
GANGS

A Community Response



Crime and Violence Prevention Center
California Attorney General's Office
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Introduction

Gangs have spread from major urban areas to the suburbs and even to our rural communities, leaving no one immune to the devastation that comes with the invasion of gangs. Drive-by shootings, carjackings and other acts of senseless violence have become too frequent in communities throughout California, destroying the lives of all who are touched by this violence.

For too long, most of us have viewed gangs as an inner city problem, or as law enforcement's responsibility. With the spread of gangs and their increasingly random violence, we can no longer afford to deny their presence and hope for the best. We must respond as a community. All of us — parents, community members, clergy, businesses, educators, law enforcement and local government — must work together to prevent violence. We need to find ways to steer our youth away from gangs. We have the power to give them options, opportunities and alternatives to joining gangs. If we take action, we can reclaim our youth . . . one at a time!

With that belief in mind, we present *Gangs: A Community Response*. This booklet will provide you with general information about gangs and how to recognize signs of gang involvement. It includes information on what you, your community and your school can do to prevent gang activity. It provides you with resource information and it includes the laws that enable law enforcement to target illegal gang activities. Our hope is that by reading this booklet, parents, educators and other interested community members will be better informed and better able to help prevent young people from making one of the worst decisions in their lives — joining a gang.

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Gangs, Crime and Violence

The first step in addressing gang problems in your family, school or community is overcoming fear and denial. Gangs are not a big city or inner city problem, any more than they are a problem of a particular race or culture. Gangs cross all ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, and geographic boundaries. They exist in rural, urban and suburban communities; and children see gang images reinforced and glamorized in the media and through music and fashion. As a parent, educator, or concerned community member, it is important for you to learn the signs of gang involvement and gang activity. The next step is to get involved and take action.

Prevention is the key to controlling gangs. Don't wait for drive-by shootings to occur. Take action at the first sign of gangs in your community. Neighborhood residents throughout the state are getting involved in comprehensive approaches to prevent gang violence and other problems associated with gangs. These comprehensive approaches stress partnerships between concerned individuals, community organizations and government agencies that are equipped to prevent or to respond to gang problems.

Comprehensive approaches normally involve the police, schools, churches, local government, parks and recreation, and businesses working with parents and youth.

Comprehensive approaches also deal with gang problems on three levels: prevention, intervention, and suppression. Prevention programs or strategies focus on youth before they are involved in gangs. Intervention approaches focus on helping youth get out and stay out of gangs. Suppression efforts are designed to protect youth and other community members from criminal or violent gang activities and involve all parts of the criminal justice system. All three approaches are necessary in order to address the different degrees to which youth become attracted to, involved in or threatened by gangs.

Once people come together, it is necessary to assess the level of the gang problems in your community. Are the problems new and emerging or are they steadily growing and entrenched? When you complete the assessment, you can develop solutions to those problems with a range of responses including prevention, intervention, and suppression.

This booklet focuses on prevention. It will provide you with some basic information to help you identify gang activity in your family, school or community. It is designed to answer key questions about why kids join gangs and the types of gang activities in which they may be involved. It also suggests action that you can take as a parent, educator, concerned community member, or local government official.

GANGS

Gangs often form along ethnic and racial lines, although there is a current trend of youth joining gangs for eco-

conomic motives, or for the glamour, excitement or “high” achieved by committing acts of violence and participating in crimes. Gangs generally identify themselves by a name derived from a street, neighborhood, or housing project where they are based; a rock band they like; a cult they follow; or their ethnicity. Some examples of gangs that are based on ethnic ties include:

- Asian (includes Vietnamese, Hmong, Cambodian, Thai, Laotian, Filipino, Samoan, Japanese or Chinese) – Well known gang names include: *Cheap Boys*, *Natoma Boys*, *Wah Ching*, *Lady Rascals* (female), *Southside Scissors* (female)
- African American – Well known gang names include: *Crips*, *Bloods*
- Hispanic – Well known gang names include: *White Fence*, *Los Vatos Locos*, *Latin Ladies* (female), *Midnite Pearls* (female)
- White (includes White Supremacist, Satanic, Ritualistic, Punk or Heavy Metal) – Well known gang names include: *Skinheads*, *Stoners*

Females, especially Asian and Hispanic, are moving away from the traditional role of being merely girlfriends of gang members, and are forming their own gangs.

Another type of gang is known as a tagging crew. Tagging crews are individuals (known as “taggers”) who initially group together for the sole purpose of placing their names or slogans in visible locations or having tagging competitions known as “battles” with other tagging crews when they are challenged. While tagging can be done by individuals or crews who have no gang affiliation, recent trends in Southern California are showing that more and more tagging crews are being identified as another type of street gang by law enforcement.

HOW TO IDENTIFY GANG MEMBERS

Gang members generally have a nickname or moniker that highlights their real or imagined special physical, personal or psychological trait. A gang member called "Slice," for example, gets his name from his skill in handling a knife. Gangs share common characteristics such as wearing distinct clothing or using hand signs. Although details will vary, the following gives general information about gangs (check with your local law enforcement officer for current information):

Attitude – gang members normally project an arrogant and defiant attitude in an attempt to intimidate others. This is particularly apparent while in the presence of other gang members.

Graffiti – gangs use graffiti to identify themselves and their territory and to communicate messages. The graffiti may indicate the gang's name, the member's nickname, a declaration of loyalty, a memorial to a slain gang member, threats, challenges, and warnings to rival gangs or a description of criminal acts in which the gang has been involved. Gang graffiti is most commonly found on neighborhood walls, fences and mail boxes. Gang graffiti may also be found on clothing, athletic shoes, notebooks, and bedroom walls.

Clothing – color and style sometimes serve to identify each gang. For example, with African American gangs, the color *red* stands for "Bloods," *blue* for "Crips."

With the emergence of a new style of "hip hop" baggy clothing, it is becoming more difficult to identify gang members based on their style of dress. Some gangs are no longer wearing their colors in order to deceive law enforcement.

Black and *dark* or *dull* colors tend to be favored by some Hispanic gangs and white Heavy Metal groups. Other favored gang colors may be *brown* or *purple*. Whether they use color or not, traditional gangs will generally adopt some article of clothing or style of dress in order to distinguish themselves as a group.

Other clothing examples are preferences for wearing baggy or “sagging” pants or having their caps turned at an angle. They also like particular brands of shoes, pants or shirts. For example, some gangs like to wear plaid Pendleton shirts in either blue, brown, black or red. These shirts are worn loose and untucked. Gang graffiti, symbols, messages or names can be written or embroidered on jackets, pants, and baseball caps. Other identifying items include belt buckles with the gang’s initials, key chains, starter jackets (team jackets), and red or blue bandannas called *rags*.

Jewelry – may be expensive or cheap, but the gaudy type is preferred. Examples are heavy gold rope chains, earrings, and large rings.

Weapons – these can include shaved-down baseball bats, sections of pipe taped at the ends, spiked wrist bands, chemical mace, knives, handguns, sawed-off shotguns and semi-automatic firearms such as an Uzi, AK-47, or MAC 10.

Tattoos – these can indicate gang affiliation or geographic origin of the gang or gang members. They can be crude or elaborate and placed on any part of the body.

Other signs that youngsters have joined gangs are cigarette burns on their hands, fingernails painted a certain color, gang-color shoelaces in their athletic shoes, and specific hairstyles (such as the Skinheads shaving their heads bald or a group of females all wearing their hair in a ponytail).

WHAT GANGS DO

Many gangs spend their time in the same activities as everyone else except for one important difference: *they are involved in criminal activity, often in the form of violent confrontations with rival gang members. When members are at school, a restaurant, party, rock concert, movie, or even a family picnic or neighborhood gathering, the potential for violent crime is far greater than for any other group of people. The violence, often indiscriminate and unpredictable, claims innocent victims; and the criminal acts range from individual assaults to drive-by shootings.*

Gangs use violence and intimidation to enhance their reputation and notoriety. They also depend upon both individual and group participation. Some maintain the recognized leadership structure of whoever is the toughest, has the guns or the most money can emerge as the leader or role model; but this status can be short-lived. Sometimes gangs have no official leaders.

Some ethnic gangs target people whose cultural background causes them to be reluctant to seek help from law enforcement. For example, Vietnamese and Chinese gangs victimize people of the same race. They invade homes to rob residents or they extort money from Asian-owned businesses. However, some Southeast Asian gangs are expanding their activities beyond their own communities and are becoming like non-Asian gangs in their crimes and indiscriminate violence.

There are different levels of gang activity, ranging from "criminal street gang" activity to the delinquent behaviors of juveniles. Juvenile delinquent behaviors, which include extorting lunch money, writing graffiti, vandalism, bullying, intimidation, stealing bicycles, burglaries, shoplifting, drug use, drug dealing, and truancy can lead to serious criminal street gang activity.

Of even greater concern than property damage is the violence associated with gang graffiti. Gang members use graffiti to mark their *territory* or *turf*, declare their allegiance to the gang, advertise the gang's status or power, announce their presence, and challenge rivals.

When a neighborhood is marked with a gang's graffiti indicating territorial dominance, the entire area and its inhabitants become potential targets for violence. A rival gang sometimes identifies everyone in the neighborhood as a potential threat. Anyone on the street or in his or her home is fair game for drive-by attacks by rival gang members. In this way, innocent residents are often subjected to gang violence by the mere presence of graffiti in their neighborhood. Also, victims of white-supremacist or hate graffiti often suffer from fear and intimidation when they are singled out by the Skinheads or other white-supremacist gangs.

The graffiti of various groups can generally be recognized by the following: Hispanic gang graffiti is often written in blocked letters and is very stylized. Some Asian gangs, particularly Laotian and Cambodian gangs, are mimicking the blocked Hispanic style of graffiti. African American and White gang graffiti tend to be similar to one another using a simple and often crude style, although White gang graffiti may include Nazi emblems or other graphically violent symbols.

Tagging crews scribbling graffiti to gain notoriety and fame are beginning to turn violent. Some taggers are referring to themselves as "tag bangers" and are carrying guns and knives along with their marking pens and cans of spray paint. These groups are acting just like street gangs claiming turf or attacking rival crews.

WHAT IS TAGGING

While gang graffiti is used to mark off territory and communicate threats, messages, or descriptions of criminal activity, the motivation for tagging is to gain fame and notoriety. Taggers choose names, slogans, and pictorial graphics in an attempt to create an identity and make themselves known. Their principal crime is vandalism and their targets are often highly visible — public transportation, billboards, benches, walls, and freeway signs.



WHY GANG MEMBERS HAVE BLEAK FUTURES

Gang membership can severely hurt one's future. Gang members usually socialize only with other gang members, reinforcing their limited view of life. They often drop out of school, limiting their chances for higher education, employment, and upward mobility. They frequently establish a lifelong pattern of involvement with the criminal justice system. They may commit serious and violent crimes that lead to lengthy incarcerations. They may be killed or injured. They may place an entire household of family members at risk. The gang members that do make it to adulthood often become dependent on alcohol and drugs. For some, the gang lifestyle is passed down as a family tradition leading to generational gangs.

Chapter 2

Pre-teens & Gangs — Telltale Signs

Gang involvement can begin as early as elementary school. Children as young as 7 or 8 years old have been recruited to work for gangs.

Parents and educators should watch for the signs that their children or students may be involved with gangs. Changes in a child's behavior or activities which may be early warning signs of gang involvement include:

- Decline in grades.
- Change of friends.
- Truancy.
- Keeping late hours.
- Alcohol and other drug use.
- Having large sums of money or expensive items which cannot be explained.
- Developing major attitude problems with parents, teachers or others in authority.
- Glamorizing gangs.

Telltale signs of gang involvement include:

- Gang graffiti in his or her bedroom on books, clothing, athletic shoes, posters and bedroom walls.
- Gang uniforms or gang colors.
- Hand signals to communicate with other gang members.
- Photos showing gang names, slogans, insignia, hand signals, or individuals involved in gang activities.
- Gang style language.
- Gang tattoos or gang insignias.
- Disclosure of gang membership.
- Witnesses connecting the individual to gang activity.

Once in a gang, the child's behavior may change either suddenly or gradually, but it will follow a pattern. To be accepted by the gang, he or she must adopt a defiant attitude toward authority figures. This defiance may be expressed by disruptive or violent behavior at school or home.

At school, the child lets everyone know of his or her new status. He or she wears gang clothing and becomes disrespectful toward the teacher and others. Also, the new gang member may fight others to gain a reputation for being bad. The gang member will pick a victim and constantly harass that child. Eventually he or she will beat up the victim. But, before doing so, the gang member will announce his or her intentions to friends and other students so they can be there to cheer the gang member on and spread the word about his or her "toughness."

When at home, the new gang member's defiance may or may not manifest itself in violence, depending on his or her relationship with parents and other family members. However, if the family attempts to interfere with the child's gang involvement by setting limits and increasing supervision, there may be repeated confrontations.

Not all gang members are obvious in their dress or manner. Some Asian gangs, for example, are not immediately recognizable by their attire. Also, they may not display gang characteristics while in school — they are respectful to staff, they do not disrupt activities, they do not drop out of school, and they maintain their grades. In such cases, gang affiliation may be overlooked until an incident occurs.

Parents and teachers should not jump to hasty conclusions about their children and gangs. The warning signs of gang involvement can be similar to normal behavior during adolescence. The key is to question the behavior if it appears to go beyond the norm.

Gang involvement and violence usually are symptoms of social, family, or psychological dysfunction. Many problems can be prevented by understanding the dynamics of gang behavior, learning how to deal with it, and finding out what alternatives and resources are available.

WHY YOUTH JOIN GANGS

Youth join gangs for a variety of reasons which are influenced by conditions in their family, school, and neighborhood. Some reasons include: excitement, physical protection, peer pressure, family tradition, perceived financial gain, seeing gangs as an avenue to gain respect and notoriety, or because they are bored. Many gang members do not recognize their ability to achieve at school or do not believe they have employment opportunities or job skills. For the most part, youth looking to join a gang are not achieving success at home or at school and are not receiving the attention and support they need from their family.

A vulnerable child will seek love and protection. Youth also seek the acceptance of their peers. Youth who lack parental guidance and support or opportunities for positive

involvement with their peers, will often turn to a gang to meet these needs. Once a child is lost to a gang, it is hard to get him or her back.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

Parents who suspect gang activity should take steps to intervene. The following are some suggested steps:

- Increase your awareness of your child's belongings, clothes, and room. Know who their friends are and where they "hang-out."
- Be willing to identify and address the dynamics within your family, as well as factors within the neighborhood and school that could be contributing to your child's gang involvement.
- Talk to your child or teenager. Get answers to your questions about their behavior and discuss the consequences of being in a gang.
- Talk to school officials and counselors. Ask if they are aware of campus problems and if there are school programs that will help.
- Contact your local law enforcement agency or juvenile probation department. They may have a crime prevention or gang specialist who can give you up-to-date information.
- Call community-based organizations. Many have experience with gang problems and can give you valuable guidance.
- Go to your religious leaders for advice. They may know of programs that help neighborhood children stay out of gangs.
- Report and immediately remove any graffiti in your neighborhood or local school grounds.
- Take action — this is the most important thing you can do as an individual, a group, or an organization.
Don't ignore the signs of gang activity.

Prevention — Take Action!

Remember, prevention is the key to controlling gang activity. Everyone and every community can work on solutions to the gang problem. *Effective anti-gang efforts begin with partnerships among parents, schools, law enforcement, religious institutions, community organizations, businesses, and youth.*

WHAT YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY CAN DO

You can do a lot to prevent gang problems or to reduce gang problems already in place. You do not have to act alone. You can join with community leaders to make a difference. As an individual, you can:

- ✓ *Learn more about gangs.*
- ✓ *Sharpen your skills as a parent.*
- ✓ *Call 911 immediately when there is an emergency in your neighborhood. Don't be afraid to get involved.*
- ✓ *Contact your local law enforcement agency for up-to-date information.* Its crime prevention or gang specialists can help your neighborhood plan ways to fight gang activity. They can help you organize:
 - a *Neighborhood Watch Program* in your neighborhood. The gang's power grows through

their use of fear and violence to intimidate rivals and citizens alike. This tactic can be countered by citizen action groups such as *Neighborhood Watch*. A neighborhood that is united in their goal to stop gang crime and violence can be an effective force in curbing gangs.

- *a graffiti abatement or clean-up program.* Get rid of gang graffiti, paint over it. A graffiti-free neighborhood signals to gang members that it's your neighborhood, not theirs!

When gang incidents occur in your neighborhood, *cooperate with the police or sheriff's department.* Your help may prevent others from becoming victims of gang violence. Any information about gang crimes, wanted suspects, or violent gang activity should be reported to the police. Remember, fighting crime and dealing directly with violent gang members are best left to experts trained to handle dangerous situations.



Youth loitering after school or hanging out on corners provide a breeding ground for gangs. Communities can offer young people alternatives to gang involvement. This includes organized activities for children and teenagers through recreation departments, schools, churches, and youth organizations. Communities should seek support from local businesses and industries to employ and train youths. Together, you and your community can:

- Ensure that youth have ample recreational activities and after-school programs.
- Work with your school, law enforcement, religious, and city officials to insure that youth are provided with a safe environment for social and recreational activities.
- Work with law enforcement to establish supervised, constructive late night alternatives like night time basketball games, competitive drill teams or dance programs.
- Encourage older youth to work with younger youth in recreational and other activities.
- Provide gang prevention education and training to parents, youth, and others in the community.
- Provide services to youth, especially high-risk youth.
- Provide employment opportunities for youth.
- Conduct an accurate assessment of the level of gang problems both in the community and at schools. Share information among parents, community residents, school personnel and law enforcement, to improve your ability to develop strong positive programs that address your community and school needs.

WHAT YOU AND YOUR SCHOOLS CAN DO

Schools and school districts are constantly burdened with the problem of finding answers to this complex problem. Many schools have a variety of prevention strategies that include graffiti removal teams, school safety policies banning gang attire and symbols on campus and gang resistance curricula. You can work with your school to:

- Develop a school and law enforcement partnership to promote a safe campus.
- Sponsor training on gang issues for parents and teachers.
- Start a volunteer parent participation program at school to assist in tutoring or lunch hour monitoring.
- Use parents and volunteers to help monitor campuses and bus stops.
- Develop conflict prevention and resolution classes for students, parents, and school personnel.
- Develop translation programs for non-English speaking parents.
- Start before- and after-school and weekend programs to give students a safe place for study, tutoring programs, and social and recreational activities.
- Start drop-out prevention programs.

WHAT LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES CAN DO

Local government agencies can form anti-gang coordinating committees to help with coordination and planning. Normally these committees would include: law enforcement agencies, prosecutors' offices, the probation department, schools, community-based organizations, parks and recreation agencies, religious organizations, local busi-

nesses, the Chamber of Commerce, neighborhood watch groups, parent groups, student groups, and news media.

These committees normally meet on a monthly basis to exchange information, coordinate activities and plan a comprehensive community response. A suggested planning process includes the following steps:

- Identify the nature and location of the problem and contributing factors.
- Develop strategies to address the problem and reduce or eliminate the contributing factors.
- Determine the resources necessary to implement the strategies.
- Locate available resources at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Implement activities in coordination with other agencies.
- Evaluate the results of activities and revise strategies.

A local anti-gang coordinating committee should maintain a list of all the organizations and individuals in the community that are conducting anti-gang efforts, are in the position to assist anti-gang efforts, or are interested in assisting anti-gang efforts. The anti-gang efforts of a community will gain momentum as more agencies and groups become involved in the committee.

Anti-Gang Laws

To reduce gang violence, graffiti and illegal drug use in California, the Attorney General, the Legislature and the Governor have worked together to enact new laws specifically aimed at gangs. These laws assist law enforcement agencies, district attorneys, judges, schools, and communities in mounting a comprehensive attack on the problem. The following gives information on anti-gang laws:

CRIMINAL STREET GANG ACTIVITY

The California Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention Act eradicates criminal gang activity by focusing upon patterns of criminal gang activity and upon the organized nature of street gangs.

Active Participation in a Criminal Street Gang with knowledge that its members engage in criminal activity is punishable as a misdemeanor or felony. (Pen. Code, § 186.22, subd. (a).)

Violent Coercion to Participate in Criminal Street Gang. Any adult who uses physical violence to coerce, induce or solicit a minor to actively participate in any criminal street gang, as defined, . . . is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for one, two, or three years. (Pen. Code, §186.26, subd. (a).)

Any adult who threatens a minor with physical violence on two or more separate occasions within any 30 day period with the intent to coerce, induce or solicit the minor to actively participate in a criminal street gang, as defined, . . . shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for one, two or three years or in a county jail for up to one year. (Pen. Code, § 186.26, subd. (b).) A minor who is 16 years of age or older who commits an offense described in subdivision (a) or (b) is guilty of a misdemeanor. (Pen. Code, § 186.26, subd. (c).)

Buildings or Places Used by Criminal Street Gangs. A building or place used by gang members for the purpose of the commission of specified offenses is a nuisance which shall be enjoined, abated and prevented and for which damages may be recovered, whether it is a public or private nuisance. (Pen. Code, § 186.22a, subd. (a).)

Drive-By Shootings - Murder - Carjacking. All murder which is committed in the perpetration of, or attempt to perpetrate . . . carjacking . . . or . . . which is perpetrated by means of discharging a firearm from a motor vehicle, intentionally at another person outside of the vehicle with the intent to inflict death, is murder of the first degree. The penalty for first degree murder can be as high as 30 years to life with the application of the penalty enhancement. All other kinds of murder are of the second degree. For second degree drive-by murder, the penalty can be as high as 25 years to life with the application of the penalty enhancement. (Pen. Code, § 189.)

Drive-by Shootings - Second Degree Murder. Every person convicted of second degree murder shall be confined in state prison for a term of 20 years to life if the killing was perpetrated by means of shooting a

firearm from a motor vehicle, intentionally at another person outside of the vehicle with the intent to commit great bodily injury. (Penal Code, § 190, subd. (b), as amended by passage of Proposition 179 on June 7, 1994.)

Drive-by Shootings. An additional and consecutive punishment of five years in state prison shall be prescribed for drive-by shootings.

Shooting at an Occupied Motor Vehicle. Any person who is convicted of a felony or an attempted felony, in which that person discharged a firearm which caused great bodily injury or death. (Pen. Code, § 12022.5, subd. (b) (1).)

Shooting from a Motor Vehicle. Any person who with intent to inflict great bodily injury or death, inflicts great bodily injury or causes the death of a person other than the occupant of a motor vehicle, as a result of discharging a firearm from a motor vehicle in the commission of a felony or attempted felony and who is convicted of the felony or attempted felony. (Pen. Code, § 12022.55.)

Providing Firearms to Gang Members. Any person who knowingly supplies, sells, or gives possession or control of any firearm to another shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison, or in a county jail for a term not exceeding one year, or by a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or by both that fine and imprisonment if all of the following apply: (1) The person has actual knowledge that the person will use the firearm to commit a specified felony, while actively participating in any criminal street gang, as defined. . . ; (2) The firearm is used to commit the felony; and, (3) A

conviction for the felony violation has first been obtained of the person to whom the firearm was supplied, sold or given possession or control This section applies only if the person is not convicted as a principal to the underlying felony offense. (Pen. Code, § 186.28.)

Possession of Firearms. Any firearm, its ammunition, or any deadly or dangerous weapon owned or possessed by a member of a criminal street gang to commit specified offenses may be confiscated by any law enforcement agency or peace officer. (Pen. Code, § 186.22a, subd. (e) (1).)

ENHANCEMENTS

Felony. Conviction for a felony that was committed to promote, further, or assist in any criminal conduct by gang members is punishable by an additional term of one, two or three years, at the court's discretion. (Pen. Code, § 186.22, subd.(b)(1).)

Felony or Misdemeanor. Conviction for a public offense punishable as a felony or misdemeanor, that was committed to promote, further or assist in any criminal conduct by gang members is punishable by imprisonment in a county jail not to exceed one year, or by imprisonment in the state prison for one, two or three years. (Pen. Code, § 186.22, subd. (c).)

Gang-Free School Zone. If the underlying felony is committed on the grounds of, or within 1,000 feet of, a public or private school, . . . when minors are using the facility, the additional term shall be two, three or four years, at the court's discretion. (Pen. Code, § 186.22, subd. (b) (1).)

ANTI-GRAFFITI LAWS

Laws pertaining to graffiti were updated and expanded by passage of the 1993 California Graffiti Omnibus Bill.

Aerosol Containers of Paint

Possession by Minor. It is a misdemeanor for a minor to possess an aerosol container of paint for the purpose of defacing property while on any public highway, street, alley, or way or other public place, regardless of whether that person is or is not in any automobile, vehicle or other conveyance. (Pen. Code, § 594.1, subd. (e) (1).)

Sale to Minor. It is a misdemeanor for any person to sell, give, or in any way furnish to a minor any aerosol container of paint that can be used to deface property. (Pen. Code, § 594.1, subd. (a).)

Purchase by Minor. It is a misdemeanor for a minor to purchase an aerosol container of paint which can be used to deface property. (Pen. Code, § 594.1, subd. (b).)

Graffiti: Infraction or Misdemeanor

When graffiti causes less than \$250 in damage, a person may be guilty of an infraction punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500. The court shall also order the defendant to perform a minimum of 24 hours of community service, not to exceed 100 hours over a period not to exceed 90 days during a time other than during his or her hours of school attendance or employment. The court may also, at the victim's option, order the defendant to clean up, repair, or replace the property damaged by that person, but cannot order the person to pay for any related costs incurred by performance of the order. (Pen. Code, § 640.6, subd. (a).)

Parental Liability. If a minor is personally unable to pay any fine levied, the parent or legal guardian of the minor shall be liable for payment of the fine. A court may waive payment of the fine by the parent or legal guardian upon a finding of good cause. (Pen. Code, § 640.6, subd. (e).)

One Prior. If the person has been convicted previously for writing graffiti, the offense is a misdemeanor, punishable by not more than six months in a county jail, by a fine not to exceed \$1,000 or by both the imprisonment and fine. As a condition of probation, the court shall order the defendant to perform a minimum of 48 hours of community service not to exceed 200 hours over a period not to exceed 180 days during a time other than during his or her hours of school attendance or employment. (Pen. Code, § 640.6, subd. (b).)

Two Priors. A person who has been convicted previously for writing graffiti and has been incarcerated . . . for at least one of the convictions, and is subsequently convicted under this section, shall be punished by imprisonment in a county jail not to exceed one year. As a condition of probation, the court may order the defendant to perform community service not to exceed 300 hours over a period not to exceed 240 days during a time other than during his or her hours of school attendance or employment. (Pen. Code, § 640.6, subd. (c).)

Graffiti: Felony or Misdemeanor Vandalism

Writing graffiti as an act of vandalism is punishable as a felony or misdemeanor. Penalties for vandalism are based on the amount of defacement, damage, or destruction. For damages up to \$50,000, the court

may impose a fine up to \$50,000; imprisonment may range from one year in state prison to not less than six months in county jail. A person convicted of vandalism may also be punished by both fine and imprisonment. The court may also order the defendant to either clean up and repair the damaged property himself or herself, or to pay for someone else to do so. (Pen. Code, § 594.)

Graffiti: On or Within 100 Feet of a Highway

Any person who writes graffiti on or within 100 feet of a highway . . . including, but not limited to, guardrails, signs, traffic signals, snow poles and similar facilities, excluding signs naming streets, is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding six months or by a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or by both that imprisonment and fine. A second conviction is punishable by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding one year, or by a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or by both that imprisonment and fine. (Pen. Code, § 640.7, subd. (a).)

Community Service. As a condition of probation, the court may order the defendant to perform community service not to exceed 100 hours over a period not to exceed 90 days during a time other than during his or her hours of school attendance or employment. (Pen. Code, § 640.7, subd. (b).)

Prior Convictions. If the person has been convicted previously of this offense, the court may, in addition, order the defendant to perform community service not to exceed 200 hours over a period not to exceed 180 days during a period other than during his or her hours of school attendance or employment. If the person has been convicted twice previously, of this offense, the

court in addition may order the defendant to perform community service not to exceed 300 hours over a period not to exceed 240 days. (Pen. Code, § 640.7, subd. (b).)

SCHOOLS

Possession of Firearms at School. A new California law requires school officials to *immediately suspend* and to recommend expulsion of, any pupil found to be in possession of a firearm at school or at a school activity off school grounds. The school board shall expel or refer the pupil to a special program for students who exhibit disciplinary problems whenever it is confirmed that the pupil was in knowing possession of the firearm and a school employee verifies the pupil's possession of the firearm. (Ed. Code, § 48915 (b).)

Possession of Other Weapons at School. Schools may also suspend or expel pupils for possession of any knife, explosive, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil at school or at a school activity off grounds. (Ed. Code, § 48915 (a) (2).)

In-Service Training. The State Department of Education is required to develop guidelines for in-service training in gang violence and drug and alcohol abuse prevention for school personnel; and, upon request, assist school districts and county offices of education in developing comprehensive programs. (Ed. Code, § 51264.)

Teacher Credentialing. By January 1, 1996, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing is required to adopt appropriate standards for teachers and other certificated personnel to be instructed in the principles

of school safety, as a pre-requisite to credentialing. (Ed. Code, § 44276.1.)

Gang Violence Prevention Resource Guide. The State Department of Education, in consultation with the School/Law Enforcement Partnership and the Governor’s Office of Criminal Justice Planning, is required to develop a resource guide to gang violence prevention curricula and programs. The guide will be developed as part of an electronic bulletin board system. (Ed. Code, § 51267.)

Model Gang Violence Suppression Curriculum. The Governor’s Office of Criminal Justice Planning, in collaboration with the Department of Education, is required to develop a model gang violence suppression and substance abuse prevention curriculum for grades 2, 4, and 6. (Ed. Code, § 51266.)

Resources

Check with your local law enforcement agency, probation department, District Attorney's office, school district or county office of education in obtaining more information on local gang intervention, prevention and suppression programs.

STATE AGENCIES

Office of the Attorney General

Crime and Violence Prevention Center
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
(916) 324-7863

Develops educational materials, conducts research, and provides gang and other crime and violence prevention information and resources to government agencies, law enforcement, and the general public.

California Department of Justice

Bureau of Investigation
Gangs/Criminal Extremists Unit
P.O. Box 163029
Sacramento, CA 95816-3029
(916) 227-4212

Provides confidential gang intelligence information to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

School/Law Enforcement Partnership

Office of the Attorney General
Crime and Violence Prevention Center
P. O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
(916) 324-7863

or

California Department of Education
School Safety and Violence Prevention Office
P.O. Box 944272
Sacramento, CA 94244-2720
(916) 657-2989

A cadre of professionals provides free personal technical assistance and resource materials to schools, law enforcement organizations, and other youth-serving agencies to promote safe schools, improve school attendance, and encourage good citizenship.

Office of Criminal Justice Planning

Gang Violence Suppression Branch
1130 K Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 327-3682

Provides funding for local anti-gang programs, including suppression, intervention, education, enforcement, prosecution, and probation efforts. Maintains an information clearinghouse on anti-gang efforts.

California Youth Authority

Gang Violence Reduction Project
2445 Mariondale Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90032
(213) 227-4114

Provides information and resources pertaining to its Gang Violence Reduction Project. The purpose of the project is to mediate gang feuds and provide positive activities for at-risk youth in their respective neighborhoods.

California Department of Transportation

Division of Maintenance
Office of Roadside Maintenance
1120 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 654-3510

Oversees a statewide anti-graffiti committee and the various district Multi-Agency Graffiti Information Committees (MAGIC). Works closely with city and county government to abate graffiti along roads and on roadside structures.

STATE ORGANIZATIONS

California Gang Investigators Association

Safe Streets Bureau
3010 East Victoria Street
Rancho Dominguez, CA 90221
(310) 603-3105

Provides information and training to law enforcement agencies regarding gangs, and provides a forum for gang investigators to discuss upcoming trends.

California District Attorney's Association

1414 K Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 443-2017

Provides training and information to prosecutor's offices on issues dealing with the prosecution of gang members.

Northern California Juvenile Officers Association

P.O. Box 160105
Sacramento, CA 95816
(510) 293-7031

Provides annual training on legislative changes concerning gangs, weapons, schools, and child abuse and offers an opportunity for networking at monthly dinner business meetings.

T.A.G.N.E.T. (Tagger and Graffiti Network Enforcement Team)

Dennis Porter or John Maxwell
Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
Safe Streets Bureau
3010 East Victoria Street
Rancho Dominguez, CA 90221
(310) 603-3100

Provides intelligence information on taggers, tagging crews, and graffiti to local law enforcement, including transit police and school police. T.A.G.N.E.T. is affiliated with the California Gang Investigators Association.

Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles Area.

313 North Figueroa Street, Room 127

Los Angeles, CA 90012

(213) 240-7785

Provides information and strategies on community efforts to prevent violence.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Juvenile Justice

and Delinquency Prevention

633 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Room 742

Washington, D.C. 20531

(202) 307-5914

Provides funding for community-based, agency-based, and school-based youth crime/gang prevention and intervention efforts at the local level.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Family and Youth Services Bureau

330 C Street, S.W., Room 2426

Washington, D.C. 20201

(202) 205-8054

Provides funding and resources for local gang prevention efforts throughout the nation. Sponsors various training and conferences on youth gangs and positive youth development.

U.S. Drugs and Crime Data Center and Clearinghouse

1600 Research Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20850
(800) 666-3332

Contains a collection of articles, reports, bulletins, and other drug-related crime information. Responds to both specific and general requests.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

United States Department of Treasury
(800) ATF-GUNS

Maintains a nationwide toll-free number for citizens to report illegal activity involving guns.

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

US Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Clearinghouse

US Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse

Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20850
(800) 851-3420 for general criminal justice information
(800) 732-3277 for criminal justice statistics

Sponsored by the United States Department of Justice, this service has the largest criminal justice library in the world. Information provided includes up-to-date and bibliographic information on crime, drugs, gangs, and related crimes. The clearinghouse offers program descriptions, project reports, and research studies as well as information on BJA-funded formula grants, technical assistance, training, and demonstration projects.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Boys and Girls Clubs of America

National Headquarters

Gang Prevention Through Targeted Outreach Program

1230 West Peachtree

Atlanta, GA 30309

(404) 815-5764

Provides training and technical assistance to Boys and Girls Clubs in communities throughout America to reach out to youth at risk of gang involvement.

National Crime Prevention Council

1700 K Street, N.W., Second Floor

Washington, D.C. 20006

(202) 466-6272

Provides information and training regarding crime prevention issues including drug and gang problems. NCPC works closely with communities around the nation to respond to crime and violence problems and maintains a network of nationwide community leaders.

National School Safety Center

4165 Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Suite 290

Westlake Village, CA 91362

(805) 373-9977

Offers print resources on gangs and technical assistance to community groups on how to address the gang problem in a community or school setting.

The National Congress of Parents and Teachers (PTA)

330 North Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611-3690
(312) 670-6782

Provides several documents on gangs and schools, highlighting successful initiatives that have been implemented by local parent groups nationwide.

Police Executive Research Forum

2300 M Street, NW, Suite 910
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 466-7820

Offers a variety of publications and background information on how law enforcement agencies can effectively deal with the gang problem.

National Graffiti Information Network

P.O. Box 400
Hurricane, UT 84737
(801) 635-0646
(801) 635-7324 Fax

Provides information on state legislation and local ordinances regarding graffiti. Publishes a newsletter and offers technical assistance for graffiti removal.

Cosmos

7475 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 900

Bethesda, MD 20814

(301) 215-9100

Provides technical assistance, training, and program evaluation services nationwide in gang prevention, and is a technical assistance contractor to the federally sponsored Youth Gang Drug Prevention Program. Services are provided to local government agencies, and private community-based youth organizations.

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LAW ENFORCEMENT CONT.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
