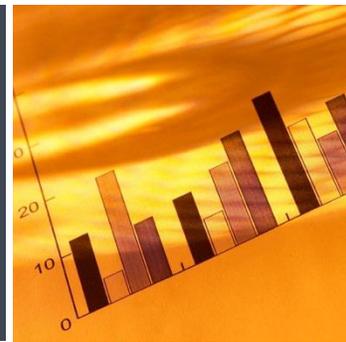


RESEARCH SUMMARY

Programme de suivi intensif de Montréal – Gangs de rue [Montreal Intensive Supervision Program – Street Gangs]



2017–S007

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BUILDING A SAFE AND RESILIENT CANADA

BACKGROUND

The Programme de suivi intensif de Montréal – Gangs de rue (PSI-MTL/GDR) [Montreal Intensive Supervision Program – Street Gangs]¹ was implemented in Montreal² from 2009 to 2014 with 138 male offenders and 4 female offenders³ aged 15 to 25 who were involved in criminal street gang activity and at a high risk of recidivism, or who were at risk of experiencing crimes associated with street gangs. The program, which was inspired by the Community-Wide Approach to Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression (Spergel et al., 1994), was intended to progressively align treatment principles between different partners and circulate information among stakeholders 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Treatment areas for the program included monitoring, supervision, assistance, and referrals for young people. An evaluation measured the impact of the PSI-MTL/GDR on offending behaviours and criminogenic risks, social integration, and the level of youth engagement in street gangs. A descriptive analysis of program costs was also carried out.

¹ The PSI-MTL/GDR was developed by the Montreal Youth Centre – University Institute (MYC-UI) and implemented in collaboration with the Batshaw Youth and Family Centres (BYFC) and Quebec Correctional Services (QCS). The treatment also involved the *Service de police de la Ville de Montréal* (SPVM), the *Direction des poursuites criminelles et pénales* (DPCP), the City of Montreal, attorneys, as well as the *PACT de rue* and Boys & Girls Club of LaSalle community organizations.

² More specifically, in the boroughs of Villerey-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension and LaSalle.

³ These are excluded from the evaluation research because they are not numerous enough for statistical analysis.

METHOD

The research design is quasi-experimental with repeated measures and a matched control group. The study includes two distinct components: the first was based on the collection of data from 33 program participants⁴ and a control group of 45 youths, recruited from youth centres in Montreal, Laval, and Montérégie, and the BYFC. The second component dealt with the files of 127 participants and 166 offenders who had received services provided by youth centres and QCS in the Montreal, Laval, and Montérégie administrative regions.

In addition to questionnaires administered to young people, the main sources of data and collection tools were: the youth centres' *Projet intégration jeunesse* system; the QCS's *Dossiers administratifs correctionnels* database; the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI); the Criminogenic Risks and Needs Inventory (CRNI); the Gang Involvement Scale; the MAC Gang; the Structured Assessment of Protective Factors; the Multidimensional Inventory of Development, Sex, and Aggression; the Canadian Criminal Records Information Services; the Finger Print System (FPS); the *Module d'informations policières* (MIP); and recidivism data from the court register of the Ministry of Justice.

FINDINGS

In order to evaluate implementation fidelity, the objectives identified in the youth treatment plans (TPs) were matched according to the youths' risks and needs. Only a third of identified high-risk areas corresponded with a specific objective in the TP, possibly due to the

⁴ Ten of which were placed under the responsibility of the QCS, and twenty-three of which fell under the responsibility of the MYC-UI.



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difficulty of translating the risk and needs assessment into an individualized support strategy. According to the analysis of stakeholders' perceptions, stakeholders understood the program well, but were hesitant to take responsibility for specific forms of treatment. In general, scheduled activities were carried out, but it was difficult to obtain the expected level of effort from the offenders.

Overall, youth risks and needs did not vary significantly after participation in the PSI-MTL/GDR. However, there were increased needs associated with offences as well as increased support needs for peer relationships, in contrast to the decreased need for support in education and employment. Treatment plans predominantly included objectives associated with work and school. In addition, the analysis of implementation fidelity indicated the possible difficulty of translating the risk and needs assessment into an individualized support strategy. For the program to be effective, intake should target drug addiction, recreation, education, employment, associating with delinquent peers, as well as pro-criminal attitudes and orientations.

An examination of recidivism shows a higher rate of new convictions for the experimental group (25.7%) compared to the control group (15%). However, there were no significant differences concerning the nature or severity of the offences. Calculating separate rates indicates that there were no significant differences for violent offences (crimes against persons) and non-violent offences, but shows that there were differences in terms of new convictions for failure to comply with supervision conditions (13.3% compared to 1.8%).

The initial risk level and criminal history were controlled for in a subsequent analysis of recidivism rates and of the length of time before the new conviction. Thus, the experimental group was almost three times more likely to be convicted of any offence or of a violent offence, and up to thirteen times more at risk of facing a new conviction for failure to comply with supervision conditions. These differences may very likely stem from reactivity and increased surveillance by the justice system, and not from more offensive behaviours.

For this reason, risk, criminal history, and level of police surveillance were then controlled for in the calculation of the recidivism rate for both groups, which could then be compared. However, the rate of failure to comply with supervision conditions in the experimental group remained slightly higher, which could partially be explained by differences in the "reporting" mechanisms. In fact, [translation] "while offences are generally based on complaints from citizens, victims, or proactive (or reactive) police actions, failures to comply with supervision conditions may be evidence of reactivity by stakeholders who support or monitor offenders" (Lafortune et al., 2016: 131). The total cost of PSI-MTL/GDR is \$14,820,543, and the cost per participant is \$67,055.04. These amounts include the direct program costs and the regular cost of services provided by agencies. Subtracting the latter fees in order to estimate the level of effort required to implement this type of program within existing services, the revised cost per participant is \$31,163.34 (\$19,143.26 for the treatment and \$12,020.08 for administration).

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

Lafortune, D., Morselli, C., Guay, J.-P., Fredette, C., Gagnon, C., & Royer, M.-N. (2016). *Programme de suivi intensif de Montréal – Gangs de rue. Rapport d'évaluation final*. Submitted to Danièle Laliberté, Public Safety Canada.

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