

WHAT TO DO

BECOME AWARE & TAKE A STAND:

The first and most important step is to become aware of gangs, gang members, and their activities. Citizens armed with basic knowledge are better able to avoid becoming victims of gang crime. When incidents occur, cooperate with authorities. Ask how to become involved in reporting gang crimes and to safeguard your identity when calling.

The Sheriff's Department has a toll free number to call when you see gang activity or want to report information about a crime.

1-888-599-GANG (888-599-4264)

Any information obtained through this confidential number will remain anonymous.

REMOVE GRAFFITI

Neighborhood graffiti should be removed quickly. The longer it remains, the more it attracts gang members and rival gang members to add to it or to start crossing it out. To remove graffiti call:

32-ERASE

KEEP YOUR KIDS BUSY:

- Be a positive role model
- Spend quality time with your children
- Know your child's friends and their family
- Help your child develop good conflict resolution skills (See www.safeyouth.org/scripts/teens/conflict.asp)
- * Encourage your child to participate in after school programs:
 - * Sheriff's Activity League (SAL)
 - * Police Activities League (PAL)
 - * Boy Scouts
 - * Girl Scouts
 - * Park Recreation Programs
 - * United Way

RESOURCES:

- **PARENT PROJECT**
www.parentproject.com
661-827-3209
A support group to help deal with out of control or strong-willed juveniles.
- Mental Health
661-868-6600
- Kern County Probation Department
" Juvenile Prevention Services"
661-868-7502
A program suited for juvenile offenders that have a truancy or misdemeanor offense pending.
- Kern County Probation Department
"Early Intervention Program"
661-336-6800
A voluntary program geared for juveniles that are in the early stages of disruptive behavior.



GANG AWARENESS

Kern County Sheriff's Office



The Kern County Sheriff's Office is committed to work in partnership with our community to enhance the safety, security, and quality of life for the residents and visitors of Kern County through professional public safety services.

GANG FACTS:

There are more than 200 active gangs in Kern County. Every year there are thousands of gang crimes in the Sheriff's Office jurisdiction. These crimes include:

- Homicides
- Felony Assaults
- Robberies
- Drive-by & walk up shootings
- Drug related crimes
- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Other crimes

WHAT ARE GANGS:

Criminal street gangs are identified by California Penal Code section 186.22 (f) as: "any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of one or more (specified) criminal acts, having a common name or common identifying sign or symbol, and whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal activity."

HOW TO IDENTIFY GANG MEMBERS:

There is no universal way to determine gang membership or affiliation because they vary by gang. The determination of gang membership or affiliation should be made on case-by-case basis. Several gang members will display gang-style tattoos, dress in a style identifying their particular gang and openly admit gang membership. Their personal belongings are frequently covered with graffiti and bear the gang's logo and the member's gang name. Gang members also make gestures with their hands and fingers, commonly referred to as "signing" that identify their gang.



DRESS:

Clothing is like a street uniform and many gang members wear distinct clothing styles to represent their individual gang. Some common gang attire are as following:

- Three-quarter-length cut-off pants and knee high socks
- Baggy or "sagging" pants
- Particular brands of shoes, pants, shirts, or professional sports gear
- College or professional sports team whose logo, uniform combination or initials that represent their gang
- Gang graffiti, symbols, messages or names on embroidered tee-shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, pants, baseball caps, or jewelry
- Belt buckles with gang initials
- Starter jackets
- Blue or red bandanas, "rags"

WHAT GANGS DO:

Violence is inherent in gang activity. Anybody in the area is fair game, including men, women, and children. Gang members use weapons that can include shaved-down baseball bats, sections of pipe taped at all ends, spiked wrist bands, Chemical Mace, knives, handguns,, AK-47 assault rifles, pistols, or 9 millimeter semiautomatic handguns.

HOW GANG VIOLENCE AFFECTS THE COMMUNITY:

Gang violence creates extensive damage on a regular basis to local property and businesses. Vandalism, in the form of graffiti and the destruction of public and private property, is often done in the furtherance of the gang's reputation. Abandoned houses and walls are favorite targets for vandalism but even occupied houses do not escape.

WHY DO KIDS JOIN GANGS?

- The excitement of gang activity
- Peer Pressure
- Protection
- Respect
- Acceptance of his or her peers
- Family Tradition
- Attention
- Financial Benefit
- Culture

WARNING SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD MAY BE INVOLVED WITH A GANG:

Prevention is the key to controlling gang activity. Many parents are unaware that their children are involved in gang activity. Parents should look for some of these changes:

- Admits to "hanging out" with kids in gangs.
- Shows an unusual interest in one or two particular colors of clothing or a particular logo.
- Has an interest in gangster-influenced music, videos, movies, or websites.
- Uses hand signals to communicate with friends.
- Has specific drawings or gang symbols on schoolbooks, clothes, walls, or tattoos.
- Comes home with unexplained physical injuries (fighting-related bruises, injuries to hands/knuckles).
- Has unexplained cash or goods, such as clothing or jewelry.
- Carries a weapon.
- Has been in trouble with the police.
- Exhibits negative changes in behavior such as:
 - * Withdrawing from family.
 - * Declining school attendance, performance, and behavior.
 - * Staying out late without reason.
 - * Displaying an unusual desire for secrecy.
 - * Exhibiting signs of drug use.
 - * Breaking rules consistently.
 - * Speaking in gang-style slang.