Gang Reference Manual
This Manual is dedicated to T whose help was invaluable, and to all the children who are already lost to gangs, those who will join gangs in the future, and those who are trying desperately to stay out of gangs. Even if only one child’s future or life is saved by the information in this manual, it has done its job. May God deliver the words in the manual to those who need to hear.

The following statement was taken from the Redeemer Lutheran Church Woodstock, IL website:

Too often, a community or a police department will proclaim that there are no gangs within the community, stating that there are only a few youths who are ‘Wannabes.’ This term should never be used. By overlooking the fact that these youths have adopted a gang name, use gang signs and symbols and commit crimes, these youths already are gang members or ‘Gonnabes.’ Failing to recognize or denying the existence of gang activity, whether willingly or through a lack of gang identification training, drastically increases a gang's ability to thrive and develop a power base (Gang Awareness, 2010).

Another statement should be added. If parents are not informed, they cannot educate their children on the perils of joining a gang.

Gang membership and the subsequent violence are increasing at an alarming rate. Though this manual is meant as a guide and in no way to be considered a complete handbook on all gangs, it should give parents, teachers, and citizens enough information to help a child understand the consequences of gang membership. This manual focuses mostly on gangs found in Rockford IL. However the information is universal. If additional information is required, there are an abundance of websites available for reference.

Information supplied in this Manual comes from credible Internet resources and also from “former” gang members. The word former is in quotes because gang members are basically considered members for life. Unfortunately for our unsuspecting youth it could end up a very short life.
Gang Structure

There are major gang affiliations around the United States in which individual gangs align themselves with. Some affiliations call themselves Nations. There are other affiliations that are separate from the Nations, such as the Suernos and the Crips. The focus of this manual will be on the Nations since in Rockford the majority of the gangs fall under one of two Nations, Folk or People.

Just like nations around the world, gang Nations are organized. Gang Nations produce income but they do not pay taxes to the US Government. They consider themselves separate from the government. The majority of their income is made through drug and gun trade but can also be made through auto theft, prostitution and other illegal activity. However, under some gang rules, like the Vice Lords, theft and prostitution are not allowed. Gangs use their income to take care of their member’s personal needs and arm them. If a gang member is caught breaking gang rules consequences called ‘violations’ are imposed. These typically include beatings, stabbings, and shootings, of the guilty gang member. Violations are not taken lightly.

Within these Nations are many separate gangs or ‘sets’ running their own territories. Gangs are typically run by older members called OG’s (original gangsters). The gangs are run as militia/military type organizations and have a hierarchy. The members are armed, they fight for their territories, try to take over other territories, and wage wars against their enemies. Nations keep a written history and their own Lit (literature) and members are expected to know it. Not knowing the history or the Lit is cause for punishment or death. Youth should never pretend to be a gang member no matter what the reason. If youth claim to be in a gang and don’t know the Lit, it is called “false claiming”. The false claiming youth will be beaten or murdered.

Gangs continually recruit new soldiers (our youth). Below is an example of an organized gang structure.

(Gang Structure, n.d.)
Leader
The leader of the gang is the absolute leader. More than likely he is in prison, but still manages to direct overall operations via telephone or other forms of communication. He can be called, President, King, Supreme Chief, or Chairman of the Board depending on which gang he leads. Not all gangs have a specific leader and may be run by a council of leaders, one from each specific faction.

Advisors
Advisors are members or outside consultants who are adept at advising the leader on financial, legal, and political issues.

Suppliers
Supplier’s supply the gang with drugs and guns which are the mainstay of their income. These suppliers include drug lords and terrorist organizations.

Political Organizations
Large groups of current and former gang members who exert influence on elections and legislation.

Communications
These are gang informants who supply information to the leadership ranging from rival gang activities to law enforcement operations. These include messengers who communicate information between rival gangs.

Ranking Council/Board Members
These are gang members who act as an advisory committee on gang activities. These members are mostly gang leaders, or members who were given ranking status because of loyalty, trust and performance. They may also be known as Vice President, Generals, Princes or Assistant Chiefs.

Chief Enforcer
The Chief Enforcer coordinates and controls gang wars and is in charge of protecting existing territories. Chief Enforcers can also be called Chief or Warlord.

Security Chief/Street Coordinator
The Security Chief/Street Coordinator “disciplines” gang members who violate the gang’s code/rules. They “discipline” independents who start operating in their territory and who fail to pay a share of the profit. They may also “discipline” business owners who fail to pay protection money “street tax”. They can also be known as Hitmen.

Treasurer
The treasurer is responsible for the income/expenses of the gang. The income is obtained from drug sales, gun sales, property investment, business, and prostitution. The Treasurer is also responsible for paying the expenses for guns, bullet proof vests, clothing/shoes, housing, and food for gang members.

Bookkeeper
The Bookkeeper is in charge of keeping the books and records.

Independents
If an independent drug or prostitution dealer has a large operation in a gang territory, a share of the profit must go to the gang or they will be killed.
Area Leaders/Area Coordinators
These are leaders in command of assigned areas. They coordinate and control all street activities within the territory. They may also be known as Governor, Lieutenant, Section Chief or President.

Gun Supplier
The gun supplier is the supplier of guns; ensuring all members ready access to an assortment of weapons.

Trustees and Representatives
Trustees and Representatives consist of the recruiters, street soldiers, runners/carriers, lookouts/spotters. Gang membership can consist of thousands of members per gang.

Recruiters
Recruiters recruit our youth. The more members a gang has the more money it can bring in. They recruit at schools, in parks, in shopping malls and wherever youth hang out. Recruiters sell drugs to youth and talk about the large amounts of cash that can be earned quickly if they become a gang member.

Street Soldiers
Street Soldiers can include hard core gang members to marginal members. The hardcore members are the most active and are very dangerous. They work towards attaining status and notoriety within the gang. Street soldiers can be involved in drive-by shootings, gang wars, murder, drug sales, graffiti, intimidation etc. They can also be known as gangbangers and homeboys.

Runners/Carriers
These gang members transport and deliver guns and drugs to varying locations or to other gang members. They are usually the younger gang members because there are less severe court penalties when juveniles are caught. They can also be known as PeeWees.

Lookouts/Spotters
These gang members serve as the lookouts for police when gang members are involved in illegal activities i.e. drug deals, graffiti, prostitution etc. You will see them on a street walking, looking around, and talking on a cell phone or walkie-talkie. Spotters are sometimes marginal members or associates.

Not all gangs have this exact structure but they are similar. Some have structures like religious organizations.

The Nations

The gang Nations fly under one of two “flags”, the 5 point star or the 6 point star. The People Nation flies under the 5 point star. The Folk Nation flies under the 6 point star. The 5 point star nation gangs consider 6 point star nation gangs their mortal enemies and vice versa. Violence between the two Nations is very common.

All money that is earned while in a gang goes to the Chief of the gang. If money is withheld from a Chief, it is cause for death.

The Folk Nation began in the Illinois State Prison System around 1978. This association of gangs was made between older existing street gangs from Chicago and grew into a national organization, now occupying twenty-two states (Gang, n.d.). The 6 Pointed Star of the Folk Nation has nothing to do with the Star of David and is actually 2 triangles; one pointing to heaven, one
pointing to hell. FOLKS is said to stand for Follow Our Loving King Satan; Satan being the leader of the entire Folk nation. The well organized Folk gangs have written constitutions and their own discipline code. Don’t let the constitutions fool you. They speak of community, and knowledge, and love in some cases. If you were to read a gang constitution you would think they are community service organizations. This fools a lot of youth into believing they are joining a cause.

Shortly after the formation of the Folk Nation, the gangs in the Illinois Prison System who where long time enemies of the Folk gangs, formed an alliance called the People Nation (Gang, n.d.) Just like the Folk Nation, the original People Nation gangs were existing gangs from Chicago. The well organized People gangs have written constitutions and their own discipline code.

Gangs are all about the Money
Representing and Identifying

Just as nations around the world have symbols to represent their nation, the gang nations do too. The United States uses the Eagle to represent the nation’s strength and freedom. The gang nations use their symbols to ‘represent’ them. Notice the symbols below. By understanding the symbols and how they are used, you will be able to ‘read’ the graffiti in your neighborhood and understand more of what is going on.

Looking at the symbols you will notice that both the People Nation and the Folk Nation use dice but one has the 5 dots and the other six, telling you which Nation that gang belongs to. Both have the bunny but one is facing to the right and one to the left. This is significant in that the Nation gangs use right and left identifiers. For example People Nation gang members wear their hat brims (break) to the left, form their hand signs with the left hand, roll up the left pant leg, may untie the left shoe, wear a bandana in the left pocket, rest their hand in the left pocket or wear jewelry to the left. The Folk Nation gangs use right identifiers in the same way.

You will see the gang symbols in their graffiti and tattooed on their body. Their graffiti is a way for them to communicate the marking of their territory, to communicate to the rival Nation that they are moving in, or warning they will kill rival gang members. When you see one of the symbols upside down it means that one Nation gang is disrespecting the other. The gang that is doing the disrespecting will always place their symbol on top. Disrespecting is a cause for bloodshed. If you discover graffiti in your neighborhood it is important to remember the three R’s: record, report, and remove. In Rockford, IL call the Graffiti Hotline immediately and the city will take pictures and remove the graffiti 815-961-3243. The faster the graffiti is removed the better.

You can read this graffiti above. The MLD’s stands for Maniac Latin Disciples (Appendix A). It shows the right-side up pitchfork which is the symbol for a Folk Nation gang, which they are. The star is six-pointed with a 6 inside; another indication it is a Folk Nation gang. The rest of the symbols are People Nation symbols and upside down. They are disrespecting the Insane Unknowns.
This is cause for People Nation gang retaliation. Sometimes there will be specific names of a rival gang member within the graffiti. When that happens it is an announcement that gang member will be shot or killed.

Above is the meaning of the symbols for the Vice Lords. The meaning behind these symbols fools adults and children into believing these are community service type organizations. Don’t let it fool you.

If you see gang initials that have the letter K after them, such as SDK, that means the rival gang is telling the other gang they are going to kill them (SD = Satan Disciples, K = Killers). The letter N at the end means Nation. A letter A before the gang initials means Almighty. On gang websites and You Tube videos, which are in abundance on the Internet, you may see something like the You Tube picture below, that you can interpret. This Satan Disciple gang member (SD tattoo) is telling the Latin Kings gang (represented by the upside down hand sign, Appendix B) that he is going to shoot/kill a rival gang member (the gun that is cocked).
Gang members use hand signs to represent and communicate (Appendix B). Warn children to avoid using any kind of hand sign no matter how innocent it may be. The hand signs that some youth use at heavy metal concerts is also the gang hand sign for the Latin Kings. A gang member may take it to be that of rival gang disrespect and your child could get hurt or even killed over it. Deaf youth using hand signs have been mistaken for gang rival gang members and beaten (Gang, n.d.). A gang member who ‘throws’ a hand sign of five fingers down is a Folk Nation gang member and is disrespecting a People Nation gang. If this is done directly to a People Nation gang member, bloodshed will ensue. If you or your child sees rival gangs throwing hand signs at each other get to a safe place. To the average citizen hand signs may be meaningless; to a gang member it is very serious.

Can you see the six point star in this YouTube clip?

If you think young children are safe from recruitment, think again. http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/gangs/awareness.html

Gang members use clothing as identifiers. These may look like two kids hanging out. Can you tell that they are actually gang members? Notice the clothing. Note that the left pant legs are rolled up. The hat brim is facing left. Notice the banana on the left arm. From what you have learned previously you should know that they are in a gang under the People Nation who identify on the left.

Individual gangs also have their own sets of colors that they display with their clothing. Just like the United States uses Red, White and Blue, the gang nations have their colors that represent their gangs. An example would be the Vice Lords who use Gold and Black. Check Appendix A for other gang colors.

Gangs also have their own pledges and slogans. Like the United States has its Pledge of Allegiance and the slogan Land of the Free, Home of the Brave. Each gang has
their own. The Vice Lords motto is “Love to Hate, Kill to Take”. Gang members also have nicknames. If a name is already taken by a rival gang member, the member must kill the other member to get the name.

What do Youth Have to Do to Get into a Gang?
(Retrieved from Covington TN Police Department Gang Crimes Task Force website)  

There are many different ways that gangs initiate recruits into the gang. The following are some examples of how gang members get initiated.

Rolled-In, Jumped-In, Quoted, Lined-In - These are the most common initiations into the gang. This ritual usually consists of the recruit having to fight 3 or more members of the gang for a specified amount of time or even just receive a beating. The time limit is different from gang to gang, but usually lasts somewhere between 1 minute and 5 minutes. The reason for the beating is to see how tough the recruit is and find out if he will make a good soldier. Lined-in is slightly different in that the gang has two lines of its members and the recruit has to go between the line as the gang members beat him/her. Sometimes parents will call the police when they see their child’s injuries. The child is often uncooperative and unwilling to tell the officer or his parent who his assailants are because he has just joined a gang.

Courted In - Sometimes a youth is asked to join a gang without going through any initiation. The youth usually has some type of special talent that the gang wants to learn or take advantage of. The individual may have a good connection for drugs, is good at stealing cars, or has some other criminal talent. It may also be that the individual has a car that the gang needs to commit criminal activity or just to get around town in.

Walked In - Some gangs have no formal initiation and may just be asked to join the gang.

Sexed In - Sometimes female recruits are required to roll 2 dice. Whatever number is thrown is the number of gang members that the recruit has to have sex with.

Commit Crimes - Some gangs require that a recruit commit a crime or a series of crimes to prove that they are good candidates for the gangs. Often times, gangs that specialize in a particular crime such as auto theft, will require the recruit to steal a car or commit the crime that they specialize in. Some gangs have point systems for the crimes and the recruit has to have so many points. The crimes required to be committed can be as violent as drive-by shootings, shooting at a police officer, or even murder.
There are two known historical truths about the persistence and continuity of criminal gangs that have so much support they can be likened to social laws. The first is based on systems theory, the idea that a gang without new members to do its "work" is a gang that will die off and fade away, a gang needs a steady supply of new young recruits to stay in business. The second is based on risk/benefit analysis: a gang cannot exist in a community without providing some benefit to the same community, so once the reciprocal benefits are terminated, and there is no benefit to the gang, the gang will disappear. Both help to clarify "what should be done" about gangs.

First, our society needs additional laws protecting the rights of juveniles, both civil and criminal penalties need to be attached to the conduct of adult gang leaders who use children to do their dirty work. Increasing the penalties for using juveniles in adult-run gangs, and doing everything else possible to cut off the flow of new recruits into a gang, will do much to destabilize any gang anywhere in systems theory.

Secondly, the risk-benefit equation currently favors adult gang leaders: they face little risk and almost no sanctions for using juveniles to do their dirty work (selling drugs, committing acts of violence against opposing gangs, etc). We as a society need to increase the "costs" to the adult gang leaders in this known national pattern of the criminal exploitation of children. We need to also eliminate any social benefits the gang claims to provide a community: involvement in voter registration, involvement in publicly funded services, anything that appears to give the gang "legitimacy" erodes the power of the community to fight back against the gangs. Some leaders in Chicago and elsewhere still have not figured this out.

Third, educating clergy, civic leaders, and parents about gang profiles like the BDs may help them recognize that the gang is not a benefit to the community, nor is it a benign social force that can be "turned into good": it is, plain and simple, a criminal organization. What we have in America today is a legal lag: gangs have continued over time, outpacing the ability of American policy makers to pass legislation to control their operations. In other words, due to the inaction of policy makers, modern American gangs like the BDs continue with "business as usual" and are able to flagrantly manipulate the system to their own benefit.
APPENDIX A

Gang Initials and Colors of Gangs Currently in Rockford

An A in front of the initial means Almighty. An N at the end initials means Nation

Folk Nation - 6 Point Star

AA = Almighty Ambrose - Black and Light Blue
BD = Black Disciples – Black Blue and Red
BGD = Black Gangster Disciples – Blue and Black
DD = Devil Disciples - ?
Insane Ashland Vikings – Black and Green ( use 8 point star) (boast Eastridge & Crosby)
LJ = Latin Jivers – Black and Brown
MLD = Maniac Latin Disciples – Black and Baby Blue
GD = Gangster Disciples - Black and Blue
SD = Satan Disciples - Black and Canary Yellow
SCR = Simon City Royals Black and Royal Blue
SGD = Spanish Gangster Disciples – Black and Baby Blue

People Nation - 5 Point Star

4C/H = 4 Corner Hustlers - Black/ Gold Red and White
ALKQ = Almighty Latin Queens - ?
AS = Apache Stones – Black Red and Green ( also Black and Brown)
BFBD = Blue Fin Black Disciples – Black Red and Blue (mostly Black & Red)
BPS = Black P-Stones - Black Red and Green
CVL = Conservative Vice Lords - Black and Gold or Black and Red
LC = Latin Counts – Red and Black
LK = Latin Kings – Black and Gold
LRz = La Raza – Red White and Green
IUK = Insane Unknowns – Black and White (formerly Liberty St. Boys) (boast
        Auburn/Day, 10th/Kishwaukee, Meridian/State)
MIVLN = Mafia Insane Vice Lords – Black/ Gold and Black/ Red
PP = Party Players – Maroon and White
SVL = Spanish Vice Lords – Black and Maroon
TS or TPS = Titanic Stones – Black Red and Green
Traveling Vice Lords – Black/ Gold Black/ Red
UTVL = Unknown Traveling Vice Lords – Black /Gold/Red
UVL - Unknown Vice Lords – Black and Red
VL = Vice Lords – Black and Gold
**Independent (No Affiliation)**
BG (sometimes LLL) - Black Gangsters AKA New Breed – Black and Grey
? = WACOS - Concord Commons - ?

**Surenos (Affiliation - Mexican Mafia)**
MS13 = Mara Salvatrucha 13’s - Blue and White (El Salvador)
18 = 18th Street Gang (Hispanic originated in CA) (rival of MS-13)
SUR13 – Surenos 13’s
APPENDIX B
Some Local Gang Hand Signs

Tell your children never to use these signs under any circumstances; it is called “false flagging” and they will be beaten or killed.

Disciples and Folk

Insane Unknowns

Disciples

Gangster Disciples

Imperial Gangsters

Latin Kings
Maniac Latin Disciples

Vice Lords – One Hand or Two
References


