

OPERATION LODESTAR:

ENGAGING, EDUCATING AND ENCOURAGING PARENTS

*"When I grow up,
I want to be just like Daddy."*



Kids learn what they live.

Only 25% of Abbotsford students said they had a positive adult role model.

Be the parent your child needs.



Cover: Tattoo Talks

A teardrop tattoo on the face of a young male member of an urban street gang can signify one of three things:

- the death of a fellow gang member or family member of the tattoo wearer;
- the tattoo wearer had served a period of incarceration in a correctional facility; or
- the tattoo wearer had murdered a rival gang member.

Dr. Mark Totten, expert in the culture of Canadian street gangs, *R. v. Abbey*, 2009 ONCA 624.

lodestar (n.) one that serves as a guide or model.

"OLD MAN TAKE A LOOK AT MY LIFE, I'M A LOT LIKE YOU."
lyrics from the song "Old Man" by Neil Young

October 2010

www.abbypd.ca

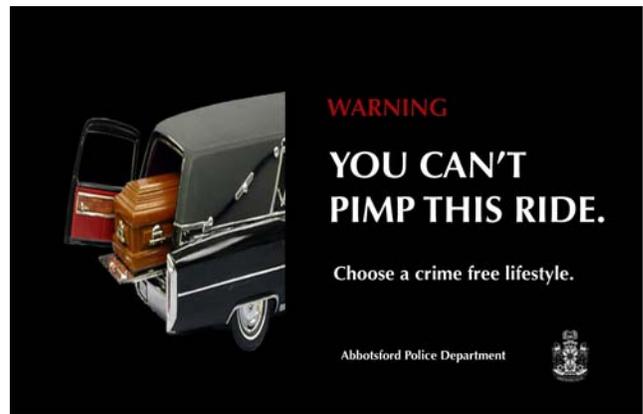
Background:

In 2008 the Abbotsford-Mission Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) was the murder capital of Canada, a rate of 4.7 homicides per 100,000 residents (the Canadian average was 1.8). During that same year, 29% of B.C.'s homicides were gang related. A Statistics Canada report on homicides for the 10 year period from 1999 to 2008 also showed that more than 58% of Abbotsford-Mission homicides were committed with a firearm, the highest percentage of any CMA (ahead of the next closest CMA, Toronto at 44.5%). In 2009 the Abbotsford-Mission CMA was again dubbed the murder capital of Canada (a rate of 5.2 homicides per 100,000 residents - the Canadian average was 1.8). Of those murdered in 2009 were two local high school students, Dilsher Gill (17 years old) and Joseph Randay (18 years old), as well as two other young men, Ryan Richards (19 years old) and Sean Murphy (21 years old). All four were believed to be connected to gang activity, some distant and tenuous.

With the start of the 2009/2010 school year, the Abbotsford Police Department (APD) launched a series of crime prevention initiatives including **OPERATION TARNISH** (a poster series displayed in secondary schools), **OPERATION IMPACT** (a one hour assembly presentation to 6,500+ secondary school students), **OPERATION VERITAS** (a series of short video commercials by APD, shown in secondary schools, posted on YouTube, shown at AHL Abbotsford Heat games), and **OPERATION IMPACT II** (a presentation to 5,500+ middle school students). APD anti-gang messaging, challenging the myth that gangs are as desirable and cool as the media, video games, and music portray them to be, also appeared on jail cell ceilings, projection billboards in Abbotsford, and ice arena boards. This was in addition to the formation of a gang suppression unit and other intervention initiatives, such as violent teen group mediation.

This school year the Abbotsford Police Department launched **OPERATION LODESTAR**, a messaging campaign directed to parents.

Parents are part of the solution.



Operation Tarnish



Operation Impact II



Operation Veritas

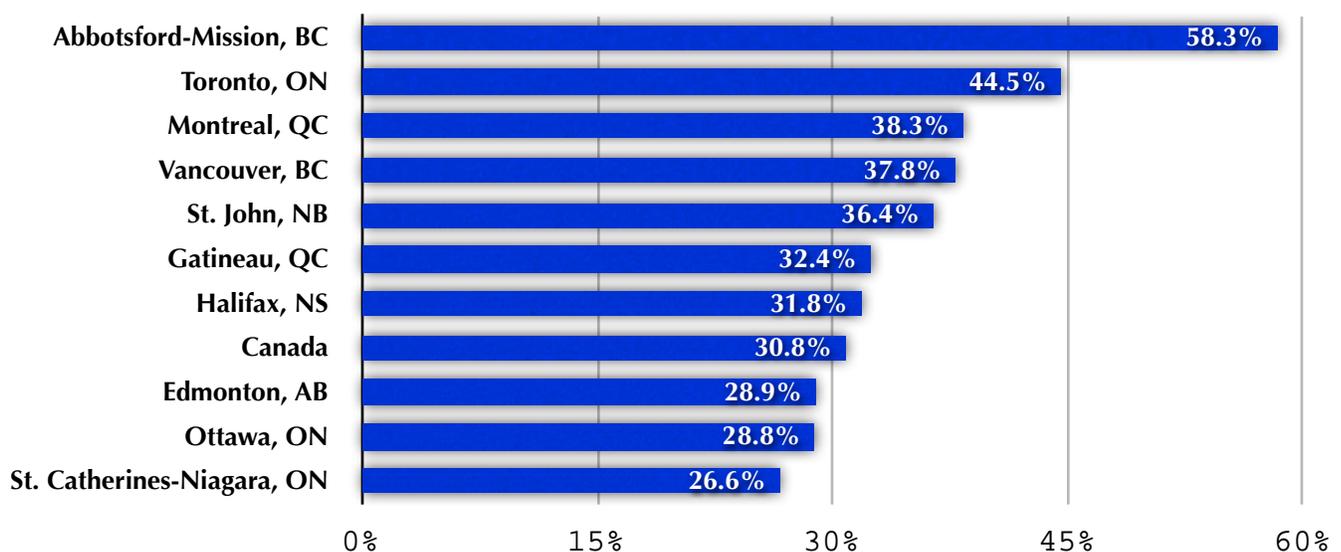
Crime prevention starts at home. Crime education should not be limited to schools and educational institutions where the focus is only on young people. Parents and other caregivers play a crucial role in public safety, and crime prevention should start at an early age. Most parents are good role models and do their best to teach their children right from wrong. But for many children, there is a greater chance of participating in criminal activity because of adverse family conditions or “risk factors”. These experiences in a child’s life can be associated with an increase in problem behaviour, such as gang involvement, drug use, violence, and other criminal or delinquent activity, and work together to increase a child’s chances of getting into trouble.

There are a number of things parents or caregivers can do to buffer the risk of their children engaging in delinquent activity. These protective factors are positive influences that mitigate the impact of risk factors and decrease the likelihood of problem behaviour.

In its simplest terms, children need their parents and guardians to be involved in their growth and development. There are a number of things parents or caregivers can do to mitigate the risk factors leading to criminal behaviour, including:

1. **setting the example**
2. **being informed**
3. **supporting school**
4. **making the rules**
5. **getting involved**

Percentage of homicides by firearm by census metropolitan area, 1999 to 2008



In the ten years spanning 1999 to 2008 the Abbotsford-Mission CMA had the largest percentage of homicides in Canada committed using a firearm. The national average was 30.8%.

Source: Statistics Canada, Spring 2010, Knives and violent crime in Canada, 2008, Catalogue no: 85-002-X, vol. 30 no. 1.

FACT: According to Abbotsford residents, crime is the most important issue facing our community. ¹ People who start offending as children tend to have longer delinquent careers and include more criminal incidents than offenders with later onset. ²

¹ Ipsos Reid, 2010 Citizen Satisfaction Syndicated Study, City of Abbotsford, June 2010.

² Statistics Canada, November 2007, The Development of Police-reported Delinquency Among Canadian Youth Born in 1987 and 1990, Catalogue no. 85-561-MIE, no. 009, p. 59.

1. set the example

What you do matters

Be a good role model for your children. They will do what you do. Model and teach them to take responsibility for their actions. Think about how your behaviour will affect your child.

FACT: Children of parents who do not model positive or responsible behaviour create an environment that increases the likelihood the child will engage in risk-taking behaviour, such as gang involvement. ¹

FACT: In a recent Abbotsford School District Survey, only 25% of students said they had parent(s) and other adults that modeled positive, responsible behaviour. ²

Encourage anti-gang, anti-drug attitudes at home

APD would also like to encourage younger adults who will become parents to think about the issues raised by **OPERATION LODESTAR**. Local post secondary institutions, such as the University of the Fraser Valley, Columbia Bible College, Summit Pacific College, and Spratt-Shaw Community College, support Lodestar. Abbotsford Bar Watch is another community program endorsing Lodestar.

Opportunity:

The adult role model could also be a teacher, neighbour, peer's parent, coach, etc. There are many organizations in Abbotsford looking for mentors and adult role models, such as Big Brother and Big Sisters www.mentoringworks.ca and the Abbotsford Advocacy and Restorative Justice Association www.arjaa.org. Other groups, such as KidsSport Abbotsford www.kidsportabbotsford.ca, provide access to mentorship and guidance from coaches. In addition to introducing children to peer relationships, leisure and recreational programs introduce children to positive adult relationships.

After one middle school presentation a student approached police and reported that they were going to start making better choices and stop using drugs. They provided the phone number of a drug dealer to police.

During the course of the investigation police were directed to an area adjacent to a school property where school was in session and children were present on the playground. Two Abbotsford women, ages 25 and 33, were operating the marijuana dial a dope line and were arrested for trafficking and possession for the purposes of trafficking. Both were parents. Cell phones, \$265 cash and over 100 individual marijuana baggies packaged for sale were seized.

"I'm gonna be like you dad.

You know I'm gonna be like you."

lyrics from the song "Cat's In The Cradle" by Harry Chapin

Children follow your example more than your advice.

"If I'm more of an influence to your son as a rapper than you are as a father ... you got to look at yourself as a parent"

rapper Ice Cube

"Your children will become what you are; so be what you want them to be."

David Bly

1 CSGV Risk and Protective Framework: Building Protective Factors Around Children, Young People and Families to Prevent Gang Involvement, Community Solution to Gang Violence, October 2006.

2 Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth Executive Summary Results from the Search Institute Survey, Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors School District #34, Abbotsford, BC, August 2009 at p. 1-3.

3 Prince's Trust, Executive Summary, 2008.

2. be informed

Know where your children are and what they're doing

Know where your children are, who they are with, what they are doing, and how they are feeling. Avoid thinking that “my child would never join a gang,” regardless of your background.

FACT: There is a strong relationship between low parental monitoring and violent delinquency. ¹

FACT: In a recent Abbotsford School District Survey, only 38% of students said their parents monitored their whereabouts. ²

Be a good observer:

- Find out who their friends are (their real names and families) and if they are a positive influence.
- Find out where they hang out and if it's safe.
- Pay attention to the music they listen to, the video games they play, the television and movies they watch and monitor internet activity; the sites they visit and social networking activities.

Know what your children are doing in and out of school.

“Delinquent behaviour was relatively rare among youth who reported that their parents always knew who they were with when they went out.” ³

1 Statistics Canada, January 2010. Parenting, School Contexts and Violent Delinquency, Catalogue no. 85-561-M, no. 19, p. 12.

2 Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth Executive Summary Results from the Search Institute Survey, Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors School District #34, Abbotsford, BC, August 2009 at p. 1-3.

3 Statistics Canada, September 2007. Youth Self-Reported Delinquency, Toronto, 2006, Catalogue no. 85-002-XPE, Vol. 27, no. 6, p. 7.

- Promote the positive use of media; TV, movies, music, gaming, social networking. Heed the age related ratings of movies and video games.
- If you think your child has something they shouldn't (guns, knives, drugs, etc.) confront them; ask them about it and follow up. If necessary, look through their belongings; it's your house, you're responsible for its activities and contents.
- Learn about gangs and drugs.
- Watch for changes in behaviour and attitude.
- Be a good listener; the more you listen the more your child will talk.

If a police officer speaks to you about your child and their involvement in criminal or delinquent behaviour, don't immediately deny it. Seek the facts. Kids can tell you what you want to hear. Be their parent, not their lawyer.

Things to watch for:

- declining school performance, attendance and/or behaviour
- signs of drug use
- weapons possession
- unexplained possession of money or other items (eg. jewelry)
- staying out late without reason
- hiding items at their home
- displaying an unusual desire for secrecy/ protectiveness in guarding their room
- consistently breaking rules
- drawings or gang symbols on books, clothes, walls, or tattoos
- unusual hand signals to communicate

Source: “Steering Kids Away From Gangs”, Vancouver School Board's YES and EPSY Projects, 2009.

“United Nations gang leader Clay Roueche sentenced to 30 years”

Vancouver Sun, December 16, 2009

FROM THE DESK OF A VETERAN REPORTER

“I do feel badly for parents of gangsters who end up in jail or worse – dead. But I have certainly observed a common thread over the years in my interviews with parents and the Roueche clan is no exception. They take no responsibility for the mess their kid has landed in. They blame the police, the media and everyone one else for their loved one's woes. They ignore the mountains of evidence that have been uncovered on both sides of the border – planes purchased for drug smuggling, coke and pot shipments intercepted, guns found in Clay's Coquitlam apartment – not to mention the mounting death toll of both UN gang members blown away ... and their rivals. For B.C.'s gang problem to be effectively tackled, police and the media need to do their/ our part. But so do parents ... who must get their heads out of the sand and end the culture of denial.” – Kim Bolan, “Clay Roueche's Dad Speaks Out”, The Vancouver Sun, The Real Scoop, August 26, 2008 (online).

From Dad: *“You gotta be proud of him, he never rolled over. ... If the rest of the world had his balls, there wouldn't be any problem. ... There was no sign of them shooting everyday people.”*

“Gangster's parents still proud; Crime groups may be violent, but they don't shoot 'everyday people'”, Ethan Baron. The Province. December 20, 2009, pg. A8.

From Mom: *“I wish I knew. I wish I had some information. We don't know anything. He had been such a good son.” ... Shirley Roueche said she knew nothing about the UN Gang, but just knows the young men as her son's “friends.”*

“UN gang leader a 'loving son missed by daughters': Mom of jailed Clayton Roueche insists he has been 'such a good son'” Kim Bolan. The Vancouver Sun. Vancouver, B.C. June 13, 2008 pg. B1

FROM THE U.S. ATTORNEY

“[Clayton] Roueche ... is the founder and leader of a Canadian gang known as the United Nations Gang (“UN Gang”), which operated primarily in British Columbia. The UN Gang was heavily involved in illegal drug trafficking and had a reputation for employing “extreme violence” to further its activities. ... [I]llegal handguns were found in his vehicle and apartment in Canada. Roueche also routinely surrounded himself with armed guards for protection and ... drove an armored vehicle for protection because of the violent world in which he existed. ... The UN Gang's drug-trafficking involved marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy, and methamphetamine. [The UN Gang's] operations were “vast and sophisticated” and involved participants in Canada, the United States, Mexico, and Central and South America. The operation involved the transportation of drugs through a variety of means including helicopters and aircraft and the use of Blackberries and code to communicate. Nonetheless, the object of these conspiracies was simple—profits from Canadian marijuana exports financed the UN Gang's importation of cocaine for sale in Canada.” – United States v. Roueche, “Government's Sentencing Memorandum,” U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington, Docket No. CR-07-0344 RSL.

3. support school

Place a high value on education

FACT: Children who don't like school, don't think grades are important, and don't want to go far in school are more likely to be involved in aggressive acts. ¹

FACT: In a recent Abbotsford School District Survey, only 18% of students said their parent(s) were actively involved in helping them succeed in school. ²

Support school. What does it mean? It doesn't mean a parent does the school work for their child. It could be:

- Emphasizing the importance of education.
- Knowing how your child is doing; check their grades – no surprises.
- Connecting with a teacher if there is a problem; seeking help.
- Getting them the necessary study and assignment supplies.
- Ensuring their time is not over scheduled.
- Providing computer access if needed.
- Giving them enough sleep. Supplying good nutrition.
- Attending school meetings, meeting with teachers and helping your child develop sound study habits.
- Supplying clean clothing and proper gym attire.
- Checking your attitude towards schooling. Yes, school can be challenging but it's worth it.

FACT: 89% of 18-24 year old men entering a federal correctional facility had not completed high school. 55% had not completed grade 10, while 19% had completed less than grade 8. ³

“Federal offenders tend to be amongst Canada’s most poorly educated.” ³

“He who opens a school door, closes a prison.”

Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

¹ Statistics Canada, May 2001. Problem Behaviour and Delinquency In Children and Youth, Catalogue no. 85-002-XPE, Vol. 21 no. 4, p. 9.

² Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth Executive Summary Results from the Search Institute Survey, Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors School District #34, Abbotsford, BC, August 2009 at p.1-3.

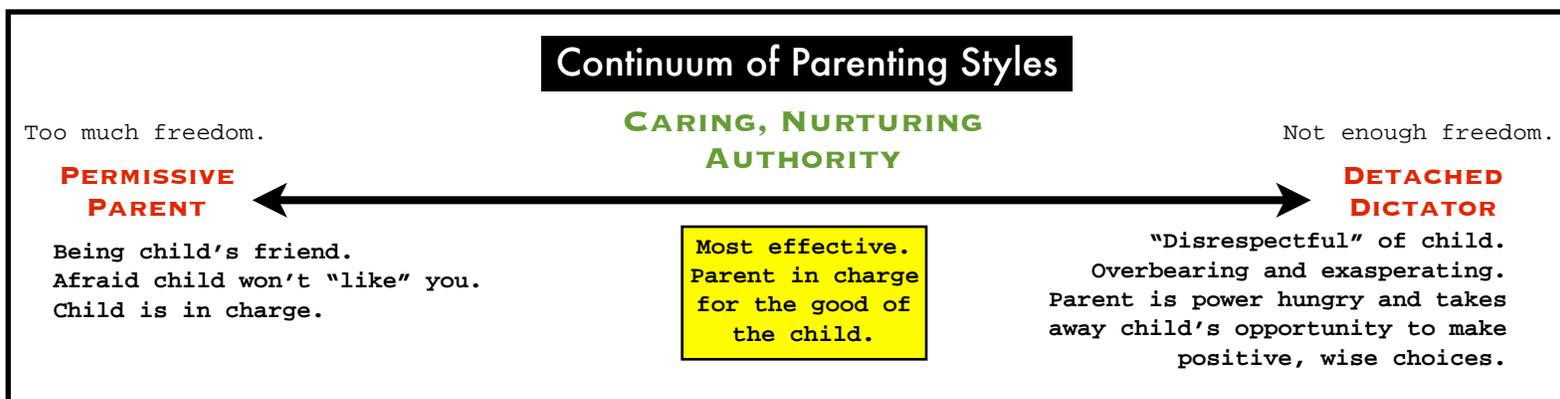
³ Forum on Corrections Research. Roger Boe. Vol 17, No: 1. (2005) Offender Employment.

4. make the rules

Set clear limits and expectations

FACT: In a recent Abbotsford School District Survey, only 38% of students said they had clear family rules and consequences. ¹

- Set clear, reasonable limits and let them know what is expected of them.
- Follow through with discipline if they break the rules – be fair.
- Ask your child what would be fair discipline. Include your child in rules making and consequences. Children are more likely to follow the rules when they understand their reasoning.
- Don't rescue them from the consequences of their decisions. Sometimes the best discipline is to face the consequences. For example, paying for damaged items.
- Be consistent.
- Try to have consequences that remedy the problem. Ask your child what would fix the problem.



"Rules without relationship leads to rebellion."

"Children who experience higher levels of punitive parenting, lower parental nurturance, and higher parental rejection are more likely to report higher levels of aggressive behaviour." ²

Give children responsibility at home. Set limits, establish and consistently maintain acceptable rules and expectations for your children's behaviour. Set clear boundaries for behaviour that enforces structure and rules within the household and reasonable disciplinary actions when rules are violated. Children need guidance.

¹ Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth Executive Summary Results from the Search Institute Survey, Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors School District #34, Abbotsford, BC, August 2009 at p.1-3.

² Statistics Canada, May 2001. Problem Behaviour and Delinquency In Children and Youth, Catalogue no. 85-002-XPE, Vol. 21 no. 4, p. 9.

5. get involved

Look after your child's interests

Look after your child's interest; nurture and support that interest.

FACT: In a recent Abbotsford School District Survey, only 29% of students said they communicate positively with their parent(s) and that they would be willing to seek their parent(s) advice or counsel.¹ In the same survey, only 30% of students said they know how to plan ahead and make choices.

Help children protect themselves. Listen to them. Let them know they can talk to you. Teach them to think for themselves and act responsibly. Children who have good communication with their parents are more likely to ask their advice than turn to peers.

- Praise your children for doing well.
- Teach your children decision making skills – help them make the right choices. Don't solve all their problems for them. Give them a chance to think of solutions. Ask them what they think.
- Explain to your child how gangs can affect them, their family, their friends, and their neighbourhood.
- Give attention to your children. Children need to know they are loved. Offer your child support and affection. Children often spell love T-I-M-E.
- Promote secure attachments to positive parent(s) or family. A child needs to be attached to their parent or caregiver and vice versa. Children do not learn to care about themselves when they feel no one else cares about them.
- Plan family activities and expose your children to a variety of learning experiences.
- Talk to your children about alcohol, drugs and gangs. Don't tolerate cigarette, alcohol or drug use by your children or their friends. Research shows that parental attitudes toward drugs and alcohol are a major

influence on a child's decision-making ability.

- Teach your child how to deal with peer pressure, to think for themselves and to act responsibly.
- Limit screen time (TV and video). Help your child participate in healthy after school and recreational activities. Sports, community clubs, church groups, music, boys and girls clubs, scouting and cadets are examples. Learn what is available in your community. Involvement in pro-social activities decreases the probability of criminal involvement.
- Encourage your child's unique interests.
- Contact parent groups, churches, or community outreach programs for support.

Parents and caregivers need to understand and acknowledge the family level factors correlated with later criminal participation. Police officers often see the end result of years of family dysfunction and are often expected to resolve issues at the moment that have been ongoing for many years. This is unrealistic. However, we all can play a role in crime prevention starting at home. Positive parenting can be an anti-drug, anti-gang, anti-crime prescription.

“Delinquent behaviours were significantly more prevalent for the youths who reported not getting along well with their parents.”¹

You want your child to have the best possible life.

¹ Statistics Canada, September 2007. Youth Self-Reported Delinquency, Toronto, 2006, Catalogue no. 85-002-XPE, Vol. 27, no. 6, p. 7.

FACT According to Abbotsford residents, crime is the most important issue facing our community.^[1]

Parents are part of the solution.

More **FACTS** Worth Thinking About

Some things you can do as a parent or guardian:

1. Set the Example: *What you do matters.*

FACT Children of parents who do not model positive or responsible behaviour are more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviour, such as gang involvement.^[2]

FACT Only 25% of Abbotsford students said they had parent(s) and other adults that modeled positive, responsible behaviour.^[3]

2. Be Informed: *Know where your children are and what they're doing.*

FACT There is a strong relationship between low parental monitoring and violent delinquency.^[4]

FACT Only 38% of Abbotsford students said their parents monitored their whereabouts.^[5]

3. Support School: *Place a high value on education.*

FACT Children who don't like school, don't think grades are important, and don't want to go far in school are more likely to be involved in aggressive acts.^[6]

FACT 89% of men ages 18-24 entering a federal correctional facility had not completed high school.^[7]

FACT Only 18% of Abbotsford students said their parent(s) were actively involved in helping them succeed in school.^[8]

4. Make the Rules: *Set clear limits and expectations.*

Like guard rails on a bridge, rules create safety. Be fair, consistent, and follow through with discipline.

FACT Only 38% of Abbotsford students said they had clear family rules and consequences.^[9]

5. Get Involved: *Look after your child's interests.*

Help children protect themselves. Talk to them about the dangers of gangs and drugs. Let them know they can talk to you. Teach them to think for themselves and act responsibly. If you have good communication with your child they will be more likely to ask your advice than turn to peers.

FACT Only 29% of Abbotsford students said they communicate positively with their parent(s) and that they would be willing to seek their parent(s) advice or counsel. In the same survey, only 30% of students said they know how to plan ahead and make choices.^[10]

Every choice has a consequence.

www.abbypd.ca



References:

[1] Ipsos Reid, 2010 Citizen Satisfaction Syndicated Study, City of Abbotsford, June 2010.

[2] CSGV Risk and Protective Framework: Building Protective Factors Around Children, Young People and Families to Prevent Gang Involvement, Community Solution to Gang Violence, October 2006.

[3, 5, 8, 9, 10] Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth Executive Summary Results from the Search Institute Survey, Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors School District #34, Abbotsford, BC, August 2009 at p. 1-3. 5,384 students in grades 8 to 12 were surveyed.

[4] Statistics Canada, January 2010. Parenting, School Contexts and Violent Delinquency, Catalogue no. 85-561-M, no. 19, p. 12.

[6] Statistics Canada, May 2001. Problem Behaviour and Delinquency In Children and Youth, Catalogue no. 85-002-XPE, Vol. 21 no. 4, p. 9.

[7] Forum on Corrections Research. Roger Boe. Vol 17, No: 1. (2005) Offender Employment.

***“When I grow up,
I want to be just like Daddy.”***



Kids learn what they live.

Parents who do not model positive behaviour put their child at risk.

Be the parent your child needs.

