

# Diagnosing Trinidad & Tobago's Gang Problem

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# Methodological Approach

- TT Gang Expert Survey
  - Replication of Eurogang Research Program Expert Survey.
  - Surveyed gang experts in all TT station districts (n=52), 100% response rate.
- Besson Street Gang Intelligence, Criminal History Project
  - Non-gang sample (n=878)
  - Gang sample (n=368)

# Methodological Approach, Cont.

- Trinidad Arrestee Project Survey (TAPS)
  - Based on DUF/ADAM
  - Interviewed 421 recently booked adult arrestees
- Trinidad Detention Survey (TDS)
  - Interviewed about 60 adult detainees
- Trinidad and Tobago Youth Survey (TTYYS)
  - Measures risk & protective factors, including gangs, among school youth
  - Adapted from the Social Development Research Group/Six state Consortium and the TT Peace Programme.
  - Surveyed approximately 4,000 students, Forms 4 thru 6, (i.e., USA comparison grades 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup>).

<b>Number of youth gangs and gang members in Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>			
National Total		<i>n</i>	
	Gangs	95	
	Gang Members	1,269	
Year formed			
	Before 2000	8.4	25.8
	2000 - 2006	24.2	74.2
	Missing	67.4	
	N=	95	31

## Composition of Gangs in TT, Cont.

- About 83% are African, 13% are East Indian
- No female dominated gangs
- About 87% are comprised of adults
- Two-thirds of gangs are comprised of 6 to 50 members
- 95% of gang are comprised of citizens of TT

## Organizational characteristics of gangs in TT

- 86% have group name
- 61% refer to themselves as a gang, 26% crew, 4.2% Clip/Unit
- 88% claim turf & 75% defend their turf
- 85% do NOT have symbols (i.e., physical identifiers, signs, other)
- 99% illegal activity is accepted by group

## Criminal involvement of TT gangs

- Frequent use of alcohol, drug use, and drug sales
- Two-thirds involved in fights with rival groups
- Experts emphasized that gang most frequently involved in Drug sales, robbery and firearms activity

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## Organizational description of gangs in Trinidad and Tobago

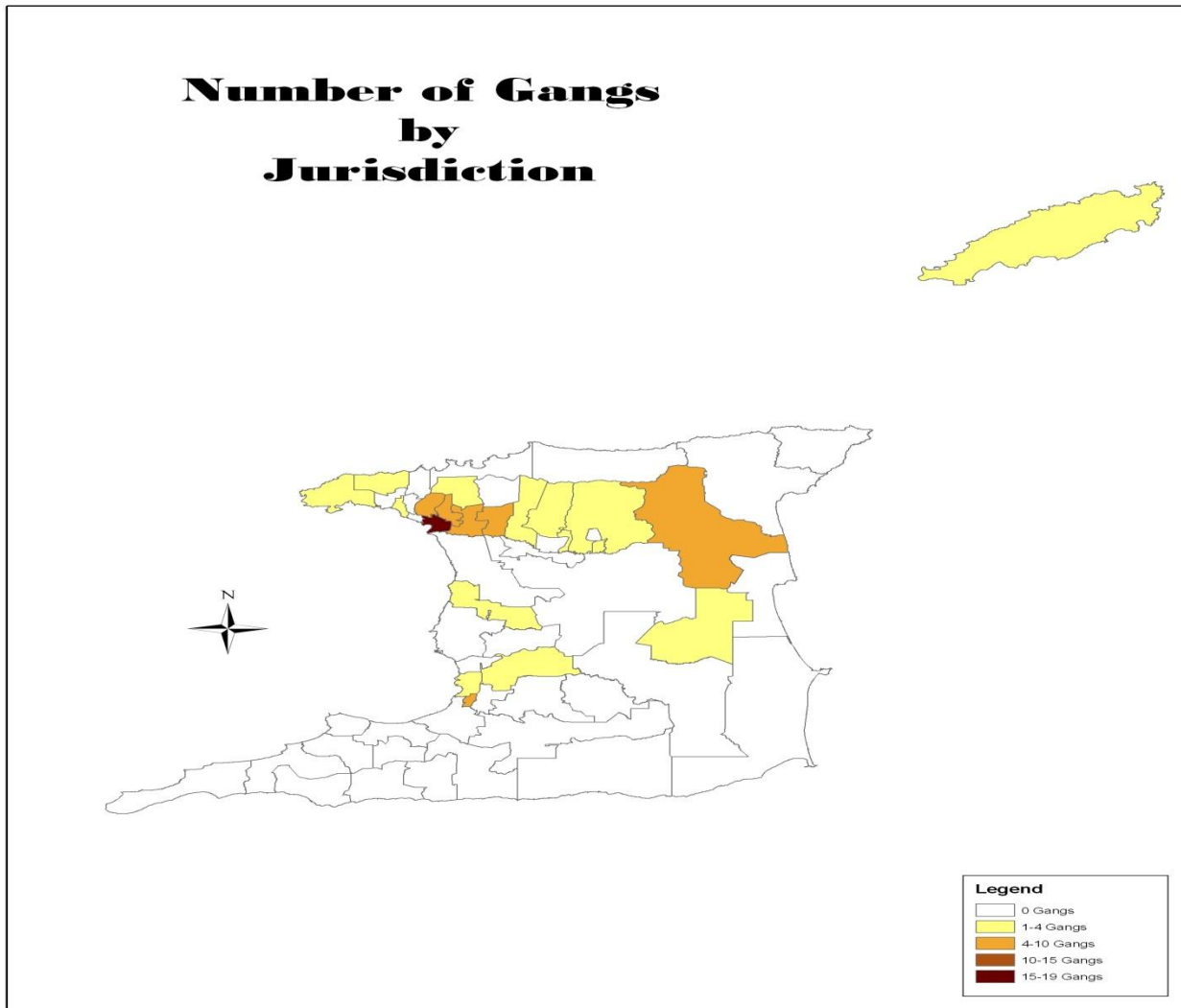
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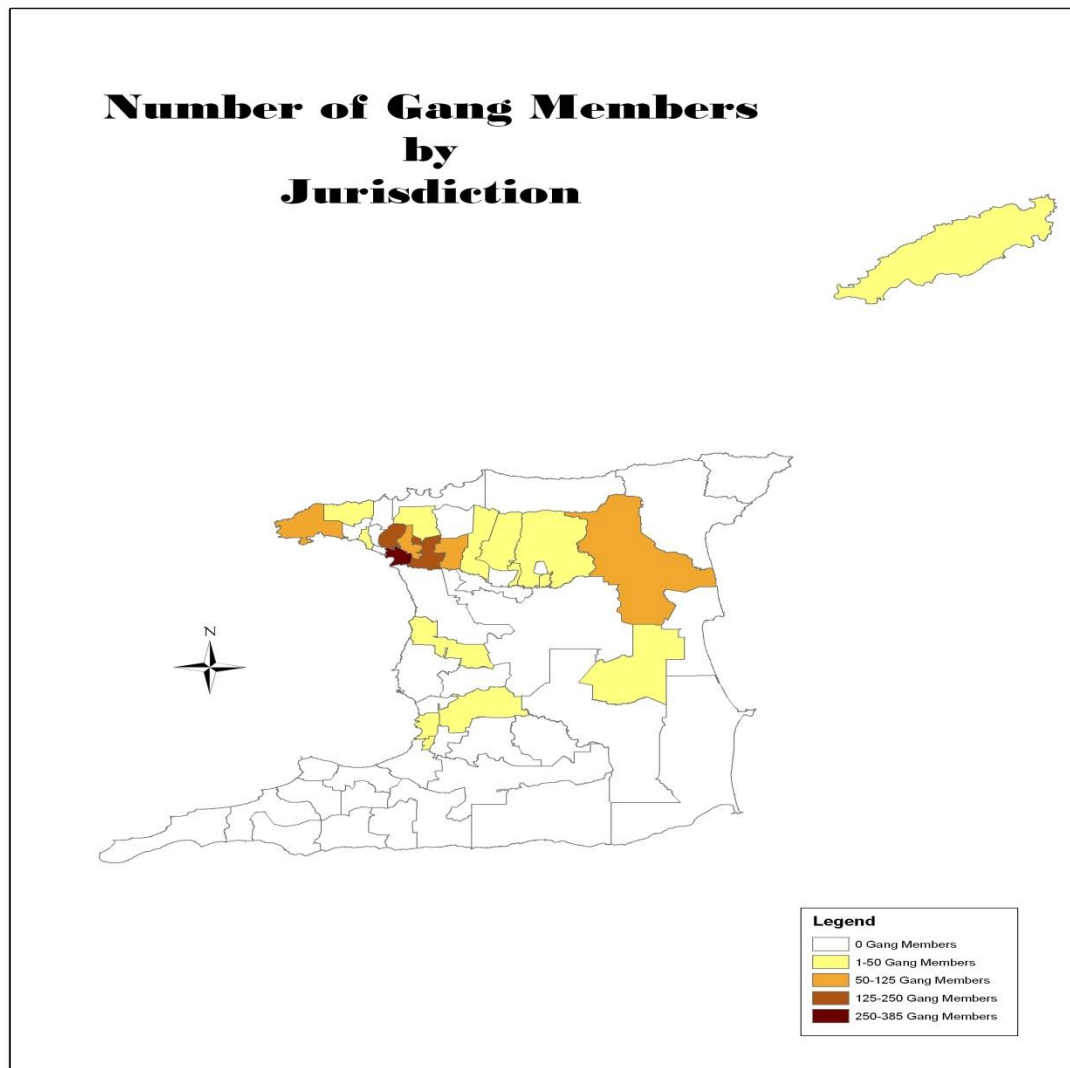
	Percent	Valid Percent
Classical	8.4	8.5
Neo-Classical	4.2	4.3
Compressed	13.7	13.8
Collective	21.1	21.3
Specialty	48.4	48.9
None	3.2	3.2
Missing	1.1	
N=	95	94

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<b>Top five station districts for number of gangs and number of gang members</b>			
		Number of Gangs	Number of Gang
Five station districts with the most			
	Besson Street	19	385
	San Juan	8	130
	Sangre Grande	8	90
	St. Joseph	7	55
	Belmont	6	165
Five station districts with the most			
	Besson Street	19	385
	Belmont	6	165
	San Juan	8	130
	Carenage	4	100
	Sangre Grande	8	90





# Besson Street Gang Intelligence, Criminal History Project

## Sample characteristics

Characteristic	Non-Gang		Gang Member		Total	
	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Valid Percent
Age distribution						
17 or Younger	4.6	5.7	3.8	5.3	4.3	5.6
18 to 21	18.6	23.3	18.8	26.1	18.6	24.1
22 to 25	21.4	26.9	18.2	25.4	20.5	26.5
26 to 35	23.0	28.9	24.2	33.7	23.4	30.2
36 to 45	8.7	10.9	5.7	8.0	7.8	10.1
46 to 55	1.9	2.4	1.1	1.5	1.7	2.2
56 or Older	1.6	2.0	28.3		1.1	1.5
Missing	20.3				22.6	
N=	878	700	368	264	1,246	964
sig.			**			

Note: Age was computed from date of birth (where known) until August 15, 2005 (date of data extraction).

\* Indicates significant difference between gang and non-gang at  $p \leq .05$

\*\* Indicates significant difference between gang and non-gang at  $p \leq .01$

## Sample characteristics, continued

Characteristic	Non-Gang		Gang Member		Total	
	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Valid Percent
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
African	57.1	81.6	87.5	96.7	66.1	86.9
Indian	3.5	5.0	0.8	0.9	2.7	3.6
Mixed/Biracial	7.6	10.9	1.9	2.1	5.9	7.8
Spanish	1.4	2.0	0.3	0.3	1.0	1.4
Caucasian	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3
Missing	30.1		9.5		24.0	
N=	878	877	368	333	1,246	1,236
sig.			**	**		
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	92.8	92.9	92.9	95.3	92.9	93.6
Female	7.1	7.1	4.6	4.7	6.3	6.4
Missing	0.1		2.4		0.8	
N=	878	613	368	359	1,246	943
sig.			**			

Note: Age was computed from date of birth (where known) until August 15, 2005 (date of data extraction).

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\*\* Indicates significant difference between gang and non-gang at  $p \leq .01$

<b>Sample characteristics, continued</b>						
Characteristic		Non-Gang		Gang Member		Total
		Valid Percent		Valid Percent		Valid Percent
Ever Arrested						
	Percent	20.2		51.4		29.4
	N=	878		368		1,246
	sig.			**		
Number of arrests						
	Mean	0.68		2.09		1.10
	SD	1.82		3.52		2.53
	N=	878		368		1,246
	sig.			**		

Note: Age was computed from date of birth (where known) until August 15, 20

\* Indicates significant difference between gang and non-gang at  $p \leq .05$

\*\* Indicates significant difference between gang and non-gang at  $p \leq .01$

## Incidence and prevalence of crime by gang membership

Arrest Offense Category	Non-Gang (n=878)		sig.	Gang Member (n=368)		Total (n=1,246)	
	<i>n</i>	Percent		<i>n</i>	Percent	<i>n</i>	Percent
Ever Arrested	177	20.2	**	189	51.4	366	29.4
Ever arrested by crime type							
Violent Offense	91	10.4	**	116	31.5	207	16.6
Firearm Related	76	8.7	**	95	25.8	171	13.7
Drug Sales	28	3.2	**	56	15.2	84	6.7
Drug Use/Possession	70	8.0	**	86	23.4	156	12.5
Property Offense	67	7.6	**	51	13.9	118	9.5
Sex Crime	16	1.8		10	2.7	26	2.1
Other	50	5.7	**	46	12.5	96	7.7

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\*\* Indicates significant difference between gang and non-gang at  $p \leq .01$



## Incidence and prevalence of crime by gang membership, continued

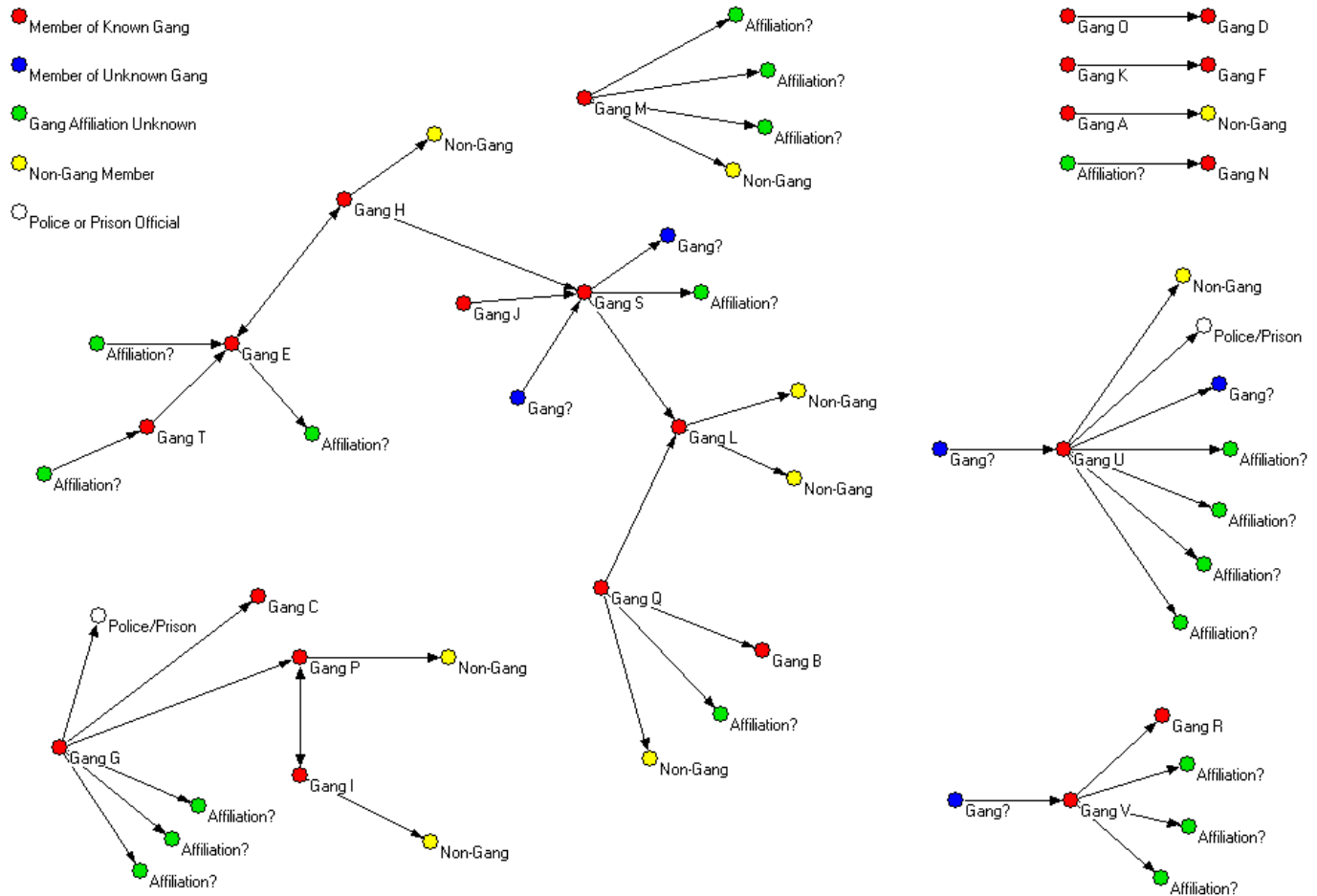
Arrest Offense Category	Non-Gang (n=878)		sig.	Gang Member (n=368)		Total (n=1,246)	
	Mean	SD		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Number of Arrests	0.68	1.82	**	2.09	3.52	1.10	2.53
Number of arrests by crime type							
Violent Offense	0.33	1.38	**	0.81	1.59	0.48	1.46
Firearm Related	0.22	1.04	**	0.45	0.91	0.29	1.01
Drug Sales	0.05	0.28	**	0.24	0.65	0.10	0.43
Drug Use/Possession	0.12	0.46	**	0.32	0.64	0.18	0.53
Property Offense	0.17	0.84	**	0.36	1.62	0.23	1.13
Sex Crime	0.03	0.30		0.03	0.19	0.03	0.27
Other	0.16	0.91		0.20	0.60	0.17	0.83

\* Indicates significant difference between gang and non-gang at  $p \leq .05$

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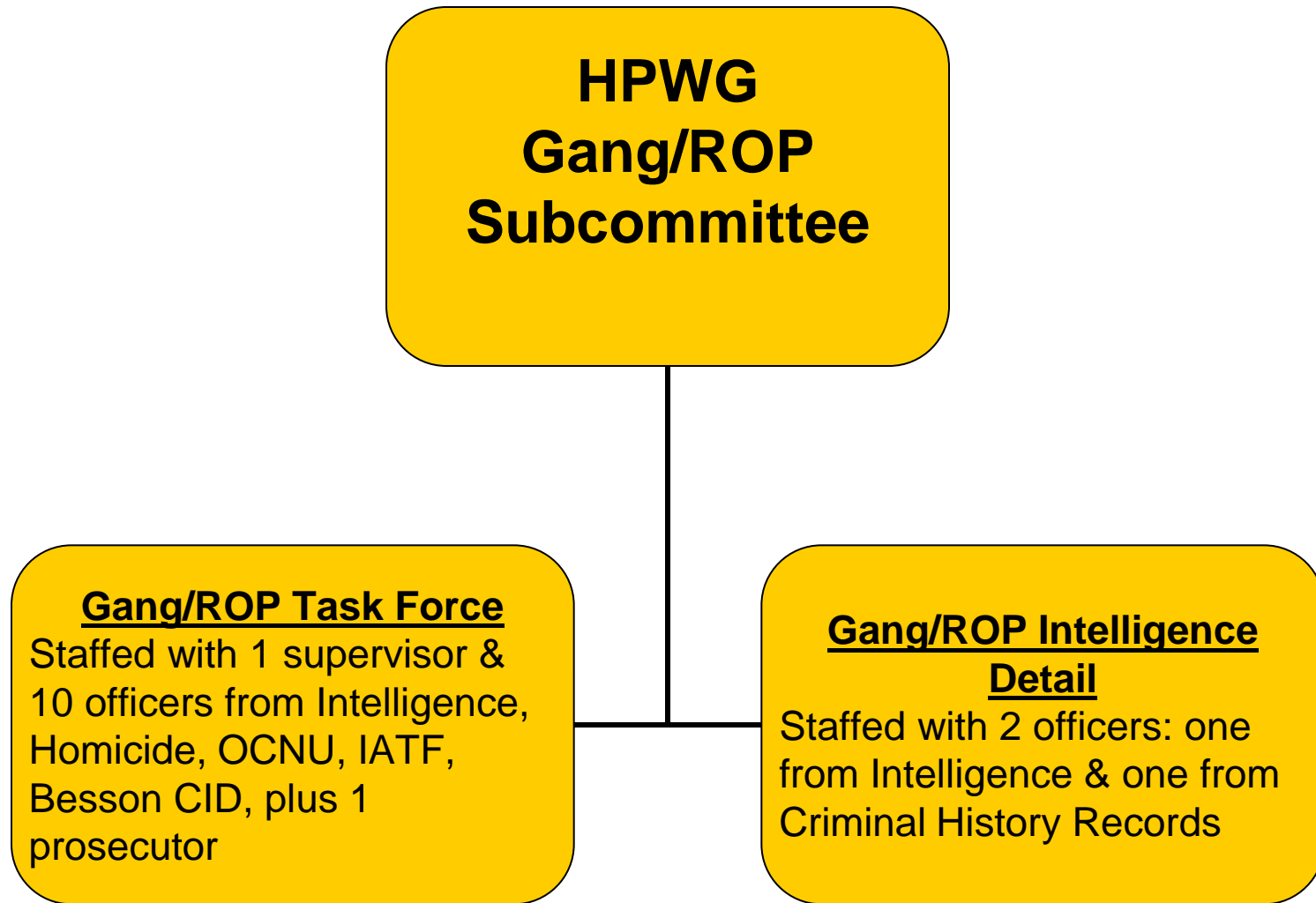
## Gang members who are chronic offenders and their contribution to crime (n=372)

	<b>n</b>	<b>% of Sample</b>	<b>Total Arrests</b>	<b>% of Total Arrests</b>
Chronic offenders	24	6.4	298	38.7
Other offenders	348	93.6	472	61.3
Chronically violent offenders	27	7.2	149	50.0
Other offenders	345	92.3	149	50.0
Chronic drug traffickers	9	2.4	29	33.3
Other offenders	363	97.6	58	66.7
Chronic gun/ammo possession offenders	18	4.8	62	38.3
Other offenders	354	95.2	100	61.7



## Gang Involved Homicides in the Besson Street Station District by Known Victim and Suspect Affiliation (1/1/05-1/26/06)

Gang	Number Homicide Suspects	Number Homicide Victimizations	Total	% of Gang Homicides in District
Gang 1	2	8	10	12.35%
Gang 2	6	3	9	11.11%
Gang 3	7	1	8	9.88%
Gang 4	6	1	7	8.64%
Gang 5	3	3	6	7.41%
Gang 6	4	2	6	7.41%
Gang 7	6	0	6	7.41%



# Create Besson Street Gang/ROP Task Force

1. Identify gangs, gang members, and other chronic offenders to be targeted for enforcement
2. Target suspected chronic offenders for surveillance and arrest
3. Arrest chronic offenders who have outstanding warrants, and
4. Provide prosecutors with full information about the criminal histories of chronic offenders and working with prosecutors to arrest and prosecute chronic offenders to the full extent of the law.