



# G.A.I.N.

GANG ACTIVITY INFORMATION NETWORK



United States  
Department  
Of Justice



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**POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS**

## A Link Between Immigration, Gang Crime?

Article published by the South Bend Tribune

**10/05/2007 Goshen, IN** | When members of a rival gang killed a 14-year-old Latino boy in the passenger seat of a car on a Goshen street, the people of the small, industrial city seemed to have had enough. The shooting, late on a Saturday night in February 2006, was apparently in retaliation for a similar attack in April 2005 that took the life of a 16-year-old Latino boy. Community leaders worried that ethnic gangs, once unknown in the city, could grip it by the throat.

When a couple of months later, in April 2006, thousands of immigrant rights supporters, many of them Hispanic, took to the streets of the city in support of comprehensive immigration reform, dissenters suggested that deporting the immigrants would tame the city's gang violence. But according to a Tribune examination, most of the 12 young men who were subsequently convicted of gang-related crimes in the two shootings are not deportable: They were born and raised in the United States. Only two were in the country illegally.



### The 'Americanization' of immigrants

That fact does not surprise officers of the Goshen and Elkhart County police forces who work closely to fight gang culture and crime. "A lot of the gang members we've dealt with were born and raised in this country," said Patrolman Rich Matteson, a certified gang specialist with the Elkhart County Sheriff's Department. Detective Stephen Priem of the Goshen Police Department agreed. "It's a criminal behavior issue," he said. "It's not an immigration issue."

Joe Guerrero, who works closely with Goshen schools to deter youth from joining gangs, said, "The impression that people have is that immigrants brought gangs to Goshen and to America, when it's actually quite the opposite."

The Tribune found that three of the 12 young men involved in the shootings were born in Mexico, three in Texas and six in California. Of the Mexican natives, two were in the country illegally and have been deported; one is a legal permanent resident who faces deportation upon his release from prison.

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Police have said the 12 young men, whose ages range from 16 to 21 years, belonged to three Hispanic gangs: SUR-13, Norteños and Vatos Locos. The first two are traditional rivals who trace their origins to the California prison system; the latter's Goshen incarnation, Guerrero said, was instituted by American-born Texan migrants.

Guerrero, who grew up knowing Chicago gang life and is now executive director of the gang control organization Communities in Schools, dates Goshen's Hispanic gang life to the late 1980s or early 1990s. He said illegal immigrants who subsequently joined gangs have been "sucked in" to the subculture, lured in part by a promise of protection and belonging.

"Kids that come from Mexico, El Salvador, they did not bring the gang culture here. They landed in a pool that was contaminated with this stuff," Guerrero said. "The root of the problem is not with immigrants, it's with how we raise our kids." Most of the "hard-core kids" who lure others into gangs are American-born, Guerrero said, sometimes second-, third-, or fourth-generation. "It's a shame that as a community we are trying to shrug off our responsibility and we're blaming other communities," said Guerrero, who calls the adoption of immigrants into gangs "the Americanization of these kids." "Gang violence is caused by our ideas, our media, our outlets."

Carlos Hernandez, a Christian pastor at Praise Chapel Ministries in Goshen, said he's seen young, undocumented immigrants join but not launch gangs. He and others who have looked closely at gang life in Goshen said undocumented immigrants may share some of the same reasons with others for becoming gang lovers.

### **A search for protection**

Although gang culture may run in a family and be passed on from one generation to another, as in Hernandez's case, new recruits often become fresh prey for similar reasons. Hernandez, who followed his parents' footsteps in becoming an East Los Angeles gang member at the raw age of 10, said newcomers, be they American or foreign-born, often join gangs in a desperate search for protection. "They want protection from racism," said Hernandez, who now works closely with gang-prone youth to help them find what they seek in religion. "They get bullied around in schools. They get called names. They need friends."

Those who seek a solid foothold in a new protective circle of allies often hail from broken homes. Other reasons include ego fulfillment, fear, a search for identity, education deficiencies and the fascination that gang power and its media portrayal hold for alienated youth who are trying to become as cool as those in the popular crowd, said Matteson, the gang specialist.

Guerrero, of Communities In Schools, agreed that single-parent households are "absolutely" a contributing factor to kids joining gangs. In fact, single-parent households may contribute to crime in general. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 56 percent of jail inmates in the nation said in 2002 that they grew up in a single-parent household or with a guardian.

### **Dismantling gangs**

Although Guerrero said good parenting may be the single worst enemy that any gang could face, he's not too worried that rising deportations of undocumented immigrants who leave strapped families behind could contribute to the growing ranks of Hispanic gang members. Few gang members are immigrants, Guerrero said, and of those who are, even fewer are in the country illegally.

But Guerrero and others admitted that the breakup of the nuclear family structure that may result from the deportation of one or more parents could foster the unintended consequence of rising local crime. "Whenever parents don't have the ability to set up boundaries, to set up discipline, technique ... then we have trouble," Guerrero said. "Single parents are often overrun, overworked ... or don't have the skills." Hernandez said, "If mom or dad gets deported, then there's only one parent watching the kid. And the youth, right away they're going to look for refuge ... and most of the time they're going to find it in gangs."

Alex Alonso, a national gang expert who lives in Los Angeles, said by phone that illegal immigration's role in gang culture is hotly debated there, too. "The irony of it is most gang members in Los Angeles County are American citizens," he said. Alonso also said single-parent households are more vulnerable preys to gang recruiters, especially if a father figure is absent.

## Crimes are Organized, but are they organized Crime?

Article published in the Times

**10/28/2007 Merrillville, IN** | Coca plants and poppies are not grown in Northwest Indiana, yet cocaine and heroin still make it to the streets of Lake and Porter counties. But if mob outfits aren't orchestrating the smuggling as they once did, how are the drugs getting here? Experts say local gang figures have been working directly with Mexican drug cartels and other illegal drug providers.

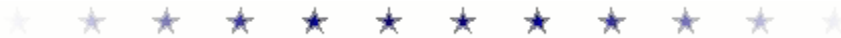
"We know of several (cartels), and almost all of them have ties either to Chicago or down in the Southwest border," said Dennis Wichern, agent in charge of Indiana for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. "All roads lead back to the Southwest border."



And in recent years, federal drug agents have traced a circuitous route of drugs smuggled across the Mexican border to suspected narcotics warehousing operations in Merrillville. In addition to that, more than two dozen members and associates of Gary's Renegades street gang have been convicted of buying and selling cocaine throughout the Midwest, federal authorities said. Among those convicted were boxing phenom Charles "Duke" Tanner and Mexican cartel member Arnulfo Castellanos.

Narcotics long have been tied to gangs, guns and the street violence that follows. The substances also have been tied to spikes in burglaries, robberies and other property crimes as addicts steal to feed their habits. Some federal and region law enforcement officials said the narcotics pipeline from Mexico to Merrillville, Chicago and elsewhere in the Midwest continues to perpetuate the crime for which millions of dollars are spent each year to battle.

**Full Story:** [http://nwitimes.com/articles/2007/10/28/updates/top\\_stories/doc47243214c045d833974279.txt](http://nwitimes.com/articles/2007/10/28/updates/top_stories/doc47243214c045d833974279.txt)



## Ten Years for Robbery Lookout

Article published by the Times

**10/06/2007 Lafayette, IN** | A Lafayette teenager believed to be the lookout during an armed robbery last December at a southside restaurant has been sentenced to 10 years in prison. Antwan J. Love, 16, also must serve four years on community corrections when he's released. Three of those years will be spent on probation. Love pleaded guilty in August to conspiracy to commit robbery and armed robbery, both Class B felonies.

He was one of five teenagers charged in connection to the Dec. 13 holdup at the Igloo Frozen Custard off County Road 350 South. According to information presented in court documents, they plotted to rob the restaurant and share the proceeds.

A single round from a handgun was fired into the ceiling. And though no one was seriously injured, the store manager was hit and a customer was kicked as he lay on the floor.



During Love's sentencing hearing before Judge Don Johnson of Tippecanoe Superior Court 1, a Lafayette police officer testified that Love has been identified as a member of the Gangster Disciples street gang. Tippecanoe County prosecutor Pat Harrington said two of the teens are believed to be members of Lafayette-area gangs.

All five defendants have now been sentenced for their role in the robbery. Three of the suspects were charged as adults. Charles D. Hunter, 18, was sentenced Aug. 24 to 18 years in prison. He is believed to have been the gunman. Michael A. Mitchell, 16, was sentenced to 17 years in prison on Aug. 10.

The other two suspects, Antwan Milsap, 15, and Alfred "Deonte" Ellis, 16, were prosecuted in juvenile court. Both were placed at Cary Home for Children, then put on house arrest. They later were placed at a boys school with the Indiana Department of Correction for violating curfew and other offenses.

**Source:** *Journal & Courier*

## Teen Gunned Down in Front of Gary High School

Article published in the Times

**11/05/2007 Gary, IN** | Six men chased an 18-year-old Gary man before one of the men shot him to death on Roosevelt High School's lawn Friday night, witnesses told police. Investigators have no suspects in the killing of Cameron C. Jackson, 18, said Gary police Sgt. Michael Jackson.

A witness said he saw six men chase the 18-year-old across the Roosevelt High School campus, Michael Jackson said. The shooting was "more than likely" gang-related, but the victim might just have confronted "a bunch of idiots," Michael Jackson said.

Cameron Jackson was pronounced dead at 10:42 p.m. Friday, according to a spokesman for the Lake County coroner's office. Earlier Friday, Cameron Jackson was arrested on suspicion he burglarized a relative's home, Michael Jackson said. He was released from police custody.

Cameron Jackson's killing is the city's 64th reported homicide of 2007.

*Source: The Times*



## Fight Disrupts School Dance in Mishawaka

Article published by the South Bend Tribune

**10/04/2007 Mishawaka, IN** | Four students -- one who struck a teacher -- are facing disciplinary action after a fight broke out at a shortened Mishawaka High School homecoming dance Friday, officials said Wednesday.

During the high school-sponsored dance in the gymnasium -- which drew about 150 students -- the power went out when the disc jockey blew a circuit breaker, said Gregg Hixenbaugh, director of human resources and relations for School City of Mishawaka.



While school officials were trying to restore power, a ninth-grade female student and her 11th-grade sister began to scream "Lakeside" -- the name of a gang in the South Bend area, according to a police report filed Tuesday.

A fight then broke out about 10:30 p.m., during which social studies teacher Nathan Blair was punched in the face by the ninth-grade female student, said school resource officer Cpl. Mark Fedder of the Mishawaka Police Department.

The incident occurred when a male student who saw the sisters' gang signs and heard the "Lakeside" shouts approached the ninth-grade student, telling her that she was not in the Lakeside gang and to "shut her mouth," Fedder said in the police report.

The two students then began to fight while several other students at the dance tried to break them up, police said. Blair, a teacher who was helping with the dance, told police the ninth-grade girl was trying to hit the student when she struck Blair in the side of his face with a closed fist, according to police reports.

Social studies teacher Mike Breske then grabbed the ninth-grader and pulled her to the side until Fedder could detain her, police said. As Fedder and building-level school administrators tried to restore order, her 11th-grade sister began to yell profanities at them, according to the report.

During the dance, another male student was holding up his hands and flashing gang signs for Lakeside before being removed from the dance and escorted out of the school, where he continued to cause problems, Fedder said.

Fedder said he believed that without the gang signs and gang language, the fight would not have happened. No one was arrested as a result of Friday's altercations, he said, but Hixenbaugh would not give details about what disciplinary action would be taken against the students, for confidentiality reasons.

**Full Story:** <http://www.southbendforum.com/vb/showthread.php?t=3403>



## Teen Charged in Chicago Slaying

Article published by the Chicago Tribune

**10/24/2007 Chicago, IL** | While family members prepared to bury a young Englewood boy shot to death in a gang battle in which his only role was victim, another teen was charged Tuesday in the boy's slaying. Arthur Jones, 10, was fatally shot a week ago just blocks from his home when two rival gangs met in the 800 block of West Garfield Boulevard and at least two people fired shots, police said.



On Tuesday, Chicago police announced charges against Lesean Jackson, 17, an alleged member of the Black P Stones gang, who police said fired shots at the rival Gangster Disciples but instead struck Arthur, an innocent bystander. Wentworth Area Cmdr. Patricia Walsh said police are looking for another suspected gunman, also believed to be a Black P Stones member whom witnesses and videotaped surveillance showed firing into the crowd. Police do not yet know if Jackson or the other alleged gunman fired the fatal shot. No guns were recovered, though they have been described as an automatic weapon and a handgun, Deputy Supt. Hiram Grau said.

Walsh said the shooting was prompted by a fight between the two gangs earlier in the day. The Black P Stones returned to the neighborhood about 4:35 p.m. "determined they were going to even the score," she said. Grau credited the "outrage" of the community and willingness of witnesses to come forward with helping to identify those allegedly involved.

Last week, police charged two other teens with murder for supplying at least one of the guns used in the shooting. Steven McCaskill, 17, another Black P Stones member, allegedly handled the murder weapon. A 14-year-old also was charged last week with murder for passing the weapon from McCaskill to Jackson, police said. All three teens have previous juvenile records, Walsh said. Jackson turned himself in Tuesday but did not give a statement to police, Walsh said. However, he was identified by witnesses and was seen in the videotape firing into the crowd, she said.

**Full Story:** [http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-jones\\_24oct24.0.6412215.story?coll=chi\\_tab01\\_layout](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-jones_24oct24.0.6412215.story?coll=chi_tab01_layout)



## Mother Slain Trick or Treating with Children

Article published by the Chicago Tribune

**11/01/2007 Chicago, IL** | Family and friends gathered this morning at the home of the pregnant woman who was shot and killed as she returned home with her three children from trick-or-treating Wednesday evening. Meanwhile, police continued to search for the suspected gang members who opened fire in Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood, killing Leticia Barrera about a half-block away. A video camera in the area that police had hoped would lead to the killers did not "reveal anything definitive," police said.

Manuel Flores, Barrera's husband, returned to Chicago from a trip to Florida to console the couple's two sons and daughter who witnessed their mother being shot in the head shortly before 6 p.m. in front of their home in the 4800 block of South Seeley Avenue. "The kids are fine, but they miss their mother," said Ubaldina Buena-Flores, her niece.

The couple had been in Chicago for seven years after moving from Mexico, she said, adding that Flores works as a roofer and in a factory. A family friend today dropped off a small white teddy bear outside the family home as a memorial.

Barrera, 38, who Buena-Flores said was three months pregnant, had just returned to her home with her three children, ages 2, 5 and 7. She was standing out front when she was shot, police said. She was not the intended target, they said. The children were not hurt. Capt. Edward Griffin said police were looking for two males, believed to be in their teens, wearing dark hooded sweatshirts. A police source said the gunman was wearing a wolfman mask.

**Full Story:** [http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-hallowshoot\\_bothnov01.0.3398889.story?coll=chi\\_tab01\\_layout](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-hallowshoot_bothnov01.0.3398889.story?coll=chi_tab01_layout)

## Feds Target Violence Gangs, Arrest 1,300

Article published by CNN

**10/09/2007 Washington, DC** | Federal agents have arrested more than 1,300 suspected gang members, including 343 with violent criminal histories, in the past three months, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency said Tuesday. "Violent foreign-born gang members and their associates have more than worn out their welcome, and to them I have one message: good riddance," Julie L. Myers, assistant secretary of Homeland Security for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said in a news release. Of those arrested, 374 face criminal charges, officials said. The rest face deportation, they said.



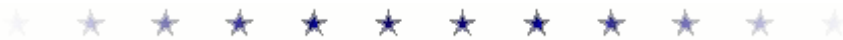
During the nationwide crackdown, immigration and customs agents worked with law enforcement counterparts in 23 cities in what officials described as a "summer surge." The most arrests were made in the New York area (205) and Miami, Florida (160), but gang members were arrested in cities as small as Boise, Idaho, and Fort Smith, Arkansas. Myers told a Washington news conference that some of "the worst of the worst" gang offenders had been taken off U.S. streets.

One of the gangs targeted has been MS-13, which is believed to be the fastest growing group in the United States as well as one of the most violent, the agency said. The FBI estimates MS-13 has about 10,000 members in the country, along with tens of thousands in Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador, where the gang originated in the late 1980s.

"MS-13 still seems to be the primary gang and the most violent gang still out there, and it is penetrating throughout the United States," said Marcy Forman, director of investigations for the agency. Don Hunter, sheriff of Collier County in southwest Florida, said MS-13 was present in what he called the "upscale" community. "We are not unique, we have transnational gangs, we have homegrown gangs," Hunter told the news conference. But he said cooperation among federal and local agencies had made it possible to put a dent in gang operations.

The sweep was part of the agency's Operation Community Shield anti-gang initiative, which started in 2005, and has resulted in arrests of more than 7,000 alleged members and their associates from more than 600 gangs, the agency said.

*Source: CNN*



## Immigration Charges Used to Crack Down on Gangs

Article published by USA Today

**10/08/2007 Washington, DC** | Federal agents are using immigration violations to arrest and deport scores of gang members in cities across the USA.

In a three-month summertime push that began June 1, federal agents working with local police agencies in 23 cities arrested 1,313 gang members, their associates and other illegal residents, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said.



Gang member arrests have increased 73% over 2006, from 2,294 people to 3,974, ICE statistics show. ICE has arrested 7,655 people from more than 700 gangs on immigration and criminal violations since the program began in 2005, ICE spokesman Michael Keegan said.

A week-long operation in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area last month netted 34 people from Mexico, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Somalia with ties to street gangs, Keegan said. Five people are charged with state crimes, nine face federal charges for re-entering the USA after previous deportations, and four are permanent U.S. residents who have previous criminal convictions, he added.

Sgt. Kelly O'Rourke of the Metro Gang Strike Force in the Twin Cities calls the immigration charges a "helpful tool," in controlling the growth of gangs, who deal in guns and drugs there.

*Full Story:* [http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-10-08-gangs\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-10-08-gangs_N.htm)

## More Than a Dozen Gang Members Indicted Under RICO Statutes

Article published by the Dallas Morning News

**10/09/2007 Dallas, TX** | Federal prosecutors in Dallas have filed a racketeering conspiracy case against 14 members of the Texas Syndicate prison gang, alleging that they are responsible for at least a dozen murders and more than a decade of drug trafficking and other criminal activity.

Ten of those indicted were already in custody on other charges, and four more were arrested in recent days before the indictment was unsealed. But the use of Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations, or RICO, statutes in this case breaks new ground locally, U.S. Attorney Richard Roper said Tuesday.

"What we're doing with this indictment is we're using the criminal statutes that were designed to take down the traditional Mafia, La Cosa Nostra, violent gangs in the northeast part of the United States," he said. "We're using this for the first time in North Texas to try to dismantle a violent prison gang."



Ten of the murders in the indictment occurred in the Dallas area, and two were in South Texas. One occurred in 2003 at the now-closed Club Suavemente, the notorious club on West Mockingbird Lane that was the scene of several parking lot killings in recent years.

Like the Mafia, the Syndicate is secretive, hierarchical and not above slaying one of its members if he is perceived to be out of line, prosecutors allege. Membership is for life, and Syndicate members who are released from prison are expected to do the bidding of those on the inside. Syndicate members often partner with relatives in common street gangs in narcotics activity or violence, authorities said. Although the Syndicate doesn't engage in random violence, it is still a danger to the city, said Lt. Santos Cadena, head of the Dallas police gang unit.

"Any time you talk about the drug trade, you're going to have violence and firearms involved," Lt. Cadena said. "That's where you are going to see a threat to the city. Who's to say where they are going to conduct a drug deal? It could be an apartment, in a parking lot, you never know when things will go wrong and people other than the targets could get hurt."

Leadership of the group, Texas' largest prison gang, includes paramilitary titles such as lieutenant and sergeant, who are led by chairmen, known as *sillons*. Regular members are called soldiers. New members are *prospectos*.

**Full Story:** <http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/latestnews/stories/101007dnmetgangs.2a6b6e2.html>



## RICO Law has Helped Some Cities Curb Gangs

Article published by the Wichita Eagle

**10/07/2007 Tulsa, OK** | The Hoover Crips were at the center of street violence in Tulsa in 2005. In March of that year, witness problems forced the dismissal of murder charges against a 21-year-old Hoover Crips member who was about to stand trial for the slaying of a rival gang member. The suspect went home that night after spending more than a year in jail.

Tulsa police Officer Leland Ashley said the Hoover Crips were probably the city's most feared street gang. "I don't know if they were the biggest, but they were one of the more violent ones, they were real violent."

On June 22, 2005, the tide turned on the Hoover Crips when federal prosecutors unsealed a 75-page indictment that targeted 14 gang leaders and their drug suppliers. The indictment was similar to one unsealed in Wichita last month, when 28 defendants were charged with operating a "racketeering enterprise" that relied on gang members who murdered, robbed and intimidated those who stood in their way.

If the court cases in Wichita play out like similar cases filed in Tulsa and more than a dozen other cities, prosecutors will likely have a high conviction rate after the cases have made their way through the federal court system. Officer Ashley said the federal charges did have an impact on violent street crime in Tulsa. "It didn't eliminate the gang, but it put a big dent in them," he said.

**Full Story:** <http://www.kansas.com/news/local/story/194352.html>

## Authorities Use Drug Charges to Take Gangs off Santa Cruz Streets

Article published by the Santa Cruz Sentinel

**10/11/2007 Santa Cruz, CA** | In February, a longtime gang member went to police with a proposition. He promised to lead officers into the center of a Latino street gang based in Watsonville that has been peddling methamphetamine to users in three counties. In exchange, the unnamed man asked for help getting out. "His girlfriend had recently had a baby, and he wanted a fresh start," said prosecutor Celia Rowland, who heads the gang prosecution unit at the District Attorney's Office.

During the six-month "Operation Red Bull" investigation, the man went undercover to buy methamphetamine from the gang and help build cases against 14 people authorities say sold drugs and guns and stole cars across Santa Cruz, San Benito and Monterey counties. "We're trying to make as much of a difference as possible, so we're trying to be innovative," Watsonville Deputy Police Chief Kim Austin said.

A grand jury indicted the alleged gang members at the end of August and five dozen officers raided their homes to arrest most of them in early September. Because the group — 12 men and two women — are accused of selling methamphetamine to benefit the gang, most are facing prison sentences if convicted, Rowland said. Someone's first or second narcotics arrest without gang allegations could result in probation, not jail or prison time, according to authorities. "Because of the interrelationship between methamphetamine sales and violence in the gang community, this office is going to prosecute them more aggressively," Rowland said.

Busting a gang for dealing drugs is a new and effective angle to combat gang activity because such convictions take gang members off the street longer, authorities said. It's also a way to try to curb methamphetamine sales in the county. "You look at that whole Operation Red Bull case and that pretty much spells out drug dealing and gangs. That's a classic example," said Sgt. Steve Carney, who oversees the Sheriff's Office Narcotic Enforcement Team. "A large amount of gang activity — besides the fact they don't get along — revolves around drug activity and drug turf because they're looking for a way to make money. When you have shootings and other things, it's drugs that are fueling those issues"

The gang member who turned in his former crew did so, in part, because he felt betrayed by the gang he'd been a member of since he was 11 years old, Rowland said. "He'd basically been really disappointed," she said. "He had this belief that the gang was like a brotherhood, a family" She didn't say what role the drug sales played in the man's decision to come forward, but added that he was not facing charges, or on probation or parole at the time. The only forms of compensation he received for the help was state relocation funding to move out of the area — Rowland declined to say where — and some payment for the undercover sales he made.



During the past several years, county law enforcement officers reported an increase in contacts, investigations, crimes and arrests related to methamphetamine use, according to the Santa Cruz County Methamphetamine Snapshot Study released last month. The study analyzed the impact of methamphetamine use on the county during the "snapshot" month of February. During that month, 75 people were contacted for methamphetamine-related events ranging from arrests to requests for drug treatment. More than half of the people were white and three-quarters were men.

Also in that time period, the District Attorney's Office filed 44 felony drug cases, 16 percent of which involved a person accused of selling methamphetamine or possessing meth for sale. "Methamphetamine, as I understand it, is the drug that is creating the most serious problems in this county," Rowland said.

Law enforcement officials report that most of the methamphetamine used by county residents can be traced back to drug cartels that make the highly addictive substance in Mexico and ship it across the border. "Not every drug transaction that occurs has something to do with a gang, but if you follow it up the ladder, oftentimes you'll find some sort of gang component," Carney said, explaining drug cartels usually distribute the methamphetamine to local gangs. In turn, the gangs farm out the drugs to street-level dealers who sell in certain areas and pay a "tax" for that privilege. The guy who sells a half-gram of meth in his living room may not be a gang member, but his supplier might be paying a gang to get the drugs.

*Source: Santa Cruz Sentinel*



## Inmates' Colors Identify and Protect

Article published by the Modesto Bee

**10/15/2007 Merced, CA** | When legendary R&B singer Sam Cooke released his song "Chain Gang" in 1960, the sight of inmates wearing black-and-white striped uniforms, swinging scythes and pick-axes in the blazing Southern sun, was as familiar as Burma Shave signs along American highways. Today, however, a visit to the laundry room of the Merced County Jail reveals a different mix of colors. Blue, grey, dark green and Dayglo green are the new black; yellow and red, the new white.

The Merced County Sheriff's Department is among several law enforcement agencies that have adopted an intricate, color-coded system of clothing to classify inmates, based on gang membership, offenses committed, gender and jail job. It's a system law enforcement officials say allows correctional officers to quickly identify problem inmates and keep them housed in areas where they pose less risk to the larger jailhouse population. To critics, however, the system amounts to an institutionalized form of segregation that only legitimizes the old group-think mentality that allows gangs to thrive.



Sheriff's officials acknowledge that rising numbers of two rival street gangs, the Norteños and the Sureños, have prompted the department to assign specific uniform colors to members of those gangs. For example, at the county's main jail, Norteño gang members wear green-and-white striped jumpsuits. Sureños are generally assigned orange and white stripes.

Men at the main jail who decide to drop their gang membership are assigned color-coded clothing, too -- orange jumpsuits with the large letters "VP." They stand for "victim potential," a grim shorthand reminder that those who drop out of gangs probably will be targeted by active gang members.

In Merced County, correctional officers house members of the rival gangs in separate areas. "You can't mix them. They don't like each other," said Cmdr. Joe Scott, who oversees the John Latorraca Correctional Facility, which houses 571 inmates. The main jail houses about 190 inmates.

In the volatile world of jailhouse politics, where violent conflicts among inmates can erupt at any moment, with or without provocation, Dwain Middleton, the county's lead classification officer, says the system of classifying and isolating inmates is one way of keeping the lid on. It also makes a safer working environment for correctional officers given the unenviable job of keeping the warring gangs apart.

**Full Story:** <http://www.modbee.com/local/story/93519.html>



## Expert: Gang Culture in Every School in County

Article published by the Greenville News

**10/10/2007 Greenville County, SC** | Some school officials in Greenville County have been living in a state of denial while the "gang culture" has been taking root "in every school" in the district, an expert told the school board Tuesday night. "Some principals say they have no gangs," T.C. Taylor told trustees. "It's not that anymore. They're in every school."



Taylor, a former Greenville County sheriff's deputy who worked as a specialist on gangs in county schools until recently, showed photos of Greenville students flashing gang hand signs, and cryptic threats spray-painted on walls around the county.

The district has just begun using a "notice of gang-related activity" form as a way of warning parents that their kids, if not already members of a gang, may be caught up in the gang culture. The form, printed on Sheriff's Office letterhead, includes a checklist of signs of gang-related activities, such as wearing gang colors, clothing or jewelry, drawing gang symbols on notebooks and "staring down" school staff or students, a practice known as "mad dogging" or "mean mugging."

**Full Story:** <http://greenvilleonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071010/NEWS01/310100001/1012>

## New Law in New Jersey Requires School Officials to Attend Gang Seminars

Article published by the Press of Atlantic City

**10/17/2007 Trenton, NJ** | Public school administrators will soon be required to attend mandatory seminars geared toward protecting students from the dangers of gangs, under a new state law that was co-sponsored by local lawmakers. The new law, which was co-sponsored by state Sen. Leonard T. Connors Jr. and Assemblymen Christopher J. Connors and Brian E. Rumpf, all R-Burlington, Ocean, Atlantic, requires the state attorney general and commissioner of education to develop seminars for instructing school administrators to spot signs of student involvement in gang activities.

Sen. Connors said in a press release that curbing gang activity in schools requires every tool available to the state, including the assistance of school administrators. "Not everyone is familiar with what the signs of gang activity are and how to spot it, especially within a student population," Sen. Connors said in the release. "Seminars will be an effective forum in which to help school administrators recognize when gang activity is present so that the proper action can be taken by either law enforcement or other appropriate agencies."



When the law takes effect, it will require seminars be held in each county and be open to all public and nonpublic school administrators. Attendance would be mandatory for all public school administrators.

Assemblyman Connors said in the release that gang activity has become a more prevalent criminal element in New Jersey, requiring that greater efforts be taken to protect residents from its dangers.

According to Rumpf, bringing the Attorney General's Office, the Department of Education and school administrators together would prove to be a productive effort in helping root out gang activity on school grounds.

*Source: Press of Atlantic City*



## Gangs Stalking Out New Turf with Web Videos

Article published by the Boston Globe

**10/31/2007 Boston, MA** | They call themselves names like "King Shizz" and "Gun Smoke Poke," and rap on the Internet about blasting their guns, dying young, and killing their rivals. As a loud bass thumps and an unseen keyboard plays an ominous melody, a half-dozen young men on Castlegate Road in Dorchester jostle for the camera's attention. "We've got guns that'll [expletive] blow your shoulders back," they rap.

The three-minute video is one of two posted on the Internet featuring teenagers who say they belong to Castlegate and Morse Street, two notorious Boston gangs whose members often turn up in police reports about shootings around the city. Now, the gangs appear to be staking out new turf with their work, which is appearing on the popular video-sharing website YouTube, alongside videos of celebrities, sports highlights, and amateur pranks.

One of the men in the video, a 19-year-old Morse Street resident who identified himself only as Millz, said the rappers are merely trying to launch a musical career online and grab the attention of hip-hop producers. "We're just rapping," he said in an interview on Castlegate Road, a street off Blue Hill Avenue that is no more than two football fields long and is lined with attached low-rise brick buildings. "That's all it is."



But among their rap's most rapt listeners are Boston police officers, who say the videos may help them identify gang members. If any of the men in the video should appear at an arraignment on a weapons charge, police said, they could use the video as evidence of affiliation with a gang. "I think it's fantastic," said Police Superintendent Daniel Linskey. "If we can play a video for a judge that shows they're involved with criminal activity, that helps us, and bodes well when we go for dangerousness hearings. We like to use these videos to use their own words against them." The participants in the videos, all young men who appear to be in their teens, rap about their allegiance to Castlegate and their hatred of rival gangs.

**Full Story:** [http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2007/10/31/gangs\\_staking\\_out\\_new\\_turf\\_with\\_web\\_videos/?page=1](http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2007/10/31/gangs_staking_out_new_turf_with_web_videos/?page=1)

## *From the Editors*



Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter.  
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