



AGENDA

A COMMUNITY LEADERS' **FORUM**

ON GANG VIOLENCE IN REGINA
SOLUTIONS
to Save our Youth

SATURDAY DECEMBER 2, 2006

9 a.m TO 4 p.m.

REGGIE NEWKIRK - FACILITATOR

- 7:30 a.m. Registration Opens
- 8:00 Pipe Ceremony
- 9:00 Opening Prayer
- 9:05 Welcoming Remarks
- 9:30 Opening Address – Kevin Daniels
- 10:00 Video Launch – *R U Down or R U Out*
Panel Question and Answers
- 11:00 Facilitated Workshop Process Begins
- 12:00^{noon} Lunch Break
- 12:30 p.m. Workshop Resumes – small group discussion
- 2:45 Plenary Session - reports from small groups and discussion.
- 4:00 Closing of Forum

The sessions will take place in the Reid Auditorium, the Gymnasium of Scott Collegiate and the second floor of the Albert Scott Recreation Centre.

- Groups A,B,C, D will be in the gym
- E,F & G are in the auditorium
- H & I are in the craft room of the rec centre
- J is in the board room of the rec centre
- K, L & M will be in the multi-purpose room of the rec centre

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OUR THANKS to the Anti-Gang Education Committee,
North Central Community Association Committee

Facilitator: Reggie Newkirk

Guests: Peter Braun, Regina Youth Justice Forum
Norma Jean Byrd
Mayor Pat Fiacco
Harold Lavallee
Warren McCall, Minister of Corrections and Public Safety
3rd Vice Chief Glen Pratt, FSIN Justice Portfolio
Rodger Ross

Catering: Chili for Children

Sponsors:



Joe Daniels
Manager Aboriginal Sport Development
Sask Sport

FIRST NATIONS DRUM

News from Canada's First Nations Communities

to read the full article, visit www.firstnationsdrum.com/Fall2003/CrimeGangs.htm

Aboriginal Gangs in Prairie Provinces in "Crisis Proportions"

By Lloyd Dolha

Prairie-based aboriginal gangs have reached crisis proportions in major urban centers, supporting larger and more sophisticated gangs - such as the Hells Angels and Asian gangs - and are spreading out into smaller cities and rural areas, moving on and off impoverished reserves recruiting new members.

In the annual report by the Criminal Intelligence Canada (CISC), Aboriginal-Based Organized Crime or ABOC has become one of the national agency's intelligence priorities.

Released on August 22nd (2003), the report states that aboriginal gangs are present in several urban centers across Canada, particularly in Winnipeg, Regina and Edmonton.

These gangs are generally involved in street-level trafficking of marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine and crystal meth.

They are also involved in prostitution, break and enters, robberies, assaults, intimidation, tobacco fraud, home invasions, vehicle thefts, weapons offences illegal gaming and debt collection and enforcement as trench troops for other organized crime groups like the Hells Angels.

Nationally, the primary gangs are the Indian Posse, Redd Alert, Warriors & Native Syndicate, with a number of smaller gangs that frequently form and reform.

Many of these gangs have ready access to firearms that has resulted in a number of incidents of violence.



Gang activity on the rise

In April, an Edmonton-based task force ... warned that gang activity will increase along with the growing aboriginal population if the social and economic problems faced by urban native youth are not addressed.

One day before the release of the CISC report on aboriginal gangs ... the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN), released its own report on aboriginal youth gang violence entitled *Alter-Natives to Non-Violence Report: Aboriginal Youth Gangs Exploration*, the result of a two-year examination of the conditions underlying the growing gang phenomena within Saskatchewan's major urban centers and the communities that are most impacted.

According the FSIN report, aboriginal youth in the prairie provinces join gangs for money, power and excitement. They are characterized by feelings of disenfranchisement from the community and family with no attachment to school.

Youth gangs can be identified by the use of colours, various hand signals, caps/hats worn a certain way, pant-leg rolled up, one glove, an untied shoelace or a bandana worn a certain way.

Aboriginal youth are initiated into gangs by the following methods:

- committing certain crimes at the behest of the leader
- 'beating in', in some cases an intense beating can last up to three minutes
- prostitution; 'sexing in' or 'banged in', where young females have sex with several members of the gang
- a family connection, children who are raised in families in gangs
- muscling others or intimidation.

Natives prime recruits

According to the FSIN report, of the 98,000 youth in Saskatchewan between the ages of 12 - 17 years, approximately 15,000 are aboriginal youth. Based on known risk factors such as poverty, lack of opportunity for employment, institutional racism and discrimination and a sense of hopelessness and despair, many of these 15,000 aboriginal youth are at-risk of being recruited.

The development of gang culture can be understood through the history of aboriginal people in Canada. A widely known aspect of the destruction of aboriginal culture in the residential school system experience and its subsequent intergenerational effects.

As it is widely known, many of the aboriginal children of the 1950s and 1960s suffered extreme physical and sexual abuse. The racism and assimilation efforts of the residential school era has left residual effects on aboriginal youth that provided the underlying social unrest of aboriginal youth leading to gang involvement.

Aboriginal youth gang can be characterized as a 'spontaneous youth social movement.'

"For an undereducated aboriginal youth disenfranchised from society, there are few options for survival. Sheer survival is a strong motivational factor that leads many youth to gangs," states the report.



Jail more likely than diploma

In the executive summary, the report notes, "In 1992, the Lynn Report stated that, It was said that an aboriginal youth had a better chance of going to jail than graduating from Grade 12 - this is still true today."

The report goes on to quote a January 2003 submission to the Commission on First Nations and Metis Peoples Justice Reform that notes Saskatchewan has the highest crime rate in the country. Aboriginal people account for only ten per cent of the population of Regina and Prince Albert combined but accounted for 47 per cent of the victims of crime.

Between 1994 and 2000, aboriginal people accounted for 55 per cent of Saskatchewan's homicide victims as well as 60 per cent of those accused of committing homicides.

Aboriginal youth accounted for about six in ten youth accused ages 12 to 17 years in the three cities of Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert in 1997.

According to the FSIN, aboriginal youth comprise at least 75 to 90 per cent of youth in open and closed custody facilities. Of the 3,000 youth that are in the criminal justice system on any given day, about 1,800 are aboriginal.

The FSIN report hopes to make a compelling case to the federal and provincial government agencies to substantiate the need for enhanced and new resources that can be directed at First Nations to address the gang issue.

Prison mentality on the Rez

A former resident who did not wish to be identified described the gang phenomena as the result of aboriginal inmates who return from jail and bring a 'prison mentality' back onto reserves that makes them 'open air prisons.'

To address the exploding gang phenomena, a number of initiatives have been launched. In November 2001, Corrections Services Canada (CSC), launched an Aboriginal Gang Initiative (AGI), in Winnipeg. The initiative was the result of former AFN national chief Ovide Mercredi, who examined the issue of aboriginal gangs and recommended 23 strategy options to CSC.

The major thrust of the May 2000 Mercredi Report, was the involvement of the aboriginal community, especially elders, to find solutions for the rise of aboriginal gangs.

The AGI team consists of five aboriginal facilitators guided by aboriginal elders. The team works with those involved in or affected by gangs.

Because it's our elders that can help gang members see how their beliefs and values determine the choices they make, which leads them into conflict with law. (We) help them commit to a spiritual path in life (the 'Red Road'), and support them in their spiritual journey.

Female gangs of concern

A key area of concern for the future is aboriginal women involved in gangs. The issue will be given greater attention once the AGI is established as an on-going initiative.

Recently renamed Bimosewin, Ojibway for 'walk your path in life in a good way', the AGI has to date: obtained a written commitment from over 125 gang and ex-gang members to work with Bimosewin; over 12 aboriginal individuals have been 'helped out or kept out' of gangs; secured employment for more than 15 aboriginal gang members; a safe house has been supported and is now available to ex-gang members; and, a core group of ex-gang members is emerging that Bimosewin can mentor and work with.

CSC is currently evaluating the efficacy of Bimosewin and, with the approval of the executive committee, may be extending Bimosewin's mandate to other to other provinces in the Prairies over the next five years.

“Many aboriginal gang members respect their elders and their traditional culture. “This is a window of opportunity for us to help them find a new identity rooted in their own culture. We believe this leads to aboriginal gang members making more positive lifestyle choices.”

Darrel Phillips, Project Manager for the AGI

Support programs

In Saskatchewan, Bimosewin has extended an offer to the FSIN to participate in their gang initiative committee. The FSIN has established a Youth Gang Awareness Cultural Camp for aboriginal youth 11-18 years in collaboration with the White Buffalo Youth Centre located in Saskatoon.

The camp provides healthy alternatives for aboriginal youth and opportunities to interact with role models and elders, working towards dispelling the glamourization often associated with gang membership.

The FSIN is developing a three to five year strategic plan to address the complex issues underlying the development of gang culture and a provincial policy that focuses on the root social problems experienced by aboriginal youth who join gangs.



What are gangs?

A gang is a loosely organized group of three or more people who interact together to the exclusion of others. The group has a name, usually a leader or leaders, and may have developed identifying signs - colors, clothing, tattoos, jewelry, or hand signals. The gang often claims a territory or an area and will fight rival gangs for control of the territory. Many gangs use distinctive graffiti or "tags" to mark their territory. Usually, gangs are participating in

some kind of illegal activity, whether it be violent crime or drug dealing or both.

Gangs in the U.S. fall under one of two categories, the People and the Folks. The Bloods are part of the People sect, and the Crips are part of the Folks. Some other common gangs are the Latin Kings, Black Gangster Disciples, and the Mexican Mafia. Although gangs are usually based in race, there can be Hispanic or Caucasian gang members in a "black" gang, or vice versa. There is no rhyme or reason to rival gangs. Often, rival gang members are from the same neighborhood and have known each other for years. The gang takes prevalence over race, background, neighborhood, and even family.

The primary age group of gang members is 14 to 20. The average is generally around 18. However, kids as young as nine are eligible for recruiting. Kids who are born into a family with a gang background, which is becoming more and more common, they are basically recruited when they are born. Gang initiation usually involves a violent beating or a "jump." The member is told that there is no way out of a gang once they have been initiated. If they try to get out, they are dead.

Why do kids join them?

Kids join gangs to fill their basic needs which usually are not being met at home and at school. These are respect, support, family, recognition, respect, protection, identity, belonging, money, and control.

Many gang members come from poor and/or broken homes, and they get the support and structure they need from gang life. Kids from the dangerous environment of inner cities often feel that they need to belong to a gang as a form of protection. Gang kids usually have a low self-esteem and sense of self-worth. Membership in a gang makes them feel important and recognized within their peer group. Poor kids are often enticed by the money and material items that they see gang members acquiring usually through illegal means. Many kids join because they are afraid of physical harm they might receive if they resist the gang recruiters.

It is important to remember that their gang is their family for most gang members, and this kind of bond is a hard one to break. Parents and schools need to try harder to make sure that the basic needs of these at-risk kids are met, so they won't feel the need to join a gang. Some schools and communities have joined the fight the spread of gangs in our nation by instituting programs which help build kids self-esteem, give them a healthy support system and outlet for aggression, and show them a better way of life.

www.stedwards.edu/educ/eanes/whatare.html#why

MYTHS ABOUT GANG LIFE

Gang members are loyal to the end

In movies, gang members are portrayed as 'brothers' who stick together no matter what. But in the real world, this is not always the case. In Calgary, established gang members often "sell" newer members to other gangs because they are no longer useful to their gang. When this happens, members are traded to a rival gang whether they want to be or not, for money, material possessions or drugs.

Gangs offer protection

Sometimes this is true. But more often than not, this will lead to more violent fights with rival gangs down the road. After all, those who protect you will look for the same in return. New members who are looking for protection from a bully or a bad situation usually have better success through other alternatives.

Gangs get respect

Gangs sometimes talk about getting respect, but what they are really talking about is fear. Obeying out of fear is not the same thing as looking up to someone because he or she is highly regarded.

Being a gang member means you belong to something important

Actually, when you make the choice to belong to a gang, you cut yourself off from everything else. You can't hang around with whoever you want anymore - the gang will dictate who your friends are. The gang will become your new "family," isolating you from your true family. And, if you get arrested for the crime you do, you could lose your freedom.

FRIENDS AS GANG MEMBERS

Some people think it's tough to hang with gang members, but at the same time, they think they won't get drawn into gang life. But where do you think new members come from?

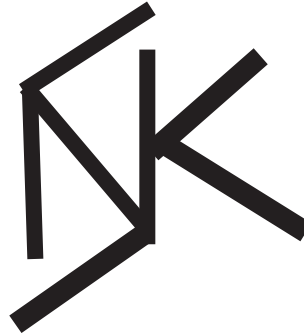
Gang members will sometimes recruit new members by getting one person or a group of friends to go along on a crime. Once involved in one crime, the gang member will threaten to tell on the friend if he walks away. In other cases, a gang member will buy clothes or other possessions for someone, then expect payback by doing crime for the gang. Girls are not immune to being drawn into gang life. In some cases, girls are also lured into prostitution through gang involvement.



www.calgarypolice.ca/kids/gangs.html



What are some signs of gang involvement?



- ① Wearing one particular colour of clothing or a particular logo excessively
- ② Wearing sagging pants
- ③ Wearing jewelry with distinctive designs only on the right or left hand of the body
- ④ Drawing gang symbols and using gang handwriting (usually graffiti-like, hard to decipher, and characterized by crossed out, and upside-down letters, and gang symbols)
- ⑤ Using hand signs to communicate with friends
- ⑥ Using strange language or slang, especially when certain letters of words are substituted (like "flue" for blue, in Blood slang)
- ⑦ Having behavior and performance problems in school
- ⑧ Defying authority
- ⑨ Becoming anti-social and withdrawing from family
- ⑩ Listening to gangster rap and/or watching movies about gangs
- ⑪ Using drugs and alcohol
- ⑫ Possessing unexplained cash or goods
- ⑬ Showing signs of physical injury and lying about events surrounding the injury
- ⑭ Hanging around friends who also exhibit these signs

If a kid shows some of these signs, it does not necessarily mean he or she is involved in a gang. Because of the popularity of gang style in popular culture, many kids who are not involved in gangs wear the style. This trend makes distinguishing who is actually involved in gangs even harder, but usually someone who exhibits all or most of these signs is probably involved in gang activity.

www.stedwards.edu/educ/eanes/signs.html

Download these Reports

- **2005 Intelligence Trends: Aboriginal-based Gangs in Saskatchewan** PDF, 554 kb
- **CISC 2005 Annual Report - Organized Crime in Canada**
- **Environmental Scan 2004** PDF, 237 kb

Community Response

Everyone needs to be involved in this issue. Parents need to be involved in their children's lives, set limits and talk to their children about gangs, drugs, alcohol and sex. Don't tolerate alcohol or drug use by your children or their friends and teach children how to effectively deal with peer pressure.

School, community groups, churches, media and government agencies need to recognize potential gang activity and report it to police. They also need to provide positive role models for youth and provide them positive activities to be involved in away from the gangs on the streets.

It takes everyone deciding they will not tolerate gangs and will do what they can to get rid of them to have a positive impact on the community.



activity to your local law enforcement agency or call Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

HOW CAN I HELP?

Help Criminal Intelligence Service Saskatchewan

Nobody is immune from the effects of Organized and serious crime. It affects every community and citizen of Saskatchewan. Crime perpetrated from organized criminal groups creates many victims. It steals resources out of the legitimate economy in addition to having a negative affect on your insurance premiums and our health-care system. If you suspect that an organized crime group is operating in your community please report this

Link to Crimestoppers site:
www.saskcrimestoppers.com/

Key Risk Factors for Juvenile Gang Membership



10 SIGNS OF PRE-GANG BEHAVIOUR

For more information on this topic refer to the document entitled: "Youth Gangs: An Overview", August 1998. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, NCJ 167249.

1. Live in high-risk neighbourhood.
 - o unemployment
 - o high homeless rate
 - o few recreational facilities
2. Sudden change in friends.
3. Change of appearance.
 - o wearing gang clothing
 - o tattoos
4. Showing no interest in school.
 - o decline in grades
 - o no longer active in school-related activities
 - o disinterest in school
5. Skipping school.
6. Disrespectful for authority, family, and school.
 - o resentful of authority
 - o bad attitude towards family and school
7. Frequent confrontations with the law.
8. Withdrawal from family activities.
9. Evidence of increased substance abuse.
10. Using unknown vocabulary, gang slang, using hand signals, or drawing graffiti symbols and names on books, folders, on bedroom walls.

(Excerpt from: Edmonton Police Service Website www.police.edmonton.ab.ca)

COSTS TO THE COMMUNITY



**INCREASED CRIME
OR
FEAR OF CRIME**

**INCREASED
INSURANCE**



**DECLINE OF
PROPERTY VALUES**



OUR LOGO represents the strong vision of working together with the community of North Central to enhance the quality of life by representing, promoting, developing partnerships and unifying our community and its image through effective communication, programs and services.

OUR VALUES:

- All People
- Respect
- Caring
- Pride

North Central Community Association
1264 Athol Street
Regina SK S4T 7V3
Phone: 791-9888
E-Mail: nccs@sasktel.net

The NCCA is an elected group of volunteers whose goal is to improve the neighbourhood in every way. The Board meets regularly in the Albert-Scott Community Centre.

KEY PLAYERS

Since 1985, **Chili for Children** has provided a service to children that most people take for granted, "being able to sit down to a hot lunch". Mrs. Theresa Stevenson, founder of Chili for Children began the program with money out of her own pocket. Today the program continues her work, serving over 400 children three times a week at three inner city locations.

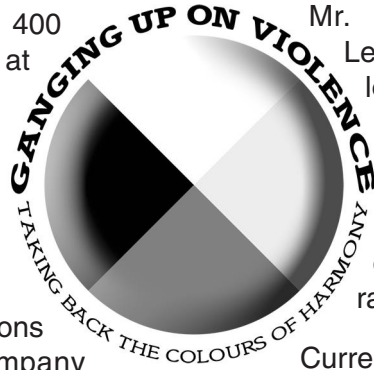
CREERUNNER Communications Ltd. is a multi-media company owned and operated by First Nation multimedia producer **Rodger W. Ross**. Rodger is a member of the Gordon's Cree First Nation and has been active in the film, video and media arts industry for over twenty years. Rodger was born and raised in Regina

CREERUNNER is dedicated to building bridges between cultures through the use of new media and educational and documentary programming.

Brenda Mercer has been a member of the North Central Community Association (NCCA) for five years and has chaired the organization for almost two years. Among her many contributions and achievements:

NC representative on the Regina Inner-City Community Partnership, contributor to Action for Neighbourhood Change and the Housing Enforcement Task Force to ensure homes in North Central meet health and safety standards. Brenda is a recipient of the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal and the City of Regina Police Special Service Award for her commitment to community and neighbours.

Reggie Newkirk grew up in Bedford Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, New York. After high school he enlisted in the United States Air Force in the 1960's to escape the harsh reality of life in the inner city. After his tour in the U.S.A.F he moved to Alberta in 1968.



Mr. Newkirk graduated from the U. of Lethbridge with a degree in history and philosophy and embarked on a career devoted to the protection of human rights. This includes Native rights, labour relations, human rights and family violence prevention. Mr. Newkirk has also helped develop policies related to promoting racial harmony.

Currently, Mr. Newkirk runs his own consulting company, Parity Consulting, in Lumsden, SK where one of his chief activities is the spearheading of the very successful Institute for Healing Racism.

Mr. Newkirk is a skilled trainer and group facilitator and he is considered to be among Canada's top human rights and race relation experts.

Because of his ability to handle challenging issues with sensitivity, care and humor, Mr. Newkirk is sought after as a public and motivational speaker by many different organizations, businesses and groups.

Kevin Daniels Chairperson, Anti-Gang Education Committee, North Central Community Association.

Kevin approached NCCA in the autumn of 2006 after hearing of one too many murders and reports of missing women.

He found others who shared his deep concern and soon a committee gathered to discuss educating youth about the negative effects of gangs, guns and drugs. Together, we're ganging up on violence and taking back the colours of harmony.

Kevin is overwhelmed by the support and we are in awe of his passion and dedication.

GUIDELINES FOR SHARING

Sharing is **voluntary**.

We want to create a **safe, loving and respectful atmosphere**.

Sharing is about **one's own feelings**, experiences, perceptions, etc.

We are **not always going to agree** or see everything the same way, and that is OK.

Each person has **the right to, and responsibility for, his or her own feelings**, thoughts and beliefs.

It is important to **avoid criticism or judgement** of other people, their points-of-view, and their feelings.

Avoid getting tied up in debate and argument. It rarely changes anything or anyone and ultimately tends to inhibit sharing and frank expression of concerns, thoughts and feelings.

We can only change ourselves. Our change and growth may, however, **inspire someone else**.

Refrain from singling out any individual as "representing" his or her group, position, etc.

It is important to give **full attention to whoever is talking**.

We will surely make mistakes in our efforts, but **mistakes are occasions for learning and forgiving**. We came together to learn about team-building, resolving conflicts and differences amicably, while **preserving the dignity of all participants**.

We may **laugh and cry together** and share pain, joy, fear and anger.

We hope we will leave this Forum with a deeper sense of commitment to "Taking Back the Colours of Harmony" - by **reducing the gang recruitment pool of our children and youth**.

