



## **ARE YOU THE PARENT OF A TAGGER?**

As you drive to work each morning, you see the eyesore created by the overnight activities of the graffiti vandals in your neighborhood. Do you think of your own teenage son or daughter and ask yourself the question “Is my son or daughter involved in this criminal activity?”

Well, maybe you should! If you think that your kids could not possibly be taggers, think again. Taggers are generally members of small loosely knit groups of adolescents, many from middle and upper income families, whose primary source of entertainment and excitement is the vandalism of private property with “Tagger Graffiti”. Your child could be a member of one of these groups.

Some indications that your child may be a tagger are:

- a. Your child stays out until early morning or all night.
- b. Your child frequently wears a large back pack or baggy pants. Clothing may be paint stained. Packs and loose clothing can be used to hold paint cans or carry graffiti tools.
- c. Your child carries tools used for etching glass, like, hole punches, rocks, glass cutters, screw drivers, awls, metal scribes or other sharp object. Your child may not be able to explain exactly why he or she has this in their possession.
- d. Your child has taken up the hobby of ink making.
- e. Your child has large quantities of magic markers, shoe polish containers, or other devices used for drawing.
- f. Your child sleeps during the day and is active outdoors at night.
- g. Your child has paint on the tips of his/her fingers.
- h. Your child frequently has permanent marker stains on his/her hands.
- i. Your child has graffiti magazines, flyers, a “piece book”, or other portfolios of tags.
- j. Your child possesses large quantities of postal stickers, “My Name is” stickers or other large stickers used for “sticker tagging” or “Slap tagging”.
- k. Your child is in possession of graffiti paraphernalia such as markers, etching tools, spray paint, bug spray and starch cans. The bug spray cans are used to make tags that will only show up in the rain.
- l. Your child is in the age group statistically associated with tagging, ages 12-18 (sometimes older).
- m. Your child has graffiti displays or tags on clothing, binders, backpacks, and the underside of the bill of their hat.
- n. Tags you see on the walls of your neighborhood are seen on your child’s walls, books and clothing.
- o. Your child is frequently deceitful about his/her activities.
- p. Your child has quantities of paint I cans but does not have the income to afford it.
- q. Your child associates with other children with the traits described above.



Obviously, each of these factors, alone, does not necessarily point to tagging; however, together they make a convincing circumstantial case. As a parent you have a legal and moral responsibility to find out what your child is doing when he or she is not at home. If you do not know, you should find out for the child's sake, as well as your own, since you may be civilly or criminally liable for your failure to control the child's behavior.

### **Definition of Graffiti:**

Generally, graffiti can be defined as **the defacing of public or private property by painting, drawing, writing, etching or carving without the property owner's permission.**

The offence of Mischief found in the Criminal Code of Canada gives police the power to lay charges for graffiti related incidents.

### **Section 430(1) CCC states everyone commits mischief who willfully:**

- a. **destroys or damages property;**
- b. **renders property dangerous, useless, inoperative or ineffective;**
- c. **obstructs, interrupts or interferes with the lawful use, enjoyment or operation of property; or**
- d. **obstructs, interrupts or interferes with any person in the lawful use, enjoyment or operation of property.**

**Penalty Section 430(4) states everyone who commits mischief in relation to property, other than property described in subsection (3):**

- a. **is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years; or**
- b. **is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction.**



## **DIFFERENT TYPES OF GRAFFITI (Main Charlottetown Types)**

- a. *Hip Hop or Wild Style*: Sophisticated, often pre-planned cartooned murals, which incorporate a tag. Lettering is commonly done in bubble or three-dimensional form. Uses many different colours. Wild style often employs the use of arrows.
- b. *Tag or Signature*: Currently the most common graffiti in Saskatoon. This is the individual assumed name of graffiti writer, a “Tagger”. The Tagger will then practice their tag and develop unique style to their written tag. The tag will be written on an object with a marker tool. Goal is fame within the graffiti culture. Taggers join crews for companionship and protection.

## **What is a “Tag”**

A Graffiti Tag is basically a signature, an individual identifier adopted by writers which the tagger will be known by in the graffiti culture. They develop an individual style to differentiate their tag.

## **WHY ARE TAGS UNIQUE**

Choosing a tag is not taken lightly. This tag will be with you for your life in the graffiti culture. The need for fame, recognition, respect and all the other things diminishes if someone else gets the credit.

## **WHAT IS A TAGGER**

A tagger is simply an individual who vandalizes property with graffiti without permission. For many, tagging is a sport and to others it becomes a way of life. At its roots, modern graffiti is still about words and writing words on surfaces with various substances. Not all taggers are artists or painters and that is why most accomplished taggers call themselves *Writers*.

## **WHY DO THEY TAG**

Fame within the graffiti sub-culture, a means of expressing their opinions, attitudes, emotions and doing this outside the norm comprising of 4 main elements:

- a. **Recognition:**
  - Low self esteem.
  - Peer recognition.
  - For recognition, a distorted view of fame.
  - See graffiti in the community and want to try it.



**b. Anti-Authority:**

A way to rebel against authority

To get out their aggression

**c. Artistic Ability:**

Some are very talented artistically and this is their way to express themselves and develop and practice their ability.

Some think they are artistic.

**c. Addition:**

Becomes an obsessive-compulsive disorder. They are addicted to *Getting Up* which is tagging throughout the community, as well as to paints, markers and tagging.