



Gang Joining and Implications for Prevention

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SOURCE: [http://www.osdfsnationalconference.com/Presentations/111.%20Gang%20Joining%20\(Wyrick\).pdf](http://www.osdfsnationalconference.com/Presentations/111.%20Gang%20Joining%20(Wyrick).pdf)



People Are “Pushed” and “Pulled” Into Gangs

- “Pushes” are the negative conditions in the environment that make a gang-free, crime-free life seem unattractive or inaccessible.
- “Pulls” are the aspects of gang involvement that young people perceive as positive or attractive.



Forces that “Push” People Toward Gangs

Community Risk Factors

Individual
Risk Factors

School
Risk Factors



Peer Risk Factors

Family Risk Factors



Community Risk Factors



- Residence in a disadvantaged or disorganized community
- Availability/ perceived access to drugs
- Feeling unsafe in the neighborhood
- Low neighborhood attachment
- High crime neighborhood
- Availability of firearms
- Neighborhood youth in trouble



School Risk Factors



- Low achievement in elementary school
- Frequent truancy, suspensions, expulsions
- Low academic aspirations
- Poor schools attitude and performance
- Low school attachment or commitment
- Low attachment to teachers
- Low parent college expectations for child
- Poorly functioning schools
- Identified as learning disabled



Family Risk Factors

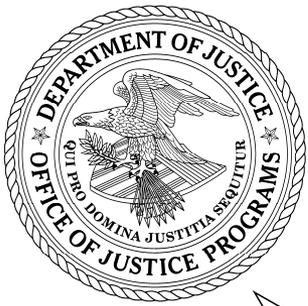
- Broken home/changes in caregiver
- Family poverty and financial stress
- Family history of problem behavior/criminal involvement
- Sibling antisocial behavior/gang involvement
- Child maltreatment, abuse or neglect
- Low parent education level
- Parental pro-violence attitudes
- Poor parental supervision & control
- Having a young mother
- Low attachment to child



Peer Risk Factors

- Association with deviant peers
- Association with aggressive peers





Individual Risk Factors

- Violent victimization
- Early onset of aggression/violence
- Antisocial/delinquent beliefs
- General delinquency involvement
- Aggression/fighting
- Early dating, sexual activity
- Substance use
- Life stressors
- Hyperactive
- Poor refusal skills
- Illegal gun ownership/carrying
- Mental health or conduct problems





Risk Factors and Gang Membership

Researchers in Seattle studied the odds of joining a gang at ages 13 to 18, relative to the number of risk factors present at ages 10 to 12.

- Those with **2 to 3 risk factors** were **3 times** more likely to join a gang later than those with zero or only 1 risk factor.
- Those with **4 to 6 risk factors** were **5 times** more likely to join a gang.
- Those with **7 or more risk factors** were **13 times** more likely to join a gang.

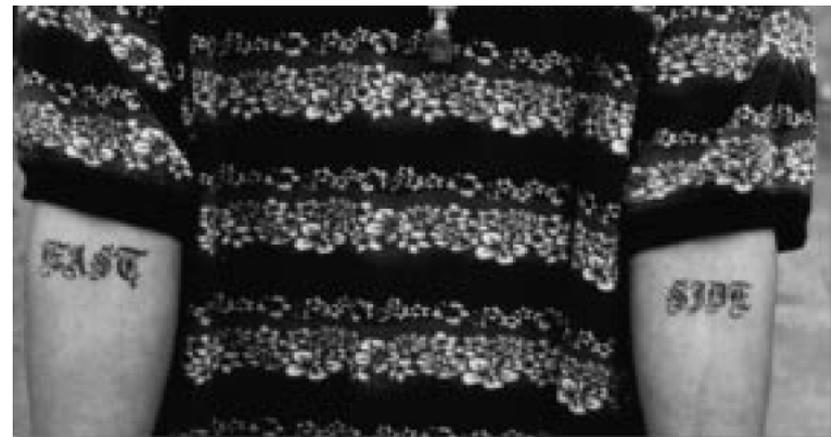


To Understand “Pulls,” Ask Young People



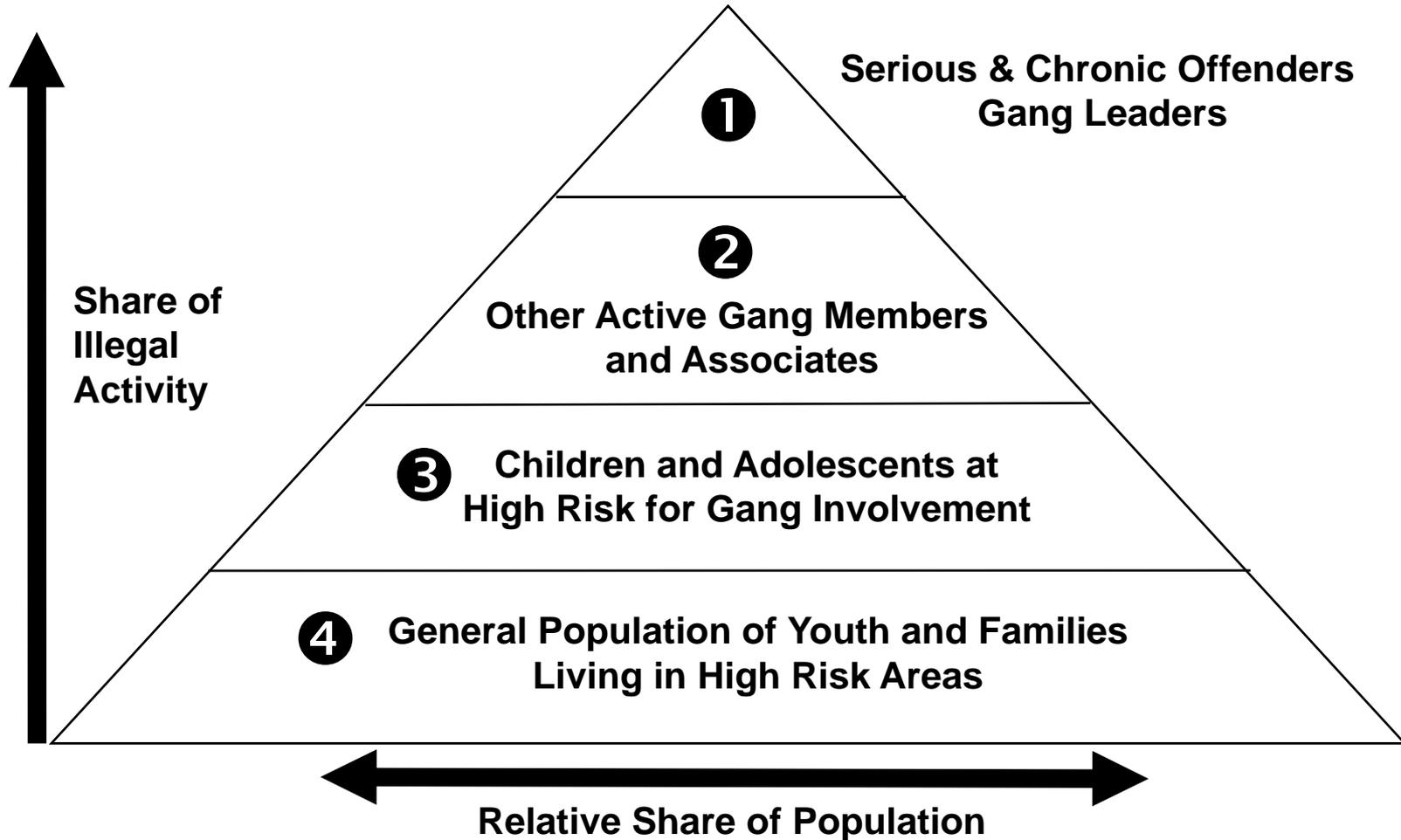
Why do young people say they join gangs?

- Status/Identity
- Fun/excitement
- Peer group/“family”
- Protection/strength
- Money





Gangs in the Community





Focusing Anti-Gang Strategies

