



## An Interactive Presentation on the Risks in Choosing Where You Belong

Key Character Development Principles: Respect, Responsibility, Integrity

### RESOURCES

<b>Gang Exiting Services</b>			
Breaking the Cycle	(416) 745-1829	<a href="http://www.cantraining.org/BTC/btc.php">http://www.cantraining.org/BTC/btc.php</a>	<i>Breaking the Cycle</i> is all about helping young people avoid getting involved in gangs or getting out of gangs if they are already involved.
Neighbourhood Basketball Association	1-877-360-JAMM (5266)	<a href="http://www.nbacanada.org">www.nbacanada.org</a>	<i>Shoot the Right Shot</i> is an initiative designed to address youth violence and gang conflict by creating opportunities to teach youth how to co-exist with each other.
<b>Health/Addiction Services</b>			
CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health)	1-800-463-6273 (toll free)	<a href="http://www.camh.net">www.camh.net</a>	Canada's largest mental health and addiction teaching hospital, combining clinical care, research, education, policy development and health promotion to help transform the lives of people affected by mental health and addiction issues.
Toronto Public Health	(416) 338-7600	<a href="http://www.toronto.ca/health/">http://www.toronto.ca/health/</a>	TPH works in many ways to improve the overall health of the population and to overcome health inequalities - providing services to individuals and communities, and advocating for public policies that make our city healthier.
<b>Crime/Violence Services</b>			
Victim Services Program of Toronto	(416) 808-7066	<a href="http://victimservicestoronto.com/">http://victimservicestoronto.com/</a>	A non-profit charitable organization dedicated to helping victims of crime and/or sudden tragic circumstance.
CrimeStoppers	1-800-222-TIPS (8477)	<a href="http://www.222tips.com/">http://www.222tips.com/</a>	Crime Stoppers is a partnership of the public, police and media which provides the community with a proactive Program to anonymously assist in solving crime and contributing to an improved quality of life
<b>Multi-Service Organizations</b>			
ESP (Empowered Student Partnership)	(416) 808-7019	<a href="http://www.esponline.ca">http://www.esponline.ca</a>	ESP recognizes that students themselves know best what safety issues are present in their schools. With the assistance of their staff advisors and divisional police officers, students are empowered to plan, organize and execute year-long safety initiatives in their school and local community.
East Metro Youth Services	(416) 438-3697	<a href="http://www.emys.on.ca">http://www.emys.on.ca</a>	A fully accredited multi-service mental health centre for youth 12-24 years of age and their families in East Toronto. Programs and services are organized into 5 areas: Counselling, Education Programs, Residential Services, Community Development, and Developmental Services.
Central Toronto Youth Services	(416) 924-2100	<a href="http://ctys.org">http://ctys.org</a>	CTYS is a children's mental health centre on the forefront of serving youth. We give youth a chance to recreate their lives in an environment where they are challenged and empowered.
Kids Help Phone	1-800-668-6868	<a href="http://kidshelpphone.ca">kidshelpphone.ca</a>	Kids Help Phone counsellors answer calls and online questions from across Canada. No matter what the problem or concern our counsellors are there to provide immediate and caring support, information and referrals to the kids who reach out to us.
211Toronto.ca		<a href="http://www.211toronto.ca">www.211toronto.ca</a>	A directory of over 20,000 community, social, health, and government services.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) Why do you think Sam wanted to join the gang? What do gangs offer to potential members that is appealing and that young people might be lacking in other areas of their lives?
- 2) Membership in an ethnic group is often a factor that glues members in a specific gang together. Did ethnicity play a role in bringing together members of the gang in *DISS*? How or how not? What are some of the reasons that gangs might form based on ethnicity?
- 3) Members of the gang in *DISS* talk about and do drugs in the play. Are drugs and gangs related? What roles do drugs play in gangs?
- 4) How do gangs provide respect and status to their members? Why do the members of gangs need to achieve this respect and status?
- 5) Some people make the case that cultural influences like Hollywood or different types of music influence gang development. Do you agree with this? In what ways does Hollywood or other celebrity culture glamourize drugs and gangs (i.e. make them seem cool)?
- 6) Most serious social issues have deeper root causes. What roles does poverty and unemployment play in gangs and gang membership? In the play, what were some of the root causes for the poverty that Tracy and Sam's family was dealing with?
- 7) In what ways does gender affect whether or how someone participates in a gang? How does Sam's memory of his father influence his idea of manhood? Why doesn't Sam want Tracy involved with the gang? Why do you think she doesn't get involved?
- 8) In the play, Tyrone was very enthusiastic about using a gun in the robbery. Sam and Jesse were hesitant to have a gun involved. What are some reasons that people may want access to guns? What is the link between violence and gangs?
- 9) What rules or norms govern gang members? How are gangs organized? Are there leaders and followers or is everyone equal? What was the hierarchy of the gang in *DISS*?
- 10) What challenges do members of gangs face as a result of their participation? How did being in a gang affect Sam's family and life? What are other ways gangs affect member's lives?
- 11) What is the reaction of families to their children's involvement in a gang? What was Maizie's strategy? What strategies would work better?
- 12) What can we do to prevent our friends from getting involved? What can we do as a community to prevent young people from wanting to be involved in gangs?
- 13) In the cafeteria, Sam tells Tracy not to inform the principal about Tyrone and Jesse's behaviour. How is this theme of "snitching" followed throughout the play? How is snitching regarded in our culture? Is there ever a good time to notify someone?

### Character Breakdown:

Maizie: Mother to Sam and Tracy

Sam: Son of Maizie, Brother of Tracy, Friends with Tyrone and Jesse

Tracy: Daughter of Maizie, Sister of Sam, interested in Jesse

Tyrone: Friends with Sam, Interested in Tracy, a bit of a hot-head

Jesse: Friends with Sam and Tyrone, Gang "Leader"