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Gang Mentality Analytical Report: Why do gang members behave the way they do?

Gang members are very unpredictable, you never know when they will strike. They are all about respect and will do anything to make sure their respects will not be lost. They commit crimes for their status. The worse the crime, the higher the status. They always have their neighborhoods gangs in check, and always want to protect their neighborhood. Some will even die trying.

Gang Activity

In terms with their education levels, most don't have any high school diplomas. In addition very few gang members have GED's or general education diplomas. The average age some members commit their first federal crime is at nine years of age. After the age of nine the number of crimes start to increase. The reason some members do their crimes is for the sake of protecting their territory or their community. Their behavior determines gang status and most are usually arrogant and defiant to intimidate others. Before a gang member actually is in a gang, some were exposed at a young age. When the gang members are exposed at a young age they tend to get influenced by their surroundings. Their environment is a big factor to their behavior.

Respect

Respect is a fundamental goal, if a gang thinks they are going to lose respect, they will do anything they can to prevent that from happening and to keep their reputation. Retaliation or pay back might happen when an individual from a gang gets attacked and the whole gang gets offended because that individual belongs to a particular gang so it is a threat. So gangs are usually armed at any social gatherings to either receive pay back or to give pay back. Back up is another term from gang slang and is sometimes used when an individual is about to get attacked and needs help from another individual from the same gang. Sometimes gang members put themselves in harm's way to protect another member. So they are in a constant state of paranoia when they attack a gang, fearing they will get retaliation. The mentality of most street gangs is to protect their neighborhood from any other gangs and to protect where they grew up.

Joining A Gang

Before gang members actually got into a gang they have to perform a ritual for trust reasons. Some of the rituals include getting beat up or beating up someone. People often join gangs because of the poverty rates in the community. They see no hope for the future so they decide to give up on life as a young adult and join a gang. Gangs exist sometimes because they see it as a money making enterprise. Also they think that by drug dealing and committing crimes will get them farther in life than working and getting a job. Gang members recruit teenagers because, young people are very susceptible to peer pressure. If they reside in a gang-dominated area, they might want to join a gang. Usually the gang member who is the most active is the leader or "shot caller"

Boredom

When teens have nothing to do in their free time they usually occupy themselves with gang mischief. Especially if there is already gangs in their neighborhood they will either join or form their own gangs. Many communities tried to lessen gang activity by creating enrichment and physical activities in their community so teens won't use boredom as an excuse. There is a higher chance for a teen to turn to violence if poverty is high because they might be in short supply of swimming pools, libraries, or even parks. For every teenager that becomes bored and joins a gang, there are 10 teens who find positive, productive ways to spend their time.

Despair

Despair is the state of mind that people who have always lived in poverty are in. People who have been through generations of poverty most likely see no chance of ever getting a nice paying job, getting a good education or leaving their neighborhood. A neighborhood gang can be an outlet for some or it may seem like the only real family they'll ever have. Joining a gang gives them a sense of being a part of something important that they can't get otherwise.

In conclusion, gang members are very unpredictable, and most want to protect their neighborhoods. Gangs are mostly about respect and they will do a lot to make sure their respect will not go down. If there is poverty in a neighborhood there will most definitely be gang activity due to no youth programs, despair, and no chance of hope. Teens might turn to gangs and violence because they have no hope for the future and they will feel as its will be the only place they belong. It gives them an outlet and a chance to be someone important, and loved.