

How can community based organisations help prevent young people becoming involved with gangs and crime?



Workshop facilitators

This workshop will be run by Gary Wildgoose and Sam Ruck. Gary is a counsellor and Therapeutic Service Manager who works therapeutically with vulnerable young people at a Pupil Referral Unit. Sam is the Head of Therapeutic Service at Visyon and is responsible for the development of risk and safeguarding policies. Both have seen a big change in the level or risk and complexity of those young people who are coming to their service for support over the last few years.

Visyon is young person's mental health charity which work in Cheshire and North Staffordshire providing counselling and wellbeing services.

Although we don't have all the answers, we would like to initiate a conversation about the important role that community organisations and members of the local community can play in preventing young people from choosing to become part of a gang. A conversation that considers:

- *Creative ways of working alongside vulnerable disenfranchised young people*
- *Understanding what young people get from being part of a gang, and why they might choose that path.*
- *What other attractive opportunities can communities create for young people which can be seen as a desirable alternative to joining a gang*
- *Do young people understand the risks, and are they bothered about the consequences, or is this one of the attractions?*
- *How can we dispel the myths behind the ideas of being in a gang?*
- *Can we safely support a young person to leave a gang?*
- *How can we spot early signs that someone might be being groomed for a gang, and what can we do?*