship status?

6. What's the highest grade you completed in school?
    a. [If applicable] Why did you leave school?

7. What school did you last go to?

8. How did you do in school?
    a. What were your grades like?
    b. What subjects and other school activities did you do well in?
    c. What did you like about school?
    d. Did you get in trouble at school? How so?
       We are looking for referrals, suspensions and expulsions and why.
    e. Were there any staff at school who you were particularly close to, or who you felt really understood you.
    f. What was school like for you in general?
       We are looking for how much they liked school, how connected to staff and peers they felt, whether or not they fit in, whether or not they felt safe/bullied/got into fights.

    What kinds of work or employment have you done that was not part of a gang?
    We are looking for where they are/were employed and what kind of work they did, and how they got involved in it.

    ### [PERSONAL GANG INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONS]

9. Are you in a gang or do you belong to a clique or a set or a neighborhood crew? *(If they were in a gang in the past, adjust the following questions appropriately)*
    a. [IF NECESSARY] Are you part of a group having to do with the neighborhood you grew up in, or the school you go or went to, or based on who you are friends with? Are there particular ways that you all identify yourselves?
    b. What is the name of the gang/clique/set/[other name]? *USE THIS NAME THROUGHOUT THE INTERVIEW*
    c. What's [name's] territory?

   d. How many members does [name] have?
     i. How many men? How many women? What ages?
   e. How do you all recruit?
   f. How does your [name] support itself?

10. How did you become a member [name]?
 We are looking for whether they moved here already in the gang, or joined it here; how old they were when they joined, whether it was something they choose to do or something they were forced to do (or felt they had no choice to do).

11. Why did you join or associate with [name]?
 You shouldn't to go through each of these, but you do what to make sure that you understand <u>all</u> the reasons they joined the gang. Before moving on to the next question, you should understand the most important reasons.
   a. For fun/something to do
   b. For protection
   c. A friend was in the gang
   d. A brother or sister was in the gang
   e. I was forced to join/had not choice
   f. To get respect
   g. For money (drugs, employment, pimping)
   h. To fit in/everyone was in a gang
   i. It's a family business (e.g., my parents were in a gang)
   j. Other _____

12. Have you been active in the last 6 months?

13. What's been your most recent rank in [name]?
   a. Leader
   b. Core member/influential (with gang all of the time)
   c. Regular member (involved most of the time)
   d. Peripheral member (minimally hangs out)
   e. Veteran/heavy/old gangster/senior gang member

14. What is the rank structure in [name]?

15. What do you get out of being in [name]? What makes you want to be part of it?
 You shouldn't go through each of these, but you do what to make sure that you understand what's important to them.
   a. Makes me feel important.
   b. Provides a good deal of support and loyalty for one another.
   c. Makes me feel respected.
   d. Makes me feel like I am a useful person to have around.
   e. Makes me feel like I really belong somewhere.
   f. I enjoy it.
   g. It's like a family to me.
   h. A good way to make money.
   i. I don't know what else I'd be doing.

  j. I'm good at it.

16. Would anything lead you to leave [name]?
  a. Tell me about that.
  You do not need to ask about each of these, but these are the kinds of answers we are looking for.
  b. Advice/pressure from a family member/relative
  c. Advice/pressure from someone else (specify who_____)
  d. Move out of neighborhood
  e. Because of a steady girlfriend/boyfriend/spouse
  f. Get married
  g. Become a parent
  h. Family responsibilities (specify what_____)
  i. Obtain a job
  j. Get into school/education program
  k. Recreation/sports program
  l. Go to jail/prison
  m. Other_____

17. What would happen if you wanted out?

18. If you could do anything with your life, what would that be?
  a. What would you be doing if you were not in [name]?
  b. What do you want to be doing in 10 years?
  c. Looking back, is there anything that you would change in how your life has gone?

Focus Group Script

1. Tell me how wide spread gangs are in Charlottesville/Albemarle.
   a. What gangs do you know of?
   b. Where is it concentrated?
   c. How do they recruit? What age/gender to do they particularly recruit?
   d. What are their main crimes?
   e. Who's most effected by gangs? What kinds of people do they target?
   f. How has gang activity changed over the last 5 years?

2. How do gangs affect your life or the life of people you know?

3. What programs, resources or individual people are there to work with and help youth who are involved in gangs?

4. What, if anything, could be done to reduce the gang problem in the community?
   You don't have to go through these one-by-one, but these are domains that we are interested in
   a. By Families
        a. By Parents, specifically
   b. By Community/Neighborhoods
   c. By Faith Community
   d. By Schools
   e. By Service Providers
   f. By Law Enforcement
   g. By City/County Government
   h. Other _____

Appendix C

Additional Demographic and Community Data

Gender and Age. The most recent Census data available shows that Albemarle and Charlottesville both have slightly more female than male residents. As seen in Table C1, about 15% and 12% of residents in Albemarle and Charlottesville, respectively, are between the ages of 10 and 19. Almost 20% and a little more than 40% of residents in Albemarle and Charlottesville, receptively, are between the ages of 20 and 34. Charlottesville has almost three times the percentage of young adults between 20 and 24 years of age; this is likely due to the University of Virginia. Both Albemarle and Charlottesville primarily identify as White (84.4% and 71.8%, respectively), and Charlottesville has a substantially higher population of residents identifying as Black than Albemarle.

Table C1. Population and Percent by Gender, Age, Race[37]

	Virginia	Albemarle		Charlottesville	
		Estimate	*Percent*	*Estimate*	*Percent*
Total Population	**7,926,192**	**97,978**		**42,758**	
Male	49.1%	47,061	48.0%	20,508	48.0%
Female	50.9%	50,917	52.0%	22,250	52.0%
Median Age	**37.3**	**37.9**		**27.6**	
Under 5 years	6.4%	5,565	5.7%	2,244	5.2%
5 to 9 years	6.4%	5,763	5.9%	1,521	3.6%
10 to 14 years	6.5%	6,268	6.4%	1,585	3.7%
15 to 24 years	14.1%	16,042	16.4%	13,426	31.4%
25 to 34 years	13.5%	12,023	12.3%	7,440	17.4%
35 to 44 years	14.2%	12,285	12.5%	4,375	10.2%
45 to 54 years	15.1%	14,371	14.7%	4,335	10.1%
55 to 64 years	11.7%	12,010	12.3%	3,765	8.8%
65 years and over	12.1%	13,651	13.9%	4,067	9.5%
White (alone or in combination)	71.8%	82,681	84.4%	30,681	71.8%
Black (alone or in combination)	20.7%	10,820	11.0%	9,115	21.3%
Hispanic or Hispanic (of any race)	7.6%	5,104	5.2%	2,104	4.9%

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[37] Data from the American Community Survey. Extracted from American FactFinder, http://www.factfinder2.census.gov

Educational Attainment. Residents in Albemarle and Charlottesville graduate from high school and college at rates at least equal to those seen on average across the State. About 90% and almost 86% of Albemarle and Charlottesville residents, respectively, have a high school degree or higher (compared to 86.6% across the State). Almost 52% and 48.5% of Albemarle and Charlottesville residents, respectively, have a bachelor's degree or higher (compared to about 34% across the State); the high proportion of advanced degrees is likely due to the presence of the University of Virginia. See Table C2.

Table C2. Number and Percent of Educational Attainment38

	Virginia	Albemarle		Charlottesville	
Level of Education	*Percent*	*Estimate*	*Percent*	*Estimate*	*Percent*
Population 25 years and over		64,340		23,982	
Less than 9th grade	5.4%	2,747	4.3%	1,461	6.1%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	8.0%	3,425	5.3%	1,932	8.1%
High school graduate or GED	25.6%	11,688	18.2%	4,658	19.4%
Some college, no degree	19.9%	9,774	15.2%	3,503	14.6%
Associate's degree	6.7%	3,392	5.3%	797	3.3%
Bachelor's degree	20.2%	16,995	26.4%	5,301	22.1%
Graduate or professional degree	14.2%	16,319	25.4%	6,330	26.4%
High school graduate or higher	86.6%		90.4%		85.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	34.4%		51.8%		48.5%

Income and Poverty. While the mean household income in Albemarle County ($65,934) is slightly higher than the State average ($63,302), the mean income in Charlottesville ($43,980) is much lower than the State average. The pattern is the same for mean family income. Similarly, compared to the State average (7.5%), fewer Albemarle families (5.1%) and more Charlottesville families (8.2%) experienced poverty "in the past 12 months." Both Albemarle (18.1%) and Charlottesville (22.9%) have single-mother households experiencing poverty "in the past 12 months" at a slightly lower rate than the State (23.9%); however, both locality's percentage is higher than the State average for single-mother households with children under the age of 5 (see Tables C3 and C4).

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38 Data from the American Community Survey. Extracted from American FactFinder, http://www.factfinder2.census.gov

Table C3. Income and Poverty Rate[39]

	Virginia	Albemarle	Charlottesville
Mean household income	$63,302	$65,934	$43,980
Median household income	$85,323	$94,672	$61,333
Mean family income	$75,962	$88,106	$64,167
Median family income	$98,742	$117,745	$86,157

Table C4. Poverty Rate in Past 12 Months[40]

	Virginia	Albemarle	Charlottesville
All people	10.7%	8.8%	26.4%
All families	7.5%	5.1%	8.2%
With related children under 18 years	11.7%	7.5%	12.8%
With related children under 5 years only	12.7%	12.2%	10.8%
Families with female householder, no husband present	23.9%	18.1%	22.9%
With related children under 18 years	31.6%	22.3%	31.9%
With related children under 5 years only	39.6%	41.0%	44.5%

[39] Data from U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5 year estimates (2007-2011), table DP03. Extracted from American FactFinder, at
http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.
[40] Ibid.

Employment. Unemployment in the area hit a low point in 2007 of between 2% and 3% and then climbed to a peak of between 5% and 7% in 2010. In the last three years, unemployment rates have begun to decrease again.[41] In 2012, the State unemployment rate was 5.9%, it was 4.8% in Albemarle, and 5.9% in Charlottesville. See Graph C1.
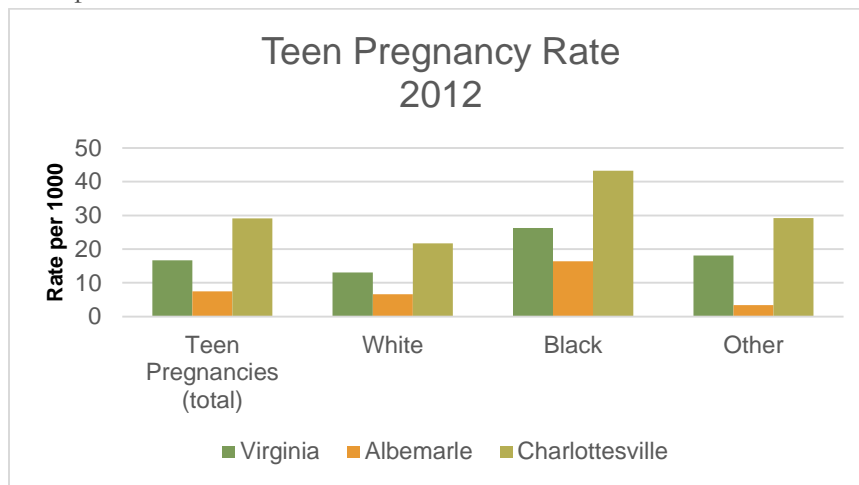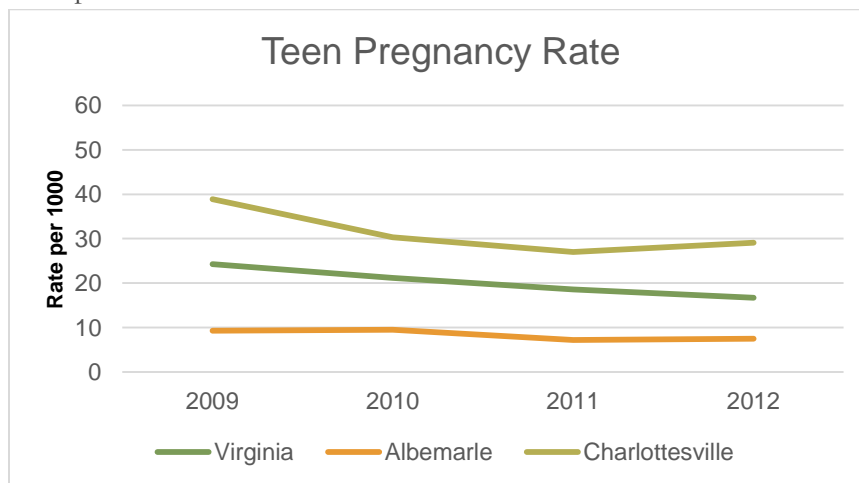
Graph C1.
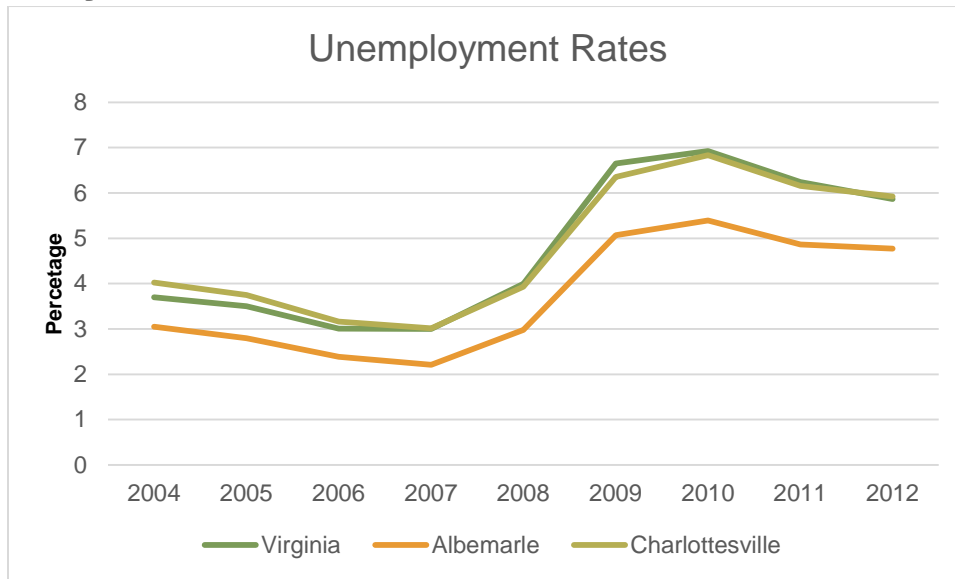
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[41] 2012 Average Annual Unemployment. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. At http://www.bls.gov/lau/laucnty12.txt Accessed January 4, 2014.

Teen Pregnancy Rate. As seen in Graph C2, the teen pregnancy rates in 2012 are highest for girls identifying as black in Albemarle, Charlottesville and Virginia; Charlottesville's total teen pregnancy rates, as well as the rates for white and black teens are higher than the average State rates, while those for Albemarle are below the average State rates. Overall, since 2009, teen pregnancy rates have decreased. Graph C3 shows that the overall pregnancy rates over the last 4 years have generally declined. Teen pregnancy rates and numbers of pregnancies, as well as live births, for the last three years are shown in Tables C5 and C6.[42]

Graph C2.

Graph C3.

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[42] 2012 data: http://www.vdh.state.va.us/healthstats/documents/2010/pdfs/TeenPregRace12.pdf
2011 data: http://www.vdh.state.va.us/healthstats/documents/2010/pdfs/TeenPregRace11.pdf
2010 data: http://www.vdh.state.va.us/healthstats/documents/2010/pdfs/TeenPregRace10.pdf
2009 data: http://www.vdh.state.va.us/healthstats/documents/2010/pdfs/TeenPregRace09.pdf

Table C5. Rate and Number of Teen Pregnancies

	2009			2010			2011			2012		
	Virginia	Albemarle	Cville	Virginia	Albemarle	Cville	Virginia	Albemarle	Cville	Virginia	Albemarle	Cville
Teen Pregnancy Rate* (total)	24.3 (n=12,283)	9.3 (n=67)	38.9 (n=91)	21.2 (n=10,970)	9.5 (n=72)	30.3 (n=66)	18.6 (n=9,630)	7.2 (n=56)	27.0 (n=63)	16.7 (n=8,651)	7.5 (n=59)	29.1 (n=60)
White	18.6 (n=6,560)	8.5 (n=50)	26.9 (n=39)	16.7 (n=5,916)	9.1 (n=56)	26.1 (n=35)	14.9 (n=5,290)	6.7 (n=42)	20.4 (n=30)	13.1 (n=4,667)	6.6 (n=42)	21.7 (n=27)
Black	40.6 (n=5,107)	16.5 (n=15)	66.3 (n=51)	34.9 (n=4,528)	13.2 (n=12)	41.5 (n=27)	29.7 (n=3,796)	12.1 (n=11)	47.8 (n=32)	26.3 (n=3,319)	16.4 (n=15)	43.3 (n=28)
Other	22.8 (n=616)	4.4 (n=<)	8.2 (n=<)	15.4 (n=526)	7.1 (n=<)	21.7 (n=<)	15.5 (n=544)	5.1 (n=<)	5.1 (n=<)	18.1 (n=665)	3.4 (n=2)	29.2 (n=5)

*Rate is per 1,000 female teens age 10-19.

Table C6. Rate and Number of Teen Live Births

	2009			2010			2011			2012		
	Virginia	Albemarle	Cville	Virginia	Albemarle	Cville	Virginia	Albemarle	Cville	Virginia	Albemarle	Cville
Teen Pregnancy Rate* (total)	16.4 (n=8,284)	7.2 (n=52)	14.9 (n=35)	14.3 (n=7,444)	7.4 (n=56)	11.0 (n=24)	12.7 (n=6,572)	4.9 (n=38)	10.7 (n=25)	11.8 (n=6,134)	5.1 (n=40)	14.6 (n=30)
White	13.0 (n=4,582)	6.3 (n=37)	7.6 (n=11)	11.8 (n=4,184)	7.3 (n=45)	5.2 (n=7)	10.6 (n=3,771)	4.6 (n=29)	5.4 (n=8)	9.4 (n=3,333)	4.1 (n=26)	8.0 (n=10)
Black	26.2 (n=3,298)	14.3 (n=13)	31.2 (n=24)	22.4 (n=2,907)	8.8 (n=8)	21.5 (n=14)	19.0 (n=2,435)	7.7 (n=7)	23.9 (n=16)	17.9 (n=2,255)	13.1 (n=12)	27.8 (n=18)
Other	15.0 (n=404)	4.4 (n=<)	< (n=<)	10.3 (n=353)	5.3 (n=<)	16.3 (n=<)	10.4 (n=366)	3.4 (n=<)	5.1 (n=<)	14.9 (n=546)	3.4 (n=2)	11.7 (n=2)

*Rate is per 1,000 female teens age 10-19.

Appendix D

Additional School Data

Economic Disadvantage. The free and reduced lunch rate has been relatively stable in both Albemarle County Public Schools (APS) and Charlottesville City Schools (CCS) for at least the last four school years (2012-2013: APS, 27.28%; CCS, 54.05%), see Graph D1 and Table D1.
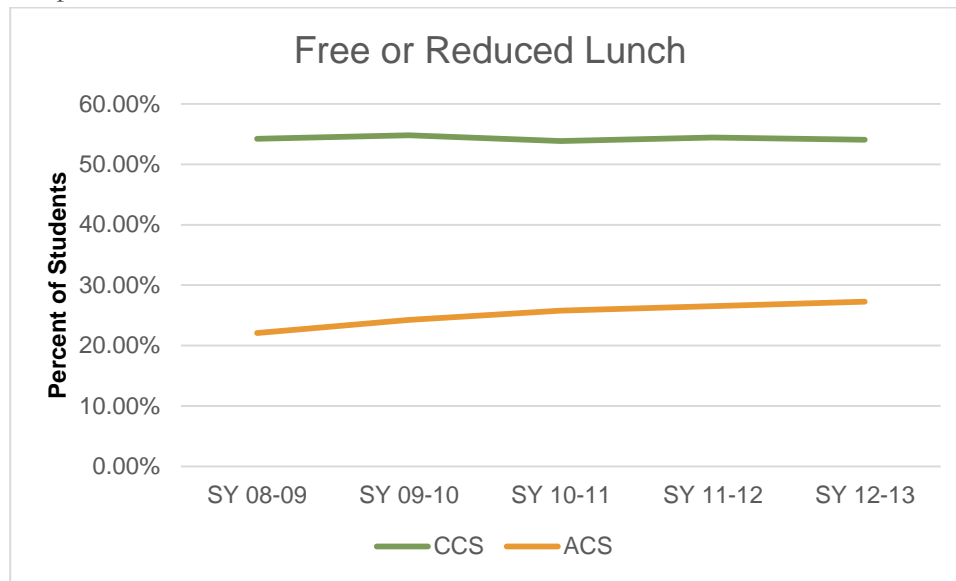
Graph D1.

Table D1. Free and Reduced Lunch in APS and CCS

School Division	School Lunch Program	Free Lunch		Reduced Lunch		Free and Reduced Lunch	
	Membership	Eligibility	%	Eligibility	%	Eligibility	%
APS SY 08-09	12,770	2,163	16.94%	659	5.16%	2,822	22.10%
APS SY 09-10	12,943	2,511	19.40%	627	4.84%	3,138	24.24%
APS SY 10-11	13,247	2,884	21.77%	531	4.01%	3,415	25.78%
APS SY 11-12	13,129	2,915	22.20%	570	4.34%	3,485	26.54%
APS SY 12-13	13,277	3,014	22.70%	608	4.58%	3,622	27.28%
CCS SY 08-09	4,055	1,882	46.41%	316	7.79%	2,198	54.20%
CCS SY 09-10	4,031	1,949	48.35%	259	6.43%	2,208	54.78%
CCS SY 10-11	3,998	1,904	47.62%	248	6.20%	2,152	53.83%
CCS SY 11-12	4,190	2,012	48.02%	268	6.40%	2,280	54.42%
CCS SY 12-13	4,218	1,996	47.32%	284	6.73%	2,280	54.05%

This report is prepared from data submitted by school divisions as of October 31, 2012
APS: Albemarle Public Schools; CCS: Charlottesville City Schools

Attendance. Truancy, in both school divisions, was at a high in 2009-2010, but lower and relatively stable since 2010-2011 (2011-2012: APS, 0.7%; CCS. 4.2%); the truancy rate for APS is substantially below that of the State average (see Graph D2 and Table D2).

Graph D2.
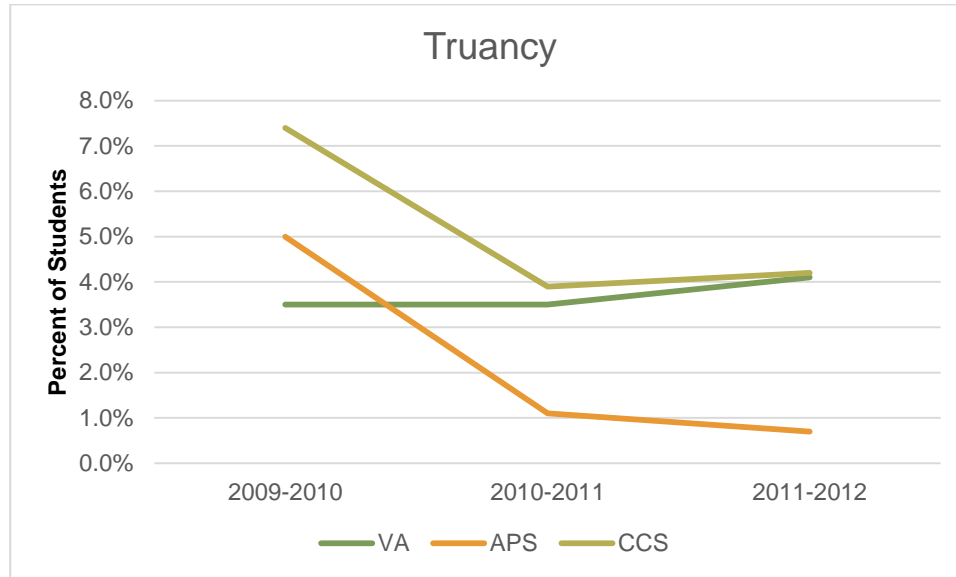
Truancy is defined as the number of students who had a conference with the school after accumulating six absences during the year.

Table D2. Truancy for APS, CCS and the State.

Division	2009-2010 secondary school attendance	total division truancy	2010-2011 secondary school attendance	total division truancy	2011-2012 secondary school attendance	total division truancy
Albemarle	96.2% (n=4,807)	0.5% (n=59)	96.6% (n=4,855)	1.1% (n=146)	96.4% (n=4,776)	0.7% (n=92)
Charlottesville	94.9% (n=1,395)	7.4% (n=283)	96.3% (n=1,362)	3.9% (n=149)	96.0% (n=1,367)	4.2% (n=164)
Virginia	94.2% (n=440,804)	3.5% (n=42,240)	94.3% (n=439,707)	3.5% (n=43,048)	94.4% (n=439,572)	4.1% (n=50,349)

Drop-out Rate. As can be seen in Graph D3, in the most recent school year for which data were available from the Virginia Department of Education, White students in both localities have the lowest drop-out rates, followed by Black students. Hispanic students in Charlottesville have a 20% drop-out rate, compared to 10.9% in Albemarle and 13.6% on average in the State. Graph D4 shows that the overall drop-out rates in Virginia, Albemarle and Charlottesville have been relatively stable since 2010. Drop-out rates and numbers of students for the last three school years, broken down by high school, are shown in Table D3.[43]

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[43] Data gathered from the Virginia Department of Education, http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/graduation_completion/cohort_reports/index.shtml . N's less than 5 are not displayed.
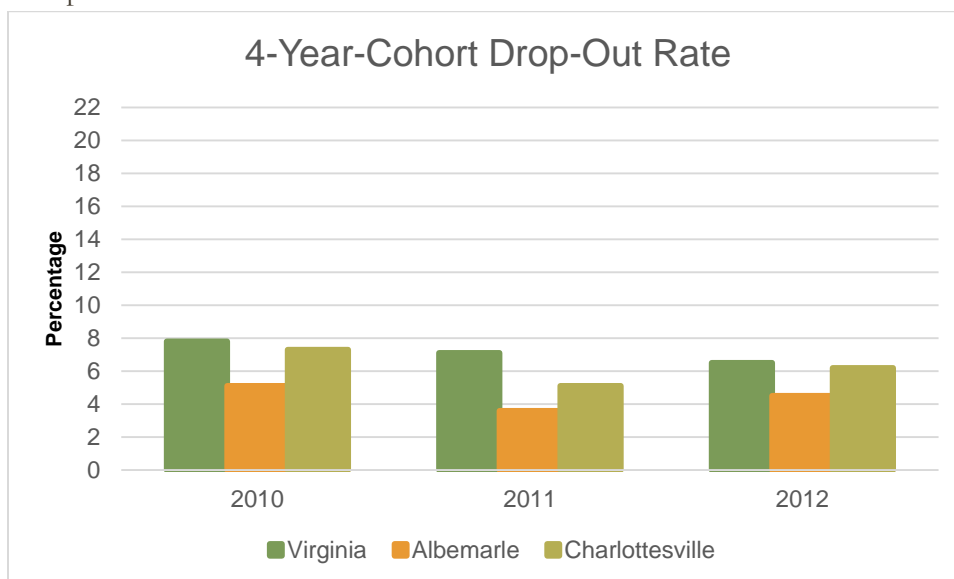
Graph D3.

**4-Year-Cohort Drop-Out Rate
2012**

Graph D4.
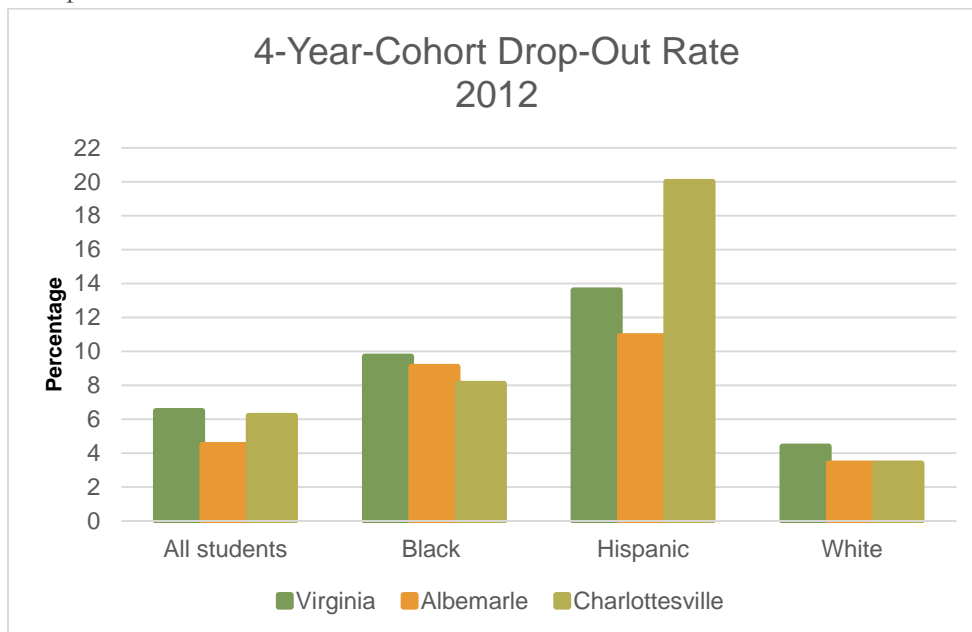
4-Year-Cohort Drop-Out Rate

Table D3. Percent and Number 4-Year Cohort Drop-Outs

	2010				2011				2012			
	All students	Black	Hisp.	White	All students	Black	Hisp.	White	All students	Black	Hisp.	White
Virginia	7.8 (n=7609)	11.7 (n=3055)	17.4 (n=1252)	3.5 (n=2970)	7.1 (n=6965)	10.8 (n=2763)	14.8 (n=1300)	4.7 (n=2580)	6.5 (n=6347)	9.7 (n=2400)	13.6 (n=1270)	4.4 (n=2363)
Albemarle	5.1 (n=52)	7.6 (n=10)	25.0 (n=11)	3.8 (n=30)	3.6 (n=37)	7.6 (n=<)	6.2 (n=<)	3.0 (n=23)	4.5 (n=46)	9.1 (n=<)	10.9 (n=<)	3.4 (n=26)
Charlottesville	7.3 (n=24)	7.1 (n=<)	< (n=0)	6.5 (n=<)	5.1 (n=<)	7.5 (n=<)	< (n=<)	0.8 (n=<)	6.2 (n=19)	8.1 (n=11)	20 (n=<)	3.4 (n=<)
Albemarle High	6.0 (n=26)	9.2 (n=<)	23.5 (n=<)	4.6 (n=14)	3.9 (n=18)	11.3 (n=<)	6.1 (n=<)	2.8 (n=<)	4.2 (n=17)	10.7 (n=<)	10.3 (n=<)	2.8 (n=<)
Monticello High	6.8 (n=19)	6.8 (n=<)	31.8 (n=<)	4.4 (n=<)	4.0 (n=12)	2.2 (n=<)	7.4 (n=<)	3.8 (n=<)	7.2 (n=23)	5.1 (n=<)	17.4 (n=<)	6.3 (n=14)
Murray High	0.0 (n=0)	0.0 (n=0)	0.0 (n=0)	0.0 (n=0)	16.7 (n=<)	< (n=<)	< (n=0)	16.7 (n=<)	6.5 (n=<)	<	< (n=0)	0.0 (n=0)
Western Albemarle High	2.5 (n=<)	< (n=0)	< (n=0)	2.8 (n=<)	0.8 (n=<)	< (n=0)	< (n=0)	0.9 (n=<)	1.6 (n=<)	< (n=0)	0.0 (n=0)	1.8 (n=<)
Charlottesville High	7.3 (n=24)	7.1 (n=<)	< (n=0)	6.5 (n=<)	5.1 (n=<)	7.5 (n=<)	< (n=<)	0.8 (n=<)	6.2 (n=19)	8.1 (n=11)	20.0 (n=<)	3.4 (n=<)

< indicates that the number of individuals in the given category is small and is not publicly provided out of privacy concerns.