



PARTNERS IN CRIME PREVENTION

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GANGS—A RENEWED PROBLEM

Reports of drive by shootings and shots fired are alarming. A 14-year old boy shot to death by a 13-year old because he was wearing the wrong color of shoes. To do the shooting, the 13 year old borrowed a gun from a 12 year old.

The Everett mayor calls for a comprehensive plan for Everett to address youth and gang violence.

Gangs have become a bigger problem in some parts of Snohomish County. The character of gangs has changed recently. Hispanics primarily participate. Gang members are required to be armed and prove that they can be “bad.” Gang members and their victims do not cooperate with police.

Signs of gang activity include an increase in gang graffiti in some areas as well as burglaries, and car prowls. In many cases, gang members are looking for guns during a burglary.

Typically, gangs feud over territory, drugs, Facebook postings and girls. The youth gangs do not deal in drugs so much as they do drugs including marijuana, meth and heroin.

The age of gang members is shockingly young, 12 to 13 years old. Some in law enforcement observe that older gang members have been recruiting kids in

6th grade for “work.” If the 6th grader does a crime for an older gang member, the older member may not get caught, and the sixth grader (if caught) might end up in the juvenile justice system but not in jail.

The graffiti, property crimes, and shootings are all indicators of a gang problem for an area. There is a legal definition for a gang.

RCW 9.94A.030.12 says that there are three elements that define a group as a gang:

- 3 or more persons
- An identifiable leadership, or a name, symbols or signs
- The group engages in criminal activity

Snohomish County citizens have long been concerned about gang activity especially with the associated graffiti and potential property crimes. The issue has escalated with the recent willingness of young gang members to carry and use guns to shoot, wound, and in some tragic cases, killed a victim.

Preventing gang violence will take cooperation between citizens, police and schools. This issue tries to explain motivations of gangs and what parents can do to prevent their children from joining gangs.



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JOINING GANGS- THE PUSH AND PULL

While most youth are not forced into gangs, there are influences that lead them into joining a gang.

Push– Factors that push youth to gangs include those individual, family, school, peer and community risks listed in the main article to the right.

Pull - Youth may perceive positive results for themselves even if the gang in the end does not deliver those results. The perceive attributes pulling a youth to a gang are more influential to joining than the pushes.

Some pulls include:

- Protection
- Fun
- Respect
- Support
- Friends/family
- Money

For more information on why youth join gangs go to,

<https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Video>

GANG MEMBERS – WHY DO THEY JOIN?

Why a youth joins a gang can be a perplexing question for people who do not have experience with gangs. Criminologists, behaviorists, and sociologists have been studying street gangs for some time and have developed a set of risk factors that they think explains why a youth would join a gang. Most youth do not join gangs, even in high gang areas. Half of youth who display risk factors do not join gangs. Nationally, 8% of youth have joined a gang.

Most youth are not forced into gangs and joining a gang is not a permanent decision. Half of the gang members will be out in one year. And Only 5-10% will stay in a gang for 3 years or more.

The complicated part is understanding how “risk factors” influence individuals toward joining a gang. Gang experts can point out the risk factors, but they cannot predict which individual will join a gang. They just know that an individual who is exposed to more risk factors, in multiple domains, will be more likely to join a gang.

Domains include the individual, family, school, peers and community.

Risk factors for an individual can include early delinquency, problem behavior such as impulsiveness, aggressiveness, being reactive, bullying or stealing. They may hold antisocial beliefs. Negative life events, such as being suspended from school, a seri-

ous illness in the family, a disruption in the family (divorce, incarceration, death, change in caregiver) can affect individuals. The individual can also be victimized by someone in the family.

Family risk factors include a troubled home environment, negative life events (see above) that lessens the child’s sense of safety and stability. Poor parental supervision, including no clear and consistent rules, lack of parental oversight and control, and unsupervised access to peers, especially gang members can affect a child. Lack of supervision can be perceived as signal of a lack of caring by parents.

School risk factors can include unhealthy school climate, poor performance in school, low school/teacher attachment, and suspensions and/or expulsions.

Peer risk factors include associating with delinquent peers who put pressure on to steal, take drugs, or join a gang. Other risk factors include a need to be accepted by their peers, delinquent peers who provide a model of behavior and normalize antisocial behavior, and peers who separate the individual from mainstream peers.

Community can have risks if there is an unsafe environment with high crime, guns, drug trafficking, poverty, instability, limited resources or segregation.

GANGS– KEEPING YOUR KIDS OUT

While most children, even in areas with high gang activity, do not join a gang, knowing what to do to keep your child out of a gang should help you to have confidence to take effective actions to keep your kids out of gangs.

Remember the family risk factors include perceived poor parental supervision. Some ways to build a strong family are

- Have clear and consistent rules.
- Exercise parental oversight and control over your child’s activities.
- Know who your child’s friends are. Talk to your child about how to deal with pressures from their friends to do anti-social or criminal acts.
- Plan and have regular family time.
- Familiarize yourself with your child’s internet and social media habits.
- Let your child know about the negative consequences of gangs. Be clear that your child should NOT:
 - Associated with individuals who belong to gangs.
 - Hang out where gang members congregate.
 - Go to parties or social events sponsored by gangs.
 - Use gang hand or finger signs.
 - Wear clothing that has meaning for local gangs.

Other things that you can do to help your child stay out of gangs include:

- If possible, take your child to and from school.
- Know where your child is located.
- Talk to the parents of your child’s friends. Verify where they live.
- Maintain access to your child’s cell phone and social media accounts.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Be aware of gang or criminal activity in your neighborhood. Talk to your school about any gang activity that you hear about.
- Report crimes to police. If you hear shooting, it’s an emergency! Call 911 for any crime in progress or if you hear guns shooting. For crimes not in progress, call the non-emergency number- (425) 407-3999.

Parenting can be a challenge depending on the child, the family dynamics and the neighborhood where the family lives. But, academics and casual observers believe that loving, caring, attentive parents are important to the positive development of a child.

For more information about how you can help as a parent go to,

<https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Parents-Guide-to-Gangs>

SIGNS OF GANG ACTIVITY

- *Clothing that may feature certain colors, T-shirts with pictures of gangs, two or three toned bead necklaces, colored fabric belts.*
- *Tattoos showing gang affiliation.*
- *Graffiti in notebooks, possession of spray paint, wide-tipped markers.*
- *Use of hand signs when greeting friends or acquaintances.*
- *Social media postings that are gang related, taunting or threatening others, or promoting gang activities.*
- *A change in behavior, personal style, attitude about school.*
- *Possession of a gun.*
- *Non-accidental physical injuries.*

**GANGS-
GRAFFITI**

Gangs use graffiti to mark their territory, brag about their reputation, and threaten or challenge rival gangs.

Removing graffiti quickly not only helps keep the neighborhood clean looking but also helps suppress gang activity.

If you see graffiti on county property such as parks, bridges, roadways, buildings, etc. report it online at

<https://snohomishcounty.wa.gov/formcenter/planning-development-services-10/graffiti-report-form-53>

For more information about controlling graffiti go to,

<https://everettwa.gov/documentcenter/view/912>

And

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graffiti_removal

GANGS- THE GANGS OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY

Knowing what gangs are active in our area is helpful in understanding the potential criminal activity around you. Gang symbols are used in graffiti. Colors may be worn on clothing items. While we cannot give a full history or description of the following gangs, this list shows what gangs are active in Snohomish County.

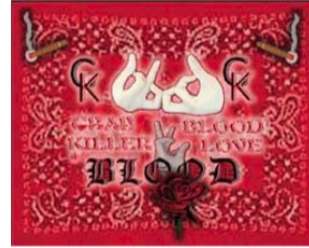
Black Gangster Disciples- Started in the Chicago area. Their main rivals are the Sureños. Their predominant symbol is a six-pointed Star of David that symbolizes the gang’s principles of love, life, loyalty, knowledge, wisdom and understanding.



Crips- This gang started in South Central Los Angeles in the 1960’s. Starting out as a black gang it is now multiethnic. The Crips use the color blue. Their main and traditional rivals are the Bloods, in Snohomish County their rivals are the Sureños.



Bloods- The Bloods split from the Crips during an internal gang war in the Los Angeles area. They identify with the color red and consider themselves “Crip Killas” (CK). Their main rivals remain the Crips.

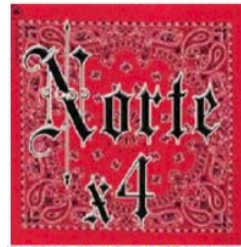


Sureño- The Sureños (Spanish for Southerners) have their origins in southern California (south of Bakersfield and have Mexican-American origins.



Sureños traditionally associate with the Mexican Mafia. They associate with the color blue and sometimes with the colors black or brown. They also use the number 13 (SUR13). There are a large number of Sureños in Snohomish County.

Norteño- The Norteños (Spanish for Northerners) have their origins in northern California (north of Bakersfield). They associate with the color red and



the number 14. There are a small number of Norteños in Snohomish County.

GANGS- THE GANGS OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY CONT.

MS-13- A trans-national gang, mostly made up of El Salvadori-



ans, which formed in the 1980's to protect themselves from other gangs in certain neighborhoods of Los Angeles. MS-13 associates itself with the Mexican Mafia.

Members identify with the colors of the El Salvadorian flag- blue and white. Members also use "MS", "MS13" and "Mara."

Asian Gangs- Some Asian gangs, such as the Tiny Rascal Gangsters and Oriental Loco Boyz, are active in Snohomish County. Many Asian gangs got their start in California in the 1970's and 1980's often by Asian refugee youth to protect themselves from already established Black and Hispanic gangs. Many newer Asian gangs have begun as dance troupes or road racing groups that develop into criminal gangs.

For more information about local gangs, look at this Gang Recognition Guide,

http://srdtf.org/sites/srdtf.org/files/gange_recognition_epd.pdf

For information on what the FBI is doing to fight street gangs look at,

<https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/violent-crime/gangs>

GANGS-GUNS

The shocking aspect of the current gang trend is the violence and use of firearms by 12 and 13 year old's. Their use of guns endangers everyone in the community.

Gang members obtain guns through burglaries, thefts, and car prowls. They may also take guns from home if their parents have them.

Last year 181 guns were reported stolen in unincorporated Snohomish County; 73 in residential burglaries and 79 from car prowls.

This makes it important to secure any firearms that you own. Keep your firearms locked in a safe or gun cabinet with ammunition securely stored in a different location. Also, use a trigger or cable lock. Never store you firearm in your vehicle.

If your firearm is stolen, report it to 911. Keep an inventory of your firearms in a safe place with a description including manufacture, model, serial number, type, caliber/gauge. A picture of each firearm is also helpful. Also, if you have an open carry firearm that you purchased outside of the State of Washington register it with the Sheriff's Office or your local police department.

GANGS-RESOURCES

Gang recruitment and activities are complex subjects. If you are interested in more information about gangs and preventing their activities here are some resources:

National Gang Center - <https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/>

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention- "Gang Prevention: An Overview of Research and Programs"

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/231116.pdf>

And "Comprehensive Gang Model, A Guide to Assessing Your Community's Youth Gang Problem"

<https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Content/Documents/Assessment-Guide/Assessment-Guide.pdf>

GANGS – GETTING HELP FOR AT RISK YOUTH

Youth who are susceptible to the risk factors on page 2 may or may not opt to join a gang. It can be difficult to predict who will join and who will not. In either case, they and their parents may need extra help in guiding their development toward adulthood.

Here are some local organizations that can help with at risk youth.

- Familias Unidas**– This is a program sponsored by the Lutheran Community Services Northwest which acts as a family support center focusing on the Snohomish County Latino community. It provides access to food, housing, help with childhood education, job placement and other services.
<https://familiasunidaseverett.com/>
- Catholic Community Services**– An arm of the Catholic Church, Catholic Community Services sponsors programs for children, youth and families.
<http://ccsww.org/get-help/snohomish-island-counties/>
- Cocoon House Project Safe**- Offers therapeutic phone consultations, parent education and supportive programs to parents and guardians to increase their ability to manage their developing teen or pre-teen.
<http://www.cocoonhouse.org/>
- YMCA of Snohomish County**– The YMCA focuses on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. For programs near your see <http://ymca-snoco.org/programs/youth-teen/>
- Hand in Hand**– Provides help for kids who need to go into foster care and outreach to prevent children from needing to go into foster care.
<http://www.handinhandkids.org/home>
- Reclaiming Futures**– Part of the county Juvenile Justice system, Reclaiming Futures provides assessment and treatment for youth who have been entered into the juvenile drug treatment courts.
http://www.reclaimingfutures.org/members/sites_washington_snohomish
- Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets (PSKS)**- PSKS provides education, employment and housing support to homeless youth and young adults.
<http://www.psk.org/>

OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOODS

MAKING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

Homeless Outreach-

Sgt. Ian Huri
Phone: (425) 508-8291
Email: neighborhood-watch@snoco.org

Community Outreach-

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SHERIFF'S OFFICE CRIME PREVENTION WEB PAGE:

<http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/289/Crime-Prevention>

NEWSLETTER INFO

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If you have questions regarding this newsletter or any articles that appear in it, please contact the editor at

TIP



Snohomish County Sheriff's Office: 425-388-3845

<http://snohomishcountywa.gov/303/Anonymous-Tips>

Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound: 1-800-222-8477