

# National *Academic Centers of Excellence* on Youth Violence Prevention

## *Center on Culture, Immigration, and Youth Violence Prevention*

### History

The Academic Centers of Excellence (ACEs) were established soon after the tragedy at Columbine High School. Each ACE works with the communities it serves to encourage participation and partnership, mobilizing residents and researchers to craft effective solutions for violence prevention tailored to their specific community. ACE Centers research youth violence prevention approaches, collect and analyze surveillance data, and foster relationships with local community partners to help develop, implement, and evaluate promising prevention efforts.

Established in 2005, the Center on Culture, Immigration, and Youth Violence Prevention (CCIIYVP) at the University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley) is a multidisciplinary partnership between Berkeley Law School, the Institute for the Study of Social Change, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, and the University of California, San Francisco. CCIIYVP's core mission is to study the relationship between ethnicity and youth violence, and the Center closely collaborates with Asian/Pacific Islander (API) and Latino community groups and the East Bay Asian Youth Center (EBAYC). The Center actively conducts research on broad topics related to youth violence prevention, and seeks to understand the role of culture and immigration in risk and protective factors for violence. The CCIIYVP focuses its efforts primarily in Oakland, CA, placing emphasis on API and Latino youth populations.

### Research

CCIIYVP is conducting an evaluation of a violence prevention program at the Roosevelt Village Center, an after-school center in Oakland. The prevention program aims to prevent violence and delinquency by promoting academic achievement and positive youth development. The study follows students over three years, with plans to assess program effectiveness. Using a community-based participatory research approach, CCIIYVP has taken steps to involve community partners throughout the research process. This partnership has proven invaluable to CCIIYVP staff, for community feedback has allowed the researchers to continually refine programmatic activities to be culturally and contextually sensitive.

CCIIYVP is also involved in other research projects, including

- A school-based, youth-led project designed to evaluate the cultural relevance of violence prevention and substance abuse prevention curricula being implemented in schools with a high proportion of API, Latino, and immigrant students. The study is examining the content and goals of the programs as developed, the adaptations teachers make in implementing the programs, and the fidelity of implementation; and

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- An outcome evaluation of the Streetside Counseling Program's *Measure Y*, an intensive case management program for youth at risk and on probation. In partnership with EBAYC, researchers are evaluating the effectiveness of the program in reducing delinquency and violence among high-risk populations.

## Surveillance

Because CCIYVP has chosen to focus on API and Latino youth populations, surveillance activities include gathering and reviewing data for specific ethnic groups from several state, regional, and law enforcement sources. Surveillance activities include collecting and analyzing data from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports, the Alameda County Public Health Department, the Alameda County Probation Department, and a community survey of day laborers.

CCIYVP's surveillance activities also focus on data that provide information about youth violence among specific racial/ethnic groups, such as API; these data are separated by gender. These data highlight the great variance in youth violence rates observed in API population subgroups, particularly in Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders. Identifying and tracking trends from these data helps researchers monitor changes in violent behavior among youth with specific ethnic backgrounds. The information also directs future Center research projects and has the potential to draw attention to the often overlooked disparity within the API population.

## Training

CCIYVP offers a variety of training opportunities to students, fellows, and community members. In 2008, doctoral-level students from across the country were invited to attend the Summer Institute on Youth Violence prevention, a week-long seminar series cosponsored by CCIYVP and the Southern California Academic Center of Excellence at the University of California, Riverside. In addition, undergraduate students are eligible for year-long internships with Center partners, and youth violence fellowships are offered for graduate students. Training activities for community partners emphasize prevention activities and building capacity for prevention and evaluation efforts.

## Community Mobilization

Collaboration with community-based organizations has directly influenced CCIYVP's research, and the interaction between CCIYVP and community partners has further led to mobilizing communities to address youth violence in individual neighborhoods. Two large coalitions formed with the assistance of CCIYVP have been instrumental in bringing together diverse teams of providers, expanding their service networks, and assisting with the development of community-based prevention efforts. Partners attend conferences and community forums, access information through the CCIYVP Website, and get updated Center news through an e-mail listserv. These components of CCIYVP are essential in keeping partners well-positioned for community activism and future collaboration.

For more information, please contact:

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