



**The National
Evaluation and
Technical
Assistance Center**

for the
Education of Children and Youth
Who Are Neglected, Delinquent
or At-Risk (NDTAC)

Gang Prevention From Multiple Perspectives: Federal, Research, and Practice

www.neglected-delinquent.org



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Introductory Remarks

**Simon Gonsoulin
Director, NDTAC**

www.neglected-delinquent.org

About NDTAC

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- **Neglected-Delinquent TA Center (NDTAC)**
- **Contract between U.S. Department of Education and the American Institutes for Research**
 - John McLaughlin
Federal Coordinator, Title I, Part D Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk Program
- **NDTAC's Mission:**
 - Develop a uniform evaluation model
 - Provide technical assistance
 - Serve as a facilitator between different organizations, agencies, and interest groups
- Join our listserv at <http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/forms/listserv1.asp>

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Presenters

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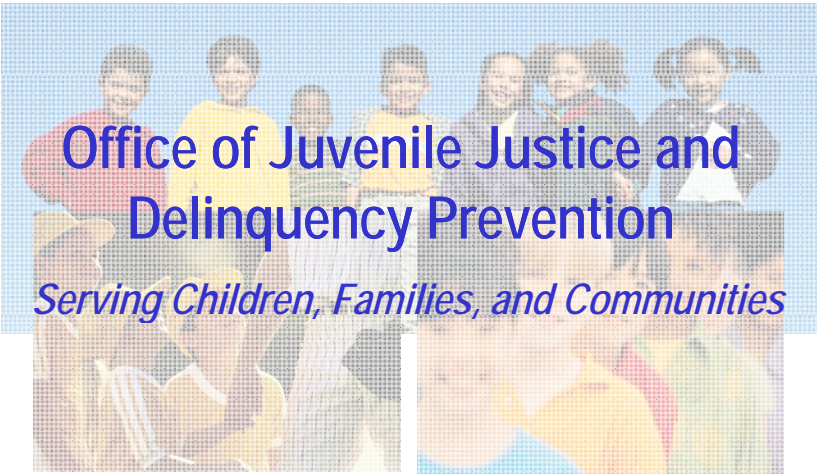

- I. **Dennis Mondoro** and **Steffie Rapp**, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
- II. **Finn Esbensen, PhD**, Professor of Youth Crime and Violence, University of Missouri-St. Louis
- III. **Tim Cowan**, GREAT Program, Garland Police Department, Garland, Texas
- IV. **Tony Ostos**, Program Manager, Gang Resistance Is Paramount (GRIP), Paramount, California

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U.S. Department of Justice
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Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention



Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Serving Children, Families, and Communities

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Addressing the Nation's Juvenile Justice Needs

- Responding to child victimization
- Preventing and intervening in delinquency
- Strengthening the juvenile justice system



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OJJDP
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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency and victimization. OJJDP supports states and communities in their efforts to develop and implement effective and coordinated prevention and intervention programs and to improve the juvenile justice system so that it protects public safety, holds offenders accountable, and provides treatment and rehabilitative services tailored to the needs of juveniles and their families.

<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org>

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National Gang Center
www.nationalgangcenter.gov

The screenshot shows the National Gang Center website interface. On the left is a navigation menu with links such as Home, Advisory Board, FAQ, Resources, Training and Technical Assistance, BIA Law Enforcement Anti-Gang Training, OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model Training, Request Training and Technical Assistance, Surveys and Analyses, Publications, Related Web Sites, Other Training and Conferences, Funding, and Feedback Site. The main content area features a header for the '2009 National Youth Gang Survey Participants' with a call to action to 'Click Here' for the online version. Below this is a section titled 'ABOUT THE NATIONAL GANG CENTER' which provides a brief history of the center, its funding by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention since 1995, and its merger with the National Gang Center (NGC) in 2003. It also mentions the annual National Youth Gang Survey of 2,500 U.S. law enforcement agencies and the availability of research, evidence-based anti-gang programs, and tools on the website.

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OJJDP FACT SHEET

Jeff Dornikowski, Acting Administrator March 2010

Highlights of the 2008 National Youth Gang Survey

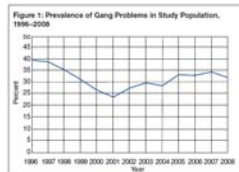
by Arlen Egley, Jr., James C. Howell, and John P. Moore

Gang activity remains a widespread problem across the United States, with prevalence rates remaining significantly elevated in 2008 compared with recorded lows in the early 2000s. Approximately one-third of the jurisdictions in the National Youth Gang Survey (NYGS) study population¹ reported gang problems in 2008. This is a significant change over the 2002 estimate, but a statistically negligible one from 2007. The 13-year trend is shown in figure 1.

The National Gang Center estimates that 32.4 percent of all cities, suburban areas, towns, and rural counties (more than 3,330 jurisdictions served by city and county law enforcement agencies) experienced gang problems in 2008. This represents a 15-percent increase from the 2002 figure. Approximately 774,000 gang members and 27,000 gangs are estimated to have been active in the United States in 2008. The number of gangs increased by 28 percent, and the number of gang members increased by 6 percent from 2002 to 2008 (see table 1).

¹ For a description of the NYGS study population and sample methodology see www.nationalgangcenter.gov/nygs-study-population-and-sample-methodology.

Furthermore, stable increases are most pronounced for the number of gangs across all population categories over this 7-year span.



To request the Parents' Guide to Gangs, visit www.nationalgangcenter.gov/parents-guide-to-gangs.

For more gang-related information and materials, contact the National Gang Center:
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Tallahassee, Florida 32317
Phone: (850) 388-0600, Ext. 224
Fax: (850) 388-6396
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Web site: www.nationalgangcenter.gov



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Parents' Guide to Gangs

This guide is designed to provide parents with information in order to recognize and prevent gang involvement.

Introduction

Research indicates that parents play a pivotal role in keeping young people out of gangs. Negative influences within the family—including domestic violence, child abuse, harsh or inconsistent parenting practices, and/or drug/alcohol abuse by family members—can increase the risk that a youth will join a gang.

Parents can protect their children from gang activity through taking positive actions, such as monitoring their children's activities, fostering close relationships with them, and using positive discipline strategies. However, parents often lack factual information about gangs.

Behaviors Associated With Joining a Gang

The early adolescent years (12-14 years of age) are a crucial time when youths are exposed to gangs and may consider joining a gang. Youths who are becoming involved in a gang may exhibit the following behaviors:

<p>Negative changes in behavior, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Withdrawing from family. Declining school attendance, performance, or behavior. Staying out late without reason. Unusual desire for secrecy. Confrontational behavior, such as talking back, verbal abuse, name calling, and disrespect for parental authority. Sudden negative opinions about law enforcement or adults in positions of authority (school officials or teachers). Change in attitude about school, church, or other normal activities or change in behavior at these activities. Unusual interest in one or two particular colors of clothing or a particular logo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest in gang-influenced music, videos, and movies. Use and practice of hand signals to communicate with friends. Peculiar drawings or gang symbols on schoolbooks, clothing, notebooks, or even walls. Dramatic changes in hair or dress style and/or having a group of friends who have the same hair or dress style. Withdrawal from longtime friends and forming bonds with an entirely new group of friends. Suspected drug use, such as alcohol, inhalants, and narcotics. The presence of firearms, ammunition, or other weapons. Nonaccidental physical injuries, such as being beaten or injuries to hands and knuckles from fighting. Unexplained cash or goods, such as clothing or jewelry.
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OJJDP Strategic Planning Tool - Internet Explorer provided by Dell
http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/About/Strategic-Planning-Tool

NATIONAL GANG CENTER™

OJJDP STRATEGIC PLANNING TOOL

The Strategic Planning Tool (SPT) is an electronic tool to assist communities in assessing their gang problems and planning strategies to deal with those problems. The tool has four interrelated components that include risk factors, planning for implementation, program matrix, and the community resource inventory. The first three components provide users with a broad array of knowledge about gang behavior, strategies, best practices, and research-based programs. The fourth component, the community resource inventory, is a database that allows users to capture and categorize local resource information for local action.

- The **Risk Factors** component provides users with a description of research-based risk factors for delinquency by age (developmental) periods and risk factors that are correlated to gang behavior are annotated. SPT users will find empirical indicators of individual risk factors and potential data sources for community-level measurement of risk factor prevalence. Also available are links to program descriptions within the SPT, indexed by age level, which correspond to individual risk factors allowing users to search for relevant research-based programs.
- The **Planning and Implementation** component permits users to access a database containing descriptions of numerous gang prevention, intervention, and suppression programs, program strategies, and best practices to address delinquency and gang behavior. The information contained is indexed by age levels and allows users to compare local data with available information to identify potential strategies and practices, or to address program service gaps in their planning efforts.
- The **Program Matrix** includes descriptions of each program in the database, which are listed alphabetically in the matrix. The matrix allows users to view the age range of clients served by each program. A unique function is the ability for users to sort programs of interest for further review.
- The **Community Resource Inventory** allows users to record and categorize information about their community organizations, programs,

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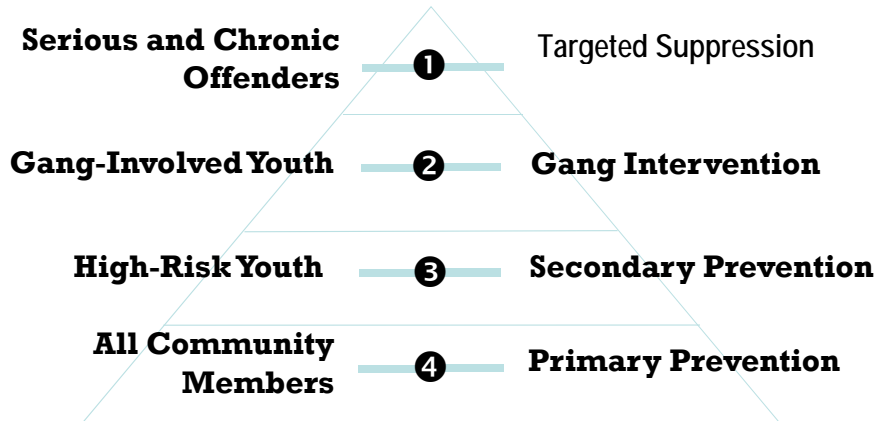
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Windows of Opportunity

Risk and Protective Factors					
Family	School	Peer Group	Individual Characteristics	Community	
Age 3	Age 6	Age 9	Age 12	Age 15	Age 18
Conduct Problems	Elementary School Failure	Child Delinquency	Gang Member	Serious and Violent Delinquency	
Prevention		Intervention		Suppression	

Source: Howell (2003)©

Focusing Anti-Gang Strategies



Factors Common to Successful Programs

- Based upon a comprehensive needs assessment
- Address multiple areas of risk
- Consistently implemented and provide youth with sufficient dosage
- Give opportunities to develop positive, long-term relationships with prosocial adults
- Serve mainly high-risk youth



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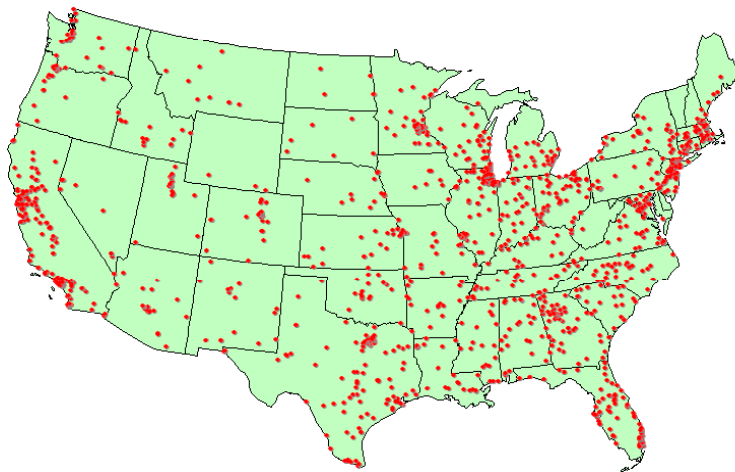
Gangs, Risk Factors, and Programs

Finn Esbensen, Ph.D.
Department of Criminology and
Criminal Justice
University of Missouri-St. Louis

Some Interesting Information about Youth Gangs & Gang Membership

- Gangs are found in all kinds of communities
- Gang members mirror youth in their communities
- Girls comprise about 1/3 of gang members
- Youth gangs are not highly organized
- Gang membership is quite transitory
- Very criminally involved while in the gang
- Gang youth commit a variety of offenses – specialization is rare

Jurisdictions Reporting Youth Gang Problems – NYGS (1999-2001)



Gang Typology

- Large-scale survey of law enforcement agencies
- Five categories/typologies:
 - **Traditional** (long-lasting, large, distinct subgroups, territorial, wide age range)
 - **Neo-traditional** (relatively short history, territorial, subgroups, and more than 50 members)
 - **Compressed** (relatively short history, no subgroups, narrow age range, and less than 50 members)
 - **Collective** (resembles compressed but larger and longer history, wider age range, no subgroups)
 - **Specialty** (short history, small, no subgroups, narrow age range, territorial, and narrow criminal focus)

Maxson & Klein, 1995

Risk Factors for Gang Joining

- **Community**
 - Most neighborhood/community level factors receive inconsistent or inconclusive support
 - Even in the most disorganized and disadvantaged neighborhoods, most youths do **NOT** join gangs
- **Individual**
 - Negative life events
 - Non delinquent problem behaviors
 - Delinquent beliefs

Risk Factors for Gang Joining

- **Family**
 - Parental supervision
- **School**
 - Inconclusive
- **Peer**
 - Affective dimensions of peer group
 - Characteristics of peer group

Risk Factors Not Supported

- Most neighborhood level indicators
- Unsafe school environment
- Family structure (e.g., single-parent)
- Parental attachment
- Family poverty
- Self-esteem
- Internalizing behaviors (withdrawal)

Multiple Risk Factors

- The more risk factors and in multiple domains; the greater the risk of gang joining
- No silver bullet – not all youth living in high-risk neighborhoods join gangs – importance of local assessment
- Given the harmful effects of cumulative risk, as well as the fact that there may be multiple paths to gang involvement, programs should be broad-based, addressing numerous risk factors across multiple domains

What is Known About Gang Prevention and Intervention?

- **Very little**
- No shortage of programs but lack of evaluations of existing programs or lack of positive outcomes

Program Implementation Concerns and Program Characteristics

Program Fidelity

- (1) **Dosage** - is the program of sufficient intensity and is enough of the program actually implemented to expect the anticipated effect?
- (2) **Program Adherence and Monitoring** - to what extent are program components actually taught or delivered?
- (3) **Quality of Delivery** - if delivered, what is the quality of the delivery?
- (4) **Training** - is the training sufficiently rigorous to prepare trainees to deliver the program?



The G.R.E.A.T Program

Tim Cowan
Garland Police Department
Garland, Texas



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The G.R.E.A.T. Acronym

Gang
Resistance
Education
And
Training



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What Is G.R.E.A.T.?

- Life-skills competency and violence prevention
- Elementary/middle school youth and families
- Officer-instructed, school-based curriculum



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G.R.E.A.T.'s Primary Goals

- Help youth avoid gang membership
- Prevent violence and criminal activity
- Develop positive relationships with law enforcement

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Curriculum Implementation—*Enhanced Curriculum*

- Program objectives
 - Alter perceptions about gangs
 - Develop social competency skills (e.g., communication, goal setting, and decision making)
 - Foster empathy for victims
 - Encourage prosocial affiliations
 - Promote social responsibility

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Elementary and Middle School Components

- Taught during school hours
- Elementary—fourth or fifth grade
- Middle school—taught at the entry level (sixth or seventh grade)

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Curriculum Overview—*G.R.E.A.T. Elementary School Curriculum*

- Optional curriculum
- Complements middle school curriculum
- Taught at 4th- and 5th-grade level
- Certified G.R.E.A.T. officer facilitates
- Six (6) lessons

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Curriculum Overview—G.R.E.A.T. Elementary School Curriculum (continued)

1. G.R.E.A.T. Beginnings
2. To Do or Not to Do
3. Loud and Clear
4. Staying Cool When the Heat Is On
5. We're All in This Together
6. G.R.E.A.T. Days Ahead

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Curriculum Overview—G.R.E.A.T. Middle School Curriculum

1. Welcome to G.R.E.A.T.
2. What's the Real Deal?
3. It's About Us
4. Where Do We Go From Here?
5. Decisions, Decisions, Decisions
6. Do You Hear What I Am Saying?
7. Walk in Someone Else's Shoes

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Curriculum Overview—G.R.E.A.T. Middle School Curriculum (continued)

8. Say It Like You Mean It
9. Getting Along Without Going Along
10. Keeping Your Cool
11. Keeping It Together
12. Working It Out
13. Looking Back

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Cooperative Effort

- Law enforcement
 - Expertise, time, support, and programs
- Educators
 - Expertise, time, and support
- Parents
 - Support and active reinforcement role
- Local community leaders
 - Support, support, and support

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What's the Bottom Line?

- Lower levels of victimization
- More negative views about gangs
- More favorable attitudes about law enforcement
- Reduction in risk-seeking behaviors
- Increased association with peers involved in prosocial activities

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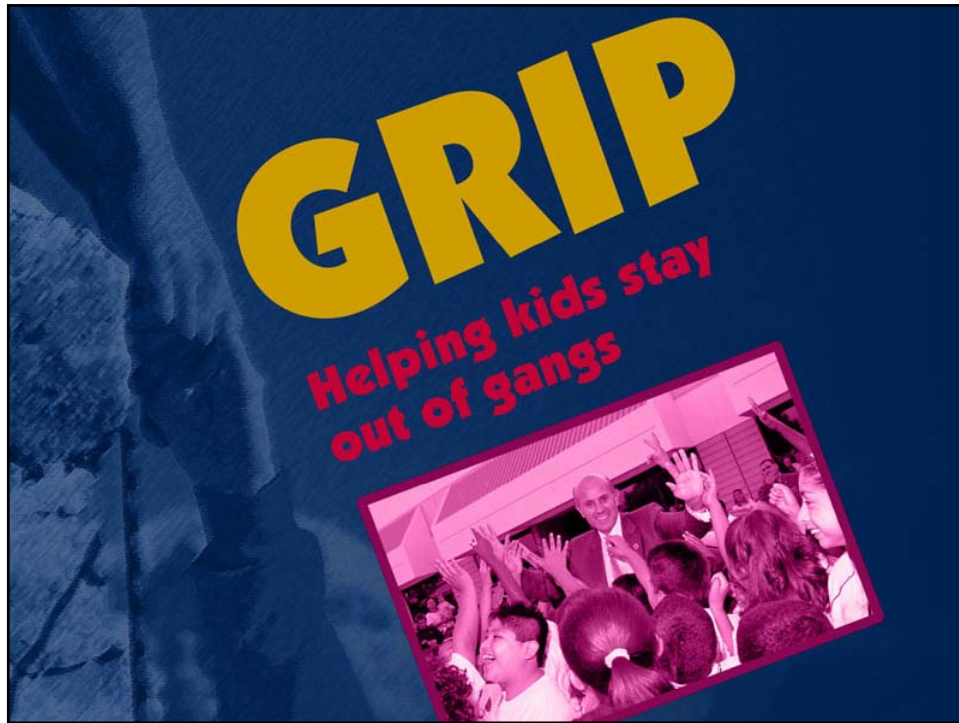
Need More Information?

www.great-online.org

(800) 726-7070

E-mail: information@great-online.org

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TO REDUCE YOUTH GANG INVOLVEMENT, GANG PREVENTION IS ESSENTIAL

- “General prevention efforts that target the entire adolescent population may also prove beneficial in reducing gang involvement”
- “...it is appropriate to formulate primary gang prevention efforts that target the entire adolescent population.”

Esbensen, Finn-Aage “Preventing Adolescent Gang Involvement” OJJDP Bulletin, U.S. Dept of Justice, September 2000

- Successful community gang prevention strategies focus on three areas:
 - prevention, suppression, intervention
- Gang prevention is essential to counteract increased recruitment and indoctrination into the gang culture that is occurring today from gang involved peers, the entertainment industry, the clothing industry, and family members that are gang involved.

WHAT IS GRIP?

(Gang Resistance Is Paramount)

- A primary prevention gang prevention program that provides anti-gang/gang resistance lessons to pre-teen youth in school classroom settings
- It is a community partnership between local public agencies that serve the same constituents:
 - The local government
 - The local school district
 - The local law enforcement agency
 - It is funded locally from local funds (or it can be funded from grants to local funds)

THE GRIP STRATEGY

- Provide gang resistance training to pre-teen youth and their parents
- Counteract gang culture indoctrination by educating youth about the dangers and consequences of gang activity
- Lower youth gang activity in the community by cultivating peer pressure against it, teaching kids how to resist peer pressure to become gang involved, and by impacting the culture of acceptance of gang activity.
- To promote affordable and positive community activities as an alternative to gang involvement

PROGRAM CONTENT

- Nine 2nd grade detailed 40 minute gang prevention lessons
- Fifteen 5th grade detailed 50 minute gang resistance lessons
- Ninth grade anti-gang reinforcement follow-up lessons
- Parent gang awareness/prevention meetings
- Anti-gang counseling for youth at the beginning stages of gang involvement or that want to quit gang activity.

SOME GRIP CURRICULUM LESSON TOPICS

GRIP Introduction - *A definition of what a gang is*
Graffiti - *Its effects on individuals and the community*
How Gangs Have Changed From the Past
Gang Violence - *A part of today's gang activity*
Gangs And Territory - *Losing your freedom*
Gang Activity Impacts The Family - *How it hurts them*
Resisting Peer Pressure To Join A Gang
Gang Tattoos - *They negatively affect your life*
Gangs Abuse Drugs
Gangs and Crime - *What it is like in jail and prisons*
Gang Members Have Police Problems
Alternatives To Gang Activity
Future Opportunities For You – *Preparing for your future*
The Choice Is Yours – *Make the right choice*

A LESSON PRESENTATION: Gangs and Territory

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Poster: "Gangs Stuck in Their Territory"
(Recommended Videos) Option 1: "Gangs and Turf", "McGruff's Gang Alert"

I. PREVIOUS LESSON REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. **Ask someone to explain what the circle of gang violence is.**
2. **Who is hurt the most in the circle of gang violence?**
The people who are involved in gang activity.
3. **What can you do to avoid the circle of gang violence?**
Don't join a gang or act like a gang member, don't dress in gang clothes, don't hang around with gang members, and avoid places where gangs hang out.

II. OPENING DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS

Introduce this lesson by explaining to the class that gangs often claim an area such as a park, a street, an alley, or even an entire neighborhood as their turf or territory. Gangs claiming and fighting over territory are some of the causes of gang violence. Ask and discuss the questions listed below.

1. **What does it mean when a gang claims an area as their territory? Does it really belong to them? When a gang claims an area as their territory, they think and act like it is theirs, and they want to decide who can go in and out of it. The area they are claiming does not really belong to them, though.**
2. **What do gangs usually do to an area that is claimed by them as their territory? They hang out there, vandalize it with graffiti, and they try to control the area by using violence to try to keep other rival gang members out.**

III. POSTER DISCUSSION

IV. VIDEO PRESENTATION DISCUSSION QUESTION

GRIP EVALUATIONS:

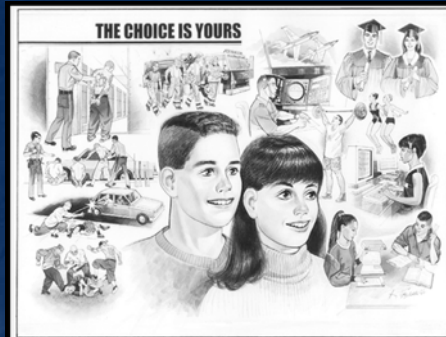
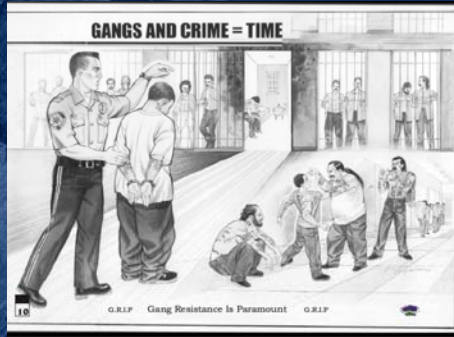
1. About half of students were initially undecided about gangs; after GRIP 90% were negative toward gangs.
2. A control group not exposed to the program, unlike the group in GRIP, showed no change in their attitude toward gangs (50% undecided).
3. About 90% of 7th graders who had taken GRIP in fifth grade still responded negatively toward gangs
4. Over 90% of 9th graders who took part in the 5th grade were staying out of gangs

GRIP EVALUATIONS (continued):

5. Followed-up with 3,612 former GRIP participants, aged 13-22 years old, 96% were not identified as being gang involved
6. A 2003 USC Evaluation
 - Population increased 57%, gang membership decreased 41%
 - Part one crimes decreased 47% from 1982 -2002
 - The ratio of gang members to residents decreased from 1:24 to 1:63

GRIP PROGRAM MATERIALS:

- Nine lesson 2nd and 15 lesson 5th grade curriculum manuals
- 2nd and 5th grade student work books
- Posters, coloring books, recommended videos (dvds)
- 9th grade follow-up lesson outlines



AN EASY TO USE PROGRAM

- GRIP is low cost and easily adaptable to other communities.
- Replicated locally by GAP in the Wilmington/San Pedro Harbor area, by Helpline Youth Counseling in Whittier, in Mendocino County by the Ukiah School District and in Fort Bragg.
- GRIP is also currently being replicated out of state in Longmont Colorado, Raleigh, N.C by the Wake County School District, it has also been used in Hawaii by the Honolulu Police Department, and by Men Engaged in Non-Violence (MEN) in Taos, New Mexico



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GRIP

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