



HELP YOUTH GROW AND  
THRIVE

---

TALKING  
TO  
FAMILIES  
ABOUT  
GANGS

---

GANG REDUCTION  
AND  
INTERVENTION  
TASKFORCE

YAKIMA

<https://drcyakima.org/>

THEY HAVE A WORLD

OF POSSIBILITIES

WAITING FOR THEM



A Gang is a group of individuals that band together for a common cause and are involved in criminal activity.

## WHO JOINS GANGS/CREWS AND WHY?

*Young people who feel they are not respected by their peers, families or communities, may turn to gangs to become stronger and protected. There are many reasons for this, both individual and systemic. The following suggestions are offered as possibilities within the control of families and youth.*

## SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

*Explain what might happen if they join a gang. Tell them that they could be physically harmed or pressured into committing criminal acts that could result in their arrest. Tell them that they could lose their lives. » Make sure your children are involved in healthy, supervised activities, especially after school. » Find out where your children go in their free time. Get to know your children's friends and their parents. » Get involved with your children's education and their schools. Encourage them to study and stay in school. » Set limits for you children and enforce them. Tell your children they are special and you are concerned about their safety.*

## SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUTH

*Be proactive. » Tell your parents, a school counselor, or a police officer immediately if you are approached by a gang member attempting to recruit you. » Let gang members know you respect them but you are not interested in joining a gang. » Avoid areas where gang members hang out. » Think about the future — what kind of job would you like? What do you have to do to get that job? If you do not like your school, talk to your family or counselor about transferring. » Find others who want to stay out of gangs. Develop friendships with peers you trust. Ask for help. Find a mentor.*

## CALL (509) 575-6200 TO REPORT GANG ACTIVITY

*The key to a safer community is collaboration between residents and their police department..*

---

**IF A YOUNG PERSON IS BUSY, CONSTRUCTIVELY ENGAGED, WITH HOPE FOR THE FUTURE, HE OR SHE WILL NOT NEED THE FALSE SELF-ESTEEM A GANG PROVIDES**

---

**FOR LOCAL RESOURCES, CONTACT**

*Dispute Resolution Center*

*132 N 1st Ave, Yakima, WA 98902*

*(800) 853-8949*

*info@drcyakima.org*

September 2021