

Gangs and Kids

A Gang Awareness Manual

Created for Newton USD 373 staff and parents, in cooperation
with the Newton Police Department.

What is a gang?

Definition of a Street Gang

A street gang is defined as an ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more individuals, whether formal or informal, who:

- Collectively or individually are involved in criminal activity or anti-social behavior, and
- Claim a common name, color, symbol or dress.

Gang activity ranges in severity from “bullying” to drug dealing and drive-by shootings. These groups thrive on intimidation and notoriety.

Dependent on both individual and group participation, these groups can vary in structure from non-formal leadership to highly structured.

Gangs will identify themselves with names they take from various places including streets, buildings, bands, or even popular movies. Although in some parts of the country gangs usually form along racial lines, most Kansas variety gangs do not.

Gang Hierarchy

Nearly all gangs in the U.S. are sub groups of two main gangs: People Nation and Folk Nation. These gangs are arch enemies of each other and this rivalry is passed down to their subgroups. Be aware, however, that many gangs are so far-removed from the original gang in the hierarchy that they don't even know which parent organization they are descended from. In Harvey County, the two main rival gangs are the VLB (Vatos Loco Boyz) and the SUR 13 (Surenos 13 or Surenos Trece). Both of these originated from Northern and Southern rival Hispanic gangs in California and Mexico.

How Do You Identify Gang Members?

Graffiti

Gangs use graffiti to indicate their presence and their territory. It will appear on their bodies, clothing, schoolbooks/lockers, personal items at home, and on public structures. It may be in the form of a gang name, roll call, specific artwork, or symbols. Graffiti that is upside down or crossed out indicates disrespect for the gang by its rivals.

Vocabulary

The following terms are common gang lingo. If you hear these terms or see them written on papers, planners, notebooks, etc., they could be a sign of gang activity.

5 = People Nation/Blood

6 = Folk Nation/Crip

187 = Homicide/murder threat

211 = Armed robbery

BK = BLOOD Killer

CK = CRIP Killer

Crab = Disrespect for Crips

Slobs = Disrespect for Bloods

Cuzz = Greeting of one Crip to another

IVL = Insane Vice Lords

Norteños = Hispanic Northerners, frequently with #14

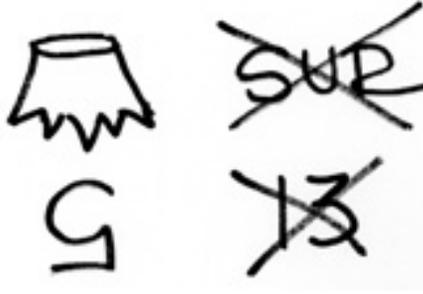
Sureños = Hispanic Southerners, frequently use #13 (Common in Harvey County)

VLB = Vato Loco Boyz a.k.a. Spanish Disciples (Common in Harvey County)

\$ = Selling Drugs

Symbols

The following are some recurring symbols associated with gangs:

SUR 13 and others	VLB and others
	
Disrespect of Rival Gang	Disrespect of Rival Gang
	

Clothing

Gangs will use both color and style to represent their affiliation. While clothing alone does not indicate gang affiliation, it should be considered a strong indicator when it is peer conforming. Another consideration is the way in which the clothing is worn. Sagging, dressing right or left (hat bill turned to side, belt buckled to the side, one pant leg rolled up, etc.), or “cholo-style” (shirt buttoned to top of neck, sunglasses, baggy pants, etc.) are all important indicators. Other personal signs can include extreme hair-styles, tattoos, use/overuse of makeup and excessive jewelry: multiple chains, large medallions, etc. In Harvey County the most common gang colors are blue and white for the SUR, and black and white for the VLB.

Weapons

The presence of weapons such as baseball bats (altered or normal), pipes, spiked wrist bands, knives, or firearms should raise a considerable amount of concern.

What should I look for?

Potential indicators parents and educators should be on the lookout for include:

Drug/alcohol use	Sudden clothing/music style change
Change in friends	Hand signals
Expensive items	Admissions
Gang graffiti	Truancy
Tattoos	Unexplained money
Decline in grades	Pictures
Keeping late hours	Sudden defiance toward authority

Why do kids join gangs?

Reasons can include:

- Excitement
- Protection
- Peer Pressure
- Attention
- Family Tradition
- Money

What should I do if I suspect my child is getting involved?

- Talk to them—Know the Who, What, Where, When and Why of where they are going and what they are doing. Be sure they know the consequences of this type of behavior.
- Talk to school officials and counselors. Do they know everything you know?
- Talk to the police. Every police department has someone that can answer your questions regarding what is going on in your community and if they are familiar with your child.
- Get you church or civic group involved.
- Take a zero tolerance policy toward gang behavior and do what you say you will do.
- Don't ignore the signs! It will not go away on its own.

What can I do to prevent the problem from starting?

- Become informed
- Stay involved
- Neighborhood Watch
- Graffiti Abatement
- Get to know your local law enforcement officers
- Report suspicious activity

Gang Graffiti in Harvey County



VLB, Spanish Disciples initials with Pitchfork, and 6-sided star.





VLB, pitchfork with Spanish Disciples initials and 22nd Street numbers.

SUR (Sureños) 13



X3 symbol for Sureños 13, Brown Pride slogan.

Number 13 crossed out showing disrespect to SUR 13 gang, pitchfork with Spanish Disciples initials, and VLB gang insignia.



Upside-down, broken, backwards and crossed-out letters and symbols showing disrespect to rival gang.