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The National Gang Center (NGC) is jointly funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Bureau of Justice Assistance. NGC conducts research on street gangs and serves as a clearinghouse for individuals and agencies seeking information, technical assistance, and training in the areas of gang prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry.

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Civil Gang Injunctions

In 1997, the California Supreme Court upheld the use of a civil gang injunction (CGI) to restrain the criminal and nuisance activities of a turf-based street gang. Today, more than 150 CGIs exist in California, dozens in Texas, and a small but growing number across the rest of the United States including Florida, Illinois, Minnesota, Tennessee, and Utah. Why the growth in CGIs? Because they work, as documented by academic studies and crime statistics.

A CGI is a preliminary or permanent court order, an injunction, issued in a civil case against a criminal street gang and its members to enjoin (prohibit) certain behavior within a defined Safety Zone—which may include associating together in public, and violating trespass and curfew laws. The goal is to abate a public nuisance caused by the conduct and activities of a gang. A public nuisance is an unreasonable interference with the comfortable enjoyment of life and property that affects an entire community. CGIs are most effective against a multigenerational turf-based criminal street gang with deep roots that openly commits criminal and nuisance activity in its own turf.

CGIs are obtained in civil court, supported by written declarations or affidavits. It can take up to one year for a dedicated attorney to work with the local gang officers, collect the evidence, and format it for presentation to the court. The evidence might be percipient declarations from 70–80 officers concerning 150–200 public nuisance incidents, totaling 300 or more pages,

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The Gang Member Migration Proposition—Part 2



Previously, the issue of how widespread gang member migration is across the country was examined (see [Summer 2012 newsletter](#)). There, it was noted that, based on law enforcement reports outside metropolitan areas, gang member migration is not as prevalent nationwide as it is often characterized in media reports. Additionally, in these jurisdictions, local gang members far outnumber gang member migrants, underscoring the notion that most gang problems are local gang problems.

An issue intricately related to the foregoing is the motivating factors behind gang member migration. In general, these can be grouped into two categories:

1. Illegitimate reasons, including drug distribution and other illegal activities, recruiting members, and avoiding or exploiting law enforcement.
2. Legitimate “social” reasons, including concerns and efforts to improve quality of life, such as moves with family for employment and/or educational opportunities.

In a recent National Gang Center survey, law enforcement respondents provided information regarding the influence of the above factors on gang member migration in their jurisdictions. The results were clear-cut and decisive: social reasons were more often cited by respondents for influencing gang member migration than all other factors—nearly nine out of ten respondents attributed at least some influence to social factors. Further, nearly half (47 percent) of the agencies rated social reasons at the highest possible value. In fact, this number exceeded the percentage of all illegitimate reasons combined, such that social reasons were not only cited most often, they were rated higher than all other factors put together. Criminal activities, especially those related to drug distribution and trafficking, were clearly noted by law enforcement agencies as influencing gang member migration, but to a significantly lower degree. These findings were consistently observed across jurisdictions of various types, population sizes, and regions.

This examination has used a large, nationally representative sample of law enforcement agencies to measure the extensiveness of gang member migration and factors influencing its occurrence. Outside metropolitan areas, gang member migration is infrequently reported, and when observed, it is most closely associated with social factors. So while gang migration to new areas for drug-related reasons is a common narrative cited and recited to the public, research-based evidence supports a far more nuanced relationship—one that is indicative of the influence conventional social processes have on matters related to the diffusion of gang culture and the movement of gang members nationally. ■

Gang Injunctions cont.

Continued from front page

along with one or more gang experts submitting lengthy declarations discussing the target gang and relevant gang culture. An expert declaration, including several dozen photographs documenting the graffiti and tattoos, can easily run over 150 pages.

When a CGI is issued, gang members with a history of committing felonies involving guns, narcotics, and intimidation abruptly quit associating in public with other gang members. Moreover, they obey the other provisions of the CGI, violation of which is a misdemeanor. Once a judge signs a CGI, the neighborhood changes immediately.

CGIs are an evolving field. Forms from even two or three years ago are now out of date. For law enforcement professionals with access to LEO (<http://www.LEO.gov>), up-to-date information is available in the Gang Injunction Network Special Interest Group. Additionally, the National District Attorneys Association provides a publication that includes a good overview of the process to obtain and enforce a civil gang injunction: (http://www.ndaa.org/pdf/Civil_Gang_Injunctions_09.pdf).

The results of a CGI project are reduced criminal and nuisance gang activity, as well as a better quality of life for the people who live and work in the neighborhood.

¹People of the State of California v. Acuna, 14 Cal. 4th 1090, cert. denied, 521 U.S. 1121 (1997).

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National Evaluation of G.R.E.A.T.



The Gang Resistance Education And Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program is an evidence-based gang- and delinquency-prevention program delivered by law enforcement officers, primarily in middle schools, throughout the nation. Originally developed more than 20 years ago, the G.R.E.A.T. curriculum was substantively revised in the early 2000s to improve upon small yet favorable results from the initial large-scale evaluation of the program. The subsequent evaluation of the revised curriculum began in 2006 and is currently in the final stages of completion. In June 2012, the research evaluation team released a summary of preliminary findings covering the four years after students participated in G.R.E.A.T. Some of the more notable results were that G.R.E.A.T. students exhibited more positive attitudes to police, less positive attitudes about gangs, and lower rates of gang membership than the comparison group.



To view the report, click on the link below:

<http://s.iir.com/GREATeval> ■

Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs

Outlaw Motorcycle Gang members are highly structured organizations that use their clubs for criminal enterprises. According to The United States Department of Justice (DOJ), there are more than 300 active Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs within the United States. For more information about outlaw motorcycle gangs,

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Gang Offending and Online Behavior



James C. Howell taught us in his article “Menacing or Mimicking” (2007) that there is a lot of misinformation about gangs. Some of the misinformation is fueled by media reports or law enforcement groups that generalize from one incident to all gangs or gang members. A good example is the story from the 1980s about flashing one’s lights at a car driving without its lights on, thought to be part of a gang initiation leading to the shooting of the occupants of the car that flashed its lights. It turned out that there were few, if any, recorded incidents of such behavior. The online behavior of gangs and gang members is another issue about which there is more talk than facts.

Scott H. Decker and David Pyrooz examined the extent and nature of online communication, particularly social media, among gang members. They found heavy use of the Internet by gang members, use that is similar to that of other members of their age group. They also found that some

gang members use the Internet to engage in crimes facilitated by such forms of communication.

While these differences are small, they are important. As many of the functions of everyday life have migrated to the Web, it should not be surprising that gang members would find a way to use the Web to support their criminal and noncriminal activities. But online behavior is highly dynamic, and today’s use of the Internet may be outmoded in a matter of months. Indeed, the evolution and uses of Twitter have shown dramatic growth and diversity since its introduction in July 2006.

More details and insight on “Gang Offending and Online Behavior” can be found in the article link below:

<http://s.iir.com/GangBehavior>

Howell, James C. 2007. “Menacing or Mimicking? Realities of Youth Gangs.” *Juvenile and Family Court Journal* 58: 39–50. ■

NGC Products and Services

Surveys and Analysis

Training and Technical Assistance

Comprehensive Gang Model

Law Enforcement Anti-Gang Training

Gang News

GANGINFO Mailing List

Legislation

This collaboration recognizes that street gang activities transcend age and other structural and jurisdictional boundaries. Thus, strategies ranging from prevention through intervention, suppression, and reentry are needed to combat them.

Motorcycle Gangs cont.

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visit the DOJ's Web site at <http://s.iir.com/DOJ>. The International Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Investigator's Association (IOMGIA) will hold its 2013 Conference in St. Paul, Minnesota, on September 8–13, 2013. For more information about the conference, visit the IOMGIA Web site at <http://s.iir.com/IOMGIA>.

Interested in Anti-Gang Training?

Check out the links below for dates and locations:

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