

CHECKLIST FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH YOUTH GANGS

- Be reliable.** Most gang-affiliated youth have been let down numerous times.
- Always look for the positive in the youth.**
- Be real.** Do not be somebody you're not.
- Absolutely do not make any promises that you cannot keep.**
- Be a good role model.** Practice what you preach.
- Avoid stereotyping.** All youth are not the same.
- Be aware that every person has different experiences than you.**
- Listen to the youth.** And he or she will listen to you.
- Be very aware of your body language.** Remember, gangs do a lot of posturing and may feel threatened by sudden hand movements.
- Strive to understand the gang member's language.** Do not be afraid to ask, "What does that word mean?"
- Avoid taking things personally.**
- Remember, you cannot help those who do not wish to be helped.**