

What to do?

REMEMBER

THE FOUR R'S OF GRAFFITI

Read – Read the graffiti to determine the gang(s) involved. If you are unable to interpret what is observed, find someone who can. Frequently, a great deal of intelligence can be gathered, such as the nicknames or monikers of gang members, warnings, threats to other gangs, availability of drugs, pending gang wars, and more.

Report - Educators, parents and other concerned citizens should report found graffiti to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Record – Use a still or video camera to record the graffiti for possible later use. If graffiti continues to appear after removal, the photographic record may serve as a history of the efforts made to combat the problem.

Remove – Remove ALL graffiti as soon as possible after it is discovered, reported and recorded. When removing graffiti, paint the entire wall, post, sign, etc. on which the graffiti was found. Studies have shown that "spot" painting to blot out the graffiti is not as effective for the permanent discouragement of graffiti as is covering the entire subject area.



Jeffrey R. Gahler
SHERIFF

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

45 South Main Street, Bel Air, Maryland 21014
410-838-6600
www.harfordsheriff.org

Gang Graffiti



www.harfordsheriff.org

**Gang Suppression Unit
(410)612-1681**

What is Gang Graffiti?

Spray painting graffiti or "tagging" is one of the main ways that gangs communicate. Graffiti is often the first indication that gang activity is present in your community. Graffiti is the gang's newspaper, a way to spread information about meetings, drug dealing, turf locations and serves to mark the gang's power and status. It marks territorial boundaries and serves, as a warning to other gangs that the area marked with unique signs and symbols is the territory or "turf" of a particular gang. Graffiti is used for intimidation and recruitment by gangs. It may also be an advertisement for the sale of drugs or a memorial to a fallen fellow gang member. Graffiti can also disrespect other gangs, provoking violent fights that threaten innocent people.

Graffiti and other gang-related vandalism can destroy neighborhoods and cause damage that is a financial burden to everyone. Graffiti should not be tolerated in any community. A ZERO TOLERANCE approach is best. Studies have shown in many cases that if graffiti is left unchecked and not removed, more and more graffiti will appear.

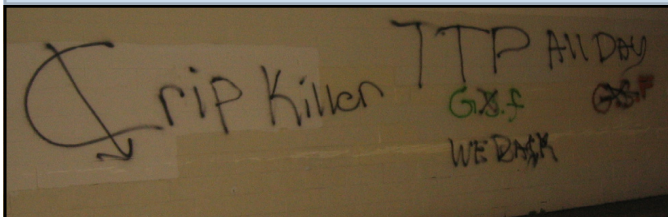
Note: Not all graffiti is gang related. Individuals known as "taggers" paint graffiti on buildings, fences, signs, highways, overpasses, and even trucks and railway cars. These individuals enjoy the reputation it creates and the thrill of the vandalism

DECIPHERING GANG GRAFFITI

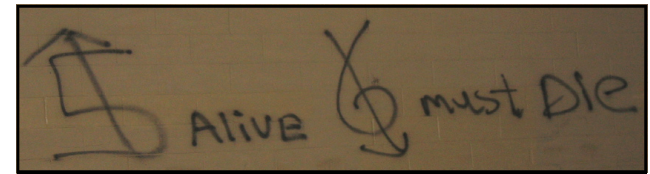
Gang graffiti is typically color specific to the gang, usually "stick letters," and may contain crossed out letters (to show disrespect or threats to other gangs). You may also see the letter "K" behind a gang name or abbreviation (stands for "gang name" killer), five or six pointed stars, and numbers (WMD or 23-13-4 which are the corresponding letter in the alphabet).



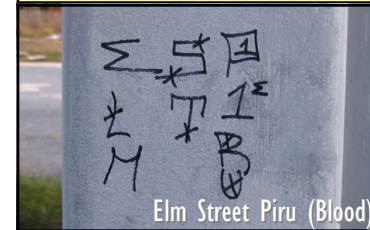
The graffiti seen above was made by a member of the Crips. LOC commonly used by members of the Crips stands for "Love of Crip." The six pointed star commonly referred to as the Star of David is used by the Crips. As seen in the above example, Crips use the number six which corresponds with the six pointed star. "BK" or "Blood Killer" seen in the above example is used to disrespect the Bloods.



Notice in the example above, the first thing seen is "Crip Killer" and the letter "C" crossed out with an arrow pointing down. This was done by someone who does not like members of the "Crip" gang. The crossed out C with an arrow pointing down is showing disrespect to the "Crips." TTP stands for Tree Top Piru which is a sub group of the "Bloods." "GSF" stands for "Goon squad female" who associate themselves with the "Crips" "GSF" has been crossed out to show disrespect. The last thing is "We Back" with the "C" crossed out again showing disrespect.



The above graffiti was also done by a member of the Bloods. The number 5 is commonly used by the Bloods, and the number 6 is used by the Crips. The up arrow through the 5 is showing respect to the Bloods while the down arrow through the 6 is showing disrespect to the Crips.



To the right is an example of Crip graffiti. "Blue Diamondz" is a set, or clique of the Crips and there is a slash through the B showing disrespect to the Bloods. Notice the letter C with the up arrow repeated throughout the graffiti. This demonstrates respect to the Crips. Writing the word "Fucc" was not a mistake. The author and other members of the Crips will not write words with "ck" because it abbreviates "Crip Killer," instead they will use the letters "cc" in place of "ck". "Slob" is commonly used by the Crips as a derogatory word for a member of the Bloods. The Star of David and the pitch fork with the number 6 are all used various cliques within the Crips.

