













# the.News



Growing Problem of Youth Membership in Gangs  
5/5/2011



1.		Animated Open	
2.		<p><b>Narration:</b> Victory Boxing Club in south Omaha. A place where dozens of kids come for a couple hours a night to learn to box. And learn how to stay out of trouble...stay out of gangs. Kids like 17-year-old Juan, who says he knows a lot of gang members.</p>	00:16
3.		<p><b>Juan:</b> <i>Well I had a lot of people tell me to be a gangster and represent their gang and stuff, but not for me I guess.</i></p>	00:33
4.		<p><b>Narration:</b> It's easy to find signs, like graffiti, of the more than 80 gangs authorities believe are active in Omaha...a city with about 3,000 documented gang members. Omaha police believe at least 16 homicides last year were gang related...the most in a decade. Servando Perales understands the problem. He says 20 years ago his lifestyle helped start gangs in south Omaha.</p>	00:42

5.	 <p>SERVANDO PERALES Victory Boxing Club founder</p>	<p><b>Servando Perales</b> <b>Victory Boxing Club</b> <i>I thought I was gonna be a drug kingpin. That's all I wanted to do. I wanted to run the drug trade in south Omaha.</i></p>	01:11
6.		<p><b>Narration:</b> Perales went to prison, found God, and turned his life around. After parole he boxed professionally for a while...then found another way to feed his passion for the sport. He opened Victory Boxing Club to try and keep kids from growing up like he did. And that's not easy.</p>	01:21
7.		<p><b>Perales:</b> <i>Even in the junior highs, it's already an obviously a known factor that gangs are trying to recruit.</i></p>	01:39
8.	 <p>JON SCHRINER theNews</p>	<p><b>On Camera:</b> <i>Officials believe there are more than a million gang members nationally, operating in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Police in some communities say gangs are responsible for 80 percent of all crimes. We'll learn more when the FBI releases a new Gang Threat Assessment Report this summer. But experts already know gangs are changing the way they do business.</i></p>	01:47

9.		<p><b>Narration:</b> As president of the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Association, Bruce Ferrell watches gang trends. Like gangs becoming more entrepreneurial, involved in more than drive-by shootings and selling drugs.</p>	02:09
10.	 <p>BRUCE FERRELL Pres., Natl. Alliance of Gang Investigators, Assoc.</p>	<p><b>Bruce Ferrell</b> <b>Pres., Natl. Alliance of Gang Investigators Assoc.</b> <i>From mortgage fraud to identity theft, credit card thefts, checks, kiting, those kinds of things.</i></p>	02:20
11.		<p><b>Narration:</b> Pete Simi talks with former gang members as a researcher and criminal justice professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Simi explains gangs are now having more of a presence in Cyberspace.</p>	02:32
12.	 <p>PETE SIMI Univ. of Nebraska at Omaha criminal justice professor</p>	<p><b>Pete Simi</b> <b>Univ. of Nebraska at Omaha Criminal Justice Professor</b> <i>So you see websites, My Space. This kind of stuff in Cyberspace where, you know, gangs actually kind of represent themselves to this much broader audience and are able to communicate with other folks that they're affiliated with.</i></p>	02:41
13.		<p><b>Narration:</b> And in cities like Omaha, gangs may have loose connections to larger established gangs like the Bloods, Crips or MS-13...but Omaha Police Chief Alex Hayes says many are really local organizations.</p>	03:01

14.	 <p>ALEX HAYES Omaha Police Chief</p>	<p><b>Alex Hayes</b> <b>Omaha Police Chief</b></p> <p><i>They're not in California gangs any longer. They're definitely Omaha gangs and they have neighborhoods that associate. There are members in a neighborhood that associate with each other and they no longer associate with the original group that would have come in from California.</i></p>	03:14
15.		<p><b>Narration:</b></p> <p>Another trend...a growth of gang activity in non-urban areas. Places like Columbus, Nebraska, a city with a population of 22 thousand, a couple hours west of Omaha.</p>	03:32
16.		<p><b>Narration:</b></p> <p>Fights...graffiti...and a 2008 drive-by shooting in this trailer park that left five juveniles wounded were wake-ups calls for longtime Columbus residents like Mike Fleming.</p>	03:44
17.	 <p>MIKE FLEMING Columbus, NE businessman</p>	<p><b>Mike Fleming</b> <b>Columbus, Neb.</b> <b>Businessman</b></p> <p><i>We had a situation where we were kind of not wanting to admit we had the problem, okay. When we knew full well we did have a problem.</i></p>	03:54

18.		<p><b>Narration:</b> Columbus fought back. Fleming and other community leaders formed Time 4 Change...basically a coordinated group of concerned citizens, including law enforcement and social services organizations, working together to curb gang activity. A key part of this is getting young people involved in and helping pay for activities like clubs and sports.</p>	04:05
19.		<p><b>Fleming:</b> <i>That prevention part is basically pretty simple. It's trying to keep the kids occupied with things that are not gang activity, you know.</i></p>	04:27
20.		<p><b>Narration:</b> Ferrell explains that this type of comprehensive strategy is needed to fight gang activity in any community.</p>	04:35
21.		<p><b>Ferrell:</b> <i>You can't just do prevention or intervention or suppression. You have to meld those three opportunities together along with other concepts like re-entry programs, early childhood development, all those different types of opportunities to help these kids in the best way that we can to keep and steer them away from this culture of violence.</i></p>	04:41

22.		<p><b>Narration:</b> Victory Boxing Club is a small piece of the anti-gang puzzle. Every night Servando Perales and his coaches keep 50 or 60 kids fighting here...instead of on the streets of Omaha.</p>	05:06
23.		<p><b>Juan:</b> <i>I could have been like a thug, a gangster I guess. But this club, it helps you get out of that kind of stuff, it gives you something to do, I guess.</i></p>	05:17
24.		<p><b>Perales:</b> <i>We can't rescue everyone, which we try, but ultimately, you know, we just can't do it, you know, no matter how many great organizations or boxing clubs are out here. Gangs are still infiltrating our streets and people are still getting shot on our streets. So as long as that continues, we've got a lot of work to do.</i></p>	05:26
25.		<p><b>Narration:</b> I'm Jon Schriener for the-dot-News.</p>	05:45