

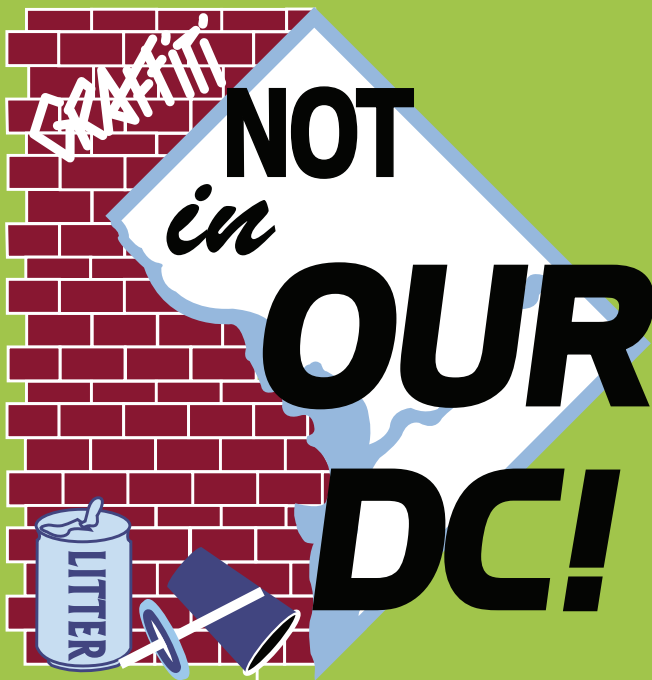
# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

Sponsored by the DC Department of Public Works



## RESOURCE GUIDE



- Fact Sheet
- Parent Tip Sheet
- Action Plan for 8- to 13-year-olds
- Action Plan for 14- to 19-year-olds
- Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions



**"The Preferred Choice"**



**Connect with Kids**

# Character Traits

All Connect with Kids  
programs address these  
26 character traits:

Caring/Compassion

Civility

Cooperation

Courtesy

Freedom

Helpfulness

Honor

Justice/Fairness

Loyalty

Peace

Respect

Self-Control

Tolerance

Citizenship

Conviction

Courage

Diligence

Generosity

Honesty

Integrity

Kindness

Patience

Perseverance

Responsibility

Togetherness

Trustworthiness



Connect with Kids

# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

Research proves that clean neighborhoods — those free of scattered litter, trash and graffiti — make residents feel safer and better about their community. Clean communities help residents have a sense of ownership, pride and responsibility, attract new businesses and keep sanitation costs under control. What can we do to prevent litter and graffiti? The time has come for all of us — parents, educators, residents and kids of all ages — to stand up, take action and keep DC litter-and graffiti-free, proclaiming **Not in *OUR* DC! Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean.**

**This resource guide accompanies the video entitled “Not in *OUR* DC! Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean” and includes:**

- Fact Sheet
- Parent Tip Sheet
- Action Plan for 8- to 13-year-olds
- Action Plan for 14- to 19-year-olds
- Discussion/  
Self-Reflection Questions



**“The Preferred Choice”**





# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Fact Sheet



#### WHAT WE KNOW

- The District of Columbia spends about \$20 million of its annual solid waste budget to pick up litter. (DC Department of Public Works, 2008)
- DC DPW will spend about \$1 million to remove graffiti, supply residents and businesses with graffiti removal kits, and fund murals and anti-graffiti paint. (DC Department of Public Works, 2008)
- Graffiti is the most common type of property vandalism, accounting for almost 35 percent of property vandalism nationally. (Bureau of Justice, 2007)
- Arrest data from 17 major cities show that 50 to 70 percent of all street-level graffiti is created by suburban adolescents, predominately males between the ages of 12 and 19. (Graffiti Hurts, 2007)

On the positive side, people across the country have joined together to do something about litter and graffiti in their neighborhoods.

Keep America Beautiful reports that nationally in 2007:

- 17,000 communities participated in 30,000 cleanup and beautification events attracting 2.8 million volunteers of all ages.
- 11,000 graffiti sites were cleaned up and painted over.
- 200 million pounds of litter were collected.
- 23 million pounds of newspaper were recycled.

Washington, DC, is part of those statistics through the Clean City Initiative.

- DPW supported almost 370 community cleanups through its Helping Hand program.
- DPW removed graffiti from almost 2,000 residences and businesses since March 2007.

#### WHAT WE CAN DO

Keep America Beautiful, Inc. offers many suggestions for ways to keep communities "safe, clean and healthy." Some can be done every single day, while other activities require larger scale organization.

Some of the daily, routine things we can do include:

- Pick up a piece of trash or litter — even if you didn't put it there. One piece each day makes a difference.
- Put a litter bag in your car, boat, or other recreational vehicle. Kids can even put a litter receptacle on their bikes.
- Report graffiti and/or vandalism to the Metropolitan Police Department, then remove it from your property. You also can call 311 to get a graffiti removal kit from DPW or ask DPW to remove the graffiti for you.
- Reduce. Re-use. Recycle.
- Donate your old cookware, gently worn clothes and other reusable materials to organizations that need them.
- On Saturdays, e-cycle unwanted electronics, dispose household hazardous waste, shred personal documents for free at the DPW trash transfer stations. Call 311 first to check the holiday schedule. The Benning Road Trash Transfer Station (3200 Benning Road, NE, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.) is open now. The Ft. Totten Trash Transfer Station (4900 Bates Road, NE, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.) introduces these services in Summer 2008.

More involved — but possible — actions include:

- Call 311 to get brooms, rakes, and bags from the DPW Helping Hand program for your next neighborhood cleanup. DPW will pick up the trash collected.



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Fact Sheet *(cont.)*



- Join SWEEP Jr. to earn community service hours for high school graduation by planting trees, beautifying neighborhoods, learning new skills and having fun.
- Gather with neighbors to beautify your local playground.
- With the proper permission, paint the play equipment or paint a mural on a wall.
- Write letters to the newspaper promoting community involvement in keep it clean and beautiful projects.
- Begin a compost heap.
- Plant trees and shrubs in an area that needs them.
- Participate in your recycling program at work.

### RESOURCES

*Clean City Initiative*

<http://occc.eom.dc.gov/occc/site/default.asp>

*DC Department of Public Works,*

[www.dpw.dc.gov](http://www.dpw.dc.gov)

*Graffiti Hurts*

[www.graffitihurts.org](http://www.graffitihurts.org)

*Keep America Beautiful*

[www.kab.org](http://www.kab.org)

*National Crime Prevention Council,*

[www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)

*U.S. Department of Justice,*

*Bureau of Justice Statistics*

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>

*"Youth in Action," July 1999, National Youth Network, a publication of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, organized by the U.S. Department of Justice*

*"DC Streets? Litter With Love, Not Trash," The Washington Post, November 8, 2007*



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Parent Tip Sheet

#### WHAT WE KNOW

Clean communities, with very little graffiti and little street trash and litter, make people feel safe and proud to be a member of that community. Research proves that crime is less likely to occur in a clean, well-lit community where lots of people abound.

When people feel ownership of their community, they enjoy its public areas and want to maintain its beauty. Clean communities attract new businesses and tourism, sustain the economy and build pride.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Set a good example for children starting when they are young. Keep America Beautiful and Graffiti Hurts suggest parents:

- Join or organize a clean-up event. There are tasks that both children and adults can complete, so entire families can participate together.
- Call 311 to get tools for your own neighborhood cleanup through the Helping Hand program. DPW will provide tools and collect the trash produced by the cleanup. Visit the DPW Web site ([www.dpw.dc.gov](http://www.dpw.dc.gov)) and click on Organize Neighborhood Cleanups to learn more about the program.
- Encourage high school youth to join SWEEP Jr. to earn their community service hours while creating a visible, positive difference in the city.
- Teach children to respect public and private property.
- Carry litterbags in your car and on your bike.
- Use trash cans with securely fitting lids.
- If using a recycling bin, put the newspapers in first, then place the glass, plastic and metal recyclables on top to prevent the papers from flying around the neighborhood.
- If you drive a pick-up truck, make sure you cover all open loads.

- If you own your own business, make sure the lids and sides of your dumpster are securely closed and the dumpster is emptied frequently enough so the lid fits properly.
- If you own your own business, make sure you have a recycling plan and follow it.
- Recycle the materials you can and encourage children to do the same.
- Provide children with positive outlets for their artistic talents.

#### RESOURCES

*Bureau of Justice Statistics*

*DC Department of Public Works*

[www.dpw.dc.gov](http://www.dpw.dc.gov)

*Graffiti Hurts*

[www.graffitihurts.org](http://www.graffitihurts.org)

*Keep America Beautiful*

[www.kab.org](http://www.kab.org)

*Learning to Give*

[www.learningtogive.org](http://www.learningtogive.org)

*National Crime Prevention Council*

[www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)

*"Youth in Action," July 1999, National Youth Network, a publication of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, organized by the U.S. Department of Justice*

*"DC Streets? Litter With Love, Not Trash," The Washington Post, November 8, 2007*





# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Action Plan for 8- to 13-year-olds

*To Facilitate Work with Students, Community Groups, or Youth Organizations*

## A is for Action

### PURPOSE

Youth participants will select and survey areas of the school, neighborhood and/or community to assess each area's level of graffiti and litter, and then develop a strategy for cleaning it up.

### OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Survey areas in their neighborhood, school, meeting facility, or community for levels of graffiti and litter
- Identify areas that need to be cleaned up
- Identify tasks necessary to clean up areas
- Develop a cleanup strategy proposal

### MATERIALS

- Pens, pencils
- Paper
- White board/overhead projector
- Transportation to sites
- Permission to visit sites
- If possible, a digital camera or other type of camera

### NOTE

*These actions can be spread over two or more sessions. Steps 9 and 10 provide optional activities depending upon the ages and ability levels of the group, as well as any restrictions to the areas the group has identified.*

### PROCEDURE

1. Begin a discussion by asking participants to think of areas of the school, meeting facility, neighborhood and/or community at large that they know to have too much litter or graffiti. Create a list of these areas for the youth to review. Ask them how this makes them feel and whether or not they feel responsible, even if they did not litter or add graffiti to the area.
2. Discuss how professional groups survey and rate areas that need to be cleaned up and how they prioritize their projected efforts.
3. Say, *professional organizations use rating systems much like schools use a grading system. An "A" means a perfect score, while a "D" indicates a failure. We are going to develop our own rating system using the following framework.*  
not notice it.

- A = completely graffiti- and litter-free not notice it.
- D = extensive graffiti and/or trash, visible from any point in the area; graffiti is offensive; trash blocks movement through the area.

Ask the participants, *What would be the criteria for earning a "B" or a "C"? Work as a group to determine what those criteria would be.* Possible guidelines might include:

- B = Some graffiti and/or trash; minor amounts; some people might not notice it.
- C = Graffiti and trash are clearly visible when entering and/or passing through the area; the trash might block movement through parts of the area; graffiti might be offensive.



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Action Plan for 8- to 13-year-olds

#### A is for Action *(cont.)*



4. After writing up the grading system, have everyone bring a pencil and paper and take the group for a walk to an area. Ask participants to individually apply the grading system to that area, writing down reasons for their assessment. Take them to at least two other areas and do the same assessment for each. If possible, take pictures of the site.
5. Return to the meeting site and have participants share their assessments. As a group, agree on the grading of each area visited, and prioritize which area should be cleaned up first.
6. Explain to them, *assessment is the first important part of any plan for improvement. Now we have to design a plan of action. What are some of the steps you think we will need to take in order to get the first area on our list clean?*
7. Break participants into groups of no more than four, and have each group answer the following questions:
  - Who will benefit from cleaning up this area?
  - What are the steps needed to clean up the area?
  - Do we as a group have the skills necessary to clean it up?
  - What materials will be needed?
  - Where can those materials be found?
  - Is there someone or some organization to which we should report this?
  - Is there someone or some organization that can help with the cleanup?
  - When can this cleanup happen?
  - Should we be the ones to do it?
  - Why should we take responsibility for this area?
8. Gather back as a group and discuss their action plans. Design a group plan of action.
9. If you feel your group is able to accomplish this plan, do so! Follow the rules your group, school or organization offers as well as their action plan and secure the appropriate permission(s).
10. If you feel your group is unable to accomplish this plan, have participants write letters to the editor of the local newspaper or to someone who could help take the next step to clean up their "adopted" area. Make sure it is not a letter of complaint, but a proposal for the community to take action and clean up the area.
11. After either step 9 or 10, state to your group, *The documentary talked about being an agent of change, being someone who starts the ball rolling to make the community a better place. Do you feel like you have been an agent of change? Explain.*
12. Have each participant write a response to the following statement: As a member of my community, I am responsible for cleaning it up and keeping it clean. When we all work together, we can make it happen.

#### EVALUATION

- Did participants take part in the discussion?
- Did participants take part in the area assessment?
- Did participants work within groups to develop an action plan?
- Do participants understand their responsibilities for keeping their community clean?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Action Plan for 14- to 19-year-olds

*To Facilitate Work with Students, Community Groups, or Youth Organizations*

## The Cleanup Plan

### PURPOSE

Youth participants will write an action plan proposal for a Community Cleanup.

### OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Assess an area in need of cleanup
- Set a specific goal for the cleanup
- Plan the steps they will take before, during and after the cleanup
- Research and find resources for the materials and volunteers they will need to make the cleanup successful
- Carry out their plan
- Determine evaluation criteria for the end of the day, two weeks after the cleanup day and two months after the cleanup day

### MATERIALS

- White board/overhead projector
- Pens, pencils
- Tracking Sheet

### NOTE

*This will take a series of planning sessions, as well as a designated time for the cleanup.*

### PROCEDURE

#### DAY 1: The Discussion and The Plan

1. Write the following on the board or presentation pad: *A clean neighborhood is the responsibility of its inhabitants.* Ask the participants if they agree or disagree with this statement and to provide evidence from their lives. Collect on the board at least 10 reasons community members should clean up their own public spaces.

2. Instruct participants that they are going to organize a cleanup day in the community and ask if anyone has ever heard of or participated in one. If so, ask them to share their experiences and what made it successful or not successful.
3. Explain that one of the very first steps is to assess an area. This means to look at the area and determine what needs to be done to make it a better place. Does graffiti need to be removed? Does litter need to be collected? Does the river bank need to be de-littered? Is a park area overgrown with bushes? Do flowers need to be planted?
4. Discuss and select an area of your neighborhood, school, meeting facility, or community that needs attention and determine what needs to be done. The group should set a very specific, attainable goal for its cleanup day — something that can be accomplished in one afternoon. Write the goal on the board or presentation pad.
5. Now think about the skills your participants have. Can everyone participate in some way? Is everyone capable of lifting trash? Painting? Trimming? Who are the best organizers? Who has contacts with newspapers or can write an article to go in the newspaper or a press release to attract media coverage? Who can upload the cleanup information to a Web site or listserv to publicize the event? Do you need to find more help?
6. Do you need to get permission to do this? From whom? How will you find out?
7. Make lists of everything you think you might need to do to organize the cleanup.



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Action Plan for 14- to 19-year-olds

#### The Cleanup Plan *(cont.)*



#### **DAY 2 (or more): Work Groups and Tasks**

Today's task is to create an action list for your cleanup day goal using the thought lists created the day before, as well as lists inspired by organizations such as Keep America Beautiful. Break the youth into the groups listed below and have each complete the jobs necessary for the assignment: You may need to arrange assistance and/or the opportunity to use the Internet, if available. Each group should discuss the questions posed and be prepared to make a brief presentation of their findings and decisions.

At the end of the session, set a target date to accomplish each task and a date and time for the cleanup.

- **Supplies**

What will you need? Tools? Paint? Flowers? Work gloves? Make a specific list. Where will you get these items? Be sure to interact with the Department of Public Works Helping Hand Program by calling 311 or 202-645-7190 for information.

- **Tasks**

What are the steps you will need to take? Put the different tasks in order. For example, if you have decided to paint and take care of the grass, then you should not mow after you paint because the grass clippings will stick to the paint. How will you know you have been successful?

- **Resources**

Who will help? What community agencies and businesses might have money for and/or the ability to donate the necessary supplies? Do you need more hands? Where will you find extra volunteers? How can the DC Department of Public Works help?

- **Permission**

Who do you need to ask for permission to do the cleanup? Will each participant need a permission slip? Does the Police Department need to know? The Department of Parks and Recreation?

- **Public Relations**

How will you publicize your event? Will you write the article yourself or invite someone from the local media? Will you take pictures or have someone else do it? What refreshments will you provide? Who can you get to donate refreshments? Is there someone who might provide music while you work, such as a local radio station or a DJ?

- **Hazard Patrol**

How can you check for potentially dangerous obstacles to completing your goal? Is this an area where you will find drug paraphernalia or weapons? Glass? Metal? Poison Ivy? Hazardous waste? Should you do a walk through beforehand? What will you do with toxic substances such as paint or electronic waste such as an old TV that has been dumped in the cleanup site? Do you know how and or where to dispose of hazardous and electronic waste? Should you contact a particular organization beforehand to learn what will be there? How will you provide your volunteers with the information they will need?

- **Schedule Team**

Working with each of the above groups, set a schedule of due dates for each task that needs to happen before the cleanup begins. When should everything be in line? When should the supplies be ready? When should the volunteers be arranged? By what date will the media have someone assigned to cover the activity? By what date should the area be reviewed for hazards?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Action Plan for 14- to 19-year-olds

#### The Cleanup Plan *(cont.)*



All of the above steps will take days to prepare; be sure the schedule team has everyone lined up and committed to the due dates for their work group. Mount a visual calendar with room to check off tasks completed before the cleanup date.

#### **DAY 3 (or so...): Take Action!**

GET OUT AND DO IT!

#### **DAY 4: Take Time to Evaluate**

1. Revisit your original goal for the cleanup day and write it down. Ask the group if they feel they accomplished the goal. *What made it successful? If it was not, why not?*
2. Ask how they will ensure that their efforts continue to benefit the community. *What are the ways we will know we have positively affected the area in the future? When should we check on the area? What will be our criteria?* Write the list down.
3. Ask *how can we sustain our efforts? Do we need to schedule revisits? Should we make this an annual, semi-annual or more frequent event? How can this cleanup day grow into something bigger for the community and neighboring communities? How might we share this with other parts of our city?*
4. Write a response to the following: *Why should community members be responsible for cleaning up their neighborhood?*

#### **EVALUATION**

- Did participants take part in the discussions?
- Did participants take part in work groups?
- Did each participant take part in the actual cleanup day?
- Could participants evaluate the success or failure of the program?
- Did each participant write a response to the final question?





# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self Reflection Questions – Documentary



#### Open

1. Whose job is it to keep the city clean? Explain your answer.
2. Do you feel like you are a part owner of the city? Of your neighborhood? If so, why? If not, what do you think you could do to feel that way?
3. What is an “agent of change?” Who do you think of as an “agent of change?” In terms of keeping your city clean or making it clean again, how could you become an “agent of change?”
4. When you see someone throw trash on the ground, what do you think? What do you do? How does it make you feel?
5. Why do you think graffiti has increased in DC at such a high rate?
6. What is the difference between graffiti on a wall and a mural on a wall?

#### Part I

1. Why do people litter? Think about the opposite side of that question: What are some reasons people don't litter? What does that tell you about the kind of community they want?
2. Describe the SWEEP Jr. program. Why do you think it has grown so popular? Describe how the participants feel about SWEEP Jr.. How does it make them think about their city as a community?
3. After joining the SWEEP Jr. program, Thandiwe Burrell became determined to get others to join in the cleanup efforts. What personal qualities make Thandiwe a positive leader and role model?
4. The documentary states that 20 million taxpayer dollars are used to clean up trash in the District of Columbia. What else could the city do with that money if people worked together to keep their city clean?
5. Look at your definition of “agent of change” from the opening. How can you be a change agent? Would you do it Thandiwe's way? Explain.

#### Part II

1. The documentary asks, “Why would anyone take a magic marker or a can of paint and write their name on someone else's wall?” Good question. What do you think makes someone do such a thing?
2. Describe The Midnight Forum. What does it do? Why?
3. What does the term “bombing” mean? How do you think it got that name? What's a “tag?”
4. How does graffiti hurt a community? Why is graffiti a slap in the face to the legends of D.C.?
5. How does creating a mural pull people away from graffiti? Isn't it the same thing? Why not?

*(Continued next page)*



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions – Documentary *(cont.)*



#### Part III

1. List the different ways Nina and her family work to help the environment. What is the value of each change they have made? What would your family say if you were to suggest any of them?
2. Nina is an example of how one person can make a difference in his or her community. How have you made a difference in your family's life? Your neighborhood? Your community? What does it take to make a difference in any of those areas?
3. What is the value of taking kids to a waste transfer station?
4. Why was the measuring classroom trash exercise valuable for the eight-year-olds olds? How do you think people your age would react to a trash weigh-in?
5. How can we produce less trash? List as many ways as you can think of for your class, your family, and any other group you belong to.

#### Close

1. The documentary states, "Cleaning up a neighborhood is contagious." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
2. What message does a community clean up send to the city? What message does it send to vandals? To the world?
3. What message does your community send to the world? What would you like your community to say to the world?
4. Could your neighborhood band together to organize a community clean up? Why or why not? What steps would you have to take to organize a clean up? Which city government departments could help you?
5. Alison Cross, a 16-year-old from the documentary, says, "It's our job. The people that live here, it's our job to keep it clean. The sanitation workers, they're supposed to help with it. But ultimately if we don't care about it, then no one else will." Do you agree or disagree with this? Explain your answer.
6. Is cleaning up everyone's job?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette I — Cleaning is Contagious

1. If you see people like Kathy Chamberlain or Vincent Spaulding walking around picking up trash, what do you do? Do you laugh or stare? Wonder why they do it? Do you stop to help out or totally ignore them? Why do you react this way?
2. What does it mean to Kathy and Vincent to “make a difference?” Have you ever done something just because you felt it made a difference? If so, what was it? If not, what activity might make you feel this way? To whom would you make a difference?
3. What are some of the benefits of spending time gardening in your front yard?
4. Maurice Rucker, a teen featured in the segment, tells us, “Someone had to see someone litter to make everyone else litter. So if someone sees someone pick up trash, everybody else will pick up trash.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
5. After seeing this documentary, do you agree or disagree with its title, “Cleaning is Contagious?” Where have you seen proof of this statement? Where would you like to see evidence of it?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette II — Focus on the Future

1. Nina says thinking about her pets and other animals made her an environmentalist. What do you think makes people become environmentalists? Why? What would make you think about being more environmentally aware?
2. The documentary lists several of the changes Nina's family has made in their lives. Have you made any of these changes? What are some others you could make?
3. Nina's mom says, "Nina's been really instrumental... saying that it can be done, it's worthwhile doing... and being quite persistent." What would it take for you to change your habits and your family's habits to make everyone more aware of how their actions affect the environment?
4. How does environmental responsibility become a chain reaction?
5. What changes has your school implemented to take care of the environment? Do you participate? Why or why not?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette III — Giving Back with SWEEP Jr.

1. Thandiwe says he joined SWEEP Jr. in order to complete his service learning hours. Would you join an organization like this if it was not a school requirement? Why or why not?
2. The documentary offers a quick glimpse into a typical session with SWEEP Jr. by watching Thandiwe and his friends. He says it's like a "clean-up party" and they have a lot of fun while doing something good for the environment. Does it seem that way to you? How would you describe the activity you observed?
3. Thandiwe says he used to just walk by, over or around litter on the street. How would you sum up your attitude toward litter? What do you do? Why?
4. Thandiwe is a leader and an "agent of change" — putting into action, as a member of a strong community, the responsibility he feels to pick up trash and keep his city clean. Have you ever felt this way? Why or why not? What do you do to put your feelings into action?
5. What would it take to get everyone in your school to commit to keeping your environment clean?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette IV — Graffiti for Good

1. Why do you think the “other” graffiti artists have chosen the particular spot shown in the documentary 20 times in the last five years? What is it about this particular wall that attracts them?
2. Do you think the mural will deter the “other” graffiti artists from defacing the wall? Why or why not?
3. How does mural art differ from graffiti art if it is on the same space using some of the same skills?
4. The documentary lists three reasons to end illegal graffiti: It hurts local businesses; it is disrespectful to the history of the city; it's expensive to clean up. Can you think of other reasons to end illegal graffiti? What are other ways to put a stop to illegal graffiti?
5. If you could speak with the “other” graffiti artists, what would you say? If you could talk with the mural artists from The Midnight Forum, what would you say?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette V — Painting History

1. Describe some of the history of the Shaw Howard Neighborhood. Who are some of its important past residents and what did they do in this neighborhood? Who are some of the big names in entertainment and where did they perform? Do you think the general public is aware of the significant things that took place in Shaw?
2. Do you think people would continue to graffiti the area if they knew about its history? How do you propose you educate people about the historical significance of an area?
3. What is a “tag?” Why it is important to graffiti-ers to “tag” their work? What message does that send to other “taggers?” What message does it send to the general public that does not deface public or private property with graffiti?
4. How would you suggest those who paint graffiti use their talents? What should they do instead of defacing public or private property?
5. Should an area have to be historically significant to be graffiti-free? Does every neighborhood deserve the respect that a historically-significant area deserves? Explain your answer.



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette VI — Trash Begets Trash

1. Describe the DC Department of Public Works (DPW) "Helping Hand" program. What does DPW bring to communities as part of the program? Why do you think it is called "Helping Hand?"
2. What is the history of the Mt. Vernon Square's Cleanup Rally? What was it like years ago? What is it like now? Why do you think people enjoy it so much?
3. What does the documentary title "Trash Begets Trash" mean to you? What is the example given in the documentary of how trash begets trash? How is the opposite of that true?
4. William O. Howland, Jr., the director of the DC Department of Public Works, says, "...it's sort of a self-fulfilling prophecy that if you have a clean neighborhood there is not as much trash as likely to get there." What does self-fulfilling prophecy mean? What does it mean in Mr. Howland's statement? Do you agree or disagree?
5. What do you think would happen if you started a Helping Hand Cleanup in your neighborhood or in your school? Do you think it would become a "self-fulfilling prophecy"? Why or why not? What would it take to become a self-fulfilling prophecy?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette VII — Cost of Litter

1. The documentary opens with the following statistic: Cleaning up trash off DC streets and waterways costs the city \$20 million a year. What else could that money buy to improve the city?
2. Quentin Henderson, a street sweeper operator, tells us, "On a heavy day I may cover approximately 25 to 30 miles... and pick up in total a ton and a half to two tons of trash." Let's think about things that weigh two tons and picture how big they are—maybe elephants. Where would you put something that big? Would you leave it in the street? Do people stop to consider how trash piles up into something so heavy? Do you think people would stop littering if they thought about how much trash they create?
3. Wilbur Parker, foreman of Sewer Services, Water and Sewer Authority, tells us about some of the things he skims off the rivers in DC: "Sofas, refrigerators, fire extinguishers, tires, coolers—that list just goes on and on" and how they get there: "by people just simply throwing stuff in the streets, off of bridges... we sometimes find bags of trash where people will come by with their car and just throw a bag of trash off the bridge into the river." Have you witnessed anything like this? Why do people do this?
4. Jeffery Gamble from the DC Water and Sewer Authority says he feels responsible and proud of his job: "I'm a District resident, so I have a vested stake in what I do. I have a kid and I want her to be able to drink clean water and live in a clean city when she grows up." How do we help people think about their actions in terms of keeping their own city clean for today and for the future? How do you help people feel they have a "vested stake" in their actions?
5. If people know the financial impact of their actions, are they are more likely to change their habits? Why or why not?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette VIII — Society of Convenience

1. The documentary opens telling us about the plastic bottles, food wrappers and other trash the city's work crews clean out of sewers, rivers and streets. Have you seen evidence of this? Where? Did you contribute to it or do something about it? Why or why not?
2. Why, do you think, do people not use the trash bins on sidewalks, in parks and other public places? What ideas do you have for ways to help these people change their behavior?
3. Richard Hughes, a teen in the documentary, says this about trash in the streets: "That's how rodents and stuff get around, roaches, and it makes the city seem just dirty." Do you think people are aware of such risks? Why or why not? If they are aware, why do they do it? If they are not aware, what would it take to make them aware?
4. What does it mean to be a "throw away society?" How does that affect the amount of litter? How are we a "society of convenience?" Convenient for whom?
5. Another teen in the documentary, Alison Cross, says, "It's our job to keep it clean. The people who live here, it's our job to keep it clean. The sanitation workers, they're supposed to help with it. But ultimately, if we don't care about it, then no one else will." Do you agree or disagree with her statement? Why?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette IX — Graffiti and Respect

1. The documentary describes the word of graffiti as being filled with “crime and danger.” Explain this phrase, using examples from both the documentary and your own experiences.
2. How does “Words Beats & Life” turns graffiti vandals into artists?
3. How did the former graffiti artists show respect for Mr. Callista? For the neighborhood? For themselves? For the law? Why is this important?
4. Steven Jones, the education director of The Midnight Forum says, “We need harmony and art, those are two things that are missing in our schools, that’s missing in our communities.” How is harmony more than just a music class? How does art go beyond painting? How do harmony and art serve as metaphors for life and the things that are missing in our lives, our schools and our communities?
5. What are some of the ways you treat your community spaces and members with respect?



# Not in *OUR* DC!

## Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

### Discussion/Self-Reflection Questions

#### Vignette X — Idle Hands

1. What does the phrase “idle hands” mean? Where have you heard it before? What does it usually mean will happen?
2. Mr. Callista thinks people who litter or do graffiti have nothing to do and they don’t care about the community or anything else. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
3. What activities does the city offer teens? Do you participate in any of them? Why or why not? Do you think these activities keep teens from having “idle hands?”
4. How do groups like The Midnight Forum and the Mt. Vernon neighborhood cleanup group teach responsibility and respect for oneself and the community?
5. What do you do to occupy your hands to keep them from being idle? How does this help you show respect for yourself and others in the community?

## For more information



Connect with Kids

on Connect with Kids or

**Not in *OUR* DC! Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean**

please call (888) 598-KIDS (5437) or

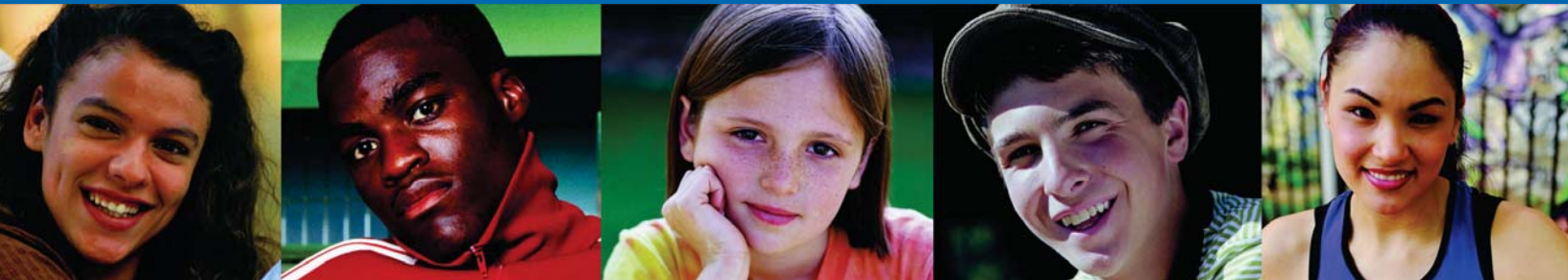
email to [sales@cwknetwork.com](mailto:sales@cwknetwork.com)

## lit•ter (li-tēr)

n. trash, wastepaper, or garbage lying scattered about, often resulting in a negative emotional, physical and financial impact to the community

## graf•fi•ti (grə-fē'tē)

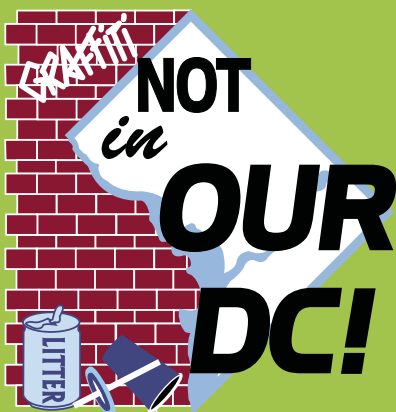
n. images or lettering scratched, scrawled, painted or marked on property, often regarded as unsightly damage or unwanted vandalism.



## Not in *OUR* DC! Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean

Research proves that clean neighborhoods — those free of scattered litter, trash and graffiti — make residents feel safer and better about their community. Clean communities help residents have a sense of ownership, pride and responsibility; attract new businesses; and keep sanitation costs under control. What can we do to remedy the situation? The time has come for all of us — residents of all ages — to stand up, take action and keep DC litter- and graffiti-free, proclaiming **Not in *OUR* DC!** Pledge to Keep the Capital Clean.

This special program was produced by the highly skilled television and educational team at CWK Network, Inc.



Phone 202-673-6833  
[www.connectwithkids.com/notinourdc](http://www.connectwithkids.com/notinourdc)

**CWK**Network  
Connect with kids.

Phone 1.888.598.KIDS