

Gangs 101

A guide for parents

Q: What is a gang?

A: A gang is defined as three or more people, who acting as a group commit crimes and instill fear in a community to benefit themselves. Gangs can form based on racial, ethnic or geographical lines.

Q: Why do children join gangs?

A: There are many reasons a child may join a gang. Some of the common reasons are;

- A need to belong to a group
- For protection from others gangs
- Forced into a gang
- Peer pressure
- The excitement of being in a gang
- Relationships that are created in a gang

Signs that your child may be in a gang:

- Changes in friendship and reluctance to introduce you to new friends
- Changes in style of clothing
- Negative contact with people of authority
- Violent outburst
- Use of hand signs
- Making or having an interest in graffiti
- Poor school performance
- Becoming very secretive about activities

