



Contact: Supervisor Zach Friend, 831-454-2200

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Criminal Justice Council of Santa Cruz County (CJC) is pleased to present an important discussion highlighting the role of women and girls in gangs.

Created over thirty years ago, the CJC is dedicated to reducing youth involvement in gangs by fostering coordination and cooperation between government, non-profit, educational and criminal justice partners and focusing on prevention and intervention as well as reentry programs.

This year, the CJC is focused on an issue rarely addressed by local communities: the role of women and girls in gangs. On Sept. 27th, 2019, the CJC will host a *free* conference at Twin Lakes Church in Aptos for criminal justice and community service providers, including experts on the role of women and girls in gangs and young women with lived experience in gangs.

The keynote speaker for "The Role of Women and Girls in Gangs" is Mississippi State University sociologist Dr. Tara Sutton, who will discuss her work on this subject and insights into the dynamics of female involvement in gangs. Local criminal justice or community service providers interested in attending this free event can register at surveymonkey.com/r/santacruzajc.

"This event will provide Criminal Justice Council partners and the community with valuable insights into a widely overlooked phenomenon. We hope this event can provide local partners valuable insights that will be useful in diverting women and girls away from gangs," Santa Cruz County Supervisors and Criminal Justice Council Chair Zach Friend said.

"We often focus on boys and men involved in gangs, but the impacts of gang lifestyles on girls and women can equal, if not exceed, those of their male counterparts," Watsonville Police Chief David Honda said. "I invite everyone interested in this topic and gang violence prevention to join us."

WHAT: The Role of Women and Girls in Gangs Symposium

WHEN: Sept. 27th, 2019 8 a.m.-noon

WHERE: Twin Lakes Church, Monschke Hall, 2701 Cabrillo College Dr., Aptos

ABOUT THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL

The Criminal Justice Council includes representatives from local law enforcement including the County Sheriff and local police departments, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, local elected representatives, Santa Cruz County Superior Court, the Santa Cruz County District Attorney, Santa Cruz County Public Defender, Santa Cruz County Chief Probation Officer, Santa Cruz County Office of Education, Cabrillo College and local non-profits.