

Corrections Hosts Annual Gang Conference

Colby Gallagher, WLTX 7:58 p.m. EDT September 15, 2014

SCDC is hosting a two-day conference to discuss statewide gang tactics in the hopes of staying one step ahead.

Law enforcement members throughout the state are trying to put a stop to gang crimes during a two-day conference in Orangeburg.

Chief Mike Adams with the Orangeburg Department of Public Safety says gang presence in South Carolina is no secret to law enforcement.

"Often times these kids or these people have really nothing for them at home," said Chief Adams. "Even if they haven't been brought up in generational gang life, a lot of these kids are looking for something and unfortunately these gangs give them a sense of being in a sense of belonging."

With constantly evolving member tactics, officers say they have to be proactive in order to stay ahead.

"That's what this is about, us getting together and putting some of our plans in focus," said Orangeburg Police Chief Keith Parks.

Chief Parks says Orangeburg officials requested the meetings in their area to address the issues plaguing smaller communities.

"Like we travel, gangs travel. Sometimes you go to some of the smaller, rural areas and that's where they like to set up shop at because there's not a huge law enforcement presence," said Chief Parks. "That's why this conference, as well as other conferences across our state are so important, because we're able to get here, we're able to network and share and discuss details about the intel that our neighbors are dealing with."

Officials say what once could be determined by colored clothing or hand symbols is now more involved. By sharing new ways of how to validate member status, law enforcement hopes to put a stop to gang crimes before they're committed.

"Network with everybody that you can because that's the only way that you're going to have a significant impact," said Chief Adams.

The group plans to talk about different topics over the course of the conference such as social media, tattoos and more.

