

CHOICES

Scenario 4

It's art, isn't it?

Your pal Warren hands you a spray can and says, "There's a blank wall behind the shops. You're good at drawing. Let's do some tags tonight! I'll show you how. Then you can be a cool dude, like me. And anyway, it's art, isn't it?"

What should you do?

A You say, "But it's against the law. And we might get caught. I'll stick to drawing at home."

What next?

Warren sees you the next day and says, "You missed out on a great time, man. And I didn't get caught." He sneers.

"I think I need a new friend – someone who's not a scaredy cat."

You feel that something is horribly wrong.

He has decided to let you go because you didn't want to do something that was illegal. What sort of friend is that?

Maybe it's best that this happened and you saw him for what he is.

Think about it

Friendship is important. But so is staying on the right side of the law.

Why is doing unauthorised graffiti against the law! Because it is property damage. Graffiti removal – paying for the people who have to scrub off every bit of the paint on walls – costs \$15 to \$18 billion per year in the USA.

When a county gives permission to a proper artist to do 'street art', it's different. That will make the city better. Illegal graffiti is just scrawls.

How would you like to be caught, and forced to scrub it all off? Yet by doing it you've forcing others to clean up your mess.

It's not a victimless crime.

Do you want to look at another scenario involving a friend who tempts you? (Go to 1)

Do you want to try the scenario again? (Go to 4)

B You decide you can't say no. You take the can and go with him.

What next?

You cover the wall in tags. In the process, you get paint all over your jacket.

You get home late at night. You try to sneak up to bed.

"Is that you?"

Your Mom comes into the room.

She sees immediately what you've being doing.

"How could you? You *do* know that he's part of a gang? I'm so disappointed in you."

Think about it

There are two worrying things about Warren's temptation. They are both lies.

First is the idea that we can do whatever we want, if we feel like it. So if you feel like covering someone's else's nice clean wall with your scrawls, that's OK – because you have the urge and no one can stop you. This is a bit like saying that if I feel like stealing or breaking something I have the right to do it, if I can get away with it. No you don't. If everyone stole or broke things, society would be in chaos.

Second, Warren is arguing that it's a form of art, and therefore justified. But you're not a professional artist. No one has asked you to paint because you're a great talent. You haven't spent years practising so that people love what you draw. This is just colored squiggles on a wall – not art.

Warren is a tough, as your Mom knows. You should stay well away from him.

Do you want to look at another scenario about facing challenges? (Go to 8)

Do you want to try this scenario again? (Go to 4)