

CRIPS

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Kansas City police spokesman Gregory Mills said it is more likely that Blue Springs drug-users would travel to Kansas City to seek out the Crips than vice versa.

Asked about the graffiti, Mills said, "I don't think that's tantamount to having a doctor say, 'I see cancer in your X-ray.' "

The graffiti was found this week on 13th Street, 15th Street, under a bridge behind police headquarters and behind the football field at the high school's Ashton Campus.

High School Principal Ted Lewman said he does not believe his student body — although certainly not drug-free — would permit drug-dealing outsiders like the Crips to feel welcome on campus.

"It doesn't seem to me that Blue Springs is much of a street-gang kind of town," Lewman said. "Right now, it's just graffiti to me."

But one student interviewed this week said he knows of a Kansas City man who has been on campus recently recruiting students to join a gang.

Another student said some Blue Springs High School students have joined the Thirteenth Street Crips but generally try to conceal their gang membership while at school.

"It's sort of like they're split personalities," the student said. "They're going to be themselves during the day, and then they're members at night."

A spokesman for the FBI in Kansas City this week said his agency has no information about a Blue Springs organization of the Crips.

FBI spokesman Mike Kortan also agreed that the Crips would have difficulties infiltrating Blue Springs. But, he added: "It's not beyond them. Graffiti often preceeds their arrival."

The Los Angeles police spokesman said the Crips know no boundaries

but will often mark off their territory in a given city by adopting a corresponding name.

"If I were you, I'd take a look at 13th Street," he said.

Most residents of 13th Street interviewed this week said they have large groups of kids in the neighborhood, but they are not aware of any gang activity.

One resident, however, said her neighbors frequently turn their backs on vandalism and other acts of violence among the kids.

The disgruntled resident also said she has seen "T.S.C." graffiti several times in the neighborhood but did not know what it stood for.

Asked about evidence of drug trafficking, she said she has seen older kids in the neighborhood a couple of times exchange suspicious-looking packages.

"A lot of time, parents will just drop their kids off on the corner," she added. "It's really strange."