



YouthLink Safe for Life: Gangs Optional Post-Field Trip Activity

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to discuss some topics related to gangs from the YouthLink presentation, to reflect on learning and what students have taken away from the session.

Materials:

- Human Graph labels

Teacher Prep:

- Ensure there is space in your classroom for students to move around and keep a safe distance from each other.
- Print human graph labels, or rewrite them onto blank paper, and tape one label to each wall of your classroom in a place that students can easily see.

Human Graph Procedure (20-30 minutes):

- **Explain** to the students that they will be creating a human graph, which is a visual way for them to answer questions and reflect on their learning. Remind them that this is an individual activity- **there are no wrong answers**, and they should try to answer each question honestly, even if they have a different opinion from their peers.
- **Read** statement #1 aloud to the class and instruct the students to move to the area of the room that has the label that mostly lines up with their option on the question. I.e: if they strongly agree with the statement, they should stand in that area of the room.

Note: Remind students that they should find their own space by the label they have chosen, not touching or standing too close to their classmates.

- After the students have found the label that best reflects their opinion, invite a few students from each group to explain why they chose to stand by that label. Students

GANGS



can discuss their answers and opinions in their groups before sharing with the class. For example: Why do you agree with this statement? Disagree?

- After members of each group have shared their opinion, read the answer listed below the question and discuss as a group. This is also a great time to share personal stories and experiences if the students feel comfortable.
- Repeat procedure with each of the statements.

Human Graph Statements:

1. Gangs only affect some parts of the city.

Answer: Even though we sometimes see specific areas involved, gang activity in Calgary affects the whole city.

2. Gangs don't recruit young people.

Answer: Gangs sometimes try to recruit adults, but most commonly gang members try to manipulate and recruit kids. Gang recruitment can start as young as targeting 11 to 13-year-old youth.

3. All gangs are big and have hundreds of members.

Answer: This is false. Legally in Canada a gang can count if there are 3 or more people. Some gangs in the world are made up of hundreds of members but many gangs in Canada are as small as 3 people.

4. Gang members do not fear for their safety.

Answer: Most gang members have reported to police that they constantly live in a state of fear. Not because of police, but because they fear they might be killed by a member of



a rival gang or even a member of their own gang. For this reason, many gang members sleep at night wearing a bulletproof vest, and rarely leave their homes.

5. Only boys join gangs.

Answer: This is a myth. Gangs all over north America, including Calgary, are made up of boys and girls.

6. If I join a gang, I will most likely end up in jail or dead.

Answer: Yes, this statement is very true for a lot of gang members in Canada. Typically, if you are a gang member it will most likely end in one of two ways. Either you end up in jail for a long time, or you will be killed at the hands of another gang member.

7. It is easy to get out of a gang.

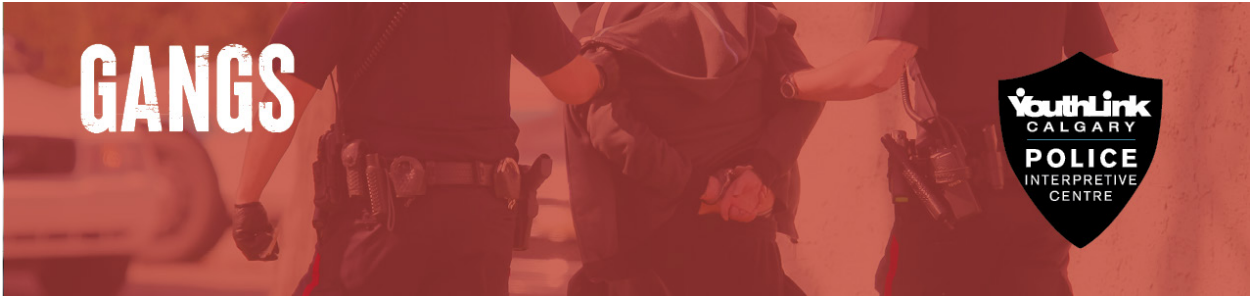
Answer: It can be very difficult to exit a gang. Not only can it put a target on your back from members of your own gang who do not want you to leave, rival gang members may still come after you even if you are no longer associated with the gang. Former gang members often feel that they must constantly look over their shoulder.

8. Joining a gang only affects me, not the people around me.

Answer: if you join a gang it will change everything for you. It will affect everyone connected to you. It will affect the happiness and safety of your family, your friends, your community and the city.

9. If a person wants to leave a gang, police can help.

Answer: Absolutely! Even if a person has made bad decisions and even broken the law, Police want to help people who want help for themselves. If a gang member wants to safely get out of a gang the first step is talking to police.



Note: Below are the Human Graph labels that you can print or copy to post around the classroom.

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Agree

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**Strongly
agree**

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**Strongly
disagree**

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Disagree