



## OFFENDER ENGAGEMENT – A VITAL TURNING POINT

While some may think that their offenders are only kids who do a few tags here and there and its just a phase or a simple rite of passage to adult hood, it needs to be stressed this is not the case.

For the most part your offenders are either in the later years of school, many won't be at school any longer and for the most part the tags you see dotted around will equate to many tens of thousands of total damage throughout your city.

When we are engaged, we invite Police from other successful cities to speak to your Police as a courtesy or at least make contact. The interaction when an offender is detained is potentially one of the most important steps as to whether that offender will cease or simply laugh the interaction off and happily continue on.

In the past offenders caught were quite often let off with a warning and those offenders were then discovered to be the cities worst. The mutual discussion with the Police who have secured shut downs use a special operating procedure which bears results.

No one ends up in jail and typically a first time offender will be placed on a good behaviour bond. It cannot be stressed enough though that the special interaction which engages certain key elements holds incredible weight to ensure the damage stops immediately and without question.

Very young offenders are treated differently of course and it is up to the discretion of the officer as to what comes next. Typically a warning and caution with parental involvement.

For the hard cases of repeat offenders who simply continue again and again which are normally a smaller percentage, unfortunately they find themselves in a situation that after years of repeat offending they end up with hefty fines and penalties and potential civil action.

The station operating procedures and MOU's created within Police circles for our program are well received and hold weight in dealing with the offenders fairly, justly and in a manner that stops the issues at the source.

Using our equipment is akin to placing 4, 8, 12 officers in the various known hot spots without Police actually having to waste patrol time which in turn brings the results and attention only when an offence is in progress.

For those who are youth resource focussed it is important to appreciate that although their focus is on youth and their well being, the program if considered carefully actually accelerates that departments ability to engage with these offenders and youth each and every time. As suggested previously, most youths who are offenders will not engage in a typical Council run program or event, so this course could also open up a whole new level of interactive possibilities and options for that department.

For most however they recognise and identify with the recent statistics that those who are detained are not the type who are having a bad period in life. They are simply the small percentage that enjoy wreaking damage, starting bin fires, and generally disrupting and destroying public property for kudos and plain fun.