

## Program teaches graffiti vandals how to harness their talent and make money



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Virtual graffiti software such as [YrWall](#) is one way to provide urban artists with an outlet for their talent without vandalising people's property. Similarly, California-based [Streetcraft LA](#) is an outreach project that aims to help youths divert their creative impulses into products that could earn them a profit instead of a trip to the police station.

The organization operates in the low-income area of Wilmington, where a type of graffiti known as tagging has become a problem. Streetcraft LA hopes to encourage youngsters who commit this type of vandalism to use their artistic talent in ways that won't land them in jail – which could affect their opportunities later in life. Instead, the initiative is offering kids the skills and facilities to put their art onto products such as t-shirts, skateboards and even furniture, which are then sold in the Streetcraft store. Profit from each item sold is then split between the organization and its young creators. The artists are also helped in devising their own marketing strategies, helping them to continue to sell their goods once they graduate from the program.

Streetcraft LA is a social enterprise that helps young people see worth in their own talent, saving them from the risk of obtaining criminal records and offering real monetary rewards for their efforts. Graffiti is a world-wide problem, so is this one to emulate in your community?

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