



Tagging/Vandalism Prevention: Tips for Parents!

Graffiti is the most common form of property damage (35%) reports the Bureau of Justice Statistics and Phoenix, AZ spends \$6 million annually on graffiti cleanup, according to the Graffiti Hurts organization. The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) reminds parents that most tagging/vandalism occur in Anthem when students are out of school for vacations or holidays and between the hours of 3-6 p.m. or after dark.

How can parents help prevent tagging and vandalism in Anthem?

First, be aware of the facts if your child is male between the ages of 12-18 they are in the group statistically associated with tagging.

Look in their clothes, hats, backpacks, shoes and bedroom for signs of tagging. Many taggers also write their initials (hidden in an "artistic form" or symbols on the rims of their hats, sides of tennis shoes, on backpacks or rear pockets.

Notice if they wear pants with deep pockets or carry a large backpack or gym bag to hide the markers, spray cans or other tools need for tagging and check these items regularly. Kids don't need their backpacks when going out after school hours, so check your children's bags and pockets.

Know where your kids are after school hours or when you are at work. Follow-up with the parent whose house they tell you they are going, get a specific locations versus, "I'm going to the park," and check-up on them periodically.

Lock up shoe polish, sharpies, spray paint and paint.

Question your child when you see paint, shoe polish stains or marker ink on their fingers. Check with the art teacher at school when the stains are from a "school project."

Enforce a curfew and follow through with the consequences if they are late! Maricopa Country curfew is enforced throughout Anthem.

Keep your child involved with community activities. Join in Anthem clean-up days and community events. If children have a personal stake in the community they will take responsibility in the protection of property.

Educate your child on the laws of the country and state laws on vandalism and reinforce the policy of consequences for their actions.

When you see graffiti, use that as a means to have an open discussion about tagging and vandalism. Emphasize the "actions of a few hurt the community as a whole."

To learn about graffiti and what you can do to prevent it, go to www.graffitihurts.org we all support each other through education, neighborhood watches, family and friends so take pride in our Anthem community and help prevent vandalism.