

#### Hand signs:

Some gangs use specific hand gestures when greeting fellow gang members and trying to intimidate others. Letters of the alphabet or numbers are formed by using the fingers and hands.

Gang-influenced music and movies: Gangsta/gangster rap is a style of rap music characterized by violent, tough-talking lyrics that glorify street-gang culture.

#### Gang Slang

Many gang members have a verbal code with their gang. Use of certain slang words can be an indicator of gang membership. Some examples:

Scraps, surenos, nortenos, locos, buster, chaps, homie.

Also, kids will be calling their friends by their street names such as:

Snoopy, playboy, lil psycho.

## Child Behaviors Associated with Joining a Gang

Negative changes in behavior, such as:

- \*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

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

Drastic 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

## What Parents Can Do

Talk to your children about gangs and ways to avoid them.

Let them know that you disapprove of gangs and do not want to see them hurt or arrested.

#### Tell your children not to:

- Associate with any gang members

- Hang out where gangs congregate

- Attend any party or social event sponsored by gangs

- Use any kind of hand or finger signs that may be meaningful to gangs

- Wear clothing that may have meaning to gangs in your area

Explain to your children that these clothing items can put them in danger and that you will not purchase them or allow them to be worn. If you are not familiar with these items, contact your local law enforcement agency for more specific information about gangs in your area.

Get to know your children's friends and their parents.

Be aware of friends' attitudes toward drugs, alcohol, and gangs. When children start to feel pressure to use drugs or join gangs, it usually comes from their friends.

Talk to your children about ways to deal with pressure from friends.

Help your children practice simple ways to respond to peer pressure. For example, if your child is challenged by a peer who says, "If you are my friend, you would," your child can respond, "If you were my friend, you wouldn't ask." Then, he/she should walk away.

Set firm limits with your children and teens.

Children and teenagers need to know clearly what is expected of them and the consequences for acting otherwise. Do not rescue your children from the consequences of their decisions.

#### Plan family time.

Make time for your family to play and eat meals together, take trips (even to local parks or activities), keep family traditions, and have family meetings to talk about plans, feelings, and complaints.

## Contacting the School for Help

If you feel your child may be leaning toward gang behaviors but are not sure, talking to school officials/teachers is a good idea. They are familiar with your child and also gang indicators related to their school. If you do not know the school contact information, you may call the school district number below and they will help you:

Colusa Unified: 458-7791

Maxwell Unified: 438-2291

Pierce Unified : 476-2892

Williams Unified: 473-5894

Colusa County Office of Education:  
458-0330 X10310



## Gang related Contacts

### Colusa County:

Gang Task Force (may be used for any gang-related question or issue related to law enforcement)

(530)-458-0238

Narcotics Task Force

(530)458-0222

Sheriff's Department

(530)458-0200

Behavioral Health (Including Counseling, Crisis Intervention, Mental Health, Substance Abuse)

(530)458-0520

24 Hour Toll Free Crisis Service

1-888-793-6580

Health and Human Services (Including Child and Adult Protective Services, CalWORKS, MediCal, Tobacco Education)

(530)458-0250

Probation

(530)458-5871

### County Police Departments

Williams PD

(530)473-2661

info@williamspd.net

Colusa PD

(530)458-7777

colusapd@frontiernet.net

### National Youth Gang Center

[www.iit.com/nygc](http://www.iit.com/nygc)

### National Criminal Justice Service

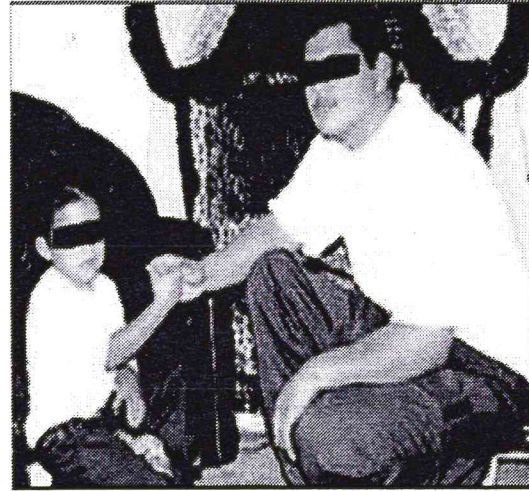
[www.ncjrs.gov](http://www.ncjrs.gov)

(For emergencies, dial 911)

Brochure provided by Colusa County Office of Education

# Keeping Kids Out of Gangs

## Parent Guide



*This brochure contains indicators that a student may be in a gang or want to imitate gang behavior. Parents whose child shows any of these behaviors, should talk with the child and seek support from the school (Counselor, Vice-Principal, Principal, Teachers) or other contacts listed here.*

*Just because a student has some of these behaviors does not necessarily mean they are in a gang. However, any of these behaviors have a bad affect on the child and must be addressed.*

## Identifying Gang Presence

Gang-style clothing and dress:

Gang members may use a particular style of dress to identify with a particular gang. This might include:

- \* clothing or bandanas worn only in certain colors that are representative of a gang
- \* pants worn well below the waist (sagging)
- \* gang-themed T-shirts with pictures of gang members, prison scenes, graffiti, or slogans
- \* two- or three-toned bead necklaces
- \* sports clothing of specific teams; or colored fabric belts, occasionally with a metal buckle that includes the initial(s) of the gang
- \* your child may refuse to wear a certain color

Colors:

Gangs use one or more colors as a symbol to represent their gang. Blue and Red are the most common in our area. These colors may be worn on shirts, bandanas, multicolored or single-colored beads, belts, hats, shoes, shoelaces, headbands, jewelry, and other items.

Symbols and numbers:

Some symbols and numbers may have special significance within the gang culture. A few common symbols in our area:

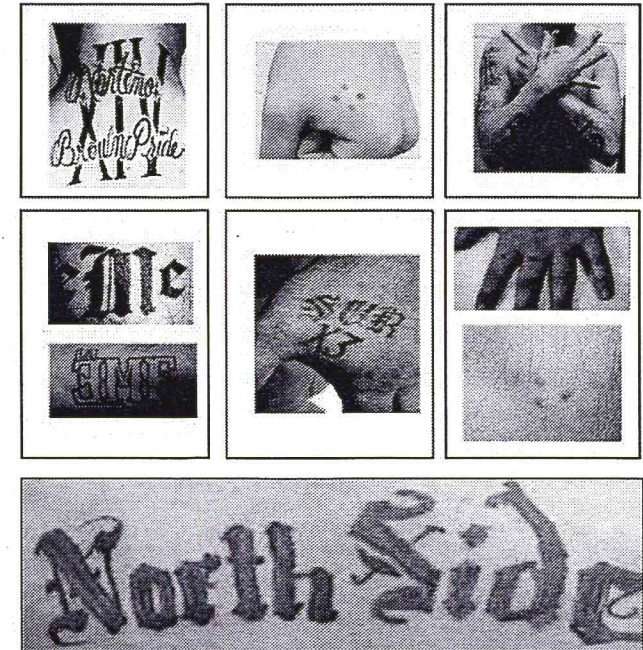
- \* 13, X3, XIII , 3 dots, la eme, Sur, C-Town, XIV, 14, X4, la ene, 530, Huelga Bird

\*Items may be altered with gang symbols or extra gang-related writing

Graffiti:

Gangs use graffiti to identify themselves and their territory. Youths who are participating in graffiti may have items such as spray paints, spray-paint plastic tips, wide-tipped markers, or sketchbooks with graffiti works in progress.

Tattoos:



Tattoos are used to show an individual's loyalty to his/her gang. These tattoos often include the name, initials, or symbols of the specific gang and may be found on the hands, neck, face, chest, or arms.