

## Is it illegal to be part of a gang?

Being in a gang isn't against the law. But being involved with illegal activities (that some gangs do) could be an offence.

Those involved could go to prison or end up with a criminal record if they are involved with:

- Gun and knife crime
- Violence or harassment
- Turf wars or postcode wars
- Carrying, using or selling drugs
- Theft or other illegal activities
- Assault

If a young person has a criminal record they might not be:

- accepted into a university, college or higher education
- able to get a job, internship or do work experience
- allowed to travel to some countries, like the USA.



It's important that your child thinks about their future and how being in a gang can affect their life.

If you want to report a crime or talk about something illegal that has happened, you can call Crimestoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111**.

If your child is feeling pressured to be in a gang:

- 1) Remind them that **no one** has the right to pressure them.
- 2) Encourage them to spend more time with friends who aren't involved in the gang, or places where they know they won't be.
- 3) Allow and encourage them to talk to a trusted adult or call Childline **0800 1111**



## NSPCC

## Gang Awareness



*Article 17: every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources*

## Gang Awareness

- Being in a gang can make your child feel part of something or that they belong.
- But some gangs take part in criminal activity and might try to get young people involved with them. Being part of a gang like this can be dangerous. Sometimes they can be forced to commit a crime or do things that are unsafe.
- If a gang carries knives or other weapons, they might get them out to show off or intimidate people. This can be very scary for other people, especially if they think the gang will use them.



## What is a gang?

A gang can be a group of mates who hang around together.

However, some gangs are involved in crime. Sometimes gangs are violent and might fight other gangs or carry weapons.



## Why do people join gangs?

Young people join gangs for lots of different reasons.

Some of these include:

- Fitting in with friends and other gang members
- Having the same interests as other people, like sports or music
- Feeling respected and important
- To be protected from bullying or from other gangs
- Making money from crime or drugs
- Gaining status and feeling powerful.

