

The background of the slide is a photograph of a brick wall. The wall is covered in various graffiti tags and drawings in black and white. At the bottom of the image, a chain-link fence is visible. The overall scene suggests an urban or industrial environment.

# DEAL.org talks about Youth Gangs

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# Are gangs really a problem?

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# ▶ Youth Gang Members in Canada

- Saskatchewan 1315
- Ontario 3320
- British Columbia 1027
- Alberta 668
- Manitoba 171
- Québec 533
- Nova Scotia 37

# In the Wrong Place, at the Wrong Time

## Jane Creba

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of December 2005, Jane Creba was killed during a shooting between rival gangs on the streets of Toronto.

Seven other innocent people were injured during the shooting.

In 2005, Toronto had 78 murders, 52 of which were related to guns.

Jane had nothing to do with the gangs. She was simply in the wrong place, at the wrong time.



# What is a gang?

In general, a gang is a group of at least 3 people engaging in criminal activities.

# Gangs and Justice

A gang whose members commit and profit from crimes is considered to be a criminal organization. Any contribution to the activity of a criminal organization is ILLEGAL. According to the *Canadian Criminal Code* (section 467.1), being involved in a criminal organization or its activities or even being aware of its criminal activities - **past, present or future** - can lead to as many as 14 years in prison - and that doesn't even account for any other crimes committed while being part of the organization!

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# Boys, Beer and Hockey...

Martin, Derek, Luke and Jadyn are all part of the same hockey team. In their spare time they like to watch hockey games on TV. While they watch they like to dress in the colours of their favourite team and they often make friendly bets as to which team will win. In order for other team members to become their friends, the boys have come up with a rule that forces any potential friend to drink a case of 24 beers in less than 4 hours.

Would you consider Martin, Derek, Luke and Jadyn to be a youth gang? Why?

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# Different Types of Gangs

Organized criminal gangs

Youth street gangs

Wannabe gangs



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# Gang Myths

## Gang Myth #1

A gang will protect you

# Gang Myths

## Gang Myth #2

A gang is like a family

# Gang Myths

## Gang Myth #3

A gang is respected  
by the community

# Gang Myths

## Gang Myth #4

Each gang is created based on a shared ethnic background

# Family Ties

Nicholas's brother is 19. He is a branch leader for an important youth gang network in his hometown. A few months back, he invited Nicholas to come along with him to a gang meeting so that he would finally get to see what the fuss was about. He and his brother have a really strong relationship since their parents divorced when they were young and their father is practically never home because of his hectic work schedule.

Do you think Nicholas might be tempted to join the gang as well? Why?

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# High Risk Youth

Many factors can influence someone's decision to participate in a gang...

Can you think of any reasons why someone would join?

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Why would a young person want to join a gang?



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# Gang Recruitment

Recruitment is done mostly through friends, acquaintances and siblings.

The average age of gang members is 17, but youth as young as 11 are targeted for recruitment.

# Gang Recruitment



How do gangs recruit?

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# Gang Hazing/Initiation

Like a lot of gangs or groups, street or organized gangs have hazing rituals.



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# Being a Member...

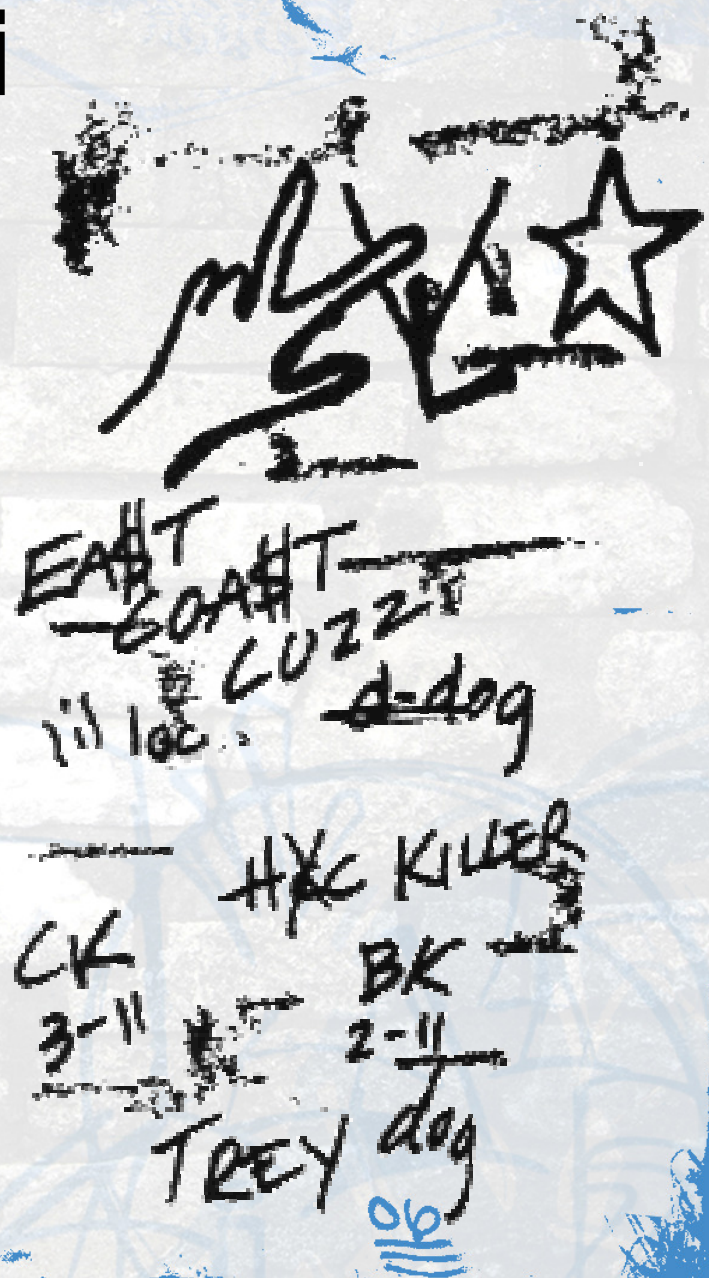
- Varies with the degree of involvement of each member
- Means you take part in criminal activities
- Can also mean you will be in charge of specific activities:
  - planning future criminal activities
  - recruitment
  - accounting
  - storage of stolen merchandise

# Graffiti

Graffiti is not exclusive to gangs.

The gangs that do graffiti do it to communicate a message or to mark their turf and usually do it with numbers, letters and colours.

Gang graffiti rarely has any artistic value.



# Net Banging

The Internet has become a powerful tool for gang recruitment and feuds.



Any gang activity online is called **net banging**.

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# Two Sexes, Two Realities

Danielle and Scott



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# Two Sexes, Two Realities

Danielle and Scott both joined their neighbourhood gang in October two years ago. Since then, Scott has been asked to fulfill many responsibilities such as organize meetings, deliver drugs, plan and conduct hazing rituals, etc. Danielle, on the other hand, is still an unofficial member. Of course, she helps out: she participates in the hazing rituals and often acts as a lure in the recruitment process.

Why do you think their roles are so different?

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# Two Sexes, Two Realities

## Boys

- represent **the majority** of the gang's membership and are usually official members
- they can become leaders and participate in planning and organizing the gang's activities
- other members participate in decision making, recruitment, hazing rituals

# Two Sexes, Two Realities

## Girls

- represent **the minority** of the gang's membership, and often play a smaller role
- they can easily move on to the sex trade
- they have many roles: spying, surveillance, transportation of drugs and arms, shoplifting, etc.
- Recently, girls have been playing a more important role in gang leadership, criminal activities and violence

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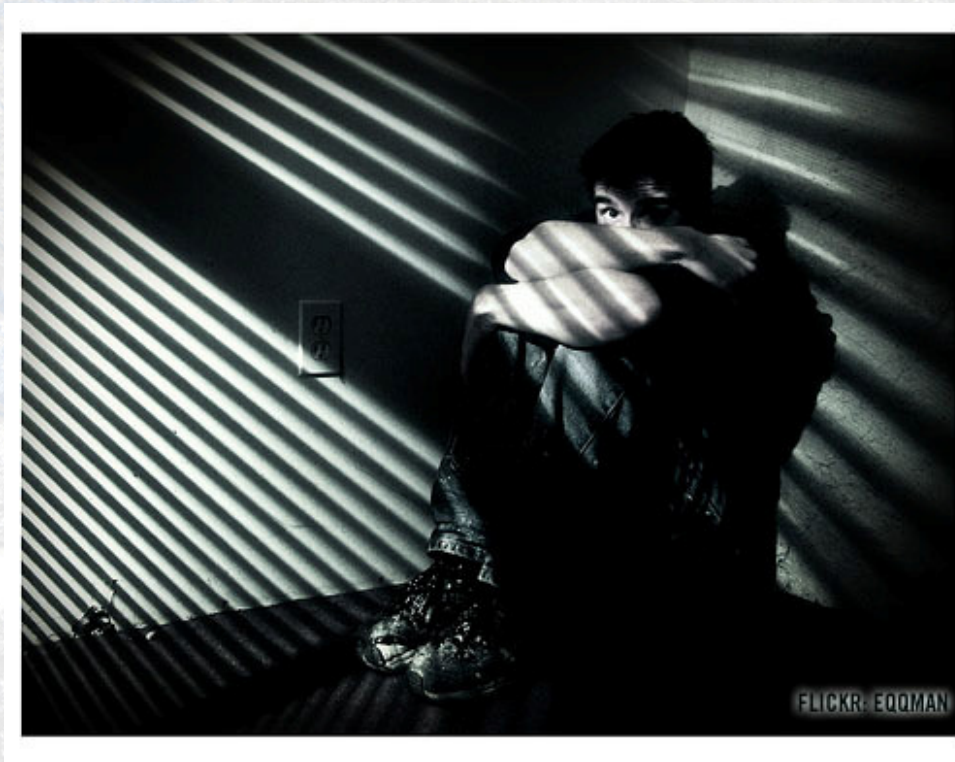
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# What would prevent someone from joining a gang?

There is no foolproof solution. However, some personal characteristics can be helpful.

Can you think of any?

# Leaving a Gang...



Any reason is a good reason  
if you want to leave your gang...

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# Leaving a Gang...



Thinking it through

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# Leaving a Gang...

You want to leave?

- Ask for help
- Think about your security
- Think about your needs.
- Get informed

# Friends in Gangs

Do you think a friend is involved  
in a youth gang?



Can you think of any  
signs that suggest  
that a friend is in a  
gang?

# How to help out?

- Talk to your friend and listen without judging or preaching
- Together, weigh out the advantages and the disadvantages
  - Respect his or her feelings
    - Suggest alternatives
- Suggest help from a professional or a youth counsellor
  - Know your limits

# Additional Resources

- “Are Youth Gangs Really on the Rise?” Article by Sabrina Yoong,  
[http://www.deal.org/content/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=616&Itemid=677&lang=en](http://www.deal.org/content/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=616&Itemid=677&lang=en)
- “Gangs” - Knowzone fact sheet  
[http://www.deal.org/content/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=538&Itemid=636&lang=en](http://www.deal.org/content/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=538&Itemid=636&lang=en)
- “Violence” - Knowzone Topic  
[http://www.deal.org/content/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=530&Itemid=630&lang=en](http://www.deal.org/content/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=530&Itemid=630&lang=en)
- “My Two Cents on 50” Article by Leo Dignard  
[http://www.deal.org/content/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=382&Itemid=453&lang=en](http://www.deal.org/content/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=382&Itemid=453&lang=en)