

Combating Youth Gangs: A Threat Assessment Model for the Year 2000

William E. Scott III

An increasing concern to law enforcement officials is the threat of youth gangs. Membership in youth gangs continues to grow at an increasing rate from the 650,000 estimated in a 1995 report on gang membership nationwide. . No longer isolated to the inner city, gang activity can be found in all sections of the United States from large cities to small rural communities that in the past felt immune from big city problems. Law enforcement needs a planned systematic assessment process in order to be prepared to tackle and arrest gang activity. This research presents an assessment model that an agency facing an emerging or chronic youth gang problem can adopt. The assessment process is also examined for its practicality through a gang survey of high school students and a case study of one local Florida municipality.