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DON'T LEAVE IT TO BEAVER: TEL-A-VISION BECAUSE THE GANG WILL

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND YOUTH

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## DON'T LEAVE IT TO BEAVER: TEL-A-VISION BECAUSE THE GANG WILL



### ABSTRACT

This will be an interactive session where we will discuss how we might help youth have a vision beyond the television. The results of a survey conducted by the presenter of tattoo removal participants both gang and non-gang youth will be shared. A result that was found was that youth want something to do; they want to be involved above and beyond the television. The survey revealed, that when there is limited access to resources youth might resort to "misdirected urges" that may result in joining the "gang" family. To help youth with those "misdirected urges" it is imperative that we help youth have a vision beyond the television and learn to unplug. Therefore, this presentation will take a three-prong approach 1) television, helping youth to have a vision and unplug, 2) gang as family and 3) survey results of tattoo removal participants. Some discussion questions to consider might include: Is your city youth/teen friendly? Is gang involvement the result of "misdirected urges of youth and/or adults"? What is the vision of the future for today's youth? What resources are available in your community to help youth have a voice/choice and option to gangs? Who is involved in the planning of the youth voice/choice and options to gangs, the youth, the adults, or both?

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The following is a work in progress based on primary and secondary research. This work in progress will be used as a guideline for part of the discussion during the **“DON'T LEAVE IT TO BEAVER: TEL-A-VISION BECAUSE THE GANG WILL”** presentation.

The information contained herein will be used to guide the discussion on how we might help youth have a vision beyond the television. The results of a survey conducted of tattoo removal participants both gang and non-gang youth will be shared. A result that was found was that youth want something to do; they want to be involved above and beyond the television. The survey revealed, that when there is limited access to resources youth

might resort to “misdirected urges” that may result in joining the “gang” family. To help youth with those “misdirected urges” it is imperative that we help youth have a vision beyond the television and learn to unplug. Therefore, the information presented will take a three-prong approach 1) television, helping youth to have a vision and unplug, 2) gang as family and 3) survey results of tattoo removal participants. Some discussion questions to consider might include: Is your city a teen friendly one? Is gang involvement the result of “misdirected urges of youth or adults”? What is the vision of the future for today’s youth?

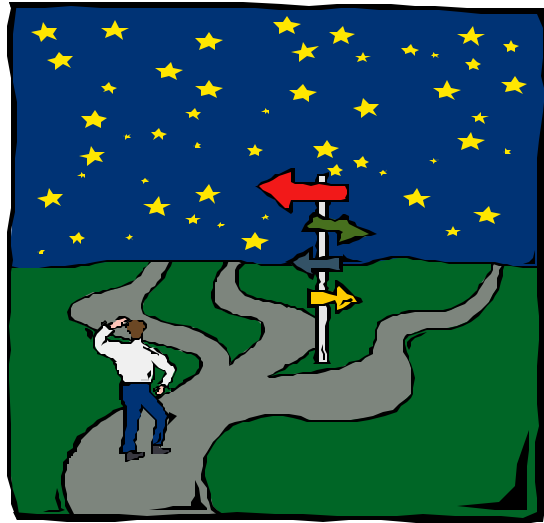
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## **PRESENTATION OUTLINE**

### **ONE-HOUR PRESENTATION**

- 1. WHOSE FAULT IS IT ANYWAY?**
- 2. HOW HAS MEDIA IMPACTED/INFLUENCES YOUTH?**
- 3. TEL-A-VISION**
- 4. NEW START TATTOO REMOVAL RESULTS**
- 5. WORKABLE SOLUTIONS GANG MEMBERS AND SURVEY RESULTS**
- 6. WRAP-UP**



### Whose fault is it anyway?

**Economics** – job market/enticements i.e. long money in the short run!

**Family** – no more nosy neighbor/who are your neighbors? /where is the village?

**Education** – schools/counseling (most likely to succeed at the level of the parent (factory/never do well)

**Society** – low bar i.e. expectations because of “background”/the not likely to...

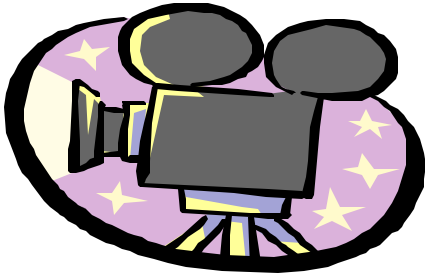
**Media** – Do the various forms of media contribute to the misdirected urges of the youth by giving too much press/hype on the issue of gangs?

**Community Organizations** – research suggests that youth get involved in misdirected urges between **3 and 6 p.m.** however, there are schools that are on a block system and the school day concludes at 1:30 therefore, the urge to get involved in misdirected urges starts earlier. What happens on the weekends? Are we to assume that the misdirected urges are confined to weekdays only? With the increase in commute hours why have programs confined they're after school activities to 3-6 hours Monday through Friday?

**Police** – racial profiling/association profiling<sup>1</sup>

**Friendliness of your city toward youth** are there outlets, recreation centers/activities geared specifically toward teens; are there teen centers teens have helped to create and run?

## HOW HAS THE VARIOUS FORMS OF MEDIA IMPACTED AND/OR INFLUENCED THE LIVES/ATTITUDES AND VISIONS OF YOUTH?



Are we leaving the "vision" too much to Beaver and other television programs?

Internet access/access to information is it too much? Has access to information and not to recreational outlets created these youth with misdirected urges?

Does the music encourage behavior or is it a reflection of the feelings of today's youth regarding their place in society/community and what is going on in **their** world?

Is it time to trade the high tech for the high touch and the plug-in for the unplugged?

Can the high tech and high touch coexist?

High tech + High touch =/± Parental Involvement (HT+HT=/±PI)



## **TEL-A-VISION**

**T = talk to don't tell**

**E = evolve - help youth evolve into strong, independent, self sufficient, self directed youth**

**L = listen to what is not being said; listen to body language; lead by example; leadership skills and development**

**E = engage youth in activities of interest; employ them in responsible positions; educate and encourage them with enthusiasm**

**V = vision - help youth have one - believe, conceive, achieve; youth have a voice and choices help them use them in a positive manner**

**I = innovate, involve, include, invite, inspire the voice of youth in decision making**

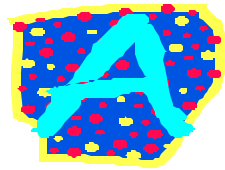
**S = self esteem, self respect, STOP ass-u-ming, sincerity, sensitivity, share you with the youth**

**I = interest in the youth, their activities, friends, opinions, options, occasions**

**O = offer support and be open to opinions regardless of how outrageous, encourage optimism that life has more to offer**

**N = nurture and nudge DON'T nag!**

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## NEW START TATTOO REMOVAL SURVEY RESULTS

**BROAD AREAS:** approximately 60 participants in two sites 24 responded

### Gang activities:

Age of gang involvement	14 years of age 50/50 of respondents
Rationale for joining	fun/environmental
Gang initiation	jumped in
Prison/probation/parole	3.5 avg. served time

### Tattoo activities:

Age of first tattoo	14 years of age
Kind of tattoo gang or other	50/50
Motivation for getting tattooed	recognition
State of sobriety	sober/tattoo not professionally applied
Tattoo removal rationale	became a parent
Tattoo removal	made a difference in how others view them, attitude toward life and how they viewed themselves

Community service hours/activities:	50 required avg.36 completed
Motivation of lifestyle changes	did not want kids to see tattoo; lifestyle change
Future plans	live a long life, get married
Who/what i.e. change in lifestyle	tired of lifestyle; became a Parent; wanted more from life

### Something about you:

Gang prevention activity	after school programs at School; weekend recreation activities; part time job/life planning activities Counseling/support/mentoring programs
Familial background	both parents home or mom only
Demographic information	avg 21 years of age; 50/50 males/females single avg 1 child @ 3.8 yrs of age; high school/ged not currently involved in a prevention program to discourage other youth from gang lifestyle.

## Workable Solutions: BRIGHT IDEAS



## SYNERGY



Recommendations from former gang members, "fringe" members and non-gang involved youth:

- Family is important/values/responsibilities
- Parental involvement/ask the hard questions; formative years and the teen years are the most important for parental involvement. Parents need to unplug and get plugged into their youth
- Parents need to focus less on career and their "extracurricular" activities and more on the youths; parents need to "unplug"/ sober up and/or clean up and improve their time and time management with the family. DO AS I SAY AND DO AS YOU SEE ME DO!
- Community involvement - programs need to be run earlier/later and at odd times like weekends including Sundays; evaluate age restrictions for involvement; encourage volunteering
- Start gang intervention at 3/4<sup>th</sup> grade and earlier and get parents involved
- Role Models and leadership responsibility at very early ages, youth have a voice help them express it
- Activities like sports for all levels of play, not just the "stars"; reduce the expense of involvement and increase accessibility; Boys and Girls Club and other community based organizations
- Faith based involvement at early ages to provide a form of spiritual guidance and structure
- Get involved in school and community activities both parents and youth; give back

- **Schools need money and need to be strict regarding rules, the enforcement of rules, and the consistency of enforcement; maybe uniforms are not a bad idea!**
- **Businesses need to be more involved in the community and with youth i.e. employment opportunities; work ethics**
- **Counseling/support/mentoring programs**
- **After school programs at school**
- **After school activities in my neighborhood**
- **More family activities**
- **How teen friendly is your city?**

**In order to reduce the gang problem and the misdirected urges of youth, families, school authorities, police officials, government administrators, faith based communities, and the community as a whole must band together and put aside individual differences, lack of collaboration and prejudices, and work together to make this a better place for youth to express their voice and choice to the decision makers be they youth or adults.**

## WRAP UP!

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### **1.WHOSE FAULT IS IT ANYWAY?**

Is gang involvement the result of "misdirected urges of youth or adults"?

### **2.HOW HAS MEDIA IMPACTED/INFLUENCES YOUTH?**

Television, helping youth to have a vision and unplug.

### **3.TEL-A-VISION**

What is the vision of the future for today's youth?

### **4.NEW START TATTOO REMOVAL RESULTS**

Survey results of tattoo removal participants.

### **5.WORKABLE SOLUTIONS GANG MEMBERS AND SURVEY RESULTS**

Is your city a teen friendly one?

