

Hatred in the Hallways: Identifying Hate Symbols in Alberta Schools

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Hate symbols are designed and utilized to provide extremists with a sense of power. Concomitantly, they are also created and employed to instill fear and insecurity in others. Increasingly, these symbols are utilized by disenfranchised youth and adult extremists in an attempt to covertly identify each other and their shared beliefs. Some of these symbols are reclaimed from previous historical meanings (such as the Confederate Flag), while others are inscribed with new and often more insidious and sinister intentions. Regardless of the symbol, whether it is historical, legitimate, or otherwise, they can carry multiple meanings that can be read in different ways. As a result, it is of paramount importance that the symbols highlighted below are evaluated within the context in which they are presented. The context can be almost as important and powerful as the symbol itself.

There are literally thousands of tattoos, graphics, numbers, acronyms, and songs that are recognized as coded messages of hate. The numerical codes provided below represent some of the ways in which extremists identify themselves and their messages.

Numbers

- 14 – Represents the fourteen words in the phrase “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.” Coined by imprisoned white supremacist David Lane in the United States, the code “14” is often used as a battle cry and rallying slogan for the white supremacist movement. Often referred to as “the 14 little words.”
- 88 – The eighth letter of the alphabet is “H” and when repeated twice it signifies “HH,” which is emblematic of the infamous Nazi greeting “Heil Hitler.” The number 88 is often found in email addresses, on propaganda, and as a closing salutation on letters and in speeches given by Neo-Nazis. Often the number 14/88 will be used in combination to demonstrate a belief in National Socialism.
- 5 – Five words is representative of the code of silence that supremacists take to avoid prosecution by law enforcement. The five words stand for: “I have nothing to say.”
- 311 – The eleventh letter of the alphabet is “K” and when repeated three times it represents “KKK” or Ku Klux Klan. The number 311 (often portrayed as 3 x 11) is symbolic of this ideology and is often used to demonstrate membership, allegiance, or sympathy.
- 33/6 – Thirty-three is 3 times 11 and since the eleventh letter of the alphabet is “K”, three Ks signify KKK or Ku Klux Klan. The “6” represents the sixth or current era of the Klan. 33/6 is a common greeting used by Klan members.
- 666 – Derived from The Book of Revelations as a symbol for the anti-Christ, Satan, or evil. Also commonly referred to as the “Mark of the Beast.”

- 83 – The eight letter of the alphabet is “H” and the third letter is “C”. Thus 83 is symbolic for “Heil Christ,” a commonly used greeting by racist organizations and individuals who consider themselves to be a particular type of Christian.
- 100% – An expression that symbolizes an individual’s white roots or pure Aryan blood. This symbol is indicative of the white supremacist belief that the white race must remain pure and uncorrupted by interracial relationships.
- 4/19 – This symbol is often displayed by racists who are anti-government. 4/19 represents the anniversary of two key dates: The confrontation in Waco, Texas between Federal agents and the Branch Davidians in 1993, and the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. 9/11 has also arisen to represent the attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon.
- 4/20 – Representative of Adolf Hitler’s birthday and often featured on tattoos to reaffirm a belief in National Socialism. Not to be confused with “420” or “4:20”, which is popular slang associated with smoking marijuana.
- 28 – Twenty-eight stands for “Blood & Honour.” “B” is the second letter of the alphabet and “H” is the eight letter. Blood & Honour is an international neo-Nazi/racist skinhead group with chapters around the world. The group is prominent in Europe, but also has chapters in North America.
- 18 – The number eighteen is used to symbolize Adolf Hitler. The first letter of the alphabet is “A” and the eighth letter is “H” thus representing AH the abbreviation for Adolf Hitler. 1+8 is also used to symbolize AH. This is a popular number used in tattoos by Neo-Nazis.
- 23 – The letter “W” is the twenty-third letter in the alphabet and often appears as short hand for the word “White.” 23 is another symbol prominent in Neo-Nazi tattoos.

If you encounter hate symbols, propaganda, or graffiti in your school, immediately contact your school resource officer or campus security and notify the Edmonton Police Service’s Hate and Bias Crime Unit.

Recommended Protocol:

- **Report incident immediately (EPS complaint line: 423-4567)**
- **Preserve the scene to protect evidence (i.e. cover graffiti but do not remove it)**
- **Do not handle propaganda materials**
- **Support the victim, and give continued support**
- **Remain vigilant--report any suspicious activity to the Police**

For a full range of hate-motivated signs, symbols, and music, visit the Anti-Defamation League’s hate archive: www.adl.org/hate_symbols/default.asp