

Watch over your children, police tell parents

By Emmanuel Santa Maria Chin
emmanuel@mmail.com

PETALING JAYA — After a major crackdown in the heart of the city which saw almost 300 loitering youngsters picked up by police, parents have been warned to take more responsibility over their children and their whereabouts.

City police chief Commissioner Datuk Amar Singh said the responsibility lay with the parents, as the negative effects from such activities outweighed the positives. “We sometimes trust society too much, not taking into account the potential criminal activities these youngsters can get involved in,” he said.

“If you are not aware and leave them on their own, you don’t know what they might get involved in.”

On Saturday evening, 279 youngsters, including 83 girls, aged 10 to 19 were rounded up by Dang Wangi police at the KLCC park while they loitered

in the area.

Several pocket knives, a brass knuckle and drugs were seized from the wannabe teenage gangsters.

The youngsters are believed to be involved in muggings, immoral activities and drug abuse.

Amar said public loitering and mixing with the wrong crowd would result in the youth getting involved in social ills, such as drug addiction and gang affiliations.

“With the wrong company they can be easily be pressured into joining the *mat rempits* or end up becoming street thugs,” he said.

He said the best way to overcome this was to include youth into more family-oriented activities.

Community Policing Malaysia founder Kuan Chee Heng said parents should not use their careers as an excuse to neglect their children.

He said many parents blamed the current economic situation for their lack of family time.

“It is easy to lure youngsters into a life

of crime, as they can be pressured by their peers into becoming delinquents,” he said.

Kuan said the hardest task was not avoiding these negative influences, but rather the rehabilitation process involved once they left this lifestyle.

“If they are addicted to drugs, the treatment can take years for a mistake that was avoidable to begin with,” he said.

“They would also find it hard to exit from gangs.”

He suggested that in some serious cases the parents should be investigated by police for negligence.

“Authorities can look at the human aspect and take their situation into consideration, but a strong message must be sent out,” he said.

The raid on Saturday uncovered the re-emergence of skinheads, punk culture, and the growing popularity of drug-influenced ravers.

Police carried out the raid after receiving reports about them disturbing and threatening the safety of the public and tourists.