

Gang Awareness and Preventative Strategies

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Student Support Services



OBJECTIVES

- Understand Gang habits.
- Learn to identify warning signs.
- What can “Parents” do to intervene in potential gang involvement.

National Gang Statistics and Trends

- Gangs Have Been Documented in Every State
 - National Drug Intelligence Center Report
 - Over 21,500 Individual Gang Sets Identified
Over 731,000 Gang Members
 - Folk and People Nations in 35 States
 - Crips and Bloods in 42 States
 - White Gangs in 44 States
 - Latino/Hispanic Gangs in 41 States
 - Asian Gangs in 41 States

National Gang Statistics and Trends

(Continued)

- Gang Migration
- Influence of Prison Gangs on Street Gangs
- Involvement in Narcotic Trafficking by Traditional Gang
 - Ties to Major International Drug Trafficking Organizations
- Increase in Gang Homicides in Smaller Communities
- Involvement at Younger Ages (11)
- Native American Involvement is Increasing

National Gang Statistics and Trends

(Continued)

- Use of More Sophisticated Weapons
- Formation of Copy-cat Type Gangs
 - Rural Gangs
 - Suburban Gangs
- Greater Organization
- Increase in Hate Gangs
- Tagger Crews Becoming More Violent

Local Trends

- What is Audience Seeing Locally?
- Rivalries Heating Up
- Gangs Create Racial Conflicts
- White Hate Gangs

Hispanic Gangs

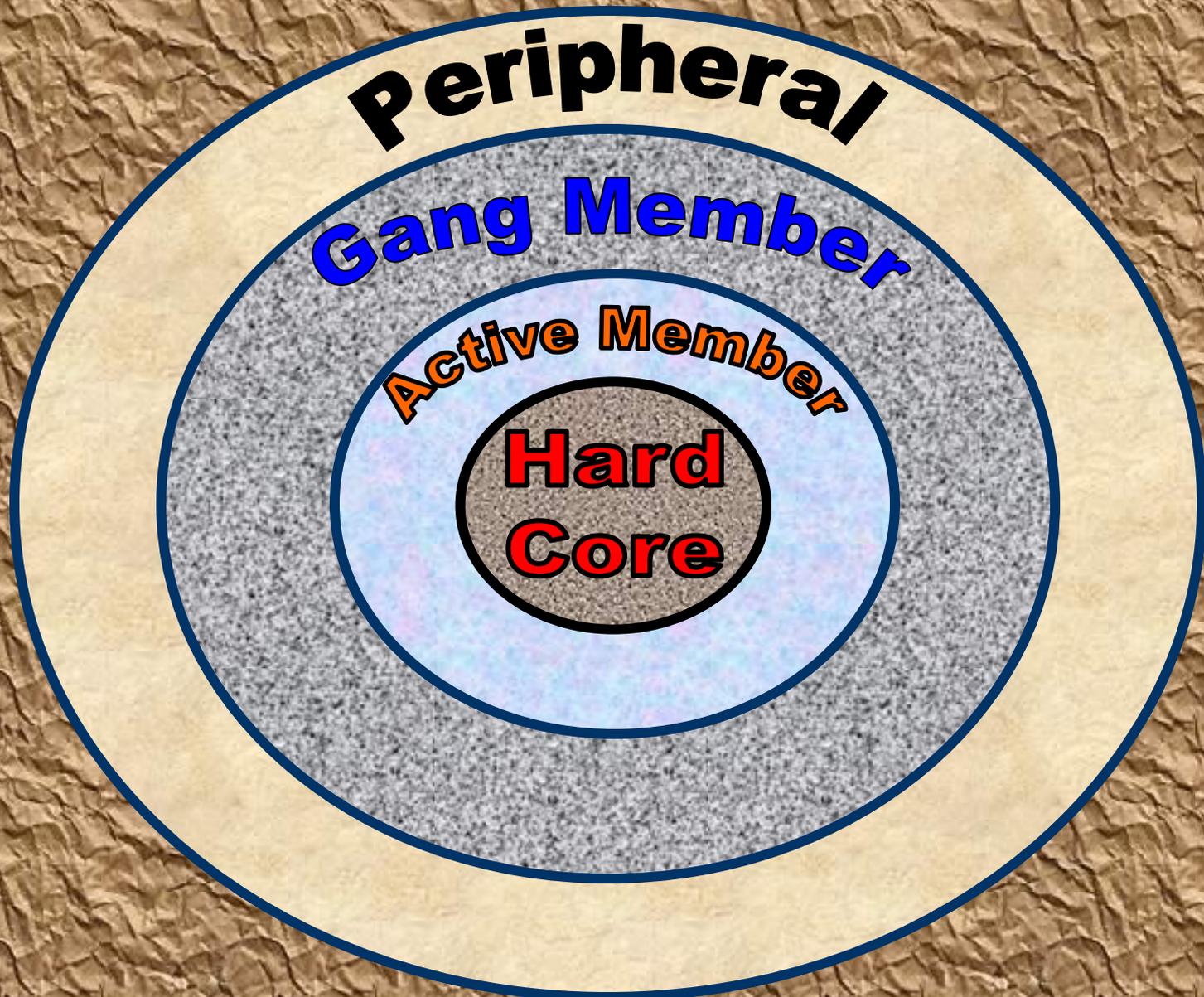
- Tradition/Generation.
- Rapid increase in the U.S.
- Generally low home structure.
- Most emulated group.

Why Youth Join Gangs

- Born into it
- Neighborhood Norm, Peer Pressure
- Power, Protection, Prestige and Party
- Cultural Identity, Friendship
- Sense of Belonging, Attention, Love
- Respect, Money, Drugs, Excitement

GANG

Structure



Alphabet Pertinent to Gangs

- A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
- In General, the number placement letter use of the alphabet is synchronized to the gang.
- Taggers use letters and numbers of a touch tone phone.

Gang Alphabet Styles

TYPES OF HISPANIC GANG WRITING (LETTERING STYLES)

CIRCLE

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T
U V W X Y Z

SQUARE

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z

HALF
DIAMOND

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V W X Y Z

WAVY

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V W X Y Z

BACKWARDS

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V W X Y Z

DIAMOND

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V W X Y Z

LOOP

Ae Be Ce De Fe Ge He Ie Ke Le Me
Ne Pe Qe Re Se Te Ue Ve We Xe
Ye Ze

Gang Involvement Indicators

- Verbal Indicators
 - Self-Admits Membership
 - City, Neighborhood, Street
 - Challenges
 - Where You From?
 - Use of Gang Slang
 - Slob
 - Cuzz

Gang Involvement Indicators *(Continued)*

- Non-Verbal Indicators
 - Tattoos, Brands, Burning, Scarring
 - Graffiti
 - Handsigns
 - Colors
 - Attire
 - Photos

Tattoos, Brands, Burning, Scarring

- Name of the Gang (City, Neighborhood, Street, Area Code)
- Nickname
- Slogans/Symbols

Tattoos, Brands, Burning, Scarring

(Continued)

- Latino/Hispanic
 - Smile Now Cry Later (Theatrical Masks)
 - Mi Vida Loca (Three Dots)
 - Surenos or Nortenos (13 or 14)
 - Area Codes (619, 213, 310)
 - Religious Symbols (Cross, Virgin Mary)
 - Gang Name on Stomach, Back or Neck
 - Tear Drop

Tattoos, Brands, Burning, Scarring

(Continued)

- Crips, Bloods, Pirus, Folks, People
 - CK
 - BK/PK
 - Pitchforks
 - Pointed Up-Folk
 - Pointed Down-People
 - Stars/Crowns
 - Six Pointed-Folk
 - Five Pointed-People

Tattoos, Brands, Burning, Scarring

(Continued)

- Hate Gang
 - Supreme White People/Power (SWP, WP)
 - Peckerwood (Woody Woodpecker)
 - Nazi Symbols (Swastika, SS, etc.)
 - Nordic Symbols
 - Racist Symbols (KKK, etc.)
 - Celtic Cross
 - 88/14

Tattoos, Brands, Burning, Scarring

(Continued)

- Southeast Asian Gang
 - TTTT(T)
 - Tinh-Love
 - Tien-Money
 - Tu-Prison
 - Toi-Crime
 - Revenge
 - Cigarette Burns
 - Five Dots
 - Scarring

Handsigns

- Rapid Movement of Hands and Fingers
- Letters, Numbers or Symbols Associated With the Gang
- Issued as a Greeting or Challenge

Gang Attire and Paraphernalia

- Use of Colors
- Sports Team Logos
- Graffiti/Symbols on Clothing
- Use of Clothing
 - Slits on Pant Legs
 - Rolled up Pant Legs
 - Right Side-Folk
 - Left Side-People
- Bagging, Sagging and Dragging

Gang Graffiti

- Denotes Territory
- Issued as a Challenge/Threat to Other Gangs
- May Include a Roster of Some Members

Warning Signs

- ❖ Back-pack or Notebooks have identifiers
 - Graffiti
 - Inappropriate Language
 - Inappropriate Drawings
 - Pictures of “friends” you do not know
- Develops a Violent or Aggressive Attitude
- Language Changes
- New Friends
- Starts Using a Nickname
- Loss of Self-Identity
- Change in Dress
- Secrecy
- Unexplained Money, Jewelry, Other Items

Warning Signs

- ❖ Unexplained Cuts and Bruises
- ❖ Observed Practicing Behaviors
 - Hand-signs
 - Tattoos
 - Graffiti
 - Hard stares
- ❖ Spray cans, Markers, Etching tools
- ❖ Graffiti or Symbols Found Around House
 - Practice Boards
 - Slam Books/Piecer Books
- ❖ Unusual Paraphernalia
 - Drug Use
 - Weapons

Warning Signs

- ❖ Gang Paraphernalia
- ❖ Music
 - Gangster Rap
 - Hate Music
 - Drugs and Suicide
- ❖ Computer Use
 - Gang web sites
 - Hate web sites
 - Drug web sites
 - Violent web sites
- ❖ Loss of Interest in Normal Areas
- ❖ School Attendance Problems
- ❖ Drop in Grades

Parents and other family members impact on students at-risk

- Single-parent households.
- Parent(s) in prison.
- Parent(s) involved in gang activity.
- Parent(s) abusing drugs/alcohol.
- Parent(s) in abusive relationship.
- Parent(s) that are unemployed.
- Grandparent(s)/guardian(s) raising youth.

At-Risk Youth Learned Behaviors

- Single-Parent Households
 - Inconsistent or harsh discipline.
 - Lack of bonding and caring.
 - Marital conflict.
 - Lack of parental care.
 - Limited funds; poverty.
 - Various parental relationships.
 - Family history of substance abuse, domestic violence, or child abuse.
 - Social instability.

At-Risk Youth...(continued)

- Parent(s) involved in gang activity
 - Condoning teen use of alcohol and drugs.
 - Condoning teen's criminal activity.
 - Approval of gang lifestyle.
 - Raise children as gang members.
 - Drug selling and abuse.
 - Easy availability of weapons.
 - Easy availability of drugs and alcohol.
 - Promotes gang attire and appearance.
 - Tattoos.

Prevention Strategies

What Parents Can Do At Home To Help
Prevent Their Children From Becoming
Involved In Gangs

Keeping Your Child Safe

- Be a Role Model not a Friend
- Positive Attention
- Open Lines of Communication
- Demonstrate Love
- Discipline
- Increase Your Knowledge
- Know Their Friends
- Develop Positive View

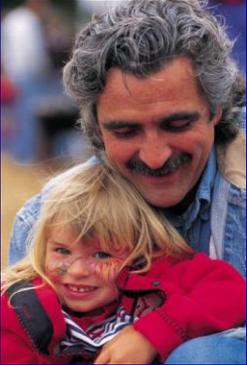


Keeping Your Child Safe

- Develop and Anti-Gang Self-Concept
- Establish a Drug-Free and Gang-Free Home
- Get Involved in the Community
- Provide Supervision
- Provide Enrichment
- Teach Them Positive Attitude
- Ensure School Success



Be a Role Model



- Children need you to be their PARENT
- Model Appropriate Behaviors
- Discipline When You Need to Set Limits
- Teach Life Skills



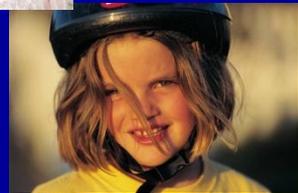
Positive Attention

- ✓ Positive V. Negative Attention
- ✓ Have a genuine interest in the things that are important to your child
- ✓ Get them interested in things you do
- ✓ Spend time with them
- ✓ Stay involved as they get older

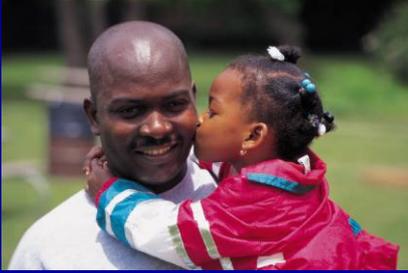


Communication

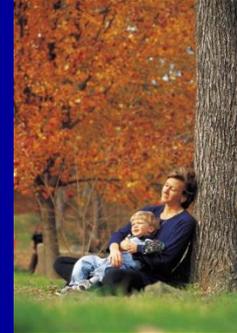
- Do not talk *at*, but with your child
- Listen to and value what they have to say
- Encourage them to discuss all problems
- Do not become judgmental
- Do not trivialize
- Set aside time to have a **CONVERSATION** with your child each day



Demonstrate Love



- Let your children know that you care for them and love them
- Do not be afraid to hug them
- Express your love
- Even when disciplining let them know you love them



Discipline

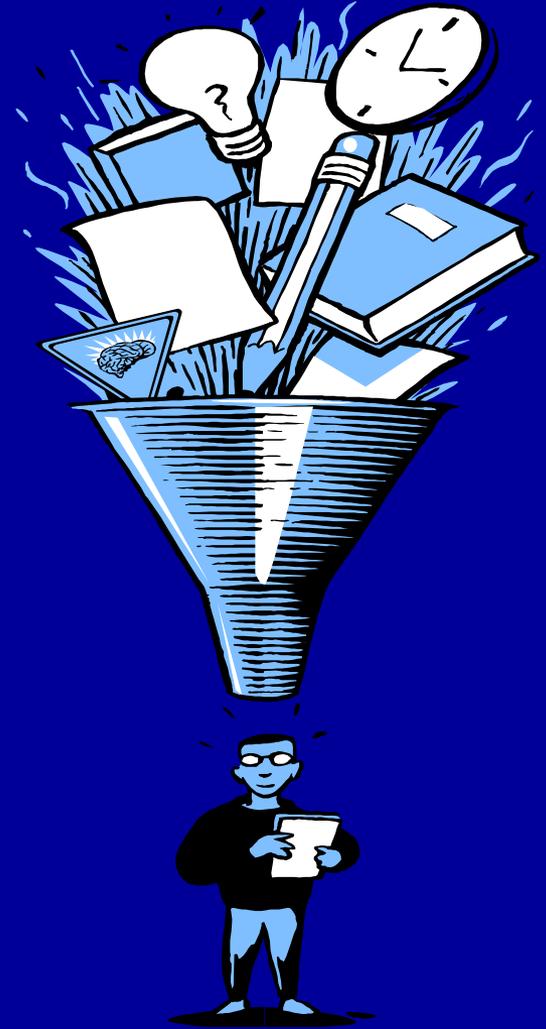
- Discipline and structure in the household will allow your child to develop self-limits
- Discuss and Develop the house rules
- Set realistic limits
- Teach them what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviors
- List the consequences of unacceptable behaviors
- Let them know when you are angry but model appropriate behaviors
- Do not discipline when too angry – give yourself a timeout
- Be Fair and Firm
- Be Consistent



Increase Your Knowledge

Times have changed

- Music
- Movies
- Magazines
- Internet
- Video Games
- Drugs
- Gangs
- Bullying
- Violence



Know Their Friends

- Peers play an important role in development
- Gangs = greater chance of violence and drugs
- Do not allow your children to hang around negative peers
- Become familiar with their friend's families



Positive View



- Young people that have the skills to succeed and feel they can make it – DO
- Remind your children that they are special
- Identify positive attributes/skills and recognize them
- Teach them they can feel good about accomplishments
- Words are very **POWERFUL**
 - Minimize negative comments
 - Maximize positive comments
- **GIVE THEM HOPE!!!**





Anti-Gang Self-Concept



- Children that know gangs are negative and can lead them down the wrong path are less likely to be gang members
- Discuss the negative impact of gangs
- Do not allow them to write gang names, initials, symbols or graffiti
- Do not allow them to take a gang-type nickname
- Do not allow them to flash handsigns

Establish a Drug Free and Gang Free Home



- Let your children and their friends know your house is a drug free and gang free home
- Do not allow any paraphernalia including:
 - Magazines
 - Pictures/Drawings
 - Clothing
 - Graffiti
- Do not allow negative language from your children or their friends
- Do not allow drug talk

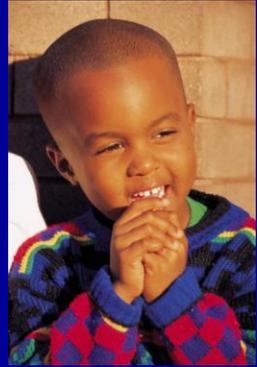
Get Involved in the Community

- A Strong United community will force gangs and drug dealers to move or disperse
- Get to know your neighbors
- Form or participate in support groups
- Develop activities that youth may become involved in
- Get involved in community clean-ups or adopt a house/neighbor



Provide Supervision

- Unsupervised youth are involved in more crime and delinquency
- Keep your children active
- Get them involved in supervised activities
 - Afterschool Programs
 - Sports
 - Clubs
 - Scouting
 - Church Activities
 - Volunteerism
- Do not allow them to stay out late
- Know where they are, where they are going and with whom
- Check up on them
- Room Searches



Provide Enrichment

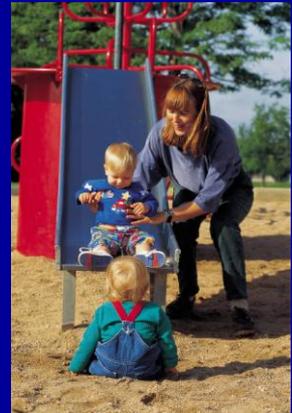


- Do things as a family that are new and different
- Explore the local area
- Go to museums and art galleries
- Walk on the college campuses
- Involve them in reading about their interests

Teach Them



- Model appropriate behaviors
- Right from Wrong
- Accountability
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Communication skills
- Anger management
- Conflict Resolution
- Respect for other people and races



Positive Attitudes and Values

A Positive Attitude towards self and others and a strong sense of ethical and moral values will enable children to make correct decisions

- At an early age teach your children to respect themselves and others
- Teach them what is right and wrong
- Develop in them a care for others
- Allow them to believe in themselves
- Let them have hope for a positive future
- Stress a positive outlook on life and the future
- Stress good work habits in academics and employment
- Let them know that with hard work, effort and education they can become anything that they want

Ensure School Success

- Most gang members do not do well in school
- Most prisoners did very poorly in school
- Take an active interest in your children's education
- Help them with homework assignments or studying for tests
- Read books with your child
- Visit educational places
- Visit local colleges



Ensure School Success *(Continued)*

- Become active in your child's school, especially middle school
 - Become acquainted with the staff
 - Become a member of PTA/PTO
 - Attend school events and activities
 - Check up on progress and behavior
- Stress the importance of a good education
- Remind them of the opportunities an education can give them



Breaking the Negative Group Influence

- Child must stop wearing gang or drug related identifiers
- Child must understand the differences between a real family and a gang
- Child must understand the differences between real friends and a gang
- They must understand the real consequences of gang involvement or drug use
- Child must take responsibility for his/her own actions

Breaking the Negative Group *(Continued)*

- Youth must set realistic goals
- Youth must learn resistance skills and practice those skills
- Child must be able to resist peer pressure
- They must develop interests in positive activities
- Child must build ties to positive groups
- Child must bond to positive role models

Gang Program Resources

- National Youth Gang Center Website www.iir.com/nygc
- OJJDP Summary: Youth Gang Programs and Strategies
(Howell, 2000)
www.iir.com/nygc/PublicationLinks.htm#YGPI
- Addressing Community Gang Problems: A Practical Guide (BJA, 1998)
www.iir.com/nygc/PublicationLinks.htm#CAYG

Gang Program Resources (cont.)

- G.R.E.A.T Programs
www.great-online.org
- National Crime Prevention Council:
Teens, Crime, and the Community
www.ncpc.org/tcc
- National Youth Gang Center
www.irr.com/nygc
- Latin American Youth Center
www.layc-dc.org
- National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center
www.safeyou.org

Resources

San Diego County Office of Education

Student Support Services

- Hector Meza, Student Support Services Assistant, 858-292-3517 hmeza@sdcoe.net
- *Gabriela G. Baeza*, School Community Policing Partnership: 858-569-5440 gbaeza@sdcoe.net
- *Anthony Ceja*, Student Support Services Coordinator: 858-569-5442 aceja@sdcoe.net
- Marie Munna, Program Assistant: 858-569-5474 marimunn@sdcoe.net
- *Barbara Rivas*, Violence Prevention/Intervention Coordinator: 858-292-3577 rivas@sdcoe.net