

Online Resources

California Gang Investigators Association:
www.cgiaonline.org

California District Attorneys Association:
www.cdaa.org

National Crime Prevention Council:
www.ncpc.org

Office of the Attorney General:
www.oag.ca.gov

Official California Legislative Information:
www.leginfo.ca.gov

Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets: www.search-institute.org/assets/

U.S Department of Justice—Juvenile Justice: www.ojdp.gov

Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles Area: www.new.vpcgla.org

Santa Rosa Police Department
965 Sonoma Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
www.santarosapd.com



Santa Rosa Police Department

Gangs are no longer a big city problem, it's time to act now.

Gangs are in our schools, neighborhoods, communities and in our kids' lives.



GANG TIP HOTLINE
707-543-GANG

Prevention

You do not need to be a gang expert. Awareness is the key to stopping gang activity. Many parents are not aware of their child's gang involvement. Most youths are reluctant to discuss it with their parents. This is why the community should learn how to recognize signs of gang activity and take appropriate action.

The first step is to recognize there is a gang problem. People who recognize the problem are better equipped to address the issue with their child, as well as not becoming victims of gang crimes.

Communities must recognize the problem and work together to come up with solutions. Structured after school activities, employment, awards for good grades, community outreach and organized sports activities help lessen gang activity. Working with schools and law enforcement officials aid in eliminating the anonymity that allows gangs to grow. Whenever graffiti occurs in your community, report it to law enforcement. Once it is documented, remove it quickly. If you allow your community to look like a ghetto, it may become a ghetto.

Enforcing the laws and dealing with gang members is best left to those trained to deal with dangerous situations. Always report crimes as soon as they occur. Get involved in such groups as Neighborhood Watch. Cooperate with law enforcement, court officials and probation officers in holding gang members responsible for their actions.

A community that is dedicated to stopping this kind of activity will hamper a gang's ability to exist.

Prison time is a harsh reality that kids often ignore when they are engaged in gang activity. However, losing young lives to gang violence never enters anyone's mind until its too late.

Local Resources

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Emergency: | 911 |
| Non-Emergency: | 707-528-5222 |
| Drug Tip Hotline: | 707-543-DRUG |
| Gang Tip Hotline: | 707-543-GANG |
| School Resource Team: | 707-543-4060 |
| Graffiti Tip Hotline: | 707-543-3499 |

Community Resources

Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force
Refer to the [Website](#) for information, resources and to receive email updates.

Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County: 707-544-6911
www.capsonoma.org

Family Service Agency of Sonoma County:
707-545-4551
www.familyservicesonoma.org

Social Advocates for Youth (SAY):
707-544-3299
www.saysc.org

Sonoma County Adult and Youth Development: 707-793-9030
www.scayd.org



Basic Criminal Street Gang Information



Many parents mistakenly assume that because their children do not dress up like hardcore gang members they are not gang involved. Talk to your kids about the dangers and consequences of gang involvement.

INTRODUCTION

This information is to help determine if a young person you care for is at risk of becoming associated with or is involved in gang activity. Indicators of gang involvement are outlined in this brochure and may generally fit a variety of youths. If you observe more than one indicator, you should talk to the individual about your concerns and seek help. Parents may not be aware of their child's gang involvement. Parents should discuss gangs with their child and actively discourage gang association at an early age.

WHAT IS A GANG?

A gang is a group of three or more people who associate together, have a common identity and engage in criminal or delinquent activity. The gang may use a name, color, clothing style, tattoos, or other items to identify themselves. A gang may or may not claim control over a certain territory in a community.

WHY PEOPLE JOIN GANGS

There are many reasons why people join gangs; attention, being part of something, excitement, peer pressure, protection, and financial gain are a few. In some families, gang membership is a tradition. Others become gang members because they think gangs are trendy. Many youths don't realize the risks, consequences and hazards of gang involvement.

SIGNS OF GANG ASSOCIATION

Signs may include sudden behavior changes in children and teens. Such changes include; a decline in grades, truancy, graffiti in the youth's room, on

school folders or on clothes, wearing a certain style or color of clothes, breaking curfew, change in friends, drug and/or alcohol use, or possession of money or items that a parent cannot explain. Involvement of your child with a group of their friends in delinquent or criminal behavior may be another sign. Some gang members devise hand signals to communicate with other gang members. Use of such signals should alert parents and caregivers to possible gang association.

GANG PARAPHERNALIA

CLOTHING:

Style shows the group that youths associate with. The particular color, type of clothing, shoes, hats, or the way the clothing is worn can be a warning sign. Look for the symbols, messages, graffiti or gang names written or embroidered on jacket, pants, shoes or baseball caps.

COLORS:



Various colors may be signs of gang association. Red may be used to show association with the Bloods or Northern California Hispanic Prison gangs. Blue may be used to show association with the Crips or Southern California Hispanic Prison gangs. Asian gangs often use the color yellow. Black clothing may be worn by a variety of gang associated youths like White Supremacist gangs and some "Heavy Metal" gangs.

GRAFFITI:

Graffiti appears on books, posters, bedroom walls, interior of vehicles, doors and furniture. You should discuss any graffiti you find with your child first, then remove it. The graffiti may be a gang member's name or the name of the gang. It may include members' nicknames, Roman numerals, or be a declaration of loyalty to a particular gang. Hispanic gang graffiti often uses block lettering that is exaggerated or has reversed letters.

JEWELRY:

Accessories may be worn to signify gang association. It may be expensive or inexpensive. Belt buckles, brace-

lets, necklaces, key chains, earrings, shoe laces, and rings are all commonly used. Some gang members wear dice earrings to show the "set" they are associated with. Others may wear certain color earrings to show their gang association.

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Pictures of your child or teen with other gang members is a clear indicator. These photos may show members displaying hand signs, weapons, colors, clothing styles, or flashing money. Photographs may show your child singularly displaying these indicators.

WEAPONS:

Families and the community should be aware that kids involved with gangs commonly carry weapons. The weapons may be baseball bats, tire irons, chains, spiked wrist bands, a pipe, "martial arts" weapons, knives, "look alike" pellet guns, and guns.

HOW GANGS FUNCTION

Gangs thrive on intimidation and publicity. Violence is common in gangs and is used to maintain its status. Gangs depend on both individual and group participation. An individual will be pressured by others in the gang to maintain their status.

Legitimate groups elect a leader. A gang's leadership generally depends on who is the toughest, natural leader or who has access to weapons or money. It may also be based on who has the best skills for what the gang wants to do at that time. A good fighter may lead on a night they are going to fight; a good thief when they want to commit a theft.



Gangs will have a name or common identity. The name usually comes from their town, a street, housing project, area code, rock bands, cults, or personal beliefs of the members. The gang name is an important identity for the gang. Members may have nicknames (monikers) as well. The moniker may be given to the member by the other members or chosen by the member. The name frequently fits the member's personality (real or perceived) or relates to some physical or mental traits.

EFFECTS OF INVOLVEMENT

Gangs are a terrible burden on society. Family members must worry about their safety as well as their child's. Friends who refuse to join the gang may be in jeopardy because of their refusal. These friends are often discarded for fellow gang members.



Parents can be subjected to heavy financial bills for legal services, medical treatment, jail housing, and restitution to victims. The gang involved youth can expect to be arrested and prosecuted for criminal activity. Most parents are not aware that if a crime is gang related, the violator will not only be prosecuted for this crime, but can also be charged with criminal gang enhancements. Upon conviction, the youth can expect more jail time, out of home placement, fines, restitution to victims, community service work and/or very restrictive conditions of probation.

WHAT GANGS DO

Gangs differ from other groups in that they engage in criminal activity. Gang members commit a variety of crimes. These include robbery, burglary, theft, vandalism, assault, rape, arson, witness intimidation, weapons and narcotic offenses.

Graffiti is probably the most visible and common crime. Gangs use graffiti to let the community know they exist, mark their territory, make statements about their gang, or issue challenges to other gangs. Graffiti is not just an idle crime and is a great source of gang information.

Gang members actively seek violent conflicts. This includes murder, assault with a deadly weapon, drive-by shooting, and battery. Gang violence often claims innocent victims.

