

Gangs don't protect against crime

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Gang members are twice as likely to be crime victims than non-gang members and are more frequently subject to simple assault, aggravated assault and drive by shootings, according to a recently study by the Crime Victims' Institute at Sam Houston State University.

In addition, gang members report their neighborhoods are more dangerous, are of lower quality, and have greater problems with drugs compared to non-gang members.

While it is commonly believed that gang membership offers protection, the study found that gang members were more likely to be victimized.

"Gang members were significantly more likely than non-gang members to be crime victims," said Dr. Kate Fox of the College of [Criminal Justice](#), who co-authored the study. "Overall, gang members were more than twice as likely to be victimized compared to non-gang members. Gang members were significantly more likely than non-gang members to be attacked without a [weapon](#), attacked with a weapon, and targeted in drive-by-shootings."

The study was based on interviews with 217 adult inmates at a Texas prison, 84 who said they were gang members and 133 who said they were not gang members. A total of 71.4 percent of gang members said they had been victimized, compared to only 31.6 percent of inmates who were not gang members. Gang members also were targeted heavily by drive-by shooting, with 52.4 percent reporting being a victim of the crime and only 4.5 percent of non-gang members saying they had been

targeted.

Among gang members, 52.4 percent reported being attacked with a weapon, and 31.1 percent said they were a victim of simple assault, compared to non-gang members, where 29.5 percent reported an assault with a weapon, and 12.8 percent said they had suffered a simple assault.

Provided by Sam Houston State University

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