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## GANGS IN CANADA

The most prevalent gangs in Canada include street gangs and prison gangs.

- Street Gangs

Many types of gangs make up the general structure of an organized group. There are street gangs, which are people with similar backgrounds and motivations. The term "street gang" is commonly used interchangeably with "youth gang", referring to neighbourhood or street-based youth groups that meet "gang" criteria. A street gang is defined as "a self-formed association of peers, united by mutual interests, with identifiable leadership and internal organization, who act collectively or as individuals to achieve specific purposes, including the conduct of illegal activity and control of a particular territory, facility, or enterprise."

Understanding the structure of gangs is a critical skill to defining the types of strategies that are most effective with dealing with them, from the at-risk youth to the gang leaders. Not all individuals who display the outward signs of gang membership are actually involved in criminal activities. An individual's age, physical structure, ability to fight, willingness to use violence, and arrest record are often principal factors in determining where an individual stands in the gang hierarchy; now money derived from criminal

activity and ability to provide for the gang also impacts the individual's status within the gang. The structure of gangs varies depending primarily on size which can range in size from five or ten to several thousand. Many of the larger gangs break up into smaller groups, cliques or subsets. The cliques typically bring more territory to a gang as they expand and recruit new members. Most gangs operate informally with leadership falling to whoever takes control; others have distinct leadership and are highly structured, much like a business or corporation.

- Prison Gangs

are groups in a prison or correctional institution for mutual protection and advancement. Prison gangs often have several "affiliates" or "chapters" in different state prison systems that branch out due to the movement or transfer of their members. A study *Neither War nor Peace: International Comparisons of Children and Youth in Organized Armed Violence* studied ten cities worldwide and found that in eight of them, "street gangs had strong links to prison gangs". According to a criminal justice professor, many of the biggest gangs from Chicago originated from prisons. Although the majority of gang leaders from Chicago are now incarcerated, most of those leaders continue to manage their gangs from within prison. Criminal gangs may function both inside and outside of prison. In the USA, prison gang Aryan Brotherhood is in organized crime outside prison.

Push/ pull factors contributing to gang involvement Individual

Family Factors

- . early drug abuse

- . antisocial/ hostile aggressive

- behaviour . social deprivation or

- isolation . family history of gang

- involvement . parental neglect

- . low academic achievement/ school dropout or

- truancy . unemployed / few employment prospects

Economic/Societal Community Factors . social

- upheaval . poverty, income inequality . racism/

- xenophobia . proliferation of gang culture

Pop culture and media significantly impacts public perception of youth gangs and gun violence:

- . glorifies gang lifestyle
- . contributes to the adoption of linguistic codes and dress styles associated with American gangs
- . heightens public perceptions of gang activity in their communities
- . focus on violent actions of gang-members

Various responses to gangs The most effective strategies use multiple programs in combination of prevention, intervention and suppression approaches. Anti-gang measures require ongoing effort, knowledge and innovation.

#### Prevention

- focuses on preventing gangs from forming and individuals from joining gangs in the first place
- early identification of youth-at-risk is critical

#### Intervention

- diverts individuals involved in gangs through the use of programs that provide alternatives includes employment training and programming providing recreational activities

#### Suppression

- suppress current gang problems through law enforcement and legislative action
- focuses on punishment and removal of gang members from a community
- includes creation of specialized gang units, prosecution efforts, legislation targeting gang activities, and the development and implementation of information systems to track gang members; communities can play an important role in the reduction of youth gang activity
- comprehensive community efforts have demonstrated measured success in addressing both emerging and chronic gang problems

#### Список використаних джерел

1. <http://www.insideprison.com/prison-gangs-canada.asp>
2. [http://publicsafety.wikia.com/wiki/Gangs\\_in\\_Canada](http://publicsafety.wikia.com/wiki/Gangs_in_Canada)