U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

1997 National YOUTH GANG Survey

OJJDP Summary

It is estimated that more than 30,500 youth gangs and 815,800 gang members were active in the United States in 1997 • Sixty-six percent of law enforcement agencies have established special gang response units • The estimated degree of gang member involvement in homicide, aggravated assault, larceny/theft, motor vehicle theft, burglary, and robbery declined between 1996 and 1997 • An estimated 42 percent of the youth gangs in the United States were involved in the street sale of drugs • The street sale of drugs by youth gangs was especially high in large cities and suburban counties • The number of gang migrants increased

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) was established by the President and Congress through the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 1974, Public Law 93–415, as amended. Located within the Office of Justice Programs of the U.S. Department of Justice, OJJDP's goal is to provide national leadership in addressing the issues of juvenile delinquency and improving juvenile justice.

OJJDP sponsors a broad array of research, program, and training initiatives to improve the juvenile justice system as a whole, as well as to benefit individual youth-serving agencies. These initiatives are carried out by seven components within OJJDP, described below.

Research and Program Development Division develops knowledge on national trends in juvenile delinquency; supports a program for data collection and information sharing that incorporates elements of statistical and systems development; identifies how delinquency develops and the best methods for its prevention, intervention, and treatment; and analyzes practices and trends in the juvenile justice system.

Training and Technical Assistance Division provides juvenile justice training and technical assistance to Federal, State, and local governments; law enforcement, judiciary, and corrections personnel; and private agencies, educational institutions, and community organizations.

Special Emphasis Division provides discretionary funds to public and private agencies, organizations, and individuals to replicate tested approaches to delinquency prevention, treatment, and control in such pertinent areas as chronic juvenile offenders, community-based sanctions, and the disproportionate representation of minorities in the juvenile justice system.

State Relations and Assistance Division supports collaborative efforts by States to carry out the mandates of the JJDP Act by providing formula grant funds to States; furnishing technical assistance to States, local governments, and private agencies; and monitoring State compliance with the JJDP Act.

Information Dissemination Unit produces and distributes information resources on juvenile justice research, training, and programs and coordinates the Office's program planning and competitive award activities. Information that meets the needs of juvenile justice professionals and policymakers is provided through print and online publications, videotapes, CD–ROM's, electronic listservs, and the Office's Web site. As part of the program planning and award process, IDU develops priorities, publishes solicitations and application kits for funding opportunities, and facilitates the peer review process for discretionary funding awards.

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The mission of OJJDP is to provide national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent juvenile victimization and respond appropriately to juvenile delinquency. This is accomplished through developing and implementing prevention programs and a juvenile justice system that protects the public safety, holds juvenile offenders accountable, and provides treatment and rehabilitative services based on the needs of each individual juvenile.

1997 National Youth Gang Survey

Summary

National Youth Gang Center

Shay Bilchik, Administrator
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Responses to the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey were submitted voluntarily by law enforcement agencies throughout the country. Readers are cautioned against basing judgments on the nature or extent of the gang problem in a particular locality solely on the data presented here. Because of differing methodology, definitions, and sampling techniques, caution is also urged in making direct comparisons between these data and data obtained in other surveys.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

Foreword

The spread of youth gangs across America has led to increased public concern in recent years. In 1995, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention launched a series of annual surveys to facilitate analysis of changes and trends in the nature of youth gangs and their activities.

The largest and most comprehensive national gang survey to date, the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey, conducted by the National Youth Gang Center, contacted nearly 5,000 law enforcement agencies across the country. To allow for both comparative and trend analysis, the 1997 survey used the same sample as the 1996 survey.

Survey results indicate that the percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs decreased from the previous year, from 53 percent in 1996 to 51 percent in 1997. Some 816,000 gang members were active in some 30,500 youth gangs in 1997, a modest decrease from the previous year's figures of 846,000 and 31,000, respectively. Despite these declines, however, there are still serious problems to be addressed. For example, every city with a population of 250,000 or greater reported the presence of youth gangs. In addition, the number of gang members increased in small cities and rural counties, as youth gangs continued to spread beyond the confines of the Nation's major cities.

These statistics are disturbing, but they are also critical to understanding the dimensions of the gang problem and ultimately resolving it. I hope that the findings of the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey will inform your efforts to combat youth gangs.

Shay Bilchik
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Executive Summary

The recent proliferation of youth gangs throughout the United States and the growth of youth gang violence have heightened the awareness of the youth gang problem among public policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and social scientists. To measure the extent of this problem, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, conducts an annual survey of law enforcement agencies. The 1997 National Youth Gang Survey, administered by the National Youth Gang Center, is the third such annual survey and offers a wealth of information about youth gangs. Nearly 5,000 law enforcement agencies were surveyed, making it the largest and most comprehensive national gang survey to date. In addition, the 1997 survey used the same sample as the 1996 survey, permitting both comparative and trend analysis.

The 1997 survey included questions regarding the number of youth gangs and gang members, the degree of involvement of youth gangs in drug sales and distribution, youth gang migration, the level of crime in which youth gang members were involved, law enforcement responses to youth gangs, and the state of the youth gang problem in the respondent's jurisdiction. A youth gang was defined as "a group of youths or young adults in (the respondent's) jurisdiction that (the respondent) or other responsible persons in (the respondent's) agency or community are willing to identify or classify as a 'gang.'"

The 1997 National Youth Gang Survey was sent to two groups: a statistically representative sample of 3,018 law enforcement agencies and a comparative sample of 1,951 law enforcement agencies that were surveyed in the 1995 National Youth Gang Survey but not selected for the representative sample. The response rate was 92 percent for the representative sample and 81 percent for the comparative sample. Information and analyses included in this Summary are limited to the survey responses for the statistically representative sample, because the data are more comprehensive and allow for a more complete nationwide perspective.

The statistically representative sample was composed of jurisdictions in four area types: all large cities with populations greater than 25,000; a random sample of small cities with populations between 2,500 and 25,000; all suburban counties; and a random sample of rural counties. Surveys were sent to the appropriate local law enforcement agency within each jurisdiction in the representative sample.

Based on the results of the survey, the percentage of jurisdictions with active youth gangs decreased slightly from 53 percent in 1996 to 51 percent in 1997. The greatest decrease appeared in large cities, especially those with populations ranging from 25,000 to 49,999. Despite these decreases, the Nation's largest cities continued to experience gang activity. In both 1996 and 1997, 100 percent

of respondents in cities with populations of 250,000 or more reported active youth gangs in their jurisdictions.

The estimated number of jurisdictions with active youth gangs in 1997 was 4,712, down slightly from 4,824 in 1996. The number of youth gangs and gang members also decreased: An estimated 30,500 youth gangs and 816,000 gang members were active in 1997, compared with 31,000 youth gangs and 846,000 gang members in 1996. Although the prevalence of youth gangs and gang members declined overall from 1996 to 1997, the number of gang members rose in small cities and rural counties.

Despite the decreases in the number of gangs and gang members, 45 percent of respondents indicated that the gang problem in their jurisdictions in 1997 was staying about the same, while 35 percent indicated it was getting worse and 20 percent said that it was getting better. In contrast, 49 percent of respondents to the 1995 National Youth Gang Survey believed that their problem was getting worse, 41 percent that it was staying about the same, and 10 percent that it was getting better.

Youth gang members were estimated to be involved in 3,340 homicides in 1997, almost two-thirds of which took place in large cities. Youth gang involvement in other types of criminal activity remained high in 1997. Respondents reported a high degree of gang member involvement, most often for aggravated assault and larceny/theft (28 percent), followed by motor vehicle theft (27 percent), burglary (26 percent), and robbery (13 percent). However, for all of the above crimes, the estimated degree of involvement in criminal activity by youth gang members was less in 1997 than in 1996. These apparent decreases are consistent with the national downturn in both adult and juvenile violent crime arrests from 1994 to 1997, as reported by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Youth gang involvement in drug sales and distribution has become a growing public concern in recent years. Results of the survey indicated that in 1997, youth gangs played a key role in the sale and distribution of drugs. Respondents estimated that 42 percent of the youth gangs in the country were involved in the street sale of drugs and 33 percent were involved in drug distribution for the purpose of generating profits for the gang. The street sale of drugs by youth gangs in 1997 was especially high in large cities and suburban counties. Nationwide, youth gangs were involved in an estimated 33 percent of crack cocaine sales, 32 percent of marijuana sales, 16 percent of powder cocaine sales, 12 percent of methamphetamine sales, and 9 percent of heroin sales. These data may indicate increased youth gang involvement in drug activities since the 1996 survey.

In contrast to the slight decrease in gang activity, reported gang migration increased from 1996 to 1997. Eighty-nine percent of respondents indicated that they experienced some gang migration into their jurisdictions during 1997, up from 84 percent in 1996. In addition, an estimated 23 percent of youth gang members in the United States were migrants in 1997, compared with 21 percent

in 1996. The vast majority (70 percent) of respondents who experienced some gang migration cited social factors (e.g., to move with families, to find legitimate job opportunities, to join relatives, or to join friends) as reasons why youth gang members migrated to their jurisdictions.

In response to the proliferation of gangs throughout the country, most law enforcement agencies (66 percent) have established specialized response units. More specifically, 35 percent reported having a youth/street gang unit or officer(s), 18 percent reported having a gang prevention unit or officer(s), and 29 percent reported having a unit that combined both types of units.

Introduction

The 1997 National Youth Gang Survey is the third annual gang survey conducted by the National Youth Gang Center (NYGC), which was created in 1995 through a cooperative agreement between the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the Institute for Intergovernmental Research. The primary purpose of the survey is to assess the extent of the youth gang problem in communities throughout the United States.

Nearly 5,000 agencies were surveyed in 1997.

The 1995 National Youth Gang Survey was the first annual survey of youth gangs conducted by NYGC. Although the 1995 survey was the most extensive national gang survey up to that time and provided valuable baseline data, it was not entirely representative of the Nation as a whole. Therefore, the sample for the 1996 National Youth Gang Survey was constructed to be statistically representative and to present a more complete national picture of youth gang activity. The 1997 National Youth Gang Survey used the same sample that was used for the 1996 survey, permitting comparative and trend analysis.

The 1996 and 1997 surveys were sent to two sample groups:

- 3,018 law enforcement agencies that constituted a statistically representative sample (hereinafter referred to as the "representative sample").
- 1,951 additional law enforcement agencies that were surveyed in 1995 but were not included in the representative sample (hereinafter referred to as the "comparative sample").

Agencies in the representative sample were asked questions regarding the extent of the gang problem in their jurisdictions, including the number of gangs and gang members. In addition, agencies were asked to comment on gang drug sales and distribution, gang migration, the level of crime committed by gang members, the types of response units created to address gang problems, and the perception of gang crime in their jurisdictions (the survey form is presented as appendix A). This sample included four subsets or area types: large cities (populations of more than 25,000), small cities (populations between 2,500 and 25,000), suburban counties,[1] and rural counties.[2]

The agencies included in the comparative sample received an abbreviated questionnaire that asked only about the presence of gangs in 1997 and the number of gangs and gang members (the survey form is presented as appendix B). This sample is not representative and, therefore, is not used for making inferences about agencies that were not surveyed; it is used only to make comparisons with the 1995 survey.

Nearly 5,000 agencies were surveyed in 1997. However, this Summary focuses solely on the 3,018 survey recipients included in the statistically representative sample, because the survey instrument was more comprehensive than that used with the comparative sample and the representative sample allows for extrapolation of the data.

Including areas with large populations in the survey allowed for comparative analysis with samples from previous surveys.

Methodology

Survey sample

The representative sample for the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey included 3,018 police and sheriff's departments in four divisions grouped by area type:

- All police departments serving cities with populations of more than 25,000 (large cities).
- A randomly selected sample of police departments serving cities with populations between 2,500 and 25,000 (small cities).
- All suburban county police and sheriff's departments (suburban counties).
- A randomly selected sample of rural county police and sheriff's departments (rural counties).

The universe of large cities (1,216) and suburban counties (662) was included in the survey sample for two reasons. First, the 1995 National Youth Gang Survey revealed that gang activity in the United States is most often reported in jurisdictions with large populations. Second, previous research on gangs focused mostly on large population areas. Therefore, including areas with large populations in the survey allowed for comparative analysis with samples from previous surveys.

The random samples of small cities and rural counties were selected using a formula developed by Cochran (1977, see appendix C). Implementation of the sampling method produced the following sample sizes: 397 jurisdictions from a total of 8,740 cities with populations between 2,500 and 25,000 identified by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, and 743 rural counties from a total of 2,356 included in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's *Crime in the United States, 1994: Uniform Crime Reports* (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1995).

The comparative sample of 1,951 police and sheriff's departments was composed of jurisdictions that were surveyed in 1995 but were not included in the 1996 representative sample. These jurisdictions were surveyed to allow for comparative and trend analysis but will not be surveyed after 1998.

Survey instructions specifically asked that sheriff's departments report only for their "unincorporated service area and any contracted jurisdictions" to avoid reporting for cities and towns within their county that were already in the survey sample. To identify instances of duplicate reporting, survey recipients were also asked whether their responses included other jurisdictions and, if so, to identify those jurisdictions. Whenever it was determined that an agency might have responded inappropriately or had included other jurisdictions in its responses, NYGC contacted the respondent and clarified the responses.

All jurisdictions included in the sample were cross-referenced with a Bureau of the Census database to determine accurate and current populations. Each jurisdiction was assigned a Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Code assigned by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Each FIPS Code is unique and is linked to the most recent Bureau of the Census population estimates. The

1997 survey used population estimates for 1994 because they were the most current estimates available at the time the sample was developed.

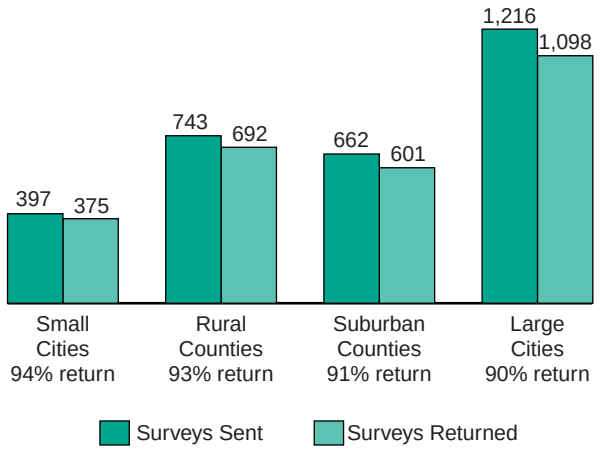
Each city and town was assigned a FIPS Code that corresponded to the entire population of that area.[3] Counties were assigned populations for their unincorporated areas. FIPS Code language refers to the unincorporated area of a county as the "balance of" the county and excludes the populations of incorporated cities and towns within the county. A few counties do not have a "balance of" population because there are no cities or towns within the jurisdiction. In such cases, the jurisdiction was assigned the population of the entire county.

Response rate

In July 1998, surveys were mailed to agencies in both the representative and comparative samples. Surveys were addressed to the respondent from the previous year or to the chief of police or the sheriff. Within the first few months, the response rate was approximately 50 percent, with surveys being received either through surface mail or fax (a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope and toll-free fax number were provided to each survey recipient). After followup calls were conducted, the response rate increased to 92 percent for the representative sample and 81 percent for the comparative sample. Response rates varied by area type for the representative sample, but not significantly (see figure 1).

In a few cases, respondents failed to answer one or more survey questions. In these instances, the agency was excluded from the analysis of the question or questions. Evaluation of the number of agencies that answered different questions revealed that respondents were less likely to answer if they were asked to indicate a percentage or raw number. In contrast, respondents were more likely to answer questions that asked them to select from a list. There did not appear to be any other survey design or methodological problems that contributed to the likelihood that a respondent would or would not answer a question.

Figure 1: Number of Respondents in 1997, by Area Type*



*This figure and all following figures and tables are based on the representative sample.

The 1997 survey used population estimates for 1994 because they were the most current estimates available at the time the sample was developed.

Extrapolation for nonrespondents in large cities and suburban counties was necessary to produce the most accurate nationwide estimate.

Extrapolation/Estimation

To provide the most accurate nationwide perspective of the extent of the gang problem, it was necessary to estimate:

- The number of jurisdictions reporting gangs.
- The number of gangs.
- The number of gang members.
- The number of homicides.

To estimate the number of jurisdictions reporting gangs in each area type, the percentage of agencies reporting gangs was multiplied by the total number of jurisdictions included in the group from which the sample was derived.

Estimating the number of gangs and gang members for small cities and rural counties was a slightly more complex task. For these samples, the following steps were completed:

1. Calculate the mean for agencies responding either “yes” or “no” to the question regarding the number of gangs and gang members.
2. Multiply the total number of jurisdictions from which the sample was derived by the percentage of agencies responding either “yes” or “no” to the question regarding the number of gangs and gang members.
3. Multiply the product of step 2 by the mean calculated in step 1.

Extrapolation for nonrespondents in large cities and suburban counties was necessary to produce the most accurate nationwide estimate. Without extrapolation, the extent of gang activity in these areas would have been systematically underestimated.

To estimate the number of gangs and gang members for large cities and suburban counties, the average or mean number of gangs and gang members per jurisdiction was calculated. These estimates were controlled for population by stratification of respondent agencies into population groups of 50,000 and by calculation of a mean for each population group. To acquire the most accurate mean, the survey designers selected 40 as the minimum number of agencies in each population group from which a mean could be derived. Setting the minimum at 40 allowed the inclusion of a large number and wide range of agencies in each population group. Population groups that did not include 40 or more agencies were expanded equally on the high and low ends in increments of 25,000 until 40 or more agencies were included. After the expansion, a mean was calculated and matched with each nonresponding agency within the corresponding population group (see appendix D).

As with estimating the numbers of gangs and gang members, estimating the number of homicides required extrapolation for both random samples and for nonrespondents in large cities and suburban counties. The survey asked respondents to report the number of homicides in their jurisdiction based on both member-based and motive-based definitions of gang crime. Member-based gang crime was defined as “crime in which a gang member(s) is either the

perpetrator or the victim, regardless of the motive," and motive-based gang crime was defined as "crime committed by a gang member(s) in which the underlying reason is to further the interests and activities of the gang." Respondents were first asked to report the number of member-based homicides. The next question asked the respondent to report the number of motive-based homicides that were a subset of the member-based number.

The response rate to the question concerning type of homicide varied among respondents. Only 68 percent of respondents who reported gangs reported both types of homicides; 89 percent reported member-based homicides, and 70 percent reported motive-based homicides.

The response rate to the question concerning type of homicide varied among respondents.

The estimated number of homicides in each area type during 1997 was determined by multiplying the average number of homicides per jurisdiction by the estimated number of jurisdictions reporting gangs in 1997. The estimate was calculated separately for each type of homicide. In other words, the average number of member-based homicides was calculated using the responses of all those who responded to the question concerning member-based homicides, regardless of whether they responded to the question on motive-based homicides. The same process was used to calculate the average number of motive-based homicides.

In several instances throughout the following analyses, the small number of observations made calculating reliable estimates and averages difficult. Therefore, summary data were not included for categories in which there were fewer than 20 observations, unless otherwise noted.

Weighting percentages

In a number of instances, survey questions asked respondents to estimate the percentage of gangs or gang members who were involved in a particular activity or who met certain criteria. Specifically, this pertains to the questions regarding drug sales and distribution and gang migration. An important limitation to interpreting these types of responses is that these percentages do not reflect differences in the number and size of the gangs across the reporting jurisdictions. To account for this important factor, the percentages were weighted by the total number of gangs or gang members (whichever was appropriate) reported in each jurisdiction. Only the responses of agencies that reported both numbers of gangs and gang members were used in this weighting procedure. This requirement decreased the number of agencies included in the analysis but increased the reliability of the translation of percentages into actual numbers of gangs or gang members.

Although weighting is necessary when reporting aggregate estimates of gangs or gang members, it is also important to be able to make comparisons about gang activity across jurisdictions using the variables discussed above (area type, geographic region, and population). Therefore, the remainder of the analyses were conducted by comparing averages for each jurisdiction, regardless of the size of the gangs in each jurisdiction. This procedure allowed differences across jurisdictions to be observed without being skewed by jurisdictions with a disproportionate number of gangs or gang members. When appropriate, tables are included in the following analysis to illustrate the differences between weighted and unweighted averages.

Law enforcement agencies continue to be the best available and most widely used source of information for national gang surveys.

Statistical significance

Statistical significance was determined by conducting *chi*-square and one-way analysis of variance tests. *Chi*-square is often used when evaluating the level of statistical significance attained in a cross-tabulation. One-way analysis of variance determines the differences between means of a dependent variable by one factor, or independent variable. The average for a particular category of a variable is compared with the overall average for the variable to determine if there are statistically significant differences between the averages. Patterns in the differences between averages can determine the nature of the relationship between variables. To be considered statistically significant, the relationship must have a level of significance of at least 0.05. That is, if a relationship is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, the probability that the relationship occurred by chance is less than 5 percent.

Data limitations

Law enforcement agencies continue to be the best available and most widely used source of information for national gang surveys and other forms of criminal justice research. Criminal justice agencies usually are centrally organized and capable of developing systems for routine recordkeeping and reporting (Curry, 1995; Maxson, Klein, and Cunningham, 1993). However, law enforcement data have some important limitations. First, many agencies do not collect data in a standardized manner. Databases, automated or otherwise, are becoming more widespread, but are more commonly used for gathering intelligence than for recording crime. In addition, the accuracy of responses to surveys of law enforcement agencies often varies across jurisdictions, because responses are generally based on estimates. For this survey, instructions specifically asked the respondent to base responses on records or personal knowledge. To determine the extent to which personal knowledge or estimates were used, the survey asked respondents to identify the source of their responses. The majority of respondents (53 percent) said they used both official records and estimates, while 44 percent indicated that they reported only estimates. Only 2 percent of respondents indicated that their responses were derived solely from official records.

Second, responses to survey questions likely were influenced by the respondents' perceptions of gangs in their jurisdiction. Each year, the survey is directed to the previous year's respondent or, if the agency has not responded to earlier surveys, to the chief of police or sheriff. Unfortunately, it is difficult to ensure that the same respondent or even the most appropriate official receives and responds to the survey. As a result, a number of different perceptions and opinions may be reflected in the responses of some jurisdictions. Political considerations also may affect responses, and a gang problem may be either denied or exaggerated (Curry, 1995).

Definitions continue to pose problems for practitioners and researchers evaluating gang activity on a national level. Little agreement has been reached on what constitutes a gang, gang member, or gang incident, despite efforts to gain a consensus (Spergel and Bobrowski, 1989). In light of these problems, the current survey did not seek to define gang terms narrowly. The survey defined a youth gang as "a group of youths or young adults in (the respondent's) jurisdiction that (the respondent)

or other responsible persons in (the respondent's) agency or community are willing to identify or classify as a 'gang.'" Respondents were asked to exclude motorcycle gangs, hate or ideology groups, prison gangs, and exclusively adult gangs. Respondents were also provided with two definitions of gang crime in order to gain some consistency in the reporting of homicides (see appendix A).

Survey Results

Prevalence of youth gangs

Fifty-one percent of survey respondents indicated that they had active youth gangs in their jurisdictions in 1997. Figure 2 illustrates the proportion of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs, by area type. Almost three-quarters of large cities (72 percent) reported active youth gangs in 1997, followed by 56 percent of suburban counties, 33 percent of small cities, and 24 percent of rural counties (see appendix E for a list of all jurisdictions reporting gangs in 1997, by area type). The relationship between agencies reporting active youth gangs in 1997 and area type was found to be statistically significant.

The percentage of respondents reporting active youth gangs decreased by 2 percent between 1996 and 1997. Table 1 shows the percentages for both years, by area type. The largest decrease was in large cities. Small cities, suburban counties, and rural counties had smaller decreases.

Table 1: Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1996 and 1997, by Area Type*

	Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs	
Area Type	**1996**	**1997**
Large city	74%	72%
Small city	34	33
Suburban county	57	56
Rural county	25	24
Overall	53	51

*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

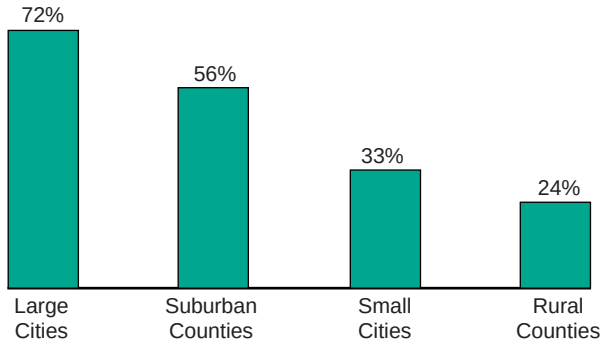
Gang activity also varied significantly by region of the country (see figure 3). The West, which has historically experienced significant gang problems, reported the highest level of gang activity (74 percent) in 1997. The percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs in the three other regions was as follows: 52 percent in the Midwest, 49 percent in the South, and 31 percent in the Northeast. These differences in gang activity by region were found to be statistically significant.

Each geographic region can be further divided into smaller increments called divisions (see appendix F). Figure 4 illustrates the percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs in 1997, by division. As expected, divisions in the

Fifty-one percent of survey respondents indicated that they had active youth gangs in their jurisdictions in 1997.

The only increase between 1996 and 1997 in the percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs was in the East South Central division.

Figure 2: Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1997, by Area Type



West had the highest percentage of agencies reporting active youth gangs, especially in the Pacific division (80 percent) which includes Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington. The Middle Atlantic division in the Northeast had the lowest percentage (26 percent) of agencies reporting active youth gangs. These differences were found to be statistically significant.

Tables 2 and 3 compare the percentages of jurisdictions that reported active youth gangs in 1996 and 1997. Regionally, the largest decrease in the percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs was in the Northeast. Moreover, a larger decrease was found in the New England division of the Northeast region. The only increase between 1996 and 1997 in the percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs was in the East South Central division. States included in this division are Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee.

Table 2: Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1996 and 1997, by Region*

	Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs	
Area Type	**1996**	**1997**
Midwest	54%	52%
Northeast	35	31
South	50	49
West	75	74
Overall	53	51

*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Figure 3: Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1997, by Region

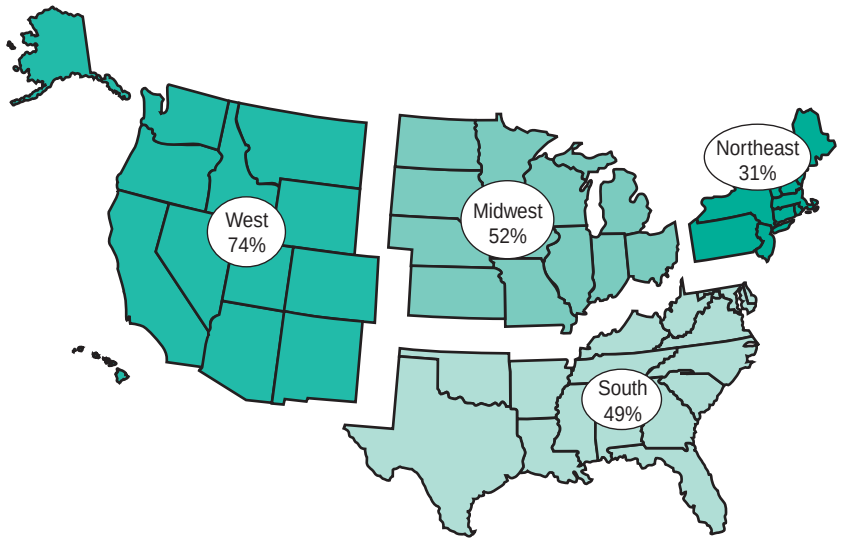
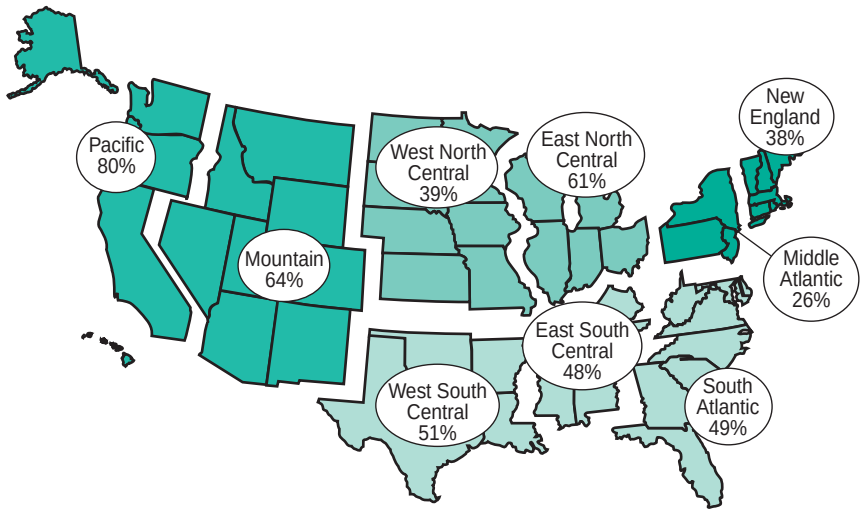


Figure 4: Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1997, by Division



Tables 4–7 show a direct variation between the presence of active youth gangs in 1997 and population, that is, the larger the population, the more likely the presence of gangs. This relationship was found to be statistically significant for all area types except small cities (the relationship between the presence of active youth gangs and population in small cities is statistically significant at the 0.09 level). The tables also compare the percentages of jurisdictions that reported active youth gangs in 1996 and 1997.

The larger the population, the more likely the presence of gangs.

The largest decrease in jurisdictions reporting gangs was for the 250,000 or more population range.

Table 3: Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1996 and 1997, by Division*

Division, by Region	Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs	
	1996	1997
Midwest		
East North Central	63%	61%
West North Central	42	39
Northeast		
New England	44	38
Middle Atlantic	29	26
South		
South Atlantic	53	49
East South Central	43	48
West South Central	52	51
West		
Mountain	64	64
Pacific	82	80
Overall	53	51

*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4: Percentage of Large Cities Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1996 and 1997, by Population Size*

Population Size	Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs	
	1996	1997
250,000 or more	100%	100%
100,000–249,999	91	92
50,000–99,999	80	81
25,000–49,999	64	59
Overall	74	72

*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

As table 4 shows, there was no variation in the 250,000 or more population range. In both 1996 and 1997, 100 percent of respondents in this population range reported active youth gangs in their jurisdictions. As table 6 shows, among suburban counties, the largest decrease in jurisdictions reporting gangs was for the 250,000 or more population range. However, there was a noticeable increase for suburban counties reporting gangs in the 1–9,999 population range.

Prior to the 1995 National Youth Gang Survey, the highest recorded number of jurisdictions with active youth gangs was 282, in 1994 (Curry, Ball, and Decker, 1996). However, most previous surveys were limited in size and scope and did not include counties. Results of the 1995 National Youth Gang Survey

indicated that there were 2,007 cities and counties with active youth gangs in the United States in 1995. This 1995 survey sample was much larger than that of previous efforts and included more than 4,000 law enforcement agencies.

Table 5: Percentage of Small Cities Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1996 and 1997, by Population Size*

	Small Cities Reporting Active Youth Gangs	
Population Size	**1996**	**1997**
10,000–24,999	43%	41%
2,500–9,999	30	30
Overall	34	33

*Only statistically significant at the 0.09 level.

Table 6: Percentage of Suburban Counties Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1996 and 1997, by Population Size*

	Suburban Counties Reporting Active Youth Gangs	
Population Size	**1996**	**1997**
250,000 or more	90%	80%
100,000–249,999	74	76
50,000–99,999	66	67
25,000–49,999	46	47
10,000–24,999	45	41
1–9,999	31	42
Overall	57	56

*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 7: Percentage of Rural Counties Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1996 and 1997, by Population Size*

	Rural Counties Reporting Active Youth Gangs	
Population Size	**1996**	**1997**
250,000 or more	—**	—**
100,000–249,999	—**	—**
50,000–99,999	41%	38%
25,000–49,999	39	38
10,000–24,999	32	29
1–9,999	19	18
Overall	25	24

*Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

**Fewer than 20 agencies responded to this question; a reliable estimate could not be reached.

There were 2,007 cities and counties with active youth gangs in the United States in 1995.

A statistically representative sample was used for the 1996 and 1997 surveys.

Number of jurisdictions with active youth gangs

Despite the comprehensiveness of the 1995 survey sample, it was not statistically representative; thus, the data could not be extrapolated for jurisdictions that either did not respond to the survey or were not included in the sample. Therefore, a statistically representative sample was used for the 1996 and 1997 surveys. As a result, the estimated number of jurisdictions with active youth gangs in 1996 and 1997 was higher than in 1995.

In 1997, an estimated 4,712 cities and counties in the United States experienced gang activity, down slightly from 4,824 in 1996. Table 8 shows the reported and estimated numbers of jurisdictions with active youth gangs in 1996 and 1997, by area type. Table 9 highlights the percentage of difference between the estimated number of jurisdictions with active youth gangs in 1996 and in 1997, by area type. Rural counties had the largest decrease (6.7 percent) in the estimated number of jurisdictions with active youth gangs from 1996 to 1997, followed by large cities (3.2 percent), suburban counties (2.1 percent), and small cities (1.2 percent). Appendixes G and H show the number and percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs in 1997, by population size and region and by area type and region, respectively.

Table 8: Reported and Estimated Number of Jurisdictions With Active Youth Gangs in 1996 and 1997, by Area Type

	Number of Jurisdictions With Active Youth Gangs			
	1996		1997	
Area Type	**Reported**	**Estimated**	**Reported**	**Estimated**
Large city	785	899	786	870
Small city	113	2,948	125	2,913
Suburban county	329	379	337	371
Rural county	158	598	164	558
Total	1,385	4,824	1,412	4,712

Note: Response rates were higher for the 1997 survey; therefore, the reported number of jurisdictions with active youth gangs in 1997 versus the estimated number does not increase proportionally compared with the 1996 survey.

Table 9: Estimated Number of Jurisdictions With Active Youth Gangs in 1996 and 1997, by Area Type

	Jurisdictions With Active Youth Gangs		
Area Type	**1996**	**1997**	**Percent Change**
Large city	899	870	–3.2%
Small city	2,948	2,913	–1.2
Suburban county	379	371	–2.1
Rural county	598	558	–6.7
Total	4,824	4,712	–2.3

Number of youth gangs and gang members

Before the 1995 National Youth Gang Survey was conducted, the highest estimates of gang activity ranged from 8,600 to 9,000 gangs and 375,000 to 400,000 gang members (Curry, Ball, and Decker, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Klein, 1995). As noted above, however, most previous surveys were limited in size and scope. The 1995 National Youth Gang Survey indicated that there were approximately 23,000 youth gangs and 665,000 gang members active in the United States in 1995. The 1996 National Youth Gang Survey indicated that there were approximately 31,000 youth gangs and 846,000 gang members in 1996.

Results of the 1997 survey revealed that there were an estimated 30,533 youth gangs and 815,896 gang members active in the United States in 1997. Table 10 shows the reported and extrapolated number of youth gangs and gang members in 1997, by area type, and table 11 shows the percent change of the estimated 1996 and 1997 figures. Overall, there was a 0.9-percent decrease in the estimated number of youth gangs and a 3.6-percent decrease in the estimated number of gang members. More specifically, the estimated number of youth gangs decreased in suburban counties (23.2 percent) and rural counties (4.1 percent). Decreases in the estimated number of youth gang members were evident in suburban counties (6.1 percent) and large cities (5.7 percent).

Table 10: Reported and Estimated Number of Youth Gangs and Gang Members in 1997, by Area Type

	Reported Number		Estimated Number	
Area Type	**Gangs**	**Gang Members**	**Gangs**	**Gang Members**
Large city	11,908	455,140	12,831	483,829
Small city	416	4,191	9,704	97,701
Suburban county	5,389	188,541	6,110	208,785
Rural county	554	7,513	1,888	25,581
Total	18,267	655,385	30,533	815,896

Table 11: Estimated Number of Youth Gangs and Gang Members in 1996 and 1997, by Area Type

	1996		1997		Percent Change	
Area Type	**Gangs**	**Gang Members**	**Gangs**	**Gang Members**	**Gangs**	**Gang Members**
Large city	12,841	513,243	12,831	483,829	nil	–5.7%
Small city	8,053	92,448	9,704	97,701	20.5%	5.7
Suburban county	7,956	222,267	6,110	208,785	–23.2	–6.1
Rural county	1,968	18,470	1,888	25,581	–4.1	38.5
Total	30,818	846,428	30,533	815,896	–0.9	–3.6

Results of the 1997 survey revealed that there were an estimated 30,533 youth gangs and 815,896 gang members active in the United States in 1997.

Despite the decreases in estimated numbers of youth gangs and gang members, there were substantial increases in certain area types.

Despite the decreases in estimated numbers of youth gangs and gang members, there were substantial increases in certain area types. Small cities had a 20.5-percent increase in the estimated number of youth gangs. Additionally, the estimated number of youth gang members increased by 38.5 percent in rural counties and 5.7 percent in small cities.

Further examination of the increases in youth gangs and gang members revealed two primary causes for the changes. First, despite reductions from 1996 to 1997 in the estimated number of jurisdictions with active youth gangs, the average number of youth gangs and gang members increased in the lowest population groups (see table 12). Second, the percentage of agencies reporting an estimate of the number of youth gangs and gang members increased from 1996 to 1997, producing a slightly higher estimate of the number of gangs and gang members in 1997. Because the survey methodology is designed to produce the most conservative estimates, respondents who answer "do not know" to these questions are excluded from the extrapolations. As a result, any increase or decrease in the number of respondents who answer "do not know" to survey questions that ask for a raw number may lead to a slight change in estimates. To mitigate this effect, it may be necessary to modify the methodology for future surveys.

Table 12 illustrates the average number of youth gangs and gang members per jurisdiction for 1996 and 1997, by population size. For cities and counties with populations of 1–9,999, there was considerable growth (percentage-wise) between the relatively low numbers of gangs and gang members reported in 1996, and the low numbers, compared with other population ranges, reported in 1997. Most of the other population ranges showed decreases.

Table 12: Average Number of Youth Gangs and Gang Members per Jurisdiction in 1996 and 1997, by Population Size*

	1996		1997	
Population Size	**Gangs per Jurisdiction**	**Gang Members per Jurisdiction**	**Gangs per Jurisdiction**	**Gang Members per Jurisdiction**
250,000 or more	**80** (*n*=90)	**5,894** (*n*=68)	**85** (*n*=88)	**5,120** (*n*=77)
100,000–249,999	**32** (*n*=167)	**1,016** (*n*=141)	**22** (*n*=179)	**764** (*n*=159)
50,000–99,999	**10** (*n*=304)	**352** (*n*=221)	**9** (*n*=333)	**289** (*n*=286)
25,000–49,999	**6** (*n*=414)	**134** (*n*=302)	**6** (*n*=406)	**128** (*n*=332)
10,000–24,999	**4** (*n*=143)	**84** (*n*=91)	**5** (*n*=144)	**85** (*n*=99)
1–9,999	**3** (*n*=132)	**37** (*n*=85)	**4** (*n*=149)	**55** (*n*=113)
Overall average	**15** (*n*=1,250)	**741** (*n*=908)	**14** (*n*=1,299)	**615** (*n*=1,066)

Notes: *n*=the number of observations in a particular category. As population size increases, the average number of gangs and gang members per jurisdiction increases for both 1996 and 1997. The overall average takes into account all jurisdictions, regardless of population size. The particular averages take into account the population size of the jurisdiction and the number of jurisdictions for a particular population size. The overall average is not an average of particular averages.

*The variation in the average number of youth gangs and gang members is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Although gang activity in 1996 and 1997 was widespread, a large portion of the youth gangs and gang members reported by survey respondents was concentrated in Chicago, IL, and Los Angeles (city and county), CA. These three localities have a long history of gang problems, and together they accounted for 4 percent of all youth gangs and 24 percent of all youth gang members estimated to be active in 1997. Without these three localities, the average numbers of youth gangs and gang members in populations of 250,000 or more were reduced to 74 and 2,702, respectively.

An estimated 3,340 member-based gang homicides were committed in the United States in 1997.

Youth gangs and crime

Gangs have typically been associated with criminal acts since the first reports of their activities were made (Thrasher, 1927; see also Sante, 1991). Observers of gangs generally agree that, while not all gang members participate in criminal acts, involvement in such activity distinguishes gangs from other groups (Curry and Decker, 1998). The 1997 survey asked respondents to report the number of member-based and motive-based homicides involving gang members (see page 48). In addition, respondents were asked to estimate the degree of gang member involvement in other criminal offenses (i.e., aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and larceny/theft).

Homicides

An estimated 3,340 member-based gang homicides were committed in the United States in 1997, of which 1,880 (56 percent) were motive based (see table 13). Large cities accounted for almost two-thirds (64 percent) of the total estimated number of member-based homicides and nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of the motive-based homicides. Considering that the national homicide total was 18,210 in 1997 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998), youth gangs were involved in 18 percent of homicides nationwide.

Table 13: Reported and Estimated Number of Homicides Involving Youth Gang Members in 1997, by Area Type and Homicide Type

	Reported Number of Homicides		Estimated Number of Homicides	
Area Type	**Member-Based**	**Motive-Based**	**Member-Based**	**Motive-Based**
Large city	1,734	890	2,123	1,357
Small city	17	4	408	146
Suburban county	416	132	553	226
Rural county	69	30	257	151
Total	2,236	1,056	3,341	1,880

Most respondents indicated that they did not have any member- or motive-based gang homicides in their jurisdictions in 1997, and only 3 percent reported having

It is difficult to recognize any trends in youth gang homicides.

more than 10 member-based gang homicides (see table 14). No small cities or rural counties reported having more than 10 member- or motive-based gang homicides in their jurisdiction. Not surprisingly, large cities accounted for the highest percentage of jurisdictions with more than 10 gang homicides. Differences in the number of homicides in each area type were found to be statistically significant for both member- and motive-based homicides.

Table 14: Number and Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Homicides Involving Youth Gang Members in 1997 Within Specific Ranges, by Homicide Type and Area Type*

Type and Number of Homicides	Area Type				
	All Areas	Large City	Small City	Suburban County	Rural County
Member-Based					
11 or more homicides	**37** (3%)	**31** (4%)	**0** (0%)	**6** (2%)	**0** (0%)
1–10 homicides	**335** (27%)	**220** (31%)	**10** (8%)	**77** (28%)	**28** (19%)
0 homicides	**891** (71%)	**461** (65%)	**112** (92%)	**197** (70%)	**121** (81%)
Motive-Based*					
11 or more homicides	**19** (2%)	**17** (3%)	**0** (0%)	**2** (1%)	**0** (0%)
1–10 homicides	**184** (19%)	**128** (22%)	**3** (3%)	**35** (16%)	**18** (16%)
0 homicides	**781** (79%)	**424** (75%)	**83** (97%)	**181** (83%)	**93** (84%)

Note: The percentages within each area type may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

* Differences in the percentages of homicide ranges are statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 15 reveals that the number of youth gang homicides reported by survey respondents varied directly with population. Generally, the percentage of respondents that reported more than 10 youth gang homicides decreased as population decreased. In the highest population range (250,000 or more), 81 percent of the respondents reported at least one member-based homicide. In contrast, only 21 percent of respondents in the lowest population range (1–9,999) reported at least one member-based homicide. The variation in the percentage of respondents reporting homicides by population size was found to be statistically significant for both member- and motive-based homicides.

As a result of differences in questions regarding homicide in the 1996 and 1997 surveys, reliable comparisons of the years could not be made. Therefore, it is difficult to recognize any trends in youth gang homicides. The current national trend for homicides among juveniles and young adults has been declining steadily since 1993. However, the rates of youth homicide remain considerably higher than those of the mid-1980's (Fox and Zawitz, 1999; Snyder, 1998).

In an effort to detect trends in youth gang homicides, the homicide questions used for the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey were also used for the 1998 National Youth Gang Survey, which was distributed to respondents in March 1999. Data from the 1998 survey will allow both comparative and trend analyses of 1997 and 1998.

Degree of criminal activity

In addition to reporting the number of gang homicides, survey recipients were asked to indicate the degree to which gang members were involved in the following offenses in their respective jurisdictions: aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and larceny/theft. These crimes were selected because they are commonly associated with gang activity and cover most serious and violent crime offense categories.

Table 15: Number and Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Homicides Involving Youth Gang Members in 1997, by Population Size and Homicide Type*

Number of Homicides, by Population Size	Type of Homicide	
	Member-Based	Motive-Based
250,000 or more		
11 or more homicides	**22** (31%)	**12** (18%)
1–10 homicides	**36** (50%)	**33** (49%)
0 homicides	**14** (19%)	**23** (34%)
100,000–249,999		
11 or more homicides	**11** (7%)	**4** (3%)
1–10 homicides	**83** (52%)	**41** (30%)
0 homicides	**65** (41%)	**91** (67%)
1–99,999		
11 or more homicides	**4** (0%)	**3** (0%)
1–10 homicides	**216** (21%)	**110** (14%)
0 homicides	**812** (79%)	**667** (86%)

Note: The percentages within each population category may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

* The variation in the percentage for the homicide ranges in each population parameter is statistically significant at the 0.05 level for both types of homicide.

Table 16 displays the degree of gang member involvement in the above offenses, by area type. Overall, agencies most often reported a high degree of involvement for aggravated assault (28 percent) and larceny/theft (28 percent), followed by motor vehicle theft (27 percent), burglary (26 percent), and robbery (13 percent). A large percentage of agencies in large cities and suburban counties reported a high degree of involvement in aggravated assault and motor vehicle theft. The percentage of agencies reporting a high degree of gang member involvement in robbery was generally small for all area types, especially in small cities (4 percent). In rural counties, the percentage of respondents reporting a high degree of gang member involvement in burglary (41 percent) was substantially larger than the overall average (26 percent). At least one-quarter of respondents in each type of jurisdiction indicated that gang members were involved in a high degree of larceny/theft. The differences in the degree of gang member involvement by area type are statistically significant for all crimes except larceny/theft.

Overall, agencies most often reported a high degree of involvement for aggravated assault and larceny/theft, followed by motor vehicle theft, burglary, and robbery.

The estimated degree of involvement in criminal activity by youth gang members was less in 1997 than in 1996 for all crimes included in the survey.

Table 16: Degree of Gang Member Criminal Activity in 1997, by Type of Offense and Area Type*

Degree of Offending, by Type of Offense	Area Type				
	All Areas	Large City	Small City	Suburban County	Rural County
Aggravated assault					
High	**382** (28%)	**256** (33%)	**14** (11%)	**88** (27%)	**24** (15%)
Medium	**520** (38%)	**295** (38%)	**39** (31%)	**122** (38%)	**64** (41%)
Low	**428** (31%)	**202** (26%)	**64** (51%)	**100** (31%)	**62** (40%)
Not involved	**44** (3%)	**16** (2%)	**8** (6%)	**13** (4%)	**7** (5%)
Robbery					
High	**174** (13%)	**116** (15%)	**5** (4%)	**35** (11%)	**18** (12%)
Medium	**400** (29%)	**266** (35%)	**16** (13%)	**91** (28%)	**27** (18%)
Low	**615** (45%)	**324** (42%)	**59** (48%)	**160** (50%)	**72** (48%)
Not involved	**177** (13%)	**62** (8%)	**44** (36%)	**37** (12%)	**34** (23%)
Burglary					
High	**358** (26%)	**175** (23%)	**28** (22%)	**91** (28%)	**64** (41%)
Medium	**538** (39%)	**306** (40%)	**52** (42%)	**126** (39%)	**54** (34%)
Low	**430** (31%)	**261** (34%)	**38** (30%)	**97** (30%)	**34** (22%)
Not involved	**47** (3%)	**25** (3%)	**7** (6%)	**10** (3%)	**5** (3%)
Motor vehicle theft					
High	**372** (27%)	**251** (33%)	**16** (13%)	**81** (25%)	**24** (16%)
Medium	**449** (33%)	**256** (34%)	**31** (25%)	**115** (35%)	**47** (30%)
Low	**454** (33%)	**223** (29%)	**54** (43%)	**111** (34%)	**66** (43%)
Not involved	**92** (7%)	**32** (4%)	**24** (19%)	**18** (6%)	**18** (12%)
Larceny/Theft					
High	**379** (28%)	**218** (28%)	**38** (31%)	**80** (25%)	**43** (27%)
Medium	**609** (44%)	**356** (46%)	**46** (37%)	**141** (44%)	**66** (42%)
Low	**349** (25%)	**180** (24%)	**35** (28%)	**92** (28%)	**42** (27%)
Not involved	**35** (3%)	**12** (2%)	**5** (4%)	**11** (3%)	**7** (4%)

Note: The percentages within each offense category may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

* The differences in the percentages of gang member involvement by area type are statistically significant at the 0.05 level for all types of offenses except larceny/theft.

The estimated degree of involvement in criminal activity by youth gang members was less in 1997 than in 1996 for all crimes included in the survey (see table 17). The decreases in the percentage of respondents who reported a high degree of gang member involvement in criminal activity from 1996 to 1997 were as follows: larceny/theft, 10 percent; aggravated assault, 5 percent; burglary, 4 percent; motor vehicle theft, 3 percent; and robbery, 2 percent. These reported decreases are consistent with the national downturn in juvenile violent crime arrests from 1994 to 1997, as reported by the U.S. Department of Justice (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998; Snyder, 1998).

Criminal activity varied considerably by region (see table 18). Jurisdictions in the West reported the largest percentage of a high degree of gang member involvement in aggravated assault, robbery, and motor vehicle theft. The proportion of

agencies reporting a high degree of gang member involvement in burglary was largest in the South (35 percent) and smallest in the Northeast (7 percent). Youth gang members were involved in larceny/theft to a high degree in all regions, with estimates ranging from 23 percent in the Northeast to 30 percent in the South. The differences in the degree of gang member involvement by region are statistically significant for all crimes except larceny/theft. In addition, regional trends in 1997 were fairly consistent with those evident in 1996.

Youth gang members were involved in larceny/theft to a high degree in all regions.

Table 17: Degree of Gang Member Criminal Activity in 1996 and 1997, by Type of Offense

Degree of Offending, by Type of Offense	Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Member Involvement	
	1996	1997
Aggravated assault		
High	33%	28%
Medium	39	38
Low	26	31
Not involved	3	3
Robbery		
High	15	13
Medium	31	29
Low	43	45
Not involved	11	13
Burglary		
High	30	26
Medium	42	39
Low	26	31
Not involved	3	3
Motor vehicle theft		
High	30	27
Medium	32	33
Low	33	33
Not involved	5	7
Larceny/Theft		
High	38	28
Medium	45	44
Low	16	25
Not involved	2	3

Note: The percentages within each offense category may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

The degree of gang member involvement in aggravated assault, robbery, and motor vehicle theft increased as population increased.

Table 18: Degree of Gang Member Criminal Activity in 1997, by Type of Offense and Region*

Degree of Offending, by Type of Offense	Region				
	All Regions	Midwest	Northeast	South	West
Aggravated assault					
High	**382** (28%)	**87** (21%)	**38** (27%)	**132** (27%)	**125** (37%)
Medium	**520** (38%)	**154** (38%)	**51** (37%)	**191** (39%)	**124** (37%)
Low	**428** (31%)	**158** (39%)	**38** (27%)	**146** (30%)	**86** (25%)
Not involved	**44** (3%)	**11** (3%)	**12** (9%)	**16** (3%)	**5** (2%)
Robbery					
High	**174** (13%)	**42** (10%)	**14** (10%)	**68** (14%)	**50** (15%)
Medium	**400** (29%)	**98** (24%)	**54** (39%)	**150** (31%)	**98** (29%)
Low	**615** (45%)	**189** (46%)	**51** (36%)	**209** (44%)	**166** (49%)
Not involved	**177** (13%)	**78** (19%)	**21** (15%)	**54** (11%)	**24** (7%)
Burglary					
High	**358** (26%)	**84** (20%)	**10** (7%)	**168** (35%)	**96** (28%)
Medium	**538** (39%)	**159** (39%)	**52** (37%)	**192** (40%)	**135** (40%)
Low	**430** (31%)	**153** (37%)	**65** (46%)	**110** (23%)	**102** (30%)
Not involved	**47** (3%)	**15** (4%)	**13** (9%)	**14** (3%)	**5** (2%)
Motor vehicle theft					
High	**372** (27%)	**84** (21%)	**27** (20%)	**142** (30%)	**119** (35%)
Medium	**449** (33%)	**135** (33%)	**42** (30%)	**158** (33%)	**114** (33%)
Low	**454** (33%)	**149** (37%)	**53** (38%)	**152** (32%)	**100** (29%)
Not involved	**92** (7%)	**38** (9%)	**16** (12%)	**30** (6%)	**8** (2%)
Larceny/Theft					
High	**379** (28%)	**109** (27%)	**31** (23%)	**145** (30%)	**94** (28%)
Medium	**609** (44%)	**178** (43%)	**59** (43%)	**213** (44%)	**159** (47%)
Low	**349** (25%)	**112** (27%)	**42** (31%)	**114** (24%)	**81** (24%)
Not involved	**35** (3%)	**12** (3%)	**5** (4%)	**14** (3%)	**4** (1%)

Note: The percentages within each offense category may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

* The differences in the percentages of gang member involvement by region are statistically significant at the 0.05 level for all types of offense except larceny/theft.

The degree of criminal activity also varied in direct proportion to population size for most crimes (see table 19). The degree of gang member involvement in aggravated assault, robbery, and motor vehicle theft increased as population increased. This variation was found to be statistically significant. Neither burglary nor larceny/theft was significantly affected by population.

Table 19: Degree of Gang Member Criminal Activity in 1997, by Type of Offense and Population Size*

Degree of, Offending by Type of Offense	Population Size						
	All Population Sizes	1–9,999	10,000–24,999	25,000–49,999	50,000–99,999	100,000–249,999	250,000 or more
Aggravated assault							
High	**382** (28%)	**24** (15%)	**19** (12%)	**105** (24%)	**105** (31%)	**76** (42%)	**53** (59%)
Medium	**520** (38%)	**54** (33%)	**59** (37%)	**154** (36%)	**148** (43%)	**76** (42%)	**29** (32%)
Low	**428** (31%)	**77** (47%)	**74** (47%)	**160** (37%)	**83** (24%)	**26** (14%)	**8** (9%)
Not involved	**44** (3%)	**10** (6%)	**7** (4%)	**15** (4%)	**8** (2%)	**4** (2%)	**0** (0%)
Robbery							
High	**174** (13%)	**12** (8%)	**10** (6%)	**40** (9%)	**45** (13%)	**38** (21%)	**29** (32%)
Medium	**400** (29%)	**24** (15%)	**29** (19%)	**128** (30%)	**111** (32%)	**77** (42%)	**31** (34%)
Low	**615** (45%)	**69** (43%)	**83** (53%)	**212** (49%)	**162** (47%)	**60** (33%)	**29** (32%)
Not involved	**177** (13%)	**56** (35%)	**35** (22%)	**53** (12%)	**25** (7%)	**7** (4%)	**1** (1%)
Burglary							
High	**358** (26%)	**52** (32%)	**42** (26%)	**104** (24%)	**93** (27%)	**49** (27%)	**18** (20%)
Medium	**538** (39%)	**60** (37%)	**65** (40%)	**168** (39%)	**121** (35%)	**80** (44%)	**44** (49%)
Low	**430** (31%)	**46** (28%)	**45** (28%)	**147** (34%)	**117** (34%)	**49** (27%)	**26** (29%)
Not involved	**47** (3%)	**6** (4%)	**9** (6%)	**14** (3%)	**12** (4%)	**5** (3%)	**1** (1%)
Motor vehicle theft							
High	**372** (27%)	**27** (17%)	**19** (12%)	**105** (25%)	**101** (29%)	**80** (44%)	**40** (45%)
Medium	**449** (33%)	**41** (25%)	**54** (34%)	**134** (31%)	**118** (34%)	**64** (35%)	**38** (43%)
Low	**454** (33%)	**67** (41%)	**70** (44%)	**166** (39%)	**110** (32%)	**31** (17%)	**10** (11%)
Not involved	**92** (7%)	**29** (18%)	**16** (10%)	**23** (5%)	**15** (4%)	**8** (4%)	**1** (1%)
Larceny/Theft							
High	**379** (28%)	**47** (29%)	**31** (20%)	**120** (28%)	**101** (29%)	**55** (30%)	**25** (28%)
Medium	**609** (44%)	**65** (39%)	**73** (46%)	**191** (44%)	**155** (45%)	**83** (46%)	**42** (47%)
Low	**349** (25%)	**42** (26%)	**50** (31%)	**111** (26%)	**86** (25%)	**40** (22%)	**20** (23%)
Not involved	**35** (3%)	**11** (7%)	**5** (3%)	**10** (2%)	**4** (1%)	**3** (2%)	**2** (2%)

Note: The percentages within each offense category may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

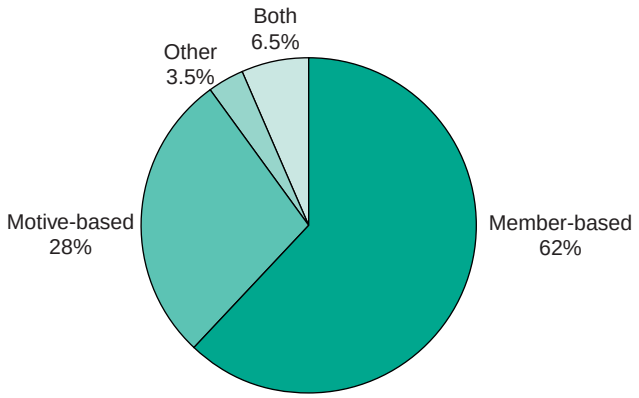
* The differences in the percentages of gang member involvement by population size are statistically significant at the 0.05 level for aggravated assault, robbery, and motor vehicle theft.

Gang crime definitions

To clarify the definitional issues surrounding gang crime, respondents were asked to indicate whether their agency most frequently uses a member-based, motive-based, or other definition. Sixty-two percent of respondents indicated that they use the member-based definition, 28 percent said they use the motive-based definition, and 10 percent reportedly use another definition (see figure 5). Further, 6.5 percent indicated that they use both member-based and motive-based definitions and 3.5 percent reportedly use another definition.

Forty-two percent of the youth gangs in the United States were estimated to be involved in the street sale of drugs.

Figure 5: Definition of Gang Crime Used by Respondents



Youth gangs and drugs

Youth gang involvement in drugs has been a major public concern since the crack cocaine epidemic began in the mid-1980's (Klein, 1995). Several issues have been debated and researched, including the extent of gang member involvement in drug sales (Decker and Van Winkle, 1994); the interrelationship of youth gangs, drugs, and crime (Howell and Decker, 1999); the geographical location of most gang drug distribution (Maxson, 1995); the race/ethnicity of gang members involved in drug sales (Esbensen and Winfree, 1998); and the ability of youth gangs to manage drug trafficking operations (Moore, 1990).

Until now, national law enforcement data have not been available for the involvement of gangs in drug sales, the types of drugs sold by youth gang members, and the extent to which gangs control or manage drug distribution. The results of the 1997 survey, reported below, provide new information on these important issues.

Drug sales

In an effort to distinguish between gangs that traffic in drugs as a function of the gang and gangs with members who sell drugs for their own personal benefit, survey recipients were asked to identify the percentage of youth gangs in their jurisdictions that engaged in the street sale of drugs for the purpose of generating profits for the gang. Street sale was defined as "the sale of drugs in small quantities that have already been prepared for consumption." After responses were weighted to account for the number of gangs reported in each jurisdiction, 42 percent of the youth gangs in the United States were estimated to be involved in the street sale of drugs for the purpose of generating profits for the gang (see table 20). Large cities had the highest percentage of youth gangs involved in drug sales (49 percent), followed by suburban counties (43 percent), rural counties (35 percent), and small cities (31 percent).

Table 20 compares the weighted and unweighted averages of the percentage of youth gangs involved in the street sale of drugs, by area type. Unlike weighted averages, unweighted averages do not account for the number of gangs in each

jurisdiction, but they do allow for the comparison of averages across jurisdictions. Using unweighted averages, the average proportion of youth gangs involved in the street sale of drugs ranged from 42 percent in suburban counties to 26 percent in small cities. Weighted averages were higher than unweighted averages, because jurisdictions with a high number of youth gangs generally reported a higher average percentage of youth gangs involved in the street sale of drugs than did jurisdictions with a relatively low number of youth gangs. The other analyses for street sales of drugs presented below use only unweighted averages so that trends across jurisdictions are more readily apparent.

The Northeast had the highest percentage of youth gangs involved in street sales, followed by the Midwest, the South, and the West.

Table 20: Number and Percentage of Youth Gangs Involved in Street Sales of Drugs in 1997, by Area Type

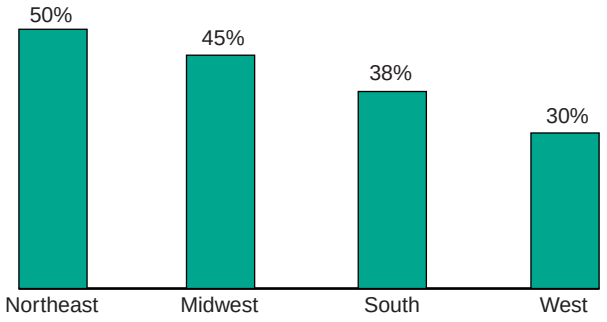
	Youth Gangs Involved in Street Sales	
Area Type	**Weighted Average**	**Unweighted Average***
Large city	**458** (49%)	**472** (41%)
Small city	**56** (31%)	**58** (26%)
Suburban county	**167** (43%)	**174** (42%)
Rural county	**71** (35%)	**77** (34%)
Total/Average	**752** (42%)	**781** (39%)

Notes: Weighted averages account for the number of gang members reported in each jurisdiction; unweighted averages do not. Generally, as area type becomes more urbanized, the percentage of gangs involved in street sales of drugs increases. However, rural counties report a higher percentage of gangs involved in street sales than do small cities.

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Figure 6 illustrates the percentage of youth gangs involved in the street sale of drugs for each region of the country. The Northeast had the highest percentage (50 percent) of youth gangs involved in street sales, followed by 45 percent for the Midwest, 38 percent for the South, and 30 percent for the West. The differences in street sales by region were found to be statistically significant.

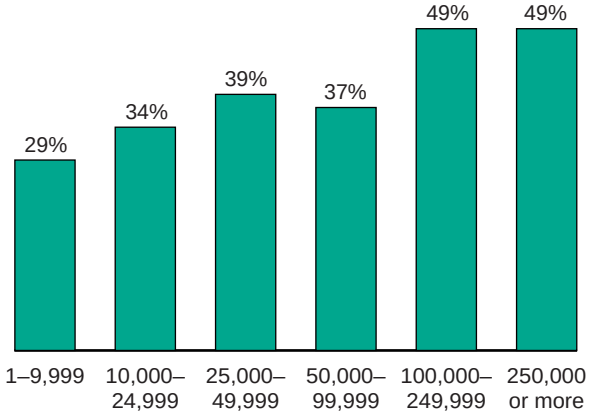
Figure 6: Percentage of Youth Gangs Involved in Street Sales of Drugs in 1997, by Region (Unweighted)



The responses indicated that more than half of the youth gangs in the country were involved in street sales of drugs at the low level.

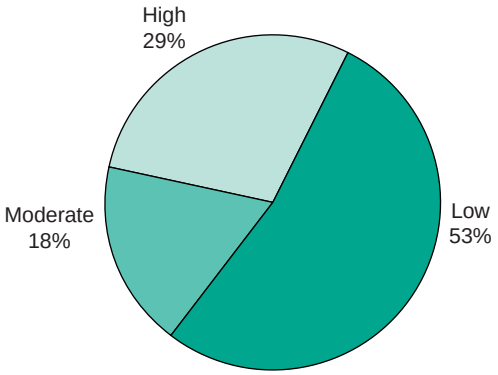
The percentage of youth gangs involved in the street sale of drugs also varied substantially by population (see figure 7). The two highest population ranges had the largest percentages (49 percent) of youth gangs involved in street sales, while the lowest population range had the smallest percentage (29 percent). These variations were found to be statistically significant.

Figure 7: Percentage of Youth Gangs Involved in Street Sales of Drugs in 1997, by Population Size (Unweighted)



Caution should be used when interpreting the data for drug sales presented above because many respondents to the 1996 National Youth Gang Survey included "drug gangs" in their youth gang definition (Howell and Gleason, in press). For the analysis of the 1997 survey data, responses were divided into three levels of street drug sales activity: low (0–33 percent), moderate (34–66 percent), and high (67–100 percent). On average, the responses indicated that more than half (53 percent) of the youth gangs in the country were involved in street sales of drugs at the low level, 29 percent at the high level, and 18 percent at the moderate level (see figure 8). Variations in the level of involvement in street sales in terms of

Figure 8: Level* of Youth Gang Involvement in Street Sales of Drugs in 1997



* "High"=67–100%; "Moderate"=34–66 percent; "Low"=0–33 percent.

area types, regions, and population ranges generally paralleled the average percentages presented above (see appendixes I, J, and K). These variations are statistically significant for region and population, but not for area type.

Drug distribution

Respondents were asked to identify the percentage of youth gangs in their jurisdictions that were involved in drug distribution for the purpose of generating profits for the gang. Drug distribution was defined as "the purchase or transfer of large quantities of drugs which are divided into smaller quantities to be sold on the street." After the responses were weighted to account for the number of gangs reported in each jurisdiction, 33 percent of the youth gangs in the United States were estimated to be involved in drug distribution for this purpose (see table 21). The percentage of youth gangs involved in drug distribution was highest in large cities (39 percent), followed by rural counties (31 percent), small cities (27 percent), and suburban counties (26 percent).

Like the data on street sales of drugs, the data on drug distribution were analyzed using both weighted and unweighted averages (see table 21). Unweighted averages were lower than weighted averages for all area types except suburban counties. As with the data on street sales of drugs, these variations most likely occurred because jurisdictions with a high number of youth gangs generally reported a higher average percentage of youth gangs involved in drug distribution than did jurisdictions with a relatively low number of youth gangs.

Table 21: Number and Percentage of Youth Gangs Involved in Drug Distribution in 1997, by Area Type

	Youth Gangs Involved in Drug Distribution	
Area Type	**Weighted Average**	**Unweighted Average**
Large city	**424** (39%)	**435** (31%)
Small city	**51** (27%)	**53** (25%)
Suburban county	**153** (26%)	**158** (29%)
Rural county	**71** (31%)	**75** (29%)
Total/Average	**699** (33%)	**721** (30%)

Notes: The relationship between drug distribution and area type was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Weighted averages account for the number of gang members reported in each jurisdiction; unweighted averages do not. Generally, as an area type becomes more urbanized, the percentage of gangs involved in drug distribution increases. However, rural counties report a higher percentage of gangs involved in drug distribution than do small cities.

Figure 9 illustrates the average percentage of youth gangs involved in drug distribution, by region. Averages ranged from 35 percent in the Midwest to 21 percent in the West. The variation between regions was found to be statistically significant.

The average percentages of youth gangs involved in drug distribution, by population size, are displayed in figure 10. The averages for the two highest population categories (250,000 or more and 100,000–249,000) were significantly

The percentage of youth gangs involved in drug distribution was highest in large cities, followed by rural counties, small cities, and suburban counties.

Most respondents indicated that the youth gangs in their jurisdictions were involved in a low level of drug distribution.

higher than the overall average. The averages for populations of less than 100,000 did not differ significantly from the overall average.

Responses to the drug distribution question were divided into three levels (low, moderate, and high) in order to determine the extent of youth gang involvement in drug distribution (figure 11). Most respondents (68 percent) indicated that the youth gangs in their jurisdictions were involved in a low level of drug distribution; 21 percent of respondents reported involvement at the high level, and 11 percent reported involvement at the moderate level.

Figure 9: Average Percentage of Youth Gangs Involved in Drug Distribution in 1997, by Region (Unweighted)

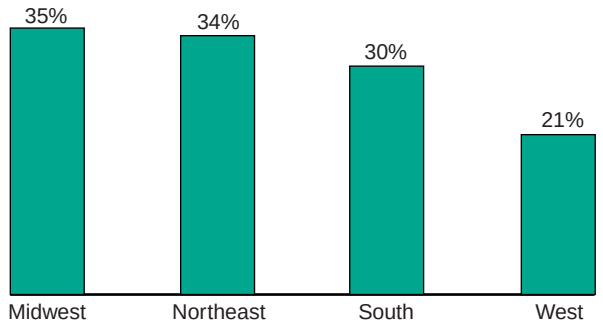
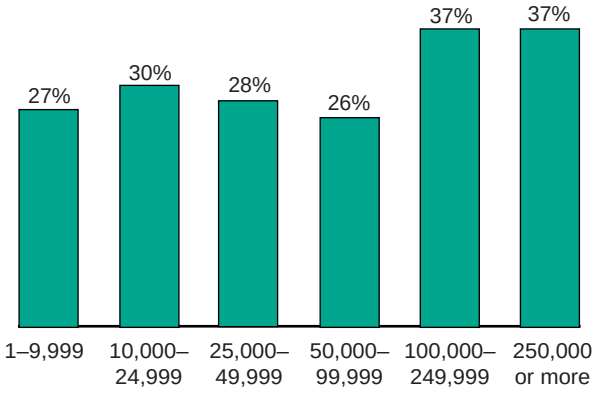


Figure 10: Average Percentage of Youth Gangs Involved in Drug Distribution in 1997, by Population Size (Unweighted)

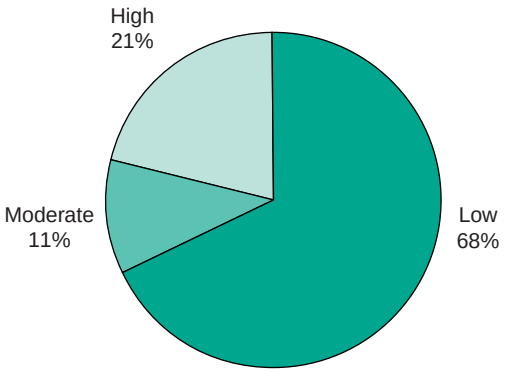


Drug types

Previous national youth gang surveys have not examined the types of drugs distributed and sold by youth gang members. As noted earlier, youth gang members have often been associated with crack cocaine trafficking, but the extent of

their involvement has not been determined. Evidence suggests that in addition to crack cocaine trafficking, youth gang members have been involved in distributing and selling many other types of drugs (Spergel, 1995).

Figure 11: Level* of Youth Gang Involvement in Drug Distribution in 1997



* "High"=67–100%; "Moderate"=34–66 percent; "Low"=0–33 percent.

To determine the extent to which youth gang members were involved in the selling of certain types of drugs in 1997, respondents were asked to identify the percentage of street sales conducted by youth gang members in their jurisdictions for the following drugs: powder cocaine, crack cocaine, marijuana, heroin, methamphetamine, and "other." As table 22 reveals, the average percentages of street sales involving youth gang members were highest for crack cocaine (33 percent) and marijuana (32 percent). Additionally, youth gang members were thought to be involved in an estimated 16 percent of powder cocaine sales, 12 percent of methamphetamine sales, and 9 percent of heroin sales.

When area type was considered, the percentage of street sales conducted by youth gang members varied somewhat for crack cocaine and heroin. The percentage of crack cocaine and heroin sales conducted by youth gang members was higher in large cities and suburban counties than in small cities and rural counties. These differences were found to be statistically significant. Variation between area types for sales of powder cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine was low and not statistically significant.

The percentage of street sales of crack cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine conducted by youth gang members varied substantially by region (see table 23). Crack cocaine sales involving youth gang members were most prevalent in the Midwest (38 percent), heroin sales were most prevalent in the Northeast (15 percent), and methamphetamine sales were most prevalent in the West (21 percent). The variation between regions for crack cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine was found to be statistically significant. There was very little variation between regions for powder cocaine and marijuana.

The percentage of street sales of crack cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine conducted by youth gang members varied substantially by region.

Youth gang involvement in sales of all types of drugs (except marijuana) was substantially larger in jurisdictions with populations of 100,000 or more.

Table 22: Number and Percentage of Street Sales of Drugs Conducted by Youth Gang Members in 1997, by Drug Type and Area Type*

	Area Type				
Drug Type	**All Areas**	**Large City**	**Small City**	**Suburban County**	**Rural County**
Powder cocaine	**601** (16%)	**361** (16%)	**42** (12%)	**124** (15%)	**74** (15%)
Crack cocaine	**692** (33%)	**411** (35%)	**47** (28%)	**152** (33%)	**82** (26%)
Marijuana	**743** (32%)	**428** (32%)	**62** (35%)	**162** (32%)	**91** (29%)
Heroin	**542** (9%)	**326** (10%)	**40** (2%)	**110** (11%)	**66** (4%)
Methamphetamine	**586** (12%)	**331** (10%)	**50** (11%)	**127** (15%)	**78** (11%)

Notes: Respondents were asked to check all that apply; therefore, percentages do not equal 100 percent. Generally, as areas become more urbanized, the percentage of street sales of crack cocaine and heroine conducted by youth gang members increases. Larger cities and suburban counties have higher percentages of street sales of crack cocaine and heroin conducted by youth gang members than do small cities and rural areas.

* The variation between area types for sales of crack cocaine and heroin is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 23: Number and Percentage of Street Sales of Drugs Conducted by Youth Gang Members in 1997, by Drug Type and Region

	Region				
Drug Type	**All Regions**	**Midwest**	**Northeast**	**South**	**West**
Powder cocaine	**601** (16%)	**189** (19%)	**64** (18%)	**218** (14%)	**130** (14%)
Crack cocaine*	**692** (33%)	**215** (38%)	**68** (27%)	**261** (34%)	**148** (26%)
Marijuana	**743** (32%)	**230** (35%)	**76** (31%)	**272** (32%)	**165** (29%)
Heroin*	**542** (9%)	**153** (8%)	**59** (15%)	**201** (5%)	**129** (12%)
Methamphetamine*	**586** (12%)	**160** (10%)	**52** (4%)	**210** (7%)	**164** (21%)

Notes: The percentage of youth gang members involved in street sales of crack cocaine was above average in the Midwest and below average in the Northeast and West. In contrast, the percentage of youth gang members involved in street sales of heroin was above average in the Northeast and West, and below average in the South.

* The variation between regions for sales of crack cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The level of youth gang involvement in drug sales varied with population size for all drug types except marijuana, although the relationship was not always linear (see table 24). The average percentage of street sales conducted by youth gang members for powder and crack cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine increased from the lowest population range (1–9,999) to the highest population range (250,000 or more), but not all population ranges between the highest and the lowest were consistent with that trend. The most substantial difference between average percentages was apparent for heroin: percentages ranged from 2 percent in the 1–9,999 population range to 24 percent in the 250,000 or more population range. Youth gang involvement in sales of all types of drugs (except marijuana) was substantially larger in jurisdictions with populations of 100,000 or more than in smaller jurisdictions.

Table 24: Number and Percentage of Street Sales of Drugs Conducted by Youth Gang Members in 1997, by Drug Type and Population Size*

Drug Type	All Population Sizes	Population Size: 1–9,999	10,000–24,999	25,000–49,999	50,000–99,999	100,000–249,999	250,000 or more
Powder cocaine	**601** (16%)	**62** (13%)	**70** (14%)	**197** (17%)	**151** (12%)	**87** (18%)	**34** (25%)
Crack cocaine	**692** (33%)	**75** (28%)	**75** (29%)	**225** (33%)	**173** (29%)	**100** (39%)	**44** (48%)
Marijuana	**743** (32%)	**95** (34%)	**82** (31%)	**240** (33%)	**183** (29%)	**102** (34%)	**41** (35%)
Heroin	**542** (9%)	**58** (2%)	**61** (7%)	**176** (7%)	**137** (8%)	**78** (12%)	**32** (24%)
Methamphetamine	**586** (12%)	**74** (14%)	**69** (14%)	**185** (10%)	**146** (8%)	**82** (14%)	**30** (19%)

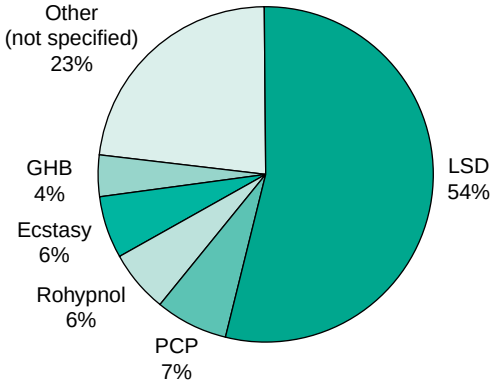
* The variation between population ranges is statistically significant at the 0.05 level for sales of all drugs except marijuana.

Respondents were also asked to identify any other drugs sold by youth gang members that were not included in the list provided on the survey. Only 106 agencies identified a drug or drugs that were sold by youth gang members in their jurisdictions and were not on the survey. Figure 12 provides a delineation of the other drugs most frequently reported by survey respondents. D-Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) or "acid" accounted for the majority (54 percent) of other drugs identified by respondents, followed by phencyclidine (PCP, 7 percent), Rohypnol (6 percent), Ecstacy (6 percent), and gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB, 4 percent).

Youth gang migration

The proliferation of gangs in the United States has heightened the interest in gang migration in recent years. Migration has often been mentioned as a factor contributing to the spread of gangs in State legislative task force reports, government-sponsored conference presentations, and law enforcement reports at the local,

Figure 12: "Other" Types of Drugs Sold by Youth Gang Members in 1997



Note: GHB, gamma-hydroxybutyrate; PCP, phencyclidine; LSD, D-lysergic acid diethylamide.

Eighty-nine percent of respondents with active youth gangs reported that they experienced some gang migration in 1997.

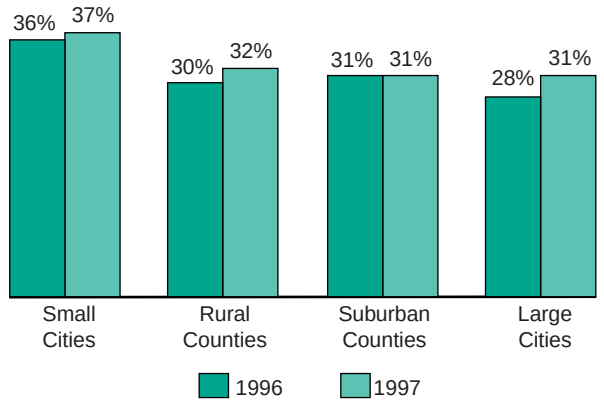
State, and Federal levels (Maxson, Woods, and Klein, 1996). The conclusions of many of these reports, however, have been at odds with those of empirically based studies (Maxson, Woods, and Klein, 1996; Maxson, 1998). A recent study of more than 1,100 cities concluded that migrant gang members have had less of an effect on the proliferation of gangs throughout the country than previously believed (Maxson, Woods, and Klein, 1996; Maxson, 1998).

In order to measure the extent of gang migration on gang proliferation, the 1996 National Youth Gang Survey included several questions on the subject. Gang migration was described in the survey as "temporary visits for social or criminal purposes as well as longer stays, including permanent moves for any reason." Results of the survey indicated that 84 percent of respondents experienced some gang migration into their jurisdictions in 1996. In addition, it was estimated that 21 percent of the youth gang members in these jurisdictions were migrants.[4]

The 1997 survey also included questions regarding gang migration so that the data could be compared with the 1996 survey results. Respondents were asked to identify the proportion of youth gang members in their jurisdictions who were migrants. Eighty-nine percent of respondents with active youth gangs reported that they experienced some gang migration in 1997, compared with 84 percent in 1996. After weighting the percentages to account for the number of youth gang members in each jurisdiction, it was estimated that 23 percent of all youth gang members in the United States had migrated from some other jurisdiction to the one in which they currently reside. This figure reveals that the number of gang migrants increased slightly (2 percent) between 1996 and 1997.

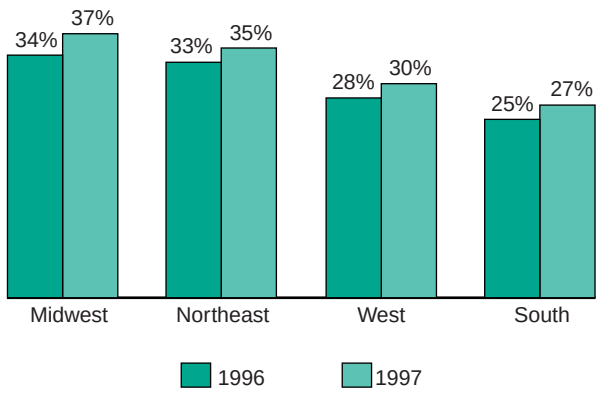
To evaluate trends across area types, regions, and population categories, unweighted percentages of gang migrants were also evaluated. Figure 13 illustrates the unweighted average percentage of gang migrants, by area type. The average percentage of gang migrants in 1997 was highest (37 percent) in small cities, which is consistent with data reported in the 1996 survey. The average percentage for the remainder of the area types varied somewhat but revealed no clear trends. These variations were not found to be statistically significant.

Figure 13: Percentage of Migrant Youth Gang Members in 1996 and 1997, by Area Type (Unweighted)



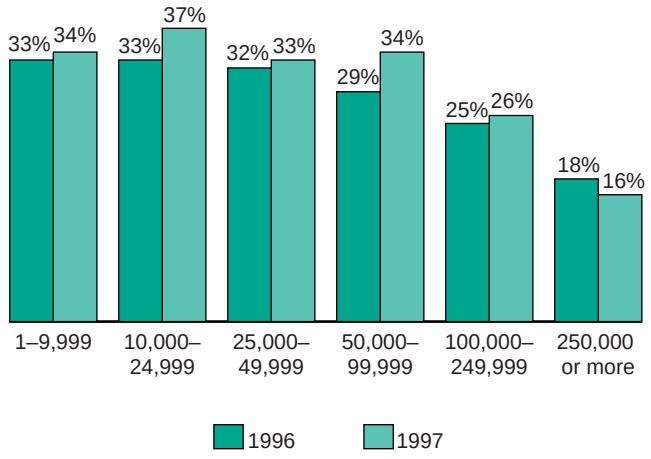
Regionally, there was a similar trend in 1996 and 1997 regarding the average percentage of gang migrants. The prevalence of gang migrants was highest in the Midwest and lowest in the South in both years (see figure 14). The variation between regions in 1996 and 1997 is statistically significant.

Figure 14: Percentage of Migrant Youth Gang Members in 1996 and 1997, by Region (Unweighted)



Population appeared to have some impact on the average percentage of gang migrants. In 1996 and 1997, the average percentages were fairly static for population ranges below 100,000 but began to decrease steadily in the two population ranges above 100,000 (see figure 15). There was also a slight increase in the average percentage of gang migrants from 1996 to 1997 for all population ranges, except the 250,000 or more range. The variation between population ranges is statistically significant in both 1996 and 1997.

Figure 15: Percentage of Migrant Youth Gang Members in 1996 and 1997, by Population Size (Unweighted)



The prevalence of gang migrants was highest in the Midwest and lowest in the South.

The vast majority of respondents cited social factors as the reason why youth gang members migrated to their jurisdictions.

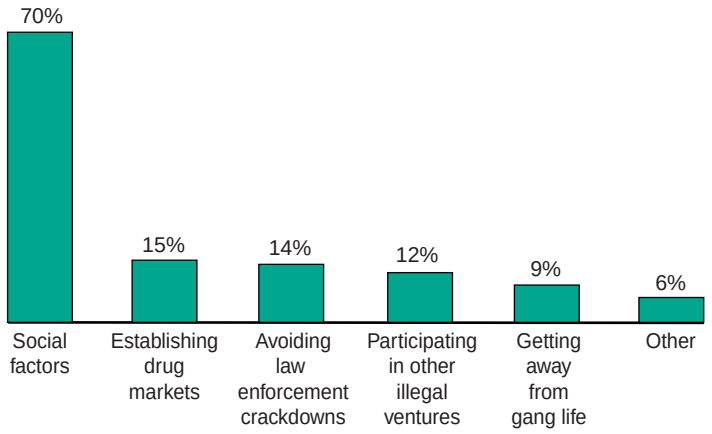
Respondents were also given a list of possible reasons for gang migration and asked to identify those that explained most of the migration to their jurisdictions. The following reasons were included in the list:

- Social factors (e.g., moving with families, finding legitimate job opportunities, or joining relatives or friends).
- Establishing drug market opportunities.
- Participating in other illegal ventures.
- Avoiding law enforcement crackdowns.
- Getting away from the gang life.
- Other reasons.

Although respondents were asked to select the single reason that explained "most" of their gang migration, a substantial percentage checked more than one reason. Due to the frequency of this occurrence, respondents who checked multiple reasons for gang migration were not excluded from the analysis.

The vast majority (70 percent) of respondents cited social factors as the reason why youth gang members migrated to their jurisdictions (see figure 16). Establishing drug markets was the second most cited reason (15 percent), followed by avoiding law enforcement crackdowns (14 percent), participating in illegal ventures other than those related to drugs (12 percent), getting away from the gang life (9 percent), and other reasons (6 percent). Only 54 respondents indicated a reason for the gang migration in their jurisdictions other than those provided in the survey. Reasons that fell into this category varied widely, but most of them qualified as social factors.

Figure 16: Reasons for Gang Migration in 1997



Reasons for gang migration varied somewhat by area type (see appendix L) and population (see appendix M), but no clear trends were apparent. Furthermore, the variations between area types and population categories were not found to be statistically significant for any of the reasons for gang migration provided on the survey.

Regionally, there was slightly more variation for two of the reasons for migration: establishing drug markets and avoiding law enforcement crackdowns (see table 25). The percentage of respondents who indicated that youth gang members migrated to their jurisdictions to establish drug markets ranged from 22 percent in the Midwest to 11 percent in the West. The Northeast had the highest percentage (22 percent) of respondents who reported that youth gang members migrated to their jurisdictions to avoid law enforcement crackdowns, and the South had the lowest percentage (11 percent). These variations were found to be statistically significant.

Table 25: Reasons for Gang Migration in 1997, by Region*

Reason for Gang Migration	Region				
	All Regions	Midwest	Northeast	South	West
Social factors	**853** (70%)	**246** (65%)	**76** (66%)	**295** (71%)	**236** (74%)
Establishing drug markets	**190** (15%)	**84** (22%)	**18** (16%)	**52** (13%)	**36** (11%)
Participating in other illegal ventures	**146** (12%)	**57** (15%)	**14** (12%)	**39** (9%)	**36** (11%)
Avoiding law enforcement crackdowns	**166** (14%)	**49** (13%)	**25** (22%)	**46** (11%)	**46** (14%)
Getting away from gang life	**116** (9%)	**34** (9%)	**6** (5%)	**36** (9%)	**40** (12%)
Other reasons	**74** (6%)	**19** (5%)	**8** (7%)	**23** (6%)	**24** (7%)

* The variation between regions is statistically significant at the 0.05 level for establishing drug markets and avoiding law enforcement crackdowns.

Law enforcement responses

In response to the recent proliferation of gangs throughout the country, law enforcement agencies have modified their structures and resources to address the gang problem. Many agencies have created specialized units to focus specifically on gangs and the crimes they commit. Results of the 1995 National Youth Gang Survey indicated that 64 percent of police departments and 50 percent of sheriff's departments had some type of specialized unit to address the gang problem.

A question concerning the creation of specialized response units was also included in the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey. Respondents who reported active youth gangs in their jurisdictions were asked if their agencies had a youth/street gang unit or officer(s), a gang prevention unit or officer(s), or one unit that combined both types of units.[5] The majority[6] (66 percent) of respondents indicated that they had some type of specialized unit to address the gang problem (see table 26). Respondents were asked to check all choices that applied; therefore, percentages may not total 100 percent. Thirty-five percent reported having a youth/street gang unit or officer(s), 18 percent said they had a gang prevention unit or officer(s), and 29 percent indicated that they had a unit that combined both of the above types of units. Large cities were the most likely (77 percent) to have a specialized response unit, and rural counties were the least likely (34 percent). The variation between area types is statistically significant for all types of response units.

Many agencies have created specialized units to focus specifically on gangs and the crimes they commit.

Compared with the other regions, agencies in the West were more likely to have each type of response unit.

Table 26: Types of Specialized Response Units for Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1997, by Area Type*

Type of Specialized Response Unit	Area Type				
	All Areas	Large City	Small City	Suburban County	Rural County
Youth/street gang unit or officer(s)	**490** (35%)	**344** (44%)	**29** (23%)	**99** (30%)	**18** (11%)
Gang prevention unit or officer(s)	**247** (18%)	**158** (20%)	**16** (13%)	**56** (17%)	**17** (10%)
One unit that combines both of the above types	**403** (29%)	**257** (33%)	**33** (27%)	**89** (27%)	**24** (15%)
None	**479** (34%)	**181** (23%)	**57** (46%)	**134** (41%)	**107** (66%)

Note: Respondents were asked to check all that apply; therefore, percentages do not equal 100 percent.

* The variation between types is statistically significant at the 0.05 level for all types of response units.

Table 27 reveals the types of specialized response units, by region. The vast majority (83 percent)[7] of respondents in the West reported having some type of response unit. Furthermore, compared with the other regions, agencies in the West were more likely to have each type of response unit listed on the survey. The variation between regions is statistically significant for all types of response units except gang prevention units or officers.

Table 27: Types of Specialized Response Units for Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1997, by Region*

Type of Specialized Response Unit	Region				
	All Regions	Midwest	Northeast	South	West
Youth/street gang unit or officer(s)	**490** (35%)	**133** (32%)	**56** (40%)	**152** (30%)	**149** (44%)
Gang prevention unit or officer(s)	**247** (18%)	**72** (17%)	**22** (16%)	**78** (16%)	**75** (22%)
One unit that combines both of the above types	**403** (29%)	**109** (26%)	**36** (26%)	**127** (26%)	**131** (38%)
None	**479** (34%)	**163** (39%)	**54** (38%)	**203** (41%)	**59** (17%)

Notes: Respondents were asked to check all that apply; therefore, percentages do not equal 100 percent. Youth street gang units or officers are more common in the West and Northeast and less common in the Midwest and South. Units that combine both youth street gang units or officers and gang prevention units or officers are most common in the West.

* The variation between regions is statistically significant at the 0.05 level for all types of response units except gang prevention units or officers.

The existence of a specialized response unit also varied directly with population size (see table 28). With few exceptions, the percentage of respondents who reported the existence of a response unit within their agency increased as population

size increased. In the highest population range (250,000 or more), 90 percent of respondents said they had some type of specialized response unit, compared with only 38 percent in the lowest population range (1–9,999).[8] The variation between population categories was found to be statistically significant for each type of specialized response unit.

Table 28: Types of Specialized Response Units for Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1997, by Population Size*

Type of Specialized Response Unit	Population Size						
	All Population Sizes	1–9,999	10,000–24,999	25,000–49,999	50,000–99,999	100,000–249,999	250,000 or more
Youth/street gang unit or officer(s)	**490** (35%)	**32** (19%)	**22** (14%)	**152** (35%)	**123** (35%)	**104** (56%)	**57** (61%)
Gang prevention unit or officer(s)	**247** (18%)	**15** (9%)	**18** (11%)	**84** (19%)	**71** (20%)	**27** (15%)	**32** (34%)
One unit that combines both of the above types	**403** (29%)	**27** (16%)	**39** (24%)	**128** (29%)	**117** (34%)	**58** (31%)	**34** (37%)
None	**479** (34%)	**103** (62%)	**89** (55%)	**156** (36%)	**93** (27%)	**29** (16%)	**9** (10%)

Notes: Respondents were asked to check all that apply; therefore, percentages do not equal 100 percent. Youth street gang units or officers and/or gang prevention units or officers are generally more common in larger population categories.

* The variation between population categories is statistically significant at the 0.05 level for each type of response unit.

Perception of the youth gang problem

Perceptions of gangs, and crime in general, are affected by a number of different factors including, but not limited to, media accounts, crime trends and rates, and, of course, empirical studies. Law enforcement perceptions, in particular, are influenced by the number of criminal incidents and the heinousness of crimes committed by gang members. Therefore, law enforcement perceptions are likely to reflect the level of criminal activity involving gang members in their jurisdictions.

The 1995 National Youth Gang Survey asked respondents about the severity of the youth gang problem in their jurisdictions. Most respondents (49 percent) believed that the problem was getting worse, 41 percent believed that the problem was staying about the same, and only 10 percent believed it was getting better (see figure 17).

In contrast, 45 percent of respondents to the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey believed that the youth gang problem was staying about the same, and 35 percent felt it was worsening, despite the slight decrease in gang activity reported from 1996 to 1997 (see figure 18). Nevertheless, 20 percent of respondents in the 1997 survey indicated that the problem was getting better, which is twice the percentage of respondents who felt the problem was getting better in 1995.[9]

The percentage of respondents who felt the youth gang problem was getting worse was highest in suburban and rural counties and lowest in small cities.

Figure 17: Perceptions of the Youth Gang Problem in 1995

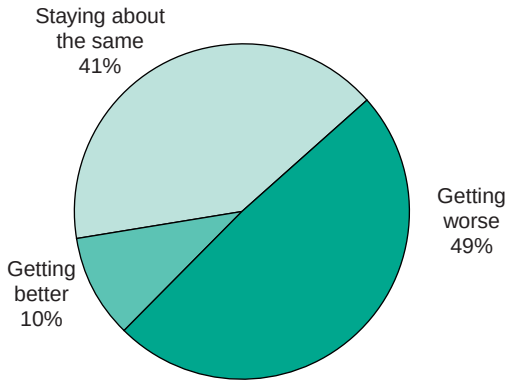


Figure 18: Perceptions of the Youth Gang Problem in 1997

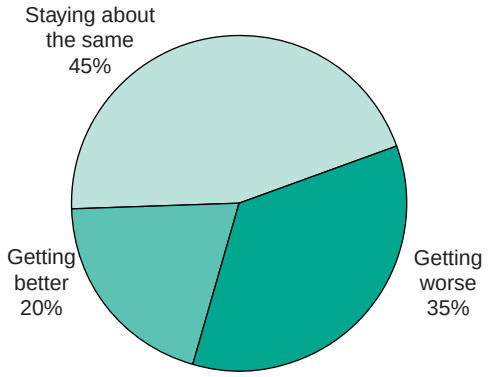


Table 29 illustrates the perceptions of the youth gang problem in 1997, by area type. The percentage of respondents who felt the youth gang problem was getting worse was highest in suburban and rural counties (43 percent) and lowest in small cities (25 percent). The variation between area types was found to be statistically significant.

Perceptions of the youth gang problem also varied between regions (see table 30). Most respondents (42 percent) in the South indicated that the problem was getting worse in their jurisdictions, and only 17 percent felt it was getting better. The Northeast had the highest percentage (24 percent) of respondents who felt the problem was getting better. These variations were found to be statistically significant.

Population size did not have a significant effect on perceptions of the youth gang problem (see table 31). Perceptions generally varied between population categories in a nonlinear fashion, and no clear trends were apparent. The relationship between perceptions of the youth gang problem and population size is not statistically significant.

Table 29: Perceptions of the Youth Gang Problem in 1997, by Area Type*

Perception of the Youth Gang Problem	Area Type				
	All Areas	Large City	Small City	Suburban County	Rural County
Getting worse	**482** (35%)	**240** (31%)	**31** (25%)	**141** (43%)	**70** (43%)
Getting better	**279** (20%)	**188** (24%)	**25** (20%)	**46** (14%)	**20** (12%)
Staying about the same	**627** (45%)	**345** (45%)	**69** (55%)	**141** (43%)	**72** (44%)

Note: The percentage of rural and suburban counties that reported their gang problem was "getting worse" was significantly greater than the overall average of jurisdictions that reported their gang problem was "getting worse."

* The variation between area types is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 30: Perceptions of the Youth Gang Problem in 1997, by Region*

Perception of the Youth Gang Problem	Region				
	All Regions	Midwest	Northeast	South	West
Getting worse	**482** (35%)	**117** (28%)	**48** (35%)	**207** (42%)	**110** (32%)
Getting better	**279** (20%)	**87** (21%)	**33** (24%)	**82** (17%)	**77** (22%)
Staying about the same	**627** (45%)	**210** (51%)	**58** (42%)	**203** (41%)	**156** (45%)

Note: Jurisdictions in the South were more likely than the average to report their gang problem was "getting worse," and jurisdictions in the Midwest were less likely than average to report their gang problem was "getting worse."

* The variation between regions is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 31: Perceptions of the Youth Gang Problem in 1997, by Population Size

Perception of the Youth Gang Problem	Population Size						
	All Population Sizes	1–9,999	10,000–24,999	25,000–49,999	50,000–99,999	100,000–249,999	250,000 or more
Getting worse	**482** (35%)	**64** (38%)	**52** (32%)	**151** (35%)	**116** (33%)	**65** (36%)	**34** (38%)
Getting better	**279** (20%)	**22** (13%)	**34** (21%)	**85** (19%)	**78** (22%)	**38** (21%)	**22** (24%)
Staying about the same	**627** (45%)	**81** (49%)	**79** (48%)	**200** (46%)	**153** (44%)	**80** (44%)	**34** (38%)

Notes: The relationship between the perception of the youth gang problem and population was not statistically significant. The lack of variation or distinct pattern in the overall percentage for population categories makes it difficult to determine whether the gang problem is getting worse, getting better, or staying the same.

An estimated 4,712 cities and counties, more than half of all respondents, reported active youth gangs in 1997.

Summary and Conclusions

The 1997 National Youth Gang Survey was the third annual survey administered by the National Youth Gang Center. Almost 5,000 law enforcement agencies throughout the United States were surveyed, representing the largest national gang survey to date. The majority of survey recipients were part of a statistically representative sample that allowed the data to be extrapolated for the Nation as a whole. The 1997 survey used the same sample as the 1996 survey, allowing both comparative and trend analysis. The data collected from these surveys provide valuable information about the extent of the youth gang problem in the United States.

The findings of the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey are summarized below:

- An estimated 4,712 cities and counties, more than half (51 percent) of all respondents, reported active youth gangs in 1997. This represents a small decrease from 1996, when an estimated 4,824 cities and counties, 53 percent of all respondents, reported active youth gangs. Moreover, small decreases between 1996 and 1997 in the percentage of respondents reporting gangs were found for each area type. Although all of these decreases were small, large cities showed the largest decrease. Large cities continued to have the highest percentage (72 percent) of jurisdictions with active youth gangs, followed by suburban counties (56 percent), small cities (33 percent), and rural counties (24 percent).
- The prevalence of gangs varied considerably by region. The percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs ranged from 74 percent in the West to 31 percent in the Northeast.
- Population also greatly affected the prevalence of active youth gangs in 1997. For all area types, the percentage of jurisdictions with active youth gangs increased as population increased.
- The estimated number of youth gangs and gang members also decreased between 1996 and 1997. In 1997, an estimated 30,500 youth gangs and 815,896 gang members were active in the United States, compared with an estimated 31,818 youth gangs and 846,428 gang members in 1996. Despite these decreases in the overall number of youth gangs and gang members, the estimated number of youth gangs in small cities increased substantially (20.5 percent) between 1996 and 1997. In addition, the estimated number of youth gang members increased by 38.5 percent in rural counties and 5.7 percent in small cities.
- The average number of youth gangs and gang members per jurisdiction increased as population increased in both 1996 and 1997. For cities and counties with populations of 1–9,999, there was considerable growth (percentage-wise) between the relatively low numbers of gangs and gang members reported in 1996 and the low numbers, compared with other population ranges, reported in 1997 (please refer back to table 12 in the text). However, the growth of the gang problem in these less populated areas is cause for concern and deserves further attention. Most population ranges, however, showed a decrease.

- An estimated 3,341 member-based youth gang homicides were committed in the United States in 1997, of which 1,880 were motive-based. Large cities accounted for almost two-thirds of the total estimated number of member-based homicides and nearly three-quarters of the motive-based homicides.
- The crimes respondents most frequently reported as having a high degree of gang member involvement were aggravated assault and larceny/theft (28 percent), followed by motor vehicle theft (27 percent), burglary (26 percent), and robbery (13 percent). However, gang member involvement in all of the above crimes decreased between 1996 and 1997 .
- Approximately 42 percent of the youth gangs in the United States were involved in the street sale of drugs for the purpose of generating profits for the gang. The average percentage of youth gangs involved in the street sale of drugs was higher in large cities and suburban counties than in small cities and rural counties. Regionally, the average percentages ranged from 50 percent in the Northeast to 30 percent in the West. The percentage of youth gangs involved in the street sale of drugs also varied directly with population.
- Approximately 33 percent of youth gangs in the country were estimated to be involved in drug distribution for the purpose of generating profits for the gang. The average percentage of youth gangs involved in drug distribution was highest in large cities (31 percent), followed by suburban counties (29 percent), rural counties (29 percent), and small cities (25 percent). Additionally, youth gangs involved in drug distribution were most prevalent in the Midwest (35 percent) and least prevalent in the West (21 percent). Population size had little effect on the percentage of youth gangs involved in drug distribution.
- Respondents estimated that, nationwide, youth gang members were responsible for 33 percent of crack cocaine sales, 32 percent of marijuana sales, 16 percent of powder cocaine sales, 12 percent of methamphetamine sales, and 9 percent of heroin sales. The average percentages of crack cocaine and heroin sales varied significantly between area types and were highest in large cities and suburban counties. Additionally, sales of crack cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine by youth gang members varied significantly by region. Crack cocaine sales were most prevalent in the Midwest (38 percent), heroin sales were most prevalent in the Northeast (15 percent), and methamphetamine sales were most prevalent in the West (21 percent).
- Nationwide, gang migration increased between 1996 and 1997. Eighty-nine percent of respondents indicated that they experienced some gang migration into their jurisdictions during 1997, up from 84 percent in 1996. In addition, approximately 23 percent of youth gang members in the country were estimated to be migrants in 1997, up from 21 percent in 1996. In both years, the average percentage of youth gang migrants was highest in small cities and jurisdictions in the Midwest.
- The vast majority (70 percent) of respondents cited social factors as reasons why youth gang members migrated to their jurisdictions. Establishing drug markets was the second most cited reason (15 percent), followed by avoiding law enforcement crackdowns (14 percent), participating in illegal ventures other than those related to drugs (12 percent), getting away from the gang life (9 percent), and other reasons (6 percent).

Nationwide, gang migration increased between 1996 and 1997.

Despite the slight decrease in gang activity between 1996 and 1997, most respondents felt that the gang problem in their jurisdictions in 1997 was staying about the same.

- Approximately two-thirds of respondents indicated that their agencies had some type of specialized response unit to address their gang problem. Thirty-five percent reported having a youth/street gang unit or officer(s), 18 percent said they had a gang prevention unit or officer(s), and 29 percent indicated they had a unit that combined both types of response. Large cities and jurisdictions in the West were the most likely to have a specialized response unit. In addition, the prevalence of specialized response units increased as population increased.
- Despite the slight decrease in gang activity between 1996 and 1997, most respondents (45 percent) felt that the gang problem in their jurisdictions in 1997 was staying about the same, 35 percent indicated it was getting worse, and 20 percent felt it was getting better. In contrast, 49 percent of respondents to the 1995 survey believed that their problem was getting worse, 41 percent said it was staying about the same, and 10 percent reported it was getting better. Most suburban and rural county respondents (43 percent) to the 1997 survey felt their youth gang problem was getting worse. Regionally, respondents in the South believed their gang problem worsened in 1997.

The National Youth Gang Center will continue to analyze these data, and subsequent surveys will gather additional information in areas that require further examination. Other researchers also will have access to the NYGC database for analysis.

Endnotes

1. The terms “large cities” and “small cities” were assigned to the two groups of cities used in the sample for ease of reference. However, most cities in the “large cities” group have populations under 100,000 and may not be considered large cities by most observers.
2. A list of cities and their populations was obtained from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. A list of agencies whose jurisdictions are considered suburban counties and rural counties was obtained from *Crime in the United States, 1994: Uniform Crime Reports*, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1995, pp. 167–189.
3. For its own purposes, the Bureau of the Census sometimes divides cities and towns into segments. However, for the purposes of this survey, the entire population of each city and town was used.
4. This figure was weighted for the number of gang members reported in each jurisdiction.
5. Respondents were asked to check all that apply; therefore, the average percentages for this question do not equal 100 percent.
6. Percentages in parentheses were calculated by subtracting the percentage of agencies reporting “none” (see table 26) from 100 percent.
7. These percentages were calculated by subtracting the percentage of agencies reporting “none” (see table 27) from 100 percent.

8. These percentages were calculated by subtracting the percentage of agencies reporting "none" (see table 28) from 100 percent.
9. The reader is reminded that the 1995 and 1997 samples were composed of different respondents; therefore, caution should be used when drawing conclusions about comparisons of data from the 2 years.

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Appendix A: 1997 National Youth Gang Survey Form for the Representative Sample

Your agency has been selected to furnish information for the **1997** National Youth Gang Survey. Your answers statistically represent those of hundreds of other law enforcement agencies that will not be surveyed—so your response is very important. **Please return the survey by August 31, 1998.**

Please return the completed survey form by fax or by mail to:

National Youth Gang Center
Institute for Intergovernmental Research
Post Office Box 12729
Tallahassee, FL 32317–2729
Telephone Number: 800–446–0912
Fax Number: 888–323–7305 *(This is a toll-free fax number.)*

Survey Instructions

1. Please report data for **Calendar Year 1997** (January 1 through December 31).
2. For the purpose of this survey, a "youth gang" is defined as: *a group of youths or young adults in your jurisdiction that you or other responsible persons in your agency or community are willing to identify or classify as a "gang."* **Do not** include motorcycle gangs, hate or ideology groups, prison gangs, or other exclusively adult gangs. Please base your responses on your records, your personal knowledge, and/or consultations with other agency personnel who are familiar with youth gangs.
3. Police departments should report only for their city/town.
4. Sheriff's departments should report ***only for their unincorporated service area and any contracted jurisdictions.***

SAMPLE

Agency Information

1. Name of Jurisdiction Served (City, Town, *or* County): _____
2. Law Enforcement Agency Name: _____
3. Agency Mailing Address:

   Street: _____

   City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
4. Name of Person Completing Survey:

   First Name: _____ MI: ____ Last Name: _____
5. Title/Rank: _____
6. Telephone Number, With Area Code: _____ –_____–_____
7. Fax Number, With Area Code: _____ –_____–_____

8a. Is your agency part of a Multijurisdictional Gang Task Force?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

8b. If so, do the responses to this survey include the other jurisdictions in the Task Force?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

8c. If your responses **do** include other jurisdictions, please list the names of other law enforcement agencies in the Multijurisdictional Gang Task Force:

Survey Questions

1. During **1997**, were any youth gangs active in the city, town, or county served by your agency?

   Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Do not know** ☐

IF YOU ANSWERED "YES" TO QUESTION 1, PLEASE CONTINUE.

IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" or "DO NOT KNOW" TO QUESTION 1, THAT COMPLETES THE SURVEY. PLEASE RETURN THE FORM BY MAIL OR FAX.

2. How many youth ***gangs*** (as defined in the survey instructions) were active in your jurisdiction during **1997?**

   Number of active youth gangs: _____ Do not know:____

3. What was the total number of active youth **gang members** in your jurisdiction during **1997?**

   Number of active youth gang members: _____ Do not know: ____

Questions 4–6 ask about the sale and distribution of drugs in your jurisdiction. For the purpose of this survey, "street sales" refers to the sale of drugs in small quantities that have already been prepared for consumption. Drug "distribution" refers to the purchase or transfer of large quantities of drugs which are divided into small quantities to be sold on the street.

4. In your jurisdiction in **1997,** what percent of the **street sales** of each of the following drugs were made by youth gang members?

Powder Cocaine:	_____%	**Do not know** ____
Crack Cocaine:	_____%	**Do not know** ____
Marijuana:	_____%	**Do not know** ____
Heroin:	_____%	**Do not know** ___
Methamphetamine:	_____%	**Do not know** ____
Other:_____	_____%	**Do not know** ____
Other:_____	_____%	**Do not know** ____

SAMPLE

5. What percent of youth gangs in your jurisdiction are involved in the **street sales** of drugs for the purpose of generating profits for the gang?

   _____% **Do not know: ____**

6. What percent of youth gangs in your jurisdiction are involved in the **distribution** of drugs for the purpose of generating profits for the gang?

   _____% **Do not know: ____**

In question 7, you are asked to comment on "migration" by youth gang members. "Migration" includes temporary visits for social or criminal purposes as well as longer stays, including permanent moves for any reason. By definition, gang migrants have already joined gangs in their former jurisdiction prior to their arrival in a new jurisdiction.

7a. What proportion of the gang members in your jurisdiction are estimated to be migrants?

   _____% **Do not know: ____**

7b. Which one of the following reasons explains **most** of the migration you have had into your jurisdiction? *(Check only one of the following.)*

- ☐ **Social (e.g., move with families, to find legitimate job opportunities, to join relatives, or to join friends)**
- ☐ **To establish drug market opportunities**
- ☐ **To participate in other illegal ventures**
- ☐ **To avoid law enforcement crackdowns**
- ☐ **To get away from the gang life**
- ☐ **Other reasons *(Please identify)*** _____

  _____

SAMPLE

Questions 8–10 ask about crimes committed by youth gang members. For the purpose of this survey, gang crime is defined as:

Member-Based—A crime in which a gang member(s) is either the perpetrator or the victim, regardless of the motive; or

Motive-Based—A crime committed by a gang member(s) in which the underlying reason is to further the interests and activities of the gang.

8. Which of these gang crime definitions does your agency most frequently use?

- ☐ **Member-Based**
- ☐ **Motive-Based**
- ☐ **Other *(Please define):*** _____

  _____

9. How many **member-based** homicides involving youth gang members do you estimate occurred in your jurisdiction in **1997**?

   Number of member-based homicides: ____ Do not know: ____

10. Out of the number of member-based homicides you indicated in **Question 9,** how many motive-based homicides involving youth gang members do you estimate occurred in your jurisdiction in **1997**?

    Number of motive-based homicides: ____ Do not know: ____

11. Please estimate the degree to which youth gang members engaged in the following offenses in your jurisdiction in **1997**. *(Please circle your response.)*

Offense	**Degree**			
Aggravated Assault	High	Medium	Low	Not involved
Robbery	High	Medium	Low	Not involved
Burglary	High	Medium	Low	Not involved
Motor Vehicle Theft	High	Medium	Low	Not involved
Larceny/Theft	High	Medium	Low	Not involved

12. Does your agency have the following? (Check all that apply)

    ☐ **Youth/Street Gang Unit or officer(s)**

    ☐ **Gang Prevention Unit or officer(s)**

    ☐ **One unit that combines both of the above types**

    ☐ **None**

    ☐ **Do not know**

13. In your opinion, are your youth gang problems:

    ☐ **Getting worse?**

    ☐ **Getting better?**

    ☐ **Staying about the same?**

    ☐ **Do not know**

14. Which of the following best describes how your answers to this survey were derived?

    ☐ **Official records** (i.e., automated databases, crime/arrest reports)

    ☐ **Estimates** (i.e., past experience, personal knowledge)

    ☐ **Both**

SAMPLE

Appendix B: Abbreviated 1997 National Youth Gang Survey Form for the Comparative Sample

Survey Instructions

In the 1995 and 1996 National Youth Gang Surveys, your agency furnished information that contributed to a better understanding of the scope of youth gang problems in the United States. We ask you to update the data for **1997** by answering the questions on page 2.

1. Please report data for **Calendar Year 1997** (January 1 through December 31).
2. For the purpose of this survey, a "youth gang" is defined as: *a group of youths or young adults in your jurisdiction that you or other responsible persons in your agency or community are willing to identify or classify as a "gang."* **Do not** include motorcycle gangs, hate or ideology groups, prison gangs, or other exclusively adult gangs. Please base your responses on your records, your personal knowledge, and/or consultations with other agency personnel who are familiar with youth gangs.
3. Police departments should report only for their city/town.
4. Sheriff's departments should report ***only for their unincorporated service area and any contracted jurisdictions.***

Please return the completed survey form by fax or by mail to:

National Youth Gang Center
Institute for Intergovernmental Research
Post Office Box 12729
Tallahassee, FL 32317–2729
Telephone Number: 800–446–0912
Fax Number: 888–323–7305 *(This is a toll-free fax number.)*

SAMPLE

Agency Information

1. Name of Jurisdiction Served (City, Town, *or* County):_____
2. Law Enforcement Agency Name: _____
3. Agency Mailing Address:

   Street: _____

   City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
4. Name of Person Completing Survey:

   First Name: _____ MI: ____ Last Name: _____
5. Title/Rank: _____
6. Telephone Number, With Area Code: _____ –_____–_____
7. Fax Number, With Area Code: _____ –_____–_____

Survey Questions

1. During **1997,** were any youth gangs active in the city, town, or county served by your agency?

   Yes ☐ **No** ☐

2. In your jurisdiction in **1997,** on the basis of records or your best estimate, what was the number of:

   Active Youth Gangs? _____ **Do not know:** _____

   Youth Gang Members? _____ **Do not know:** _____

SAMPLE

Appendix C: Random Sample Selection Methodology

Two random samples were constructed for the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey: (1) cities and towns with populations between 2,500 and 25,000 (small cities) and (2) rural counties. These samples were also used for the 1996 National Youth Gang Survey.

On previous surveys, the response rate for cities with populations of more than 150,000 has been as high as 91.3 percent. The response rate for cities with populations between 25,000 and 150,000 was estimated using a random sample of municipalities in that size range that were surveyed as part of the 1994 National Institute of Justice survey conducted by Curry et al. (1996). The response rate of those cities to the 1995 National Youth Gang Survey was estimated to be 74.5 percent. All of the above computations for the proposed sample size assumed a response rate of 75 percent.

The estimated required sample size *n* was derived using the formula:

$$n = \frac{t^2 NPQ}{(d^2 (N-1) + t^2 PQ)}$$

Where:

- *t* is the abscissa of the normal curve that cuts off an area of α at the tails.
- *N* is the true population size.
- *P* is the true proportion of the population with a specific characteristic.
- *Q* is the true proportion of the population without a specific characteristic or (1–P).
- *d* is an acceptable error of size that can be incurred at probability α.

This computing formula is derived from the formula provided by Cochran's *Sampling Techniques* (1977) for sample size *n* required for producing an error of size *d* at a specific probability α. Cochran uses *t*, the abscissa of the normal curve that cuts off an area of α at the tails to produce the formula:

$$n = \frac{\frac{t^2 PQ}{d^2}}{1 + \frac{1}{N}\left(\frac{t^2 PQ}{d^2} - 1\right)}$$

All the terms in the computing formula are presented in a form equivalent to those in Cochran's formula.

An error rate *d* was computed as 5 percent. The probability α of an estimated error being greater than *d* used in the computations above is 0.05. All computations are based on an estimated true population of *P*=0.5 and *Q*=0.5 because this results in the most conservative and largest estimates for required samples for each stratum.

Appendix D: Population Categories Used for Estimating the Average Number of Youth Gangs and Gang Members, Based on Population of Nonrespondents

Population	Average Number of Gangs	Population	Average Number of Gang Members
Large Cities		**Large Cities**	
25,000–74,999	4.45	25,000–74,999	89.82
75,000–124,999	10.69	75,000–124,999	438.48
150,000–249,999	20.58	150,000–249,999	740.94
175,000–424,999	38.00	175,000–424,999	1341.71
225,000–474,999	57.67	225,000–474,999	2081.31
225,000–574,999	58.69	225,000–574,999	2141.32
275,000–824,999	70.89	275,000–824,999	2597.24
Suburban Counties		**Suburban Counties**	
0–49,999	3.02	0–49,999	47.87
50,000–99,999	6.53	50,000–99,999	273.79
100,000–149,999	14.62	100,000–149,999	397.80
125,000–224,999	25.10	125,000–224,999	628.49
150,000–299,999	29.45	125,000–324,999	753.67
150,000–399,999	32.66	150,000–399,999	933.76
175,000–474,999	32.43	150,000–499,999	874.72
175,000–574,999	30.25	150,000–599,999	856.50
175,000–674,999	33.69	150,000–699,999	956.24
200,000–749,999	28.25	150,000–799,999	956.2

Appendix E: Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1997

This list is not comprehensive. Jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs in 1997 listed for large cities and suburban counties include only those that responded to the survey. Jurisdictions reporting for small cities and rural counties were part of a random sample and statistically represent many other jurisdictions that had active youth gangs in 1997 but are unnamed.

Large Cities

Alabama

Anniston
Auburn
Bessemer
Birmingham
Decatur
Dothan
Florence
Gadsden
Huntsville
Mobile
Montgomery
Phenix City
Tuscaloosa

Alaska

Anchorage
Fairbanks
Juneau

Arizona

Bullhead City
Chandler
Flagstaff
Gilbert
Glendale
Lake Havasu City
Mesa
Peoria
Phoenix
Prescott
Scottsdale
Sierra Vista
Tempe
Tucson
Yuma

Arkansas

Conway
Fort Smith
Hot Springs
Jacksonville
Jonesboro
Little Rock
North Little Rock
Pine Bluff
Rogers
Springdale

California

Alameda
Alhambra
Anaheim
Antioch
Arcadia
Azusa
Bakersfield
Bell
Bell Gardens
Belmont
Berkeley
Brea
Buena Park
Burbank
Burlingame
Carlsbad
Cathedral
Ceres
Chino
Chula Vista
Claremont
Clovis
Colton
Corona
Costa Mesa
Covina
Culver City
Cypress
Daly City
Downey
East Palo Alto
El Cajon
El Centro
El Monte
Escondido
Eureka
Fontana
Fountain Valley
Fremont
Fresno
Garden Grove
Gardena
Gilroy
Glendale
Hemet
Huntington Beach
Huntington Park
Inglewood
Irvine
La Habra
Livermore
Lodi
Lompoc
Long Beach
Los Altos
Los Angeles
Madera
Manhattan Beach
Manteca
Maywood
Menlo Park
Merced
Milpitas
Monrovia
Montclair
Monterey Park
Morgan Hill
Mountain View
Napa
National City
Newark
Newport Beach
Oakland
Oceanside
Ontario
Orange
Oxnard
Palo Alto
Paradise
Pasadena
Petaluma
Pittsburg
Placentia
Pleasant Hill
Pomona
Porterville
Redding
Redlands
Redondo Beach
Redwood City
Rialto
Richmond
Ridgecrest
Riverside
Rohnert Park
Roseville
Sacramento
Salinas
San Bernardino
San Bruno
San Diego
San Francisco
San Gabriel
San Jose
San Leandro
San Mateo
Santa Ana
Santa Barbara
Santa Clara
Santa Cruz
Santa Monica
Santa Paula
Santa Rosa
Simi Valley

South Gate
South San Francisco
Stockton
Suisun City
Sunnyvale
Torrance
Tracy
Tulare
Turlock
Tustin
Union City
Upland
Vacaville
Vallejo
Ventura
Visalia
Watsonville
West Covina
Westminster
Whittier
Woodland
Yuba City

Colorado

Arvada
Aurora
Broomfield
Colorado Springs
Denver
Englewood
Fort Collins
Grand Junction
Greeley
Lakewood
Littleton
Longmont
Loveland
Northglenn
Pueblo
Thornton
Wheat Ridge

Connecticut

Branford
Bridgeport
Bristol
Danbury
East Hartford
Groton
Hamden
Hartford
Meriden
Naugatuck
New Britain
New Haven
Norwalk
Shelton
Stamford
Stratford
Wallingford
Waterbury
West Hartford
West Haven

Delaware

Dover
Wilmington

Florida

Altamonte Springs
Boca Raton
Boynton Beach
Bradenton
Cape Coral
Coconut Creek
Coral Springs
Davie
Daytona Beach
Delray Beach
Fort Lauderdale
Fort Myers
Hallandale
Hialeah
Hollywood
Jacksonville
Jupiter
Kissimmee
Lake Worth
Lakeland
Largo
Lauderhill
Margate
Melbourne
Miami
Miami Beach
Miramar
North Lauderdale
North Miami
North Miami Beach
Oakland Park
Ocala
Orlando
Ormond Beach
Palm Bay
Palm Beach Gardens
Pensacola
Pinellas Park
Plantation
Pompano Beach
Riviera Beach
Sanford
Sarasota
St. Petersburg
Tallahassee
Tampa
Titusville
West Palm Beach
Winter Haven

Georgia

Albany
Atlanta
Columbus
Hinesville
Lagrange
Macon
Marietta
Rome
Roswell
Savannah
Smyrna
Valdosta
Warner Robins

Idaho

Boise
Coeur d'Alene
Nampa
Pocatello

Illinois

Addison
Arlington Heights
Aurora
Bartlett
Belleville
Berwyn
Bloomington
Bolingbrook
Buffalo Grove
Carbondale
Carol Stream
Chicago
Crystal Lake
Danville
De Kalb
Decatur
Des Plaines
Dolton
East St. Louis
Elgin
Evanston
Freeport
Galesburg
Glendale Heights
Glenview
Hanover Park
Harvey
Hoffman Estates
Joliet
Kankakee
Lombard
Maywood
Moline
Mount Prospect
Naperville
Niles
Normal
North Chicago
Oak Lawn
Oak Park
Palatine
Park Forest
Park Ridge
Pekin
Peoria
Quincy
Rock Island
Rockford
Schaumburg
Skokie
Springfield
St. Charles
Streamwood
Tinley Park
Urbana
Wheaton
Woodridge

Indiana

Anderson
Bloomington
Columbus
East Chicago
Elkhart
Evansville
Fort Wayne
Gary

Goshen
Greenwood
Hammond
Indianapolis
Kokomo
Lafayette
Lawrence
Marion
Merrillville
Michigan City
Mishawaka
Muncie
New Albany
Richmond
South Bend
Valparaiso

Iowa

Burlington
Cedar Rapids
Clinton
Council Bluffs
Davenport
Des Moines
Dubuque
Iowa City
Mason City
Urbandale
Waterloo

Kansas

Emporia
Hutchinson
Kansas City
Lawrence
Olathe
Overland Park
Salina
Topeka
Wichita

Kentucky

Bowling Green
Covington
Frankfort
Henderson
Louisville
Owensboro

Louisiana

Alexandria
Baton Rouge
Bossier City
Houma
Kenner
Lafayette
Monroe
New Iberia
New Orleans

Maine

Lewiston
Portland

Maryland

Baltimore
Frederick

Massachusetts

Amherst
Attleboro
Billerica
Boston
Brookline
Chelmsford
Chicopee
Dracut
Everett
Fall River
Fitchburg
Haverhill
Lawrence
Leominster
Lowell
Lynn
Malboro
Malden
Methuen
New Bedford
Northampton
Pittsfield
Revere
Somerville
Springfield
Taunton
Tewksbury
Waltham
Wellesley
West Springfield
Westfield
Woburn
Worcester

Michigan

Allen Park
Ann Arbor
Battle Creek
Burton
Canton
Chesterfield
Dearborn
Dearborn Heights
Detroit
East Lansing
Eastpointe
Farmington Hills
Flint
Flint Township
Grand Rapids
Holland
Jackson
Kalamazoo
Kentwood
Lansing
Muskegon
Port Huron
Portage
Roseville
Saginaw
St. Clair Shores
Shelby Township
Southfield
Southgate
Sterling Heights
Troy
Warren
Waterford

Minnesota

Apple Valley
Bloomington
Brooklyn Center
Brooklyn Park
Burnsville
Coon Rapids
Cottage Grove
Eagan
Edina
Lakeville
Maplewood
Minneapolis
Moorhead
Plymouth
Richfield
Rochester
St. Cloud
St. Paul
St. Louis Park
Winona

Mississippi

Biloxi
Columbus
Hattiesburg
Pascagoula
Tupelo
Vicksburg

Missouri

Cape Girardeau
Gladstone
Independence
Kansas City
St. Joseph
St. Louis
Springfield
University City

Montana

Billings
Bozeman
Great Falls
Missoula

Nebraska

Bellevue
Grand Island
Kearney
Lincoln
Omaha

Nevada

Henderson
Las Vegas
North Las Vegas
Reno
Sparks

New Hampshire

Derry

New Jersey

Bayonne
Belleville
Brick
East Orange
Edison
Fair Lawn
Fort Lee
Hamilton
Howell
Irvington

Jersey City
Kearny
Lakewood
Linden
Long Branch
Manalapan
Millville
Montclair
Neptune
New Brunswick
Newark
North Bergen
Orange
Parsippany
Paterson
Perth Amboy
Teaneck
Trenton
Union
Union City
West New York

New Mexico

Alamogordo
Albuquerque
Clovis
Farmington
Hobbs
Las Cruces
Rio Rancho
Roswell
Santa Fe

New York

Albany
Buffalo
Cicero
Cortlandt Manor
Freeport
Hempstead
Jamestown
Long Beach
New York
Rochester
Rockville Centre
Schenectady
Syracuse
Troy
Yonkers

North Carolina

Charlotte
Durham
Fayetteville
Gastonia
Greensboro
Greenville
High Point
Kinston
Salisbury
Wilmington
Winston Salem

North Dakota

Bismarck
Fargo
Grand Forks

Ohio

Akron
Barberton
Bowling Green
Canton
Cincinnati
Cleveland
Cleveland Heights
Columbus
East Cleveland
Elyria
Fairborn
Findlay
Huber Heights
Kent
Lakewood
Lorain
Mansfield
Marion
Middletown
Newark
Reynoldsburg
Springfield
Stow
Toledo
Upper Arlington
Westerville
Youngstown

Oklahoma

Broken Arrow
Edmond
Enid
Lawton
Midwest City
Moore
Muskogee
Norman
Oklahoma City
Shawnee
Stillwater
Tulsa

Oregon

Albany
Beaverton
Eugene
Hillsboro
Keizer
Medford
Portland
Salem
Springfield

Pennsylvania

Allentown
Bensalem
Chester
Erie
Harrisburg
Lower Paxton
Philadelphia
Scranton
Upper Darby
Wilkes-Barre

Rhode Island

Coventry
Cranston
East Providence
North Providence
Providence

South Carolina

Myrtle Beach
Rock Hill
Spartanburg

South Dakota

Aberdeen
Rapid City
Sioux Falls

Tennessee

Bartlett
Chattanooga
Clarksville
Cleveland
Columbia
Cookeville
Franklin
Hendersonville
Johnson City
Kingsport
Knoxville
Memphis
Murfreesboro
Nashville
Oak Ridge

Texas

Abilene
Allen
Amarillo
Arlington
Austin
Baytown
Beaumont
Bedford
Bryan
Carrollton
College Station
Conroe
Copperas Cove
Corpus Christi
De Soto
Del Rio
Denton
Duncanville
Edinburg
El Paso
Euless
Fort Worth
Galveston
Garland
Grapevine
Haltom City
Harlingen
Houston
Huntsville
Irving
Killeen
Kingsville
La Porte
Lake Jackson
Laredo
League City
Lewisville
Longview
Lubbock
Lufkin
McAllen
Mesquite
Midland

Nacogdoches
New Braunfels
North Richland Hills
Odessa
Pasadena
Plano
Port Arthur
Richardson
Round Rock
Rowlett
San Antonio
San Marcos
Sherman
Sugar Land
Temple
Texarkana
Texas City
Waco

Utah

Bountiful
Layton
Logan
Murray
St. George
Salt Lake City
Sandy
West Jordan
West Valley City

Virginia

Alexandria
Blacksburg
Chesapeake
Manassas
Newport News
Norfolk
Portsmouth
Virginia Beach

Washington

Auburn
Bellevue
Bellingham
Everett
Kennewick
Kirkland
Puyallup
Renton
Seattle
Spokane
Tacoma
Vancouver
Walla Walla
Yakima

West Virginia

Charleston
Parkersburg

Wisconsin

Appleton
Beloit
Brookfield
Eau Claire
Fond Du Lac
Green Bay
Janesville
Kenosha
La Crosse
Madison
Milwaukee
New Berlin
Oshkosh
Racine
Sheboygan
Superior
Waukesha
Wausau
West Allis
West Bend

Wyoming

Cheyenne
Laramie

Small Cities

Alabama

Bridgeport
Chickasaw
Midfield
Trussville

Arizona

San Luis
Show Low
Somerton

Arkansas

Hamburg

California

Calipatria
Dixon
Farmersville
Firebaugh
Half Moon Bay
Huron
Los Banos
Needles
Red Bluff

Connecticut

Cromwell

Florida

Alachua
Edgewater
Greenacres
Lake City
Madison
Mount Dora
Wildwood

Georgia

Dawson
Forest Park
Pelham

Idaho

Rexburg

Illinois

Coal Valley
Country Club Hills
Crest Hill
Edwardsville
Gillespie
Glen Carbon
Knoxville
Libertyville
Madison
Marseilles
Morton Grove
North Aurora
Plainfield
Prospect Heights
Richton Park
Riverside
Sterling
Wauconda
Westmont
Winfield
Winthrop Harbor

Indiana

Petersburg

Iowa

Grinnell

Kansas

Arkansas City
Paola
Roeland Park

Kentucky

Franklin
London

Louisiana

Bunkie
Haynesville

Maine

Brunswick
Fort Fairfield

Massachusetts

Holden

Michigan

Almont
Marshall
Menominee
Monroe

Minnesota

Lindstrom
South St. Paul
Waseca

Mississippi

Booneville
Nettleton
Winona

Missouri

Crystal City
Festus
North Kansas City
Pevely

New Jersey

Asbury Park
Newton
Tuckerton
Wyckoff

New Mexico

Deming
Lovington

New York
Malone
Oxford
Scotia
South Nyack
Spring Valley

North Carolina
Raeford

Ohio
Cardington
Fostoria
Kenton
Mason
Napoleon
Piqua

Oklahoma
Fort Gibson
Tecumseh

Oregon
Ontario
Pendleton

Pennsylvania
Palmerton

South Carolina
Belton

South Dakota
Winner

Tennessee
Camden
Clinton

Texas
Crockett
Gladewater
Los Fresnos
Needville
Richmond

Utah
Centerville
Roosevelt
Salt Lake City
Spanish Fork
Springville

Virginia
Waynesboro

Washington
Blaine
Chelan
Ferndale
Lacey
Mount Vernon
Steilacoom

Wisconsin
Horicon
Little Chute
New Holstein
Shawano

Wyoming
Rock Springs

Suburban Counties

Alabama
Autauga
Baldwin
Calhoun
Colbert
Jefferson
Lawrence
Limestone
Madison
Russell
Shelby
Tuscaloosa

Arizona
Maricopa
Mohave
Pinal
Yuma

Arkansas
Benton
Crittenden
Lonoke
Pulaski
Sebastian
Washington

California
Butte
Contra Costa
El Dorado
Fresno
Kern
Los Angeles
Madera
Marin
Merced
Monterey
Napa
Orange
Placer
Sacramento
San Diego
San Joaquin
San Luis Obispo
San Mateo
Santa Clara
Santa Cruz
Sonoma
Stanislaus
Sutter
Tulare
Ventura
Yolo
Yuba

Colorado
Arapahoe
Douglas
El Paso
Jefferson
Larimer
Weld

Florida
Alachua
Bay
Brevard
Broward
Clay
Collier
Dade
Escambia
Flagler
Hillsborough
Lake
Lee
Leon
Manatee
Nassau
Okaloosa
Orange
Osceola
Pasco
Pinellas
Polk
St. Johns
Santa Rosa
Sarasota
Seminole

Georgia
Cherokee
Clayton
Cobb
Columbia
De Kalb
Douglas
Fayette
Gwinnett
Henry
Jones
Madison
Newton
Paulding
Rockdale
Spalding
Twiggs
Walker
Walton

Idaho
Ada
Canyon

Illinois
Boone
Cook
De Kalb
Grundy
Kane
Kankakee
Kendall
Macon
McHenry
McLean
Menard
Ogle
Peoria
Rock Island
St. Clair
Sangamon
Tazewell
Will
Winnebago

Indiana
Allen
Clark

Delaware
Elkhart
Lake
Marion
Porter
St. Joseph
Tippecanoe
Warrick

Iowa

Dallas
Linn
Polk
Woodbury

Kansas

Butler
Harvey
Johnson
Sedgwick

Kentucky

Bell
Boone
Bullitt
Butler
Campbell
Christian
Daviess
Grant
Oldham

Louisiana

Ascension
Bossier
Caddo
Calcasieu
East Baton Rouge
Jefferson
Rapides
St. Charles
St. James
St. Landry
Webster

Maryland

Baltimore
Charles
Frederick
Harford
Howard
Montgomery
Prince Georges

Michigan

Berrien
Eaton
Ingham
Kalamazoo
Kent
Lenawee
Macomb
Midland
Monroe
Muskegon
Oakland
Ottawa
Van Buren
Washtenaw
Wayne

Minnesota

Dakota
Hennepin
Olmsted
Ramsey
St. Louis

Mississippi

Forrest
Harrison
Madison

Missouri

Buchanan
Clay
Jackson
Jefferson
Lincoln
St. Charles
St. Louis

Montana

Yellowstone

Nebraska

Cass
Dakota
Douglas
Sarpy

Nevada

Washoe

New Jersey

Camden
Essex
Ocean
Warren

New Mexico

Dona Ana
Sandoval

New York

Broome
Genesee
Monroe
Onondaga
Schenectady
Suffolk

North Carolina

Brunswick
Buncombe
Burke
Catawba
Cumberland
Durham
Forsyth
Gaston
Guilford
Johnston
New Hanover
Onslow
Pitt
Rowan
Yadkin

North Dakota

Cass
Grand Forks

Ohio

Allen
Ashtabula
Clermont
Columbiana
Franklin
Greene
Hamilton
Jefferson
Licking
Lorain
Mahoning
Medina
Miami
Montgomery
Portage
Wood
Oklahoma
Cleveland

Oklahoma

Pottawatomie

Oregon

Clackamas
Columbia
Lane
Multnomah
Washington

Pennsylvania

Beaver
Westmoreland

South Carolina

Aiken
Berkeley
Cherokee
Edgefield
Greenville
Lexington
Spartanburg
Sumter

South Dakota

Minnehaha
Pennington

Tennessee

Knox
Loudon
Rutherford
Sullivan

Texas

Bastrop
Bexar
Brazoria
Brazos
Dallas
Denton
Ector
El Paso
Ellis
Fort Bend
Galveston
Guadalupe
Harris
Hays
Hidalgo
Johnson

Lubbock
Montgomery
Nueces
Orange
Rockwall
San Patricio
Tarrant
Tom Green
Travis
Victoria
Webb
Williamson

Utah

Davis
Salt Lake
Utah
Weber

Virginia

Albemarle
Arlington
Bedford
Chesterfield
Fairfax
Fauquier
Gloucester
Goochland
Henrico
Loudoun
New Kent
Prince William
Spotsylvania

Washington

Benton
Clark
Franklin
King
Kitsap
Spokane
Thurston
Whatcom
Yakima

West Virginia

Brooke
Cabell
Wood

Wisconsin

Brown
Dane
Eau Claire
Kenosha
Marathon
Milwaukee
Ozaukee
Pierce
Washington
Waukesha
Winnebago

Wyoming

Laramie

Rural Counties

Alabama

De Kalb
Greene
Marengo
Sumter
Talladega

Arizona

Greenlee
Yavapai

Arkansas

Chicot
Garland
Ouachita
Phillips
Prairie
St. Francis

California

Colusa
Humboldt
Lake
Tehama

Colorado

Bent
Costilla
Custer
Morgan
Park
Summit

Florida

Bradford
Highlands
Monroe
Putnam
Sumter
Wakulla

Georgia

Brooks
Butts
Clinch
Coffee
Crawford
Forsyth
Glynn
Habersham
Hancock
Stephens
Talbot
Tift
Union
White
Wilkinson

Idaho

Jerome
Kootenai
Madison
Teton

Illinois

Moultrie
Williamson

Indiana

Bartholomew
Grant
Noble
Orange
Steuben
Union
Wabash

Iowa

Emmet

Kansas

Coffey
Jackson
Jefferson
Riley
Seward
Stanton

Kentucky

Marshall
Owen

Louisiana

Claiborne
East Carroll
Washington

Maine

Kennebec

Michigan

Houghton
Iosco
Mackinac
Newaygo
Tuscola

Minnesota

Carlton
Chippewa
Goodhue
Itasca
Meeker
Waseca
Watonwan
Yellow Medicine

Mississippi

Bolivar
Copiah
Hancock
Kemper
Pearl River
Perry
Scott
Tippah
Wayne

Missouri

Cape Girardeau
Dent
Douglas
Howell
McDonald
Mississippi
Pike
Pulaski
St. Francois

Montana

Hill

Nebraska

Hamilton
Thurston

Nevada

Douglas

New Mexico
Luna
McKinley
Torrance

North Carolina
Chowan
Vance

North Dakota
Rolette

Ohio
Hancock
Hardin
Monroe
Tuscarawas
Wayne

Oklahoma
Craig

Oregon
Deschutes
Josephine
Umatilla

South Carolina
Abbeville
Lancaster
Newberry

South Dakota
Roberts
Todd
Tripp
Ziebach

Tennessee
Cumberland
Haywood
Lauderdale
Lincoln
Maury
McNairy
Roane
Sequatchie
Tipton
Warren

Texas
Atascosa
Calhoun
Duval
Fayette
Foard
Goliad
Kerr
Kleberg
Lipscomb
Medina
Robertson
Scurry
Upton
Winkler
Wise
Zapata

Virginia
Lunenburg

Washington
Grant
Okanogan
Pacific

Wisconsin
Forest
Iowa
Menominee
Portage
Richland
Sauk
Vilas

Appendix F: U.S. Regions and Divisions Used for the 1997 National Youth Gang Survey

Midwestern States

East North Central

Illinois
Indiana
Michigan
Ohio
Wisconsin

West North Central

Iowa
Kansas
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
South Dakota

Northeastern States

New England

Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
Rhode Island
Vermont

Middle Atlantic

New Jersey
New York
Pennsylvania

Southern States

South Atlantic

Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Maryland
North Carolina
South Carolina
Virginia
West Virginia

East South Central

Alabama
Kentucky
Mississippi
Tennessee

West South Central

Arkansas
Louisiana
Oklahoma
Texas

Western States

Mountain

Arizona
Colorado
Idaho
Montana
Nevada
New Mexico
Utah
Wyoming

Pacific

Alaska
California
Hawaii
Oregon
Washington

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation. 1998. *Crime in the United States, 1997: Uniform Crime Reports.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

Appendix G: Number and Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1997, by Population Size and Region*

	Region				
Population Size	**All Regions**	**Midwest**	**Northeast**	**South**	**West**
250,000 or more	**93** (90%)	**19** (100%)	**11** (65%)	**36** (95%)	**27** (96%)
100,000–249,999	**189** (83%)	**41** (89%)	**18** (56%)	**66** (79%)	**64** (99%)
50,000–99,999	**352** (75%)	**97** (80%)	**45** (49%)	**114** (73%)	**96** (95%)
25,000–49,999	**445** (55%)	**138** (64%)	**56** (27%)	**147** (60%)	**104** (78%)
10,000–24,999	**166** (36%)	**62** (46%)	**8** (17%)	**71** (30%)	**25** (58%)
1–9,999	**167** (24%)	**67** (24%)	**6** (8%)	**65** (27%)	**29** (29%)
Total/Percentage	**1,412** (51%)	**424** (52%)	**144** (31%)	**499** (49%)	**345** (74%)

Notes: As population increases, the percentage of jurisdictions reporting gangs increases. At the same time, there is significant variation by region in the percentage of jurisdictions reporting gangs for each population category. Large increases in the percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs appear to be most associated with population increases in the West.

* The multivariate relationship of region and population size on the percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix H: Number and Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Active Youth Gangs in 1997, by Area Type and Region*

	Region				
Area Type	**All Regions**	**Midwest**	**Northeast**	**South**	**West**
Large city	**786** (72%)	**220** (76%)	**117** (42%)	**222** (81%)	**227** (89%)
Small city	**125** (33%)	**48** (39%)	**14** (13%)	**34** (39%)	**29** (54%)
Suburban county	**337** (56%)	**99** (61%)	**12** (27%)	**164** (50%)	**62** (91%)
Rural county	**164** (24%)	**57** (24%)	**1** (3%)	**79** (25%)	**27** (30%)
Total/Percentage	**1,412** (51%)	**424** (52%)	**144** (31%)	**499** (49%)	**345** (74%)

Note: The increase in the percentage of jurisdictions reporting gangs appears to be associated with large cities and suburban counties, particularly in the West.

* The multivariate relationship of region and area type on the percentage of jurisdictions reporting active youth gangs is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix I: Level of Youth Gang Involvement in Street Sales of Drugs in 1997, by Area Type*

Level of Involvement	Area Type				
	All Areas	Large City	Small City	Suburban County	Rural County
67–100% (high)	**228** (29%)	**144** (31%)	**10** (17%)	**54** (31%)	**20** (26%)
34–66% (moderate)	**138** (18%)	**89** (19%)	**9** (16%)	**30** (17%)	**10** (13%)
0–33% (low)	**415** (53%)	**239** (51%)	**39** (67%)	**90** (52%)	**47** (61%)
Total/Percentage	**781** (100%)	**472** (101%)	**58** (100%)	**174** (100%)	**77** (100%)

Note: The percentages within each level of involvement may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

* The relationship between area type and level of involvement was not statistically significant.

Appendix J: Level of Youth Gang Involvement in Street Sales of Drugs in 1997, by Region

Level of Involvement	Region				
	All Regions	Midwest	Northeast	South	West
67–100% (high)	**228** (29%)	**82** (36%)	**32** (39%)	**80** (29%)	**34** (17%)
34–66% (moderate)	**138** (18%)	**44** (19%)	**16** (20%)	**40** (15%)	**38** (19%)
0–33% (low)	**415** (53%)	**103** (45%)	**34** (41%)	**154** (56%)	**124** (63%)
Total/Percentage	**781** (100%)	**229** (100%)	**82** (100%)	**274** (100%)	**196** (99%)

Notes: The percentages within each level of involvement may not equal 100 percent due to rounding. The Midwest and Northeast have gangs with higher than average involvement in street sales of drugs, while the West has gangs with lower than average involvement. Gangs in the South have about average involvement in street sales of drugs.

Appendix K: Level of Youth Gang Involvement in Street Sales of Drugs in 1997, by Population Size*

Level of Involvement	All Population Sizes	1–9,999	10,000–24,999	25,000–49,999	50,000–99,999	100,000–249,999	250,000 or more
	Population Size						
67–100% (high)	**228** (29%)	**15** (19%)	**19** (27%)	**72** (29%)	**61** (29%)	**45** (38%)	**16** (29%)
34–66% (moderate)	**138** (18%)	**11** (14%)	**8** (11%)	**45** (18%)	**28** (13%)	**25** (21%)	**21** (38%)
0–33% (low)	**415** (53%)	**52** (67%)	**44** (62%)	**131** (53%)	**121** (58%)	**49** (41%)	**18** (33%)
Total/Percentage	**781** (100%)	**78** (100%)	**71** (100%)	**248** (100%)	**210** (100%)	**119** (100%)	**55** (100%)

Notes: The percentages within each level of involvement may not equal 100 percent due to rounding. As population increases through the 100,000–249,999 category, the percentage of youth gangs involved in street sales of drugs at a high level increases. Jurisdictions with populations of 1–9,999 are below average in the percentage of gangs involved in street sales of drugs at a high level, while the jurisdictions with populations of 100,000–249,999 are above average. The percentage of youth gangs in the 250,000 or more category involved in street sales of drugs is about average. Conversely, as the population of a jurisdiction increases, the percentage of gangs involved in street sales of drugs at a low level decreases. Thus, there is a general increase in the percentage of gangs involved in street drug sales at successively higher degrees as population increases.

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix L: Reasons for Gang Migration in 1997, by Area Type

Reason for Migration	All Areas	Large City	Small City	Suburban County	Rural County
	Area Type				
Social factors	**853** (70%)	**486** (69%)	**71** (71%)	**207** (72%)	**89** (64%)*
Establishing drug markets	**190** (15%)	**119** (17%)	**7** (7%)*	**45** (16%)	**19** (14%)
Participating in other illegal ventures	**146** (12%)	**81** (12%)	**11** (11%)	**33** (11%)	**21** (15%)*
Avoiding law enforcement crackdowns	**166** (14%)	**88** (13%)	**11** (11%)	**39** (14%)	**28** (20%)
Getting away from gang life	**116** (9%)	**75** (11%)	**5** (5%)*	**24** (8%)	**12** (9%)*
Other reasons	**74** (6%)	**41** (6%)	**8** (8%)	**18** (6%)	**7** (5%)

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 because respondents indicated multiple reasons.

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix M: Reasons for Gang Migration in 1997, by Population Size

Level of Involvement	All Population Sizes	Population Size: 1–9,999	10,000–24,999	25,000–49,999	50,000–99,999	100,000–249,999	250,000 or more
Social factors	**853** (70%)	**90** (67%)	**85** (63%)	**278** (71%)	**213** (68%)	**130** (75%)	**57** (70%)
Establishing drug markets	**190** (15%)	**13** (10%)	**21** (16%)	**67** (17%)	**43** (14%)	**30** (17%)	**16** (20%)
Participating in other illegal ventures	**146** (12%)	**21** (16%)	**15** (11%)	**48** (12%)	**33** (11%)	**21** (12%)	**8** (10%)
Avoiding law enforcement crackdowns	**166** (14%)	**27** (20%)	**19** (14%)	**56** (14%)	**33** (11%)	**19** (11%)	**12** (15%)
Getting away from gang life	**116** (9%)	**10** (7%)	**13** (10%)	**44** (11%)	**31** (10%)	**10** (6%)	**8** (10%)
Other reasons	**74** (6%)	**6** (4%)	**10** (7%)	**24** (6%)	**22** (7%)	**6** (3%)	**6** (7%)

Notes: There was no statistically significant variation for any of the reasons for gang migration. Percentages do not equal 100 because respondents indicated multiple reasons.

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Disproportionate Minority Confinement: 1997 Update. 1998, NCJ 170606 (12 pp.).

Disproportionate Minority Confinement: Lessons Learned From Five States. 1998, NCJ 173420 (12 pp.).

Juvenile Arrests 1997. 1999, NCJ 173938 (12 pp.).

Reintegration, Supervised Release, and Intensive Aftercare. 1999, NCJ 175715 (24 pp.).

Courts

Guide for Implementing the Balanced and Restorative Justice Model. 1998. NCJ 167887 (112 pp.).

Innovative Approaches to Juvenile Indigent Defense. 1998, NCJ 171151 (8 pp.).

Juvenile Court Statistics 1996. 1999, NCJ 168963 (113 pp.).

Offenders in Juvenile Court, 1996. 1999, NCJ 175719 (12 pp.).

RESTTA National Directory of Restitution and Community Service Programs. 1998, NCJ 166365 (500 pp.), $33.50.

Trying Juveniles as Adults in Criminal Court: An Analysis of State Transfer Provisions. 1998, NCJ 172836 (112 pp.).

Youth Courts: A National Movement Teleconference (Video). 1998, NCJ 171149 (120 min.), $17.

Delinquency Prevention

1998 Report to Congress: Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP). 1999, NCJ 173424 (65 pp.).

1998 Report to Congress: Title V Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs. 1999, NCJ 176342 (58 pp.).

Combating Violence and Delinquency: The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan (Report). 1996, NCJ 157106 (200 pp.).

Combating Violence and Delinquency: The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan (Summary). 1996, NCJ 157105 (36 pp.).

Effective Family Strengthening Interventions. 1998, NCJ 171121 (16 pp.).

Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants Strategic Planning Guide. 1999, NCJ 172846 (62 pp.).

Parents Anonymous: Strengthening America's Families. 1999, NCJ 171120 (12 pp.).

Prenatal and Early Childhood Nurse Home Visitation. 1998, NCJ 172875 (8 pp.).

Treatment Foster Care. 1999, NCJ 173421 (12 pp.).

Gangs

1996 National Youth Gang Survey. 1999, NCJ 173964 (96 pp.).

Gang Members on the Move. 1998, NCJ 171153 (12 pp.).

Youth Gangs: An Overview. 1998, NCJ 167249 (20 pp.).

The Youth Gangs, Drugs, and Violence Connection. 1999, NCJ 171152 (12 pp.).

Youth Gangs in America Teleconference (Video). 1997, NCJ 164937 (120 min.), $17.

General Juvenile Justice

Comprehensive Juvenile Justice in State Legislatures Teleconference (Video). 1998, NCJ 169593 (120 min.), $17.

Guidelines for the Screening of Persons Working With Children, the Elderly, and Individuals With Disabilities in Need of Support. 1998, NCJ 167248 (52 pp.).

Juvenile Justice, Volume V, Number 1. 1998, NCJ 170025 (32 pp.).

A Juvenile Justice System for the 21st Century. 1998, NCJ 169726 (8 pp.).

Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report. 1999, NCJ 178257 (232 pp.).

OJJDP Research: Making a Difference for Juveniles. 1999, NCJ 177602 (52 pp.).

Promising Strategies To Reduce Gun Violence. 1999, NCJ 173950 (253 pp.).

Sharing Information: A Guide to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and Participation in Juvenile Justice Programs. 1997, NCJ 163705 (52 pp.).

Missing and Exploited Children

Portable Guides to Investigating Child Abuse (13-title series).

Protecting Children Online Teleconference (Video). 1998, NCJ 170023 (120 min.), $17.

When Your Child Is Missing: A Family Survival Guide. 1998, NCJ 170022 (96 pp.).

Substance Abuse

The Coach's Playbook Against Drugs. 1998, NCJ 173393 (20 pp.).

Drug Identification and Testing in the Juvenile Justice System. 1998, NCJ 167889 (92 pp.).

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Combating Fear and Restoring Safety in Schools. 1998, NCJ 167888 (16 pp.).

Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders. 1995, NCJ 153681 (255 pp.).

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Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders. 1998, NCJ 170027 (8 pp.).

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White House Conference on School Safety: Causes and Prevention of Youth Violence Teleconference (Video). 1998, NCJ 173399 (240 min.), $17.

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