



Gangs: What you should know, part one
383
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Note

- This is not the full presentation. This is for note-taking during the presentation. The full presentation includes numerous photographs that I cannot release to the public.
- The full presentation will be shown during the session.
- Thank you for understanding.

Learners will...

- 1) Gain an understanding of the extent of the gang problem;
- 2) Recognize the different gangs' colors, tats, graffiti, and lit;
- 3) Gain an understanding of gang mentality; and,
- 4) Be able to recognize gangs in the community you serve as well as in your workplace.

Who is most vulnerable to gang membership?

- Domestic Violence victims
- Bullied students
- Poor grades
- Truant
- Parent w/alcohol/drug problem
- Early criminal behavior/incarceration
- Parent in prison
- Parent/sibling gang members
- Lives in high risk area/joins for protection

Indicators for potential gang membership

- Domestic violence in the home creates a violence training camp for the millions of children living in these environments.
- Violence for children can become an accepted norm at an early age.
- These children often spend their school days in survival mode – unable to learn.
- They withdraw and act out.
- They usually keep the family secret.

Bullying in School

- It can be a side effect of domestic violence in the home and/or violence in the neighborhood.
- Pushing, hitting, grabbing, intimidating can all be lessons learned at home or in gang initiations.

Truancy

- Can be traced to domestic violence, drug abuse in the home, gang involvement, bullying, peer sexual harassment, and other gangs in schools.
- Students frequently believe that schools cannot protect them.
- Once students are involved in gangs, going to school can be problematic.
- Students can also be truant because they stay home to protect a parent or care for siblings.

Gangs at School

Transfers to the Institution

- Gang members take their affiliations to school and recruit.
- Gang colors and behaviors can be seen surfacing in elementary school. Your school policy is a great help here.
- Youth gang involvement and violence build through elementary school. By middle school the violence level is high and so is the truancy rate. Consider a truancy reduction project. Adult level crimes are being committed at this time.

Gangs at School

- Bring with them a higher level of violence.
- Initiations are violent beatings or gang rape.
- Drugs are an everyday part of gang activity, either use of or the sale of or both.
- Gang representation, colors and tattoos can be seen on participating students.
- Graffiti can be found on and in school buildings.
- Weapons can be present or readily accessible.

Maintaining Safe Schools

- Safe schools need parent, community and law enforcement support and involvement.
- Safe schools begin with understanding the problems in the communities served.
- SROs are valuable assets to have in your buildings. They stay up on changes in gang activities and trends.
- Talk/listen to students. Often students think adults know but don't care.
- Be observant. Skip wall murals.

Maintaining Safe Schools

- Bring partners together; i.e., parole and probation should meet their clients in the school.
- Service providers for students in the school should work together when possible.
- Probation officers and social workers for the same child might never meet. Therefore they might never have the full picture needed to help the child and family.

What should schools do?

- Work with your SRO on training for all school staff on gang recognition.
- Have a school safety plan.
- Develop gang and truancy prevention programs for students if not already in place.
- Keep graffiti off your buildings and property. Scan regularly. Photograph, date, catalog and remove.