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## Officials Discuss Ways To Reduce Gang Violence

April Baer | June 14, 2012 12:09 p.m. | Updated: June 14, 2012 12:17 p.m. | Portland, OR



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The summer months may leave teenagers without much to do, but Portland officials say gang violence will not be tolerated.

Mayor Sam Adams assembled leaders from regional law enforcement Thursday to discuss what they'll do to stem a rising tide of shootings.



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April Baer / OPB

Portland Police Chief Mike Reese spoke at Thursday's discussion of ways to prevent gang-related violence.

Gang-related violence has driven crime stats up in the city. As of June 8, police had responded to 57 gang-related shootings. That's well beyond the number at this time last year.

Mayor Adams and Commissioner Nick Fish laid out how the parks system will try to maximize opportunities for children and teens, both in terms of summer jobs and activities.

Gang Outreach worker Royal Harris added that every adult in the city has a role to play.

"Opening your eyes, acknowledging people, saying hello. Showing a genuine interest and concern in the kids around you. One of the things that repeatedly come out of the mouths of young people is they seem to be invisible to adults," Harris said.

Police say they believe economic hard times are feeding the surge of youth violence. They say other American cities, like Seattle and Chicago, have reported a similar surge.

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