

GANG AWARENESS

PARENT REFERENCE GUIDE



The following is a quick reference guide for parents to provide clues and common warning signs that their child might be involved in a gang. The information is not all encompassing but provides many of the most predominant clues.

Parents need to be alert and involved in their child's daily activities. They also need to look for multiple signs indicating possible gang involvement. Indicators taken alone, such as clothes or musical preferences, are common youth trends and do not indicate gang involvement. Learn the basics about your local gang culture and seek help early on. Consider contacting school personnel, local law enforcement, faith leaders and community organizations for additional assistance.

WARNING SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD MAY BE INVOLVED IN A GANG

- * Admits to "hanging out" with kids in gangs, but denies membership.
- * Shows a new or unusual interest in one or two particular colors but strongly dislikes another.
- * Purchases or wears a specific color of clothing or must wear a specific logo.
- * Has new or unusual interest in gangster influenced music, videos, movies or web sites.
- * Use of hand signals to communicate with friends.
- * Has unexplainable physical injuries that could be linked with fight related bruising or injured hands and knuckles.
- * Carries unexplained cash and has new clothing, jewelry or high end electronics.
- * Possesses a weapon.
- * Will not let parent view their internet social site or cell phone. (myspace, facebook)
- * In trouble at school or contacted by law enforcement.
- * Begins exhibiting negative behaviors like:
 - Withdrawing from family members and activities
 - Declining school performance and attendance.
 - Consistently disobeys rules
 - Breaks curfew and stays out late
 - Becomes secretive and non communicative
 - Exhibits signs or drug or alcohol use
 - Adopts gang style slang language

For emergencies, call 911

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Know who your child hangs out with

Utilize after school programs & activities

Engage with your child and be part of their daily life

Sterling Police Department
Crime Prevention Unit
815 632-6640
crimeprevention@sterling-il.gov
www.ci.sterling.il.us/main/departments/police

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