

# GANGS

## What is a Gang?

A gang is a loosely organized group of three or more people who interact together and exclude others. The group has a name and a leader or leaders. The gang may have developed an identifying sign, colors, clothing, tattoos, jewelry, or hand signals. The gang often claims a territory or an area and will fight rival gangs for control. Many gangs use distinctive graffiti or "tags" to mark their territory. Gangs usually participate in some kind of illegal activity, whether it be violent crime, theft or drug dealing.

## Why do Kids Join a Gang?

Kids join gangs to fill their basic needs which usually are not met at home or at school. These are:

Respect  
Recognition  
Belonging

Support  
Protection  
Money

Family/Friends  
Identity  
Control/Excitement

## Signs of a Gang Member

Colors or Emblems  
Negative Behavior  
Unexplainable Income  
"Gangsta" Rap Music  
Secretive/Defensiveness

Hand Signals  
Drop in Grades  
Bullying

Graffiti/Symbols  
Carrying Weapons  
Gang Slang  
Out of Control Behavior  
Non-Interest in Family

Gang Tattoos/Jewelry/Clothing

# What Can A Parent Do?

## As a Parent "What Can I Do"?

- ☞ Listen and talk to your child.
- ☞ Spend time with your child.
- ☞ Put a high value on education, help them succeed at school.
- ☞ Identify positive role models and heroes in your community.
- ☞ Involve you child in supervised, positive group activities.
- ☞ Know what your child is doing and whom he/she is with.
- ☞ Know their friends and their friend's families.
- ☞ Think of your child in a positive light but don't be blind.

## Tell Your Child

- ☞ You disapprove of gangs
- ☞ You don't want them hurt or arrested
- ☞ He/She is special and worth protecting
- ☞ Family members don't keep secrets from each other
- ☞ You want to help him/her with their problems
- ☞ A story about a problem you had when you were younger

## What Can I Do to Work Towards a Gang-Free Community?

- ☞ Talk to other parents, support one another in organized clubs, sports and activities for the children.
- ☞ Report suspicious activity immediately (gang graffiti, criminal/drug activity, etc.), set up a community patrol.
- ☞ Work with police and other community agencies. Find out what local services there are that will work with neighborhood groups against gangs and drugs.
- ☞ Start a Neighborhood Group that will address a clean and safe community for our children to grow up in.



**"It takes a village to raise a child"**

Get to know your village and your child.

### Escondido Community Phone Numbers

Abandoned Vehicles  
Crimes in Progress  
Code Enforcement  
Domestic Violence  
Drug Activity  
Graffiti Removal

839-4755  
911  
839-4650  
888-305-7233  
839-4954  
839-4668

Graffiti Removal Spanish  
Neighborhood Liaison  
Info Line (Community Services)  
Police Dispatch (Non Emergency)  
Underage Drinking

839-6386  
839-4579  
211  
839-4722  
839-4973

*Compliments of the Neighborhood Porch*