

Gangs

Signs your teen may be involved

When things get out of hand

Gangs are often linked to criminal activity, so it can be useful to recognise certain types of behaviour and signs that your teenager may be involved in gang-related crime.

Change of behaviour

Recently your teenager has been avoiding you, stays out late and spends time with a new group of friends you don't know.



Gang identity

A group may be classed as a gang if it has a name, a defined territory and uses symbols shown in tattoos or graffiti.

Visual signs

Your teenager is dressing differently, wearing expensive goods, has unexplained physical injuries or speaks with friends in 'code'.



Police

The police may identify your teenager as a gang member if he/she is arrested in the company of identified gang members.

What parents can do...

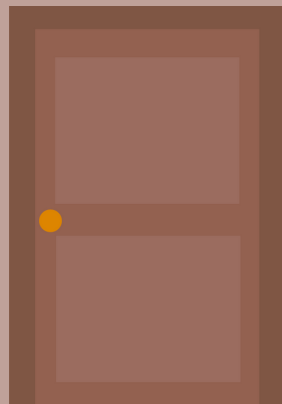
If you think your teenager has become involved or to prevent them becoming involved

As a parent you can help protect your teenager by understanding the issues, recognising the signs and getting further help and support if you need it.



Be there for them

Be present in their day-to-day life as much as possible so they are not vulnerable.



Listen

Listen to your teen and have open communication on a day-to-day level. Find out about what they do, who they are with etc.

What's your plan for today?

A conversation

Talk to your teenager without judgement. Help them see the bigger picture in life, getting a positive education and the life choices they make.

Seek help

Seek advice and get further support below.

Local services

Using local services such as youth services, finding them work or volunteering so they don't have time to be a part of a gang. Extra-curricular activities like a gym, boxing, cooking, whatever they are interested in.



Weapons

If you suspect a weapon at home, it's vital to check.

Find out more

To find out more about gangs visit:

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/teenagers/behaviour/gangs/>

Family Lives is always here to support you through difficult times. For support call our confidential helpline on 0808 800 2222, email us at askus@familylives.org.uk or chat to us online.