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Police arrest 31 in teen gang crackdown

May 24, 2009

Gangs, car hoons and graffiti vandals have been targeted in a police crackdown on juvenile crime in Sydney's west.

Police conducted Operation Lorn on Friday and Saturday in response to a recent spate of crime and anti-social behaviour in Penrith and St Marys.

Police arrested 31 people during the two-night crackdown for offences including car theft, assault, robbery, graffiti and illegal street racing.

Three teenage boys, allegedly members of a street gang called the Fulltime Addlays, were among those charged.

Two 17-year-olds and a 15-year-old were charged with assault, resisting arrest, robbery and break and enter.

Nine youths belonging to the St Clair Crew and two from the gang Bombin' Local Carriage were issued with warnings over graffiti, police said.

Inspector Kevin Doods from St Marys Local Area Command said the operation had been a success and police would continue clamping down on local street gangs.

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"We won't take a backward step. Police will maintain a strong presence to prevent antisocial behaviour and graffiti vandalism," he said in a statement on Sunday.

Police have shamed the young offenders by confronting them with their parents and made them clean up the graffiti.

The parents of many youths caught spray painting buildings in the area didn't even know their children were out of the house, police said.

"We found it surprising when we confronted the parents. Some weren't even aware their children were involved in such criminal activity," Insp Dodds said.

"We will continue to work with parents in averting juveniles from criminal and antisocial behaviour through our Youth Liaison Officers and School Liaison Officers."

Police searched 136 youths loitering around graffiti hot spots, including patrols of 48 trains.

Officers handed out a total of 57 traffic infringement notices during the crackdown, including two drivers charged for alleged burnouts.

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