

Many gang members commit criminal acts to gain power, get recognition or set controls over territory in communities.

In addition, youth gangs differ in size structure, complexity, age range, racial and ethnic diversity and gender.

Below are examples of some activities gang members may take part in with their members:

- Involvement in graffiti and vandalism
- Experimenting with drug taking and drinking alcohol
- Selling drugs
- Robbery or stealing from people, shops, cars and homes
- Sexually exploiting young women
- Carrying weapons and experimenting with weapons
- Gambling
- Forgery
- Money laundering

How can I help someone in a gang?

It can be really worrying if you know someone who is in a gang and you want to help them. You don't have to cope with things on your own; you can [talk to a Childline counsellor](#) to get help. You can find out more about helping a friend at the [Childline](#) website.

You could also try:

- encouraging the person to think about their safety and their future
- talking to an adult about your worries, like a teacher or parent who you trust. [Childline](#) has advice about this.
- contacting [Gangline](#) for free advice and support from ex-gang members
- encouraging the person to contact [Fearless](#), a non-judgemental website
- reporting a concern with the NSPCC [online](#), by email at help@nspcc.org.uk or by calling 0808 800 5000
- calling the police on 999 if you think the person is in danger and needs urgent help
- reporting the concern to Sussex police
 - online at www.sussex.police.uk/reportonline
 - by email to eastbourne@sussex.pnn.police.uk
 - by telephoning 101

How can I leave a gang?

How you leave a gang can depend on what your position is within the gang. It's not always easy but it's possible to leave safely.

You might worry that:

- other gangs might still see you as a rival and could try to harm you
- the people in your gang won't allow you to leave or will make it hard for you
- your family or friends could be targeted if you leave
- you won't have any friends or fit in any more
- you won't feel safe if you're not in the gang.

Think about the positive things in your life and what you want your future to be like.

Seek support from your friends, family or the sources above and together you can escape a gang's influence and control.