

## HOW TO SUPPORT GRAFFITI

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

#### “How can I get graffiti artists to beautify my property?”

- Painting the sides of your building, garage door, walls and fences a light color, such as white, cream, or light blue will give graffiti artists a nice base coat to work with.

Remember that graffiti artists' work in a lot of ways like traditional master painters, they start with the base and build up their paintings layer by layer.

- Put a small sign in your window that says “I Support Graffiti.”

This will tell artists that you are a friend and they will want to do their best work on your property.

#### “I have noticed that when the lighting around my property is bright at night graffiti writers don't come around much. Why is this?”

- Unfortunately most city and state governments have yet to realize the value of graffiti art to youth, community and our society in general. This means that they are actually trying to arrest graffiti writers for their art! Until these governments straighten themselves out it is best to allow the artists to work quietly and unseen in the dark cover of night.
- Security systems and surveillance cameras are a real hindrance to local artists. Disarm and disable all cameras if you want to maintain a vibrant street culture in your town.



#### “Since some of my more close-minded neighbors began to call the police on graffiti artists, I feel that writing graffiti in my neighborhood has lost its appeal. What can I do about this?”

- Talk to your neighbors! It is estimated that U.S. municipalities combined spend around \$15 billion a year covering graffiti, think of

what else that money could be used for? Ask your neighbors whether they want that \$15 billion dollars to cover graffiti or to build housing, hospitals and schools?

- Ask your neighbors whether they would rather have the neighborhood

youth working on artwork or turning to more anti-social activity like drug dealing or mugging people?

#### “How do I keep the police from interfering with my local graffiti artists?”

- Start a local “cop watch” system. There is nothing more frustrating to a graffiti writer than an active police graffiti squad that goes unchecked. This seriously decreases the chances for a beautiful and colorful neighborhood.
- Go to your local community policing meetings and tell them that you enjoy and value the local graffiti, and that you feel the police would be better off spending their time tracking down real menaces like corporations that are breaking labor and environmental laws or corrupt public officials that are embezzling public monies.

**M**isguided police departments and graffiti abatement programs are attempting to deter future artists with frequent and harsher arrests and prosecutions. Fortunately we can prevent these efforts from having long-term impact on the amount of graffiti we see on the streets. Our young people need to be attracted to graffiti; they need to understand and see it as a tool and as a positive means of expression. Young artists need to be encouraged to step to the forefront and become more serious as others become tired and burnt out from the uphill battle of beautifying our nation's neighborhoods. It is increasingly important for our young people to take up graffiti and to grow up in a graffiti friendly environment. A graffiti writer knows their neighborhood like the back of their hand, this relationship to their surroundings is more intimate than the average person, for our communities to thrive we need young people to build these connections.

#### YOU ARE THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR PROGRAM

**I**t is up to ordinary citizens like you to help us end the madness that's called graffiti abatement. It is you talking to your neighbors, encouraging the youth and keeping the police at bay that is at the base of empowered and beautiful communities that understand and respect their youth artists.

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[www.counterproductiveindustries.com/gbgr](http://www.counterproductiveindustries.com/gbgr)  
[graffiti@counterproductiveindustries.com](mailto:graffiti@counterproductiveindustries.com)