

Fact sheet: Civil gang injunctions

- Civil gang injunctions (CGI) were created and used in the 1980s in California to stop neighborhood nuisances caused by disruptive activity by gangs.
- Typically, gangs and gang members are specifically listed on the injunction, which is then heard by a judge and put into effect.
- The use of CGIs grew in scope and popularity throughout the '80s and '90s, eventually enjoining entire gangs and creating "safety zones" that comprised whole neighborhoods.
- Gang members are restricted from doing certain activities in the enjoined area, referred to as a "safety zone." These restricted activities usually include intimidation, violence, drug dealing, drinking in public, gang recruitment and associating with other gang members.
- Research on CGIs show varying effects. Many studies show reduction in crime and 911 calls. Others show increases in crime. However, residents typically report feeling safer.
- CGIs also vary in efficacy because gang structure and activity vary across cities and states. Highly territorial, organized gangs are most affected, while more loosely associated gangs are less affected.

The Metro Ideas Project recently completed a literature review on civil gang injunctions. The review is available on our website: <http://metroideas.org/blog/a-survey-of-civil-gang-injunctions/>

If you have additional questions or want more information on the history and efficacy of gang injunctions, please email Joda Thongnopnua, executive director, at joda@metroideas.org.