

HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT GANGS

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GANG MEMBERS SAY THEY JOINED GANGS BECAUSE ë

- Gang offered them support
- Gang offered them caring
- Gang offered a sense of order/purpose
- Gang offered them a sense of safety
- Gang offered them a sense of power/control



IF PARENTS PROVIDE ë

- Support
- Caring
- Consistency
- Praise
- Safety





WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Offer positive alternatives
 - After-school activities
 - Sports
 - Clubs
 - Mentors
 - Tutors



WHAT CAN WE DO?



- Talk with other parents
 - Support one another
 - Talk about what you see/hear around the neighborhood
 - Get ideas from one another
 - Find out from other parents what they are doing with their kids



WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Work with the police and other agencies like Probation
 - Report suspicious activity
 - Create a neighborhood watch
 - Inform Officer Porter & Police about gang graffiti
 - Talk to local leaders about what everyone can do
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WHAT ARE RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS?

RISK FACTORS FOR GANG ACTIVITY

- Aggressiveness
- Early initiation of violent behavior
- Parental criminality
- Child maltreatment
- Low levels of parental involvement
- Parent-child separation
- Academic failure
- Lack of school connectedness
- Truancy and school dropout
- Frequent school transitions
- Delinquent siblings and peers
- Peer gang membership
- Poverty
- Substance use (e.g. illicit drugs and alcohol)
- Community disorganization
- Availability of drugs and firearms
- Exposure to violence and racial prejudice

THE GOOD NEWS: PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Parental involvement and monitoring
- Family support,
- Coping skills (interpersonal skills)
- Positive social connections
- Peer support
- Academic achievement
- Reducing delinquency, alcohol, and drug use



Source: OJJDP

SO ð HOW DO WE TALK TO THEM?

- It's never too early
- Share values
- Share expectations
- Be consistent
- Be clear



TALKING TIPS

- Spend time
- Listen
- Encourage them to do their best
- Praise them for doing well
- Hold the bar high





DO TEENS LISTEN TO ADULTS?

YES THEY DO!

- They may seem to disregard what we say but they are listening
- They watch what we say and do
- Talking to kids about gangs is like talking to them about any other critical issue:
 - Be clear & concise
 - Express your concerns
 - Explain the consequences
 - Be specific about what you expect

TALK BEFORE THERE IS A PROBLEM

Tell your child:

You disapprove of gangs

You don't want to see him/her hurt or arrested

TALKING ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF GANG AFFILIATION

- Be clear about your disapproval of gangs
- Be firm in your expectations that your child must NOT:
 - Associate with individuals involved with gangs
 - Hang out where gang members congregate
 - Attend any parties/social gatherings hosted by gang members
 - Use hand signs, even in pictures (even as a joke)
 - Wear clothing associated with gangs in our area

EXPLAIN

- That doing any of these things may put him/her in danger
- You will not provide money for or purchase anything that is gang-related
- That there will be swift consequences if these rules are broken

TALK ABOUT HOW TO DEAL WITH PEER PRESSURE

- Assist your child to practice ways to resist pressure
 - "If you were my friend, you would..."
 - "If you were my friend, you wouldn't..."
 - A

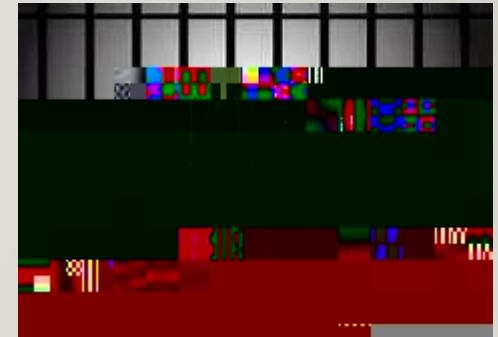
WE THINK THEY DON'T WANT IT BUT

Teens & pre-teens need ***firm limits***.

They may balk but this is how they know we care about them!

TALK ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES

- For him/her
- For family
- For neighborhood
- For larger community
- For society



EXPRESS YOUR CONCERNS

- Threats
- Intimidation
- Harm/death
- Jail

Don't be afraid to be clear and even blunt with a teen.

ALLOW THEM TO:

- Express their fears
- Express their concerns
- Ask questions
- Talk about their experiences





THEN ë

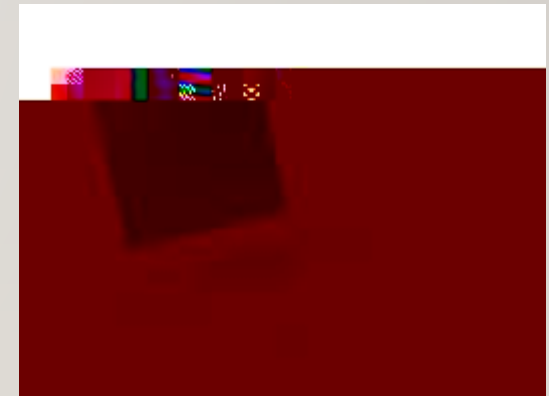
MORE TIPS ë

- Encourage kids to talk about their attitudes and beliefs about drugs, alcohol and gangs
- Have routine times for talking
- Tell them secrecy is not allowed
 - Gangs will tell kids they will harm their family, friends and pets
 - Let kids know there are no secrets ò even if someone threatens to hurt them or others

WHAT ABOUT THE INTERNET?

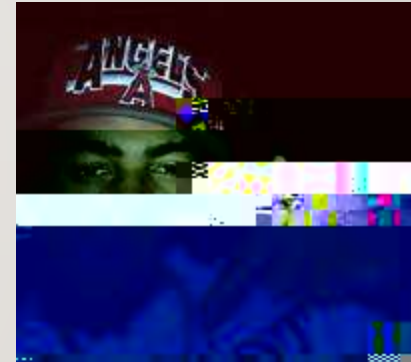
MORE ABOUT THE INTERNET/TECHNOLOGY

- Familiarize yourself with internet websites
- Know teen slang
- Know abbreviations, acronyms kids use online and while texting
- Establish rules for phone and computer use that include total parental access



MORE TO LOOK FOR ë

- Associating with known gang members
- Withdrawing from family members
- Not obeying curfews
- Changing/worsening attitude with adults and/or peers
- Using/possessing drugs
- Carrying weapons



PLAN FAMILY TIME

- Make time for family to play
- Eat meals together
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QUESTIONS?



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