

Reclaiming Gang-Involved Youth

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RECLAIMING FUTURES

Communities helping teens
overcome drugs, alcohol and crime

***WE ARE GUESTS IN THESE
COMMUNITIES. THE FAMILIES
WE STRIVE TO SERVE ARE
THE EXPERTS ON THEIR
LIVES.***



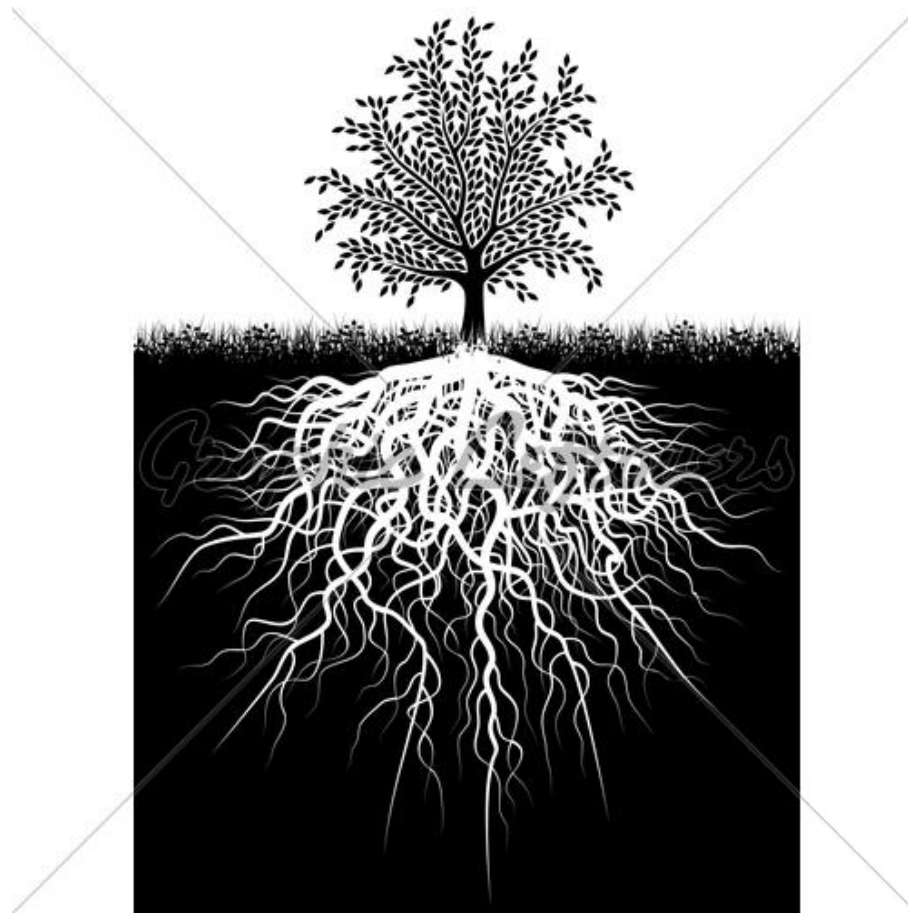
What is Culture?

Culture is the combination of thoughts, feelings, attitudes, material traits, and behaviors of a group of people. Each of these characteristics is manifested and shared by the group through symbols, communication, and social patterns.

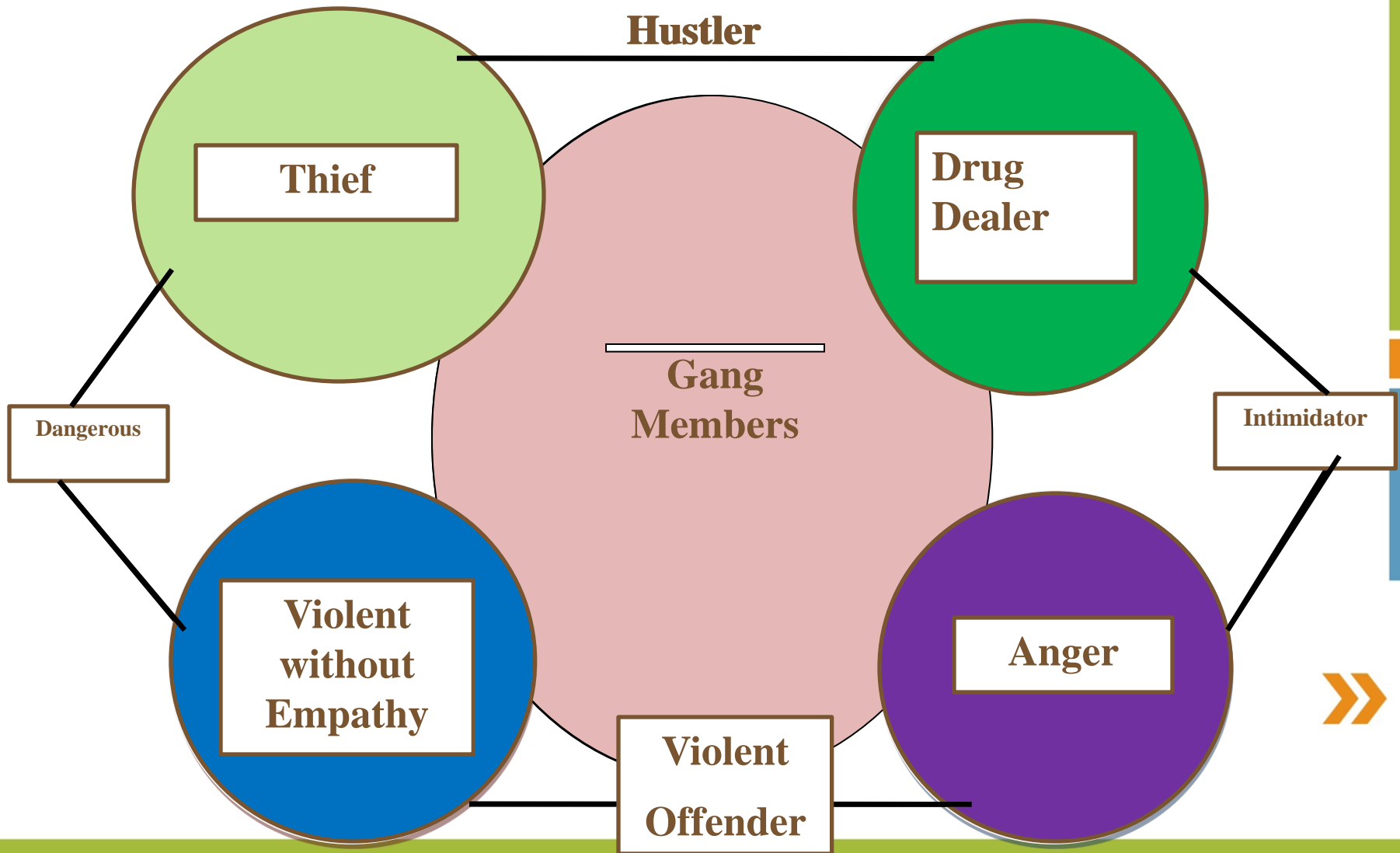
Webster's (1975) defines culture as "**...the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thought, speech, action;...the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group.**"



What is the Strongest part of the Tree?



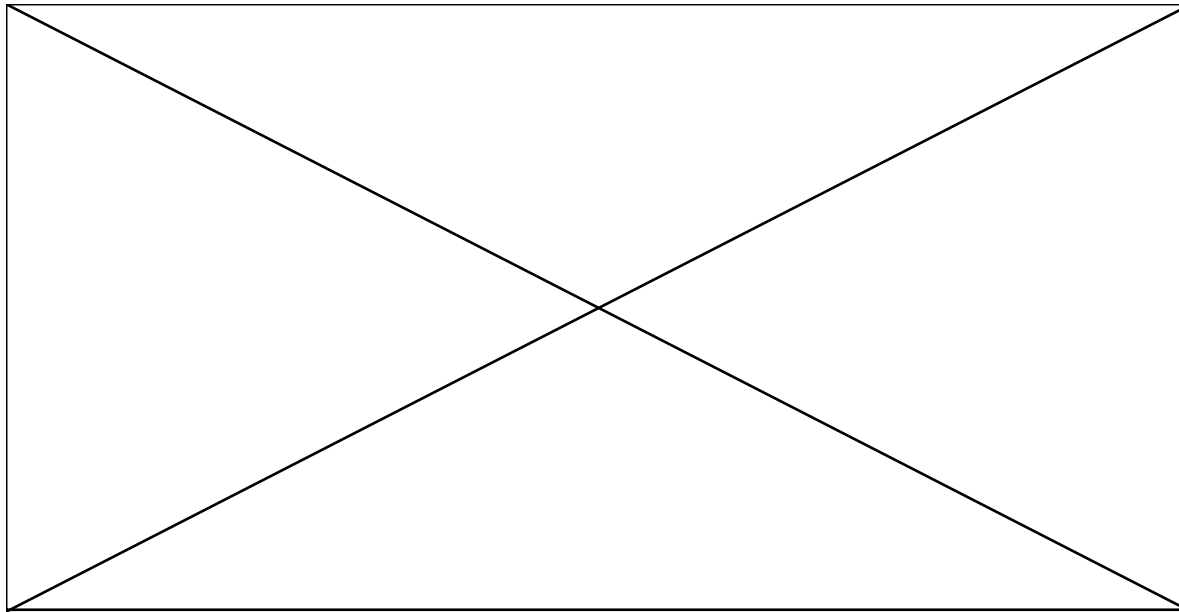
Gang Member Typology



<p>Level One: Youth has no involvement in gangs</p>	<p>Level Two: Youth has knowledge of gangs, but not involved</p>	<p>Level Three: Youth has knowledge of the gangs and has gang friends but not involved</p>	<p>Level Four: Youth has knowledge of the gangs/friends/clothing/assimilation begins/behavior/attitude/language/rags /certain graffiti on books and clothing, drug and alcohol experimentation, poor attendance in school, skipping, suspensions.</p>
<p>Level Five: Youth has joined the gang, but is not too far involved in the gangs/activities</p>	<p>Level Six: Youth has joined the gangs/criminal activity begins/some behavior of threatening other gang members/fighting/smoking/delivering drugs/drinking alcohol/and carrying weapons</p>	<p>Level Seven: Youth is starting to become entrenched/more illegal activities/incarceration at juvenile detention facility</p>	<p>Level Eight: Youth is starting to become out of control/increased recidivism within the juvenile court systems/increased rate of criminal activities.</p>
<p>Level Nine: Youth is out of control/increased gang activity/high recidivism rates/no longer delinquent behavior/increased criminal activity represents longer incarcerations times in the prison system.</p>	<p>Level Ten: Extreme and fully integrated gangster mentality/ extreme criminal activities/gang behavior. (full-blown gangster)</p>		



Video: Gang Members Speak Out



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIS3cXT3aoY&feature=related>



Different Worlds, same place!



Response to Gang Culture

A four-pronged approach to reduction

- Prevention
- Intervention
- Suppression
- Re-entry



Yummy Sandifer



To learn more about Yummy Sandifer visit:
thewashingtonsyndicate.wordpress.com/.../true-crime-the-forgotten



The Crisis

Factors that affect gang-involved youth

- Chemical Dependency
- Culture/Cycle of Violence
- Societal
- Family
- Peer
- Cultural

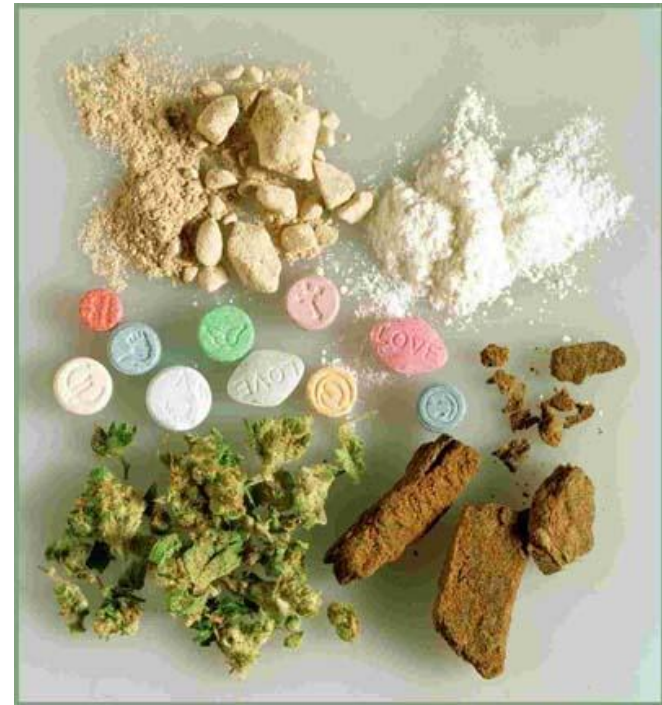
Factors that affect gang-involved families

- Chemical Dependency
- Language barrier
- Cultural
- Institutional Racism
- Poverty
- Culture/Cycle of Violence



Drugs commonly used

- .Alcohol
- .Marijuana
- .Sherm (embalming fluid)
- .Crack
- .Cocaine
- .Prescription Pills
- .Heroin
- .Meth
- .Alcohol
- .Acid
- .Ecstasy



Interesting Facts

.70-80% of juvenile offenders have substance abuse issues.

.30% have significant mental health diagnosis (depression, PTSD, anxiety disorders) *Mental Illness does not include conduct disorder

.70% of families coming into system have significant substance abuse issues.

.40-50% of dependency petitions are directly related to chemical dependency.



Understanding our young people:

A. “If The Shoe Fits”

B. “Survival Mode”

C. “Home” Alone

D. “Lost In Translation”



Understanding our families:

- Chemical Dependency
- Disporportionality
- Diverse Populations
- Poverty
- Environmental Factors
- Traumatic Experiences
 - Cultural Collisions
 - Life Experience
 - Exposure to Violence



Impacts of Trauma

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUXqp1dOKSs&feature=related>



Two Types of Community

Healthy Community

- .Shared responsibility
- .Advocacy
- .Culturally Competent Programs/Services

Unhealthy community

- .Shame
- . Fear
- .Isolation



Community Involvement

Is a planned process with a specific purpose of working with identified groups of people (connected by geographic location, special interest, affiliation or identity) to address issues affecting their well being with the focus on the collective.

Includes a variety of approaches: Consultation, Communication, Education, Extension, Participation and Partnership.





What works

- .Assess the youth in terms of their gang behavior to come up with an individual plan for the youth and the family**
- .Build Relationship
- .Cultural understanding of the youth not based on color competent model, but a true cultural competency model**
- .Solution focused therapy as a means to grow
- .Engage, Empower, Enlighten –expect little changes from youth and family based on strengths not the negatives**
- .Systems Change – takes time, is a difficult process



Early Warning Signs

1. Social withdrawal
2. Excessive feelings of isolation and being alone
3. Excessive feelings of rejection
4. Being a victim of violence
5. Feelings of being picked on and persecuted
6. Low school interest and poor academic performance
7. Expression of violence in writings and drawings
8. Drug use and alcohol use
9. Problems maintaining relationships with family
10. Reside in neighborhood where gangs exist



Tips for Working with Gang Involved Youth and Families:

- .Provide a safe place to express their feelings.**
- .Meet them where they are at. (Do not pass judgment.)**
- .Offer programs/resources at a time when they can be successful.**
- .Provide ongoing support for them especially when transitioning from one life phase to another i.e. school, workplace, education, etc.**
- .Work with them in identifying strengths and translate into a solution that will work for both.**



Tips for Working with Gang Involved Youth and Families:

- .Creatively involve support systems, i.e. families, friends, community, etc.**
- .Identify and develop positive links to their respected communities.**
- .Make a priority to build trust and respect with them**
- .Create ways for them to share their concerns.**



Reclaiming Futures Theme

More Treatment!

Better Treatment!

Beyond Treatment!



Dialogue

