

## Graffiti & Tagging



Graffiti reduces property values and tells criminals that residents don't care about their neighborhood.

Gangs use graffiti to mark territory, send messages and intimidate rival gangs, but only 10 percent of graffiti is thought to be gang-related. The remaining 90 percent is thought to be done by young vandals otherwise known as "taggers".

Most taggers are between the ages 14 and 17. They often tote paint cans and other tools in backpacks.

The content of the markings are not at issue. Artistic value is not at issue. Nor is freedom of speech. Marking of property without the consent of the owner is Graffiti. Graffiti is a crime.

### Warning Signs for Parents & Teachers

- Sudden change in friends.
- Using a nickname or attaching a prefix.
- Suddenly purchasing or wanting clothing of one color.
- May have paint on their clothing, hands, or have graffiti displayed on their books or the walls in their room.

### Things you can do to prevent graffiti

Be aware of suspicious activity in your area. Call 9-1-1 if anyone looks suspicious in alleys, parks, or along the I-5 freeway noise wall. Give the police a good description of the persons involved and any vehicles or direction of travel.

Get involved in your community.

Plant trees or other vegetation near a graffiti plagued wall. This will help prevent access.

Install lighting in areas that are dark. Motion activated lights are affordable and easy to install, especially above garages and in alleyways.

Report graffiti to the police department before you remove it. This helps build cases against vandals. Most taggers sign their work and target the same area.

Remove graffiti as quickly as possible. The goal is to deny the vandal the chance to display their work.

Start a Neighborhood Watch group and patrol the area.

