

Youth Violence and Prevention Methods

May 21, 2008

Los Angeles Marriott Downtown

Honorable Tony Cárdenas, Los Angeles City Councilmember

Aquil Basheer, CEO of Maximum Force Enterprises and Brotherhood Unified for Independent Leadership through Discipline

Los Angeles Police Department officer Larry Covington, of Juvenile Intervention and Prevention Program

Belinda Smith Walker, Director of Girls and Gangs

Moderator: Toni Guinyard, freelance reporter

The panelists addressed the ever-pressing issue of youth violence and its consequential impacts. Each panelist provided a different point of view on the root causes of youth violence and how to best respond with effective prevention and intervention methods. Honorable Tony Cárdenas looked towards the existing educational infrastructure and the lack of resources available to youth, as a cause. Ms. Walker and Officer Covington agreed and highlighted the importance of familial structure and how its absence may also be a contributor to the existing youth violence. Mr. Basheer disagreed some of the opinions expressed by others, pointing to the fact that adults have systematically failed the youth. The panelists approached effective prevention and intervention methods with differing points of view also. All the panelists agreed that various non-traditional educational models, such as boot camps, charter schools and academies are effective delivery vehicles to address needs of the youth.