



# School Safety Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 8

April 2014

## Gangs in Educational Facilities

Excerpt from *National Gang Report 2013*. National Gang Intelligence Center, FBI. pg 38 - 41.  
<http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/national-gang-report-2013/view>



*Protecting our  
future through  
information  
sharing*

Gangs maintain a significant presence in educational facilities at every level – elementary, middle school/junior high, high school, and college campuses – throughout the United States. Accordingly, underage gang members pose serious issues for educators, law enforcement, and youth-service professionals, as street gang members carry criminal behavior into the schools they attend.

### **Gangs in Public Schools**

Public schools – at the elementary, junior high and high school levels – provide fertile ground for gang recruitment.

- According to a 2010 study conducted by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 45 percent of high school students assert that gangs are present in their schools while 35 percent of middle-school students report gangs present in their schools.

Due to gang prevalence in educational facilities, many communities find criminal operations conducted by gangs occur either on school yards or immediately proximal to school grounds. Accordingly, law enforcement reports and academic studies suggest a strong correlation exists between gang presence and crime levels in schools. Drugs and weapons offenses are the most common crimes gangs commit on school properties. Some research suggests that the likelihood of violence more than doubles in educational facilities that have a gang presence.

**Approximately 80 percent of survey respondents indicate gangs are present in the public school systems within their jurisdictions, with 54 percent reporting that gangs in their school system pose a moderate or serious threat.**

While gangs most commonly recruit from junior high schools – grades seven and eight specifically – some gangs direct recruitment efforts toward elementary schools.

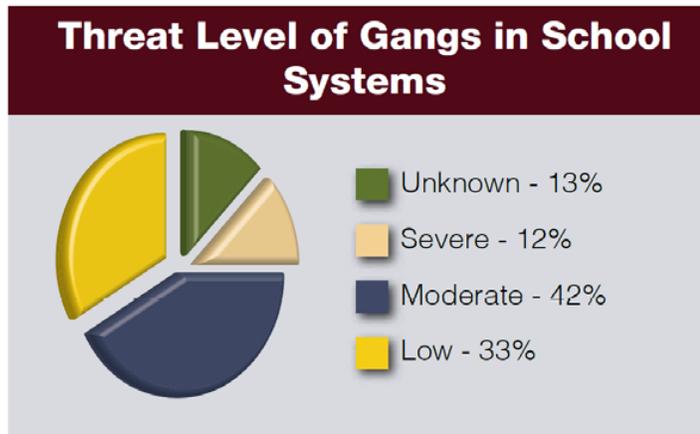
- According to survey reporting, law enforcement in 14 jurisdictions report that gangs are recruiting children in the third grade. Officials in Anderson, Indiana, and Chesterfield, Virginia, report that gangs are recruiting children in the second grade. Officials in Gulfport, Mississippi; Paterson, New Jersey; and Seattle, Washington, all report that gangs are recruiting first grade children.

### **In This Issue**

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- Youth Bullying: What Does the Research Say?
- Questions from School Safety Information Sharing Members

## Gangs in Educational Facilities (Continued)

- According to March 2013 open source reporting, some public grade schools in New York City are rampant with gangs, weapons, prostitution, and violence. Gangs are reportedly so prevalent at a junior high school in Queens, New York, that female students often feel compelled to engage in sex acts with gang members to gain acceptance or gang membership privileges. In one instance in New York, a firearm was confiscated from a second grade student at an elementary school.



### **Gangs on College Campuses**

Gang presence on college campuses increases both crime and academic failure rates and thereby presents a significant concern for educators, students, and law enforcement officials. Open source and law enforcement reports indicate gang members gravitate toward colleges to escape gang life, to join athletic programs, or to acquire skill sets for their gang. Some investigators believe that gang members may disguise themselves as college students so they can run criminal operations on campus with minimal detection. Such gangs as the Bloods, Crips, Gangster Disciples, MS-13, 18th Street, Vice Lords, and the Skinheads have been reported on a number of college campuses and reportedly commit crimes to include: drug distribution, assaults, weapons offenses, and robberies.

- A 2012 survey conducted by the Austin Peay State University in Tennessee found that suspected gang members were responsible for 10 percent of campus crime. Nearly two-thirds of respondents reported that approximately 10 percent of students on campus were active gang members. The same study suggests that leaders of organized gangs recruit from colleges and send their members to institutions of higher education to learn skills conducive to the commission of complex crimes – like mortgage fraud, cyber crime, and identity theft – in furtherance of gang objectives.

Criminal activity and violence on or near college campuses occur in conjunction with gang assimilation on campus, which creates a concern for public safety officials, educators, and administrative authorities. Accordingly, multiple law enforcement reports and open source accounts indicate that gangs are responsible for numerous assaults, shootings, robberies, carjackings, drug crimes, and weapons offenses on college campuses in California, Maine, Maryland, and Texas.

- Open source documents show that in June 2013, three suspected members of the Sotel 13 gang in West Los Angeles were arrested in connection with the shooting death of rival gang members near Santa Monica College. One of the victims was reported to have attended the college.
- March 2013 open source reports further indicate that a gang-related shooting occurred near the campus of Kilgore College in Texas, which was the continuation of a fight that occurred on campus earlier that day.

Gang members who join sports teams in school to escape gang life often retreat back to the gangster lifestyle once they reach college.

- A 2011 Department of Justice (DOJ) study conducted by researchers at Arizona State University cited that nearly 20 percent of the 87 police chiefs surveyed claimed to know an athlete who retained gang membership while in college. Researchers further found a strong link between gangs and sports due to the fact that universities do not typically conduct background checks on the athletic recruits; the tie between gangs and sports could also exist because gangs often recruit college athletes as a result of their visibility and prestige.

## Monthly Webinars!

First Wednesday of  
Every Month at 10  
am.

Next Webinar -  
May 7, 2014

Each webinar has a  
round table discussion at  
the end. Questions are  
always welcome!

To participate, you must be a  
vetted member. For more  
information please email  
schoolsafety@isp.state.il.us

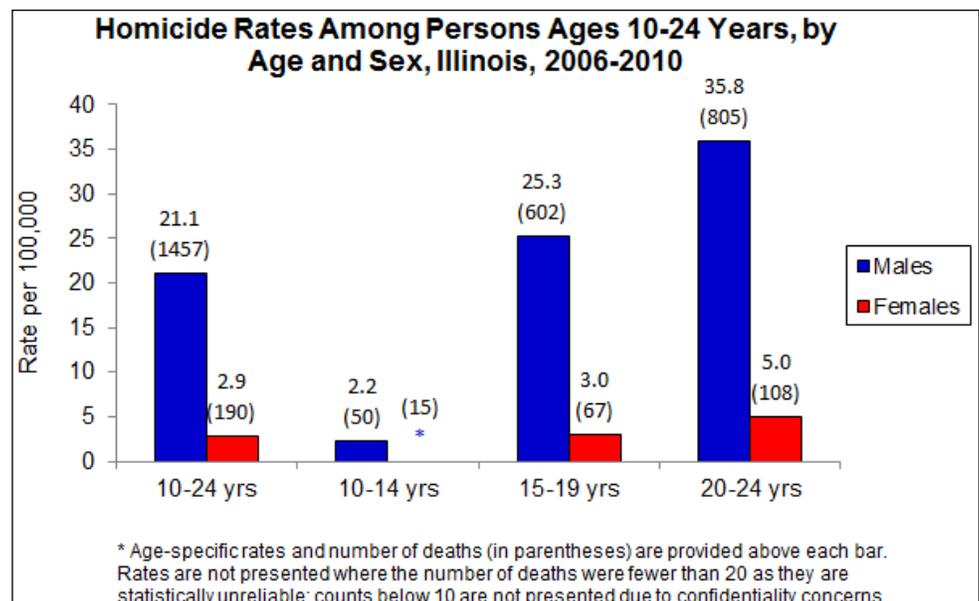
## Youth Violence

Facts at a Glance (2012) - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/yv\\_datasheet\\_2012-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/yv_datasheet_2012-a.pdf)

Images: [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/stats\\_at\\_a\\_glance/il.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/stats_at_a_glance/il.html)

- In 2010, 4,828 young people ages 10 to 24 were victims of homicide—an average of 13 each day.
- Homicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24 years old.
- Among homicide victims 10 to 24 years old in 2010, 86% (4,171) were male and 14% (657) were female.
- Among homicide victims ages 10 to 24 years old in 2010, 82.8% were killed with a firearm.
- Each year, youth homicides and assault-related injuries result in an estimated \$16 billion in combined medical and work loss costs.



### Violence-related Behaviors

In a 2011 nationally-representative sample of youth in grades 9-12:

- 32.8% reported being in a physical fight in the 12 months preceding the survey; the prevalence was higher among males (40.7%) than females (24.4%).
- 16.6% reported carrying a weapon (gun, knife or club) on one or more days in the 30 days preceding the survey; the prevalence was higher among males (25.9%) than females (6.8%).
- 5.1% reported carrying a gun on one or more days in the 30 days preceding the survey; the prevalence was higher among males (8.6%) than females (1.4%).

### School Violence

In a 2011 nationally-representative sample of youth in grades 9-12:

- 12% reported being in a physical fight on school property in the 12 months preceding the survey.
- 16% of male students and 7.8% of female students reported being in a physical fight on school property in the 12 months preceding the survey.
- 5.9% did not go to school on one or more days in the 30 days preceding the survey because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.
- 5.4% reported carrying a weapon (gun, knife or club) on school property on one or more days in the 30 days preceding the survey.
- 7.4% reported being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property one or more times in the 12 months preceding the survey.

## Youth Bullying: What Does the Research Say? - From the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

Bullying is one type of youth violence that threatens young people's well-being. Bullying can result in physical injuries, social and emotional difficulties, and academic problems. The harmful effects of bullying are frequently felt by others, including friends and families, and can hurt the overall health and safety of schools, neighborhoods, and society.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines bullying as any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths who are not siblings or current dating partners that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm. A young person can be a perpetrator, a victim, or both (also known as "bully/victim").

Bullying can occur in-person and through technology. Electronic aggression or cyber-bullying is bullying that happens through email, chat rooms, instant message, a website, text message, or social media.

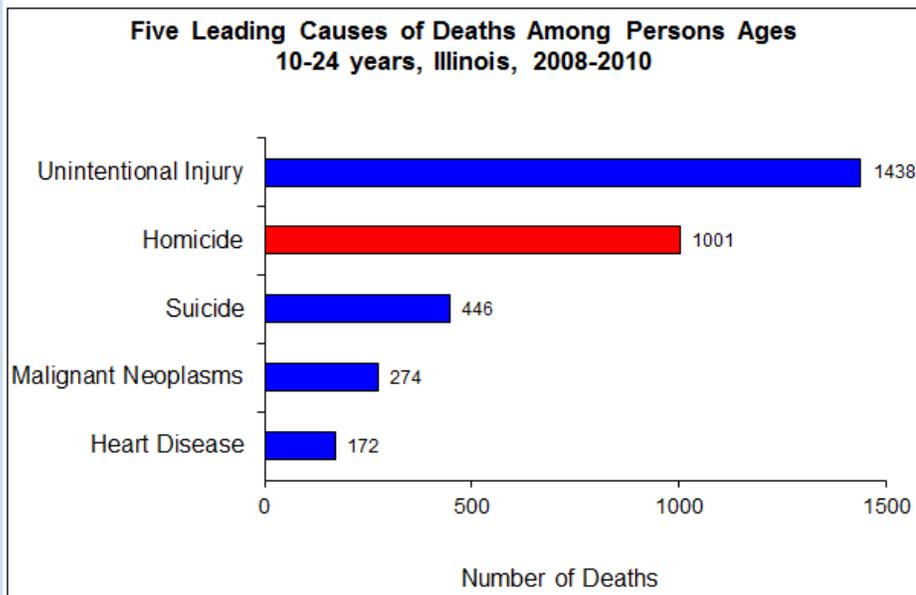
The CDC works to understand and prevent bullying before it starts. Research is still developing and helps us to better understand and prevent bullying. School-based bullying prevention programs are widely implemented but not always evaluated. However, research suggests promising program elements include:

- Improving supervision of students
- Using school rules and behavior management techniques in the classroom and throughout the school to detect and address bullying by providing consequences for bullying
- Having a whole school anti-bullying policy, and enforcing that policy consistently
- Promoting cooperation among different professionals and between school staff and parents

The following resources provide additional information on bullying, electronic aggression, youth violence prevention, and safe schools.

To view the resources, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/bullyingresearch/index.html>

## Youth Violence (Continued)



## Questions from School Safety Information Sharing Members

School Safety Information Sharing members are welcome to ask questions. The following are a few that were brought to the program's attention you might be interested in.

Q: Can we share any information from the School Safety Information Sharing program and to whom?

A: Products listed as FOUO can not be disseminated to commercial e-mail accounts, passed around or posted in public locations. You can discuss the content of the document with those in your school or campus who are in a position of "need-to-know." FOUO documents can not be shared with the general public. Law enforcement involved in the program will receive additional information that is labeled LES (Law Enforcement Sensitive). This type of information is only available to current sworn law enforcement and cannot be shared with anyone other than law enforcement. If you have any questions on how to handle material that is sent out through the School Safety Information Sharing program, please feel free to reach out to Mia.

**Do you have something to share?** This is an invitation for anyone in the School Safety Information Sharing Program to submit lessons learned or success stories that could be helpful and shared with other schools and campuses in Illinois. Authors would be notified of acceptance if their story is selected for the monthly newsletter prior to publication. Questions or ideas, please contact Mia (information below).



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### **School Safety Newsletter**

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