

Safeguarding Factsheet 8: Gangs

The basics

A gang is defined as 'a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group – engaging in criminal activity and violence. They may lay claim over territory (not necessarily geographical but can include an illegal economy territory); have some form of identifying structural feature; and are in conflict with other, similar, gangs' (Centre for Social Justice, 2009).

Hallsworth and Young (2004) argue that there are three types of groups commonly referred to as gangs:

- Peer groups: relatively small, unorganised, and transient entities that come together in public spaces. Delinquency and criminal activity are not integral to such a group's identity or practice. Offending is periodic, spontaneous, intermittent, and opportunistic. Offences are often low-level nuisance or anti-social, with little to no engagement in serious assault or acquisitive crime
- Street gangs: relatively durable, street-based groups who see themselves and are seen by others as a group for whom crime and violence are essential to group Practice and solidarity. Crime, especially violent crime, is instrumental as well as expressive, as it involves a distinctive form of culture and masculinity
- Organised crime groups: composed principally of individuals for whom involvement in criminal activity is an occupation and a business venture. In economic terms, organised crime groups exercise disproportionate control over the illegal means and forces of crime production.

More information

[Advice to parents and carers on gangs](#)

[Gov.uk knife, gun and gang crime](#)

Help in Kirklees

Kirklees Youth Intervention Team

Do I need to get consent when making a referral into the Kirklees Youth Intervention Hub?

When making a referral for a young person under the age of 18 consent from a parent/guardian is required. When making a referral for a young person over the age of 18 consent from the young person is required.

We would ask that the referrer obtain consent before a referral is made to the hub our work focuses on early intervention, prevention and support and therefore requires each young person to want to work with our service for the work to be a success

What if I cannot get consent?

From time to time there will be occasions when the referrer is not able to get consent either from a parent/guardian or young person. We do not want this to be a barrier in accessing our service and therefore if this is the case please still make a referral giving the reason why you could not obtain consent. The assigned intervention officer gangs will then attempt to gain consent using other partner agencies already involved with the young person or by contacting the young person/ parent directly to discuss the referral.

Please note that their needs to be a legitimate reason for not obtaining consent and if this is not clear we may return the referral for further information.

Is there an age limit?

There is no age limit in place for who we will work with although the majority of our referrals are for young people. We are able to work with any person at risk of becoming involved in gang related activity.

I have a concern but I am not sure whether it is gang related or not?

If you have a concern and are not sure whether it requires a referral please contact one of the youth intervention officers who will be able to offer you some guidance.

You can contact the team for support and guidance by calling 01484 221000 and asking for the gang's team or by emailing gangs@kirklees.gov.uk