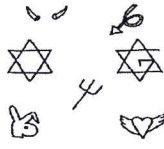


**GANGS:**  
A Reason for Concern to Healthcare



Raising Awareness for the  
Intersection with  
Contemporary Healthcare

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**Objectives**

- To examine the proliferation of gang activity in the United States
- To explore the foundational facets of 3 major USA-based gangs:
  - Bloods
  - Crips
  - MS-13
- To discuss the importance of recognizing healthcare clients who are potentially also gang members and the related implications for assessment, intervention and safety maintenance.

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- Gangs are continuing to proliferate throughout the USA
  - Healthcare personnel may will encounter their *members* and *associates* in a variety of settings.
    - \*gangs are now present in all 50 states and all the USA territories
- It is critically important to raise the awareness for identification of potential members/associates and subsequently enhance forensic assessment and maintain facility safety.

Sheboygan Falls teens under fire for "gang signs" photo



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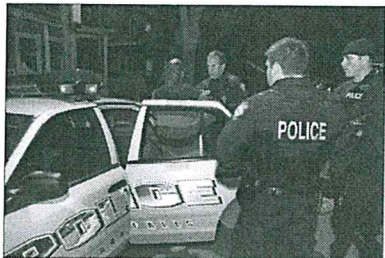
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Gangs are consistently moving into suburban and rural areas



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• The police definition of a gang is:

- a group of individuals,
- juvenile and or adult,
- who associate on a continuous basis,
- form an allegiance for a common purpose, and
- are involved in delinquent or criminal activity.



• This definition is simple and functional.

• It allows the police departments to take proactive law enforcement action normally before the gang gets an organized structure.

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• The gang may range from a loose knit group of individuals who hang around together and commit crimes together, to a formal organization with a leader or ruling council, gang colors, gang identifiers, and a gang name.



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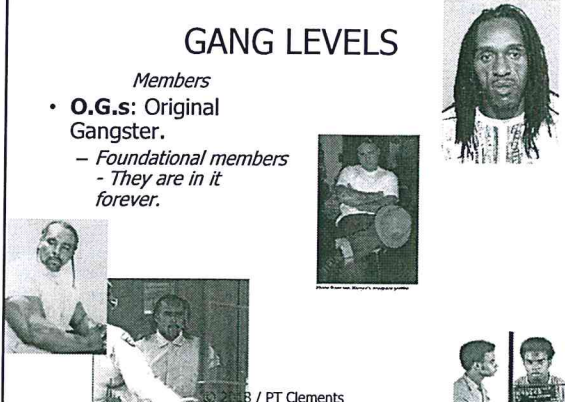
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## GANG LEVELS

*Members*

- **O.G.s:** Original Gangster.
  - *Foundational members*
  - *They are in it forever.*



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## GANG LEVELS

*Members*

- **Hardcore.**
  - Comprise approximately 5-10% of the gang. These are the die-hard gangsters, who thrive on the gang's lifestyle and will always seek the gang's companionship.
    - Deck of cards
  - The hardcore gangsters will most always be the leaders and without them the gang may fall apart.
  - The gang's level of violence will normally be determined by the most violent hardcore members.
    - They are usually the shooters.



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## GANG LEVELS

*Members*

- **Regular Members (or Associates).**
  - Usually range from 14 to 17 years old; their jobs are robbing and stealing.
    - They are money oriented.
    - They are initiated into the gang and will back up the "hardcore" gang members.
    - If they stay in the gang long enough, they will become hardcore.
    - They usually join the gang for status and recognition.



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## GANG LEVELS

- Does not participate in gang activities, but may be involved in juvenile delinquent acts.
- Doodles gang insignias and may commit acts of graffiti vandalism.
- May have gang affiliated tattoos.



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## GANG LEVELS

- Speaks in slang, uses gang terminology and displays gang hand-signs.
- They have made no formal commitment to the gang.
- May carry concealed weapons for protection.
- Most females involved in gang activity are classified in this category
  - although this is changing



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## GANG LEVELS

- **Wanna-be's.**
- Usually 11 to 13 years old; their jobs are tagging and stealing.
- They are not yet initiated into the gang, but hang around with them and usually will do most anything the gang members ask of them so that they may prove themselves worthy of belonging.



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### GANG LEVELS

- **Could-be's.** Usually under the age of 10. Children of this age are at more risk when they live in or close to an area where there are gangs or have a family member who is involved with gangs.
- It is important to find alternatives for these children in order that they may avoid gang affiliation completely.
  - Generally, the further into a gang that someone is, the harder it is to get out.



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### Gang Membership

- There are other ways to join a gang.
  - Some children have grown up with their parents and other older relatives being in gangs.
  - A new member could be sponsored by an existing member.
  - This new member could be a family member, or someone who is well known by the rest of the gang.

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### Gang Membership

- New gang members can also commit crime to show their loyalty and willingness to back up the gang.
  - The crimes can range from shoplifting beer, to graffiti vandalism to murder.

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## 3 Rs of Gangs

REPUTATION/REP.

Maintaining respect is a fundamental goal for gang members and plays a role in gang behaviors. To lose face, to get challenged, to be stared at too long and not respond are all ways that gang members think they lose respect.

Gang members often have a sense that the gang they belong to and they themselves lose respect if any insult goes unanswered.

This belief causes gangs to respond, often violently, to minor incidents, like those mentioned above.

If a gang member feels that he or she will lose respect, they are motivated to prevent that from happening because they are protecting their own and the gang's reputation and respect. For this reason gangs will use violence almost anywhere.

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## 3 Rs of Gangs

(2) RESPECT

- This is something everyone wants and some gang members carry their desire for it to the extreme. Respect is sought for not only the individual, but also for one's set or gang, family, territory, and various other things, real or perceived in the mind of the "gangbanger".
- Some gangs require, by written or spoken regulation, that the gang member must always show disrespect to rival gang members. (Referred to in gang slang as *dis*).
  - If a gang member witnesses a fellow member failing to *dis* a rival gang through hand signs, graffiti, or a simple "mad dog" or stare-down, they can issue a "violation" to their fellow posse member and he/she can actually be "beaten down" by their own gang as punishment. After *dis* has been issued, if it is witnessed, the third "R" will become evident.

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## 3 Rs of Gangs

(3) RETALIATION/REVENGE

- It must be understood that in gang culture, no challenge goes unanswered. Many times, drive-by shootings and other acts of violence follow an event perceived as *dis*.
- A common occurrence is a confrontation between a gang set and single rival "gangbanger." Outnumbered, he departs the area and returns with others to complete the confrontation to keep his reputation intact. This may occur immediately or follow a delay for planning and obtaining the necessary equipment to complete the retaliatory strike. It must also be understood that many acts of violence are the result of bad drug deals or infringement on drug territory.

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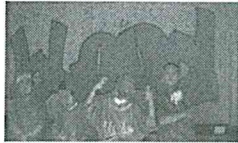
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## BLOODS



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- The Bloods are a Los Angeles based street gang and traditional have always worn red colors, using red bandanas
- Similarly, graffiti and clothing choices emphasize major disrespect for CRIPS colors and symbols.



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## “Throwing” hand signs

- As with most gangs, Bloods have their own system of “throwing up” hand signals used to identify membership in the gang, and sometimes, a particular “set”
- A “set” is a faction, sometimes a local gang/street gang, who has chosen affiliation with/sworn allegiance to one of the major gangs



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### Hand Signs

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### Symbols

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- The Blood membership is composed of various sub-groups across the USA, known as "sets."
- The Bloods originated in Los Angeles from the original PIRU gang, which took its name from Piru Street in Compton, CA.

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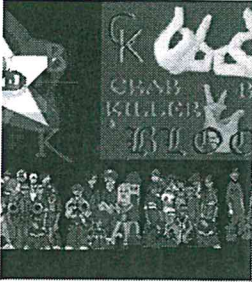
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- The original gang was created to protect its members from members of the Crips who would frequently target them in urban settings
  - Subsequently other gangs across the nation started taking on the names PIRU and BLOODS to signify an alliance with the main gang.



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- The BLOODS have a strong fascination with assault-type weapons (as do the CRIPS) which makes for lethal street assaults with numerous fatalities.



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- Congruent with most gangs, BLOODS see "snitching" or becoming an informant as expressly forbidden
  - There is a significant risk for severe punishment or death



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# CRIPS



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- The CRIPS are a primarily, but not exclusively, African-American gang.
- Founded in Los Angeles in 1969 by 15 year old Raymond Washington.



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- What was once a single gang is now a loosely connected network of individual sets.
- The gang has grown to be one of the most powerful in the USA with a significant number of members.



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