

# POLICE NEWS

## The Teen Crisis: It's Not All Bad News

Recently I arrived to meet an acquaintance at his office only to find it locked. As I waited in my car for him, a young man who looked to be in his late teens walked rapidly toward my car. He was dressed in trendy hip-hop style baggy pants and an oversized shirt.

My first impulse was to roll up the car window and lock the door. I watched him closely until he was out of view. I then berated myself for reacting with momentary panic and fear to the sight of him.

But I knew why I did. He was a teenager, and therefore a threat. Many adults regard teens with the same mix of caution of fear. It's easy to see why. One of the hottest topics in America is teen violence. Much of the media has plied the public with horror stories on teen murder and mayhem. Much of the public is scared stiff that teens are out of control. Political leaders have reacted to the teen crisis with tough talk and even tougher legislation.

In February, President Clinton called juvenile crime the "ultimate threat to our country" and called for increased funds for more prosecutors and judges, as well as a crack down on gangs. Congress quickly upped the ante with a bill that provides \$1.5 billion in federal grants to states that try more juveniles as adults, and would permit 14-year olds who

commit major felonies to be tried in federal courts.

Public fear of youth crime and violence are not totally the product of media sensationalism and vote hungry politicians. The arrest rate of juveniles for violent crimes has soared 65 percent in the last five years, and the murder rates have climbed even higher.

In 1996, four cities accounted for more than 30 percent of juvenile arrests for violent crime in the nation, and six states accounted for half of the juvenile arrests for violent crime nationwide. In May, the arrest of a Long Beach, California teen in the slaying of a seven-year-old girl at a Nevada Gambling Casino, and the arrest in June of Malcolm Shabazz, the grandson of Betty Shabazz, on murder charges in her arson death raged home for many the fearful image of a generation gone bad.

But how bad? While there is much cause for concern about teen violence, the picture is not completely one of doom and gloom.

Drugs. In February, President Clinton declared a new war on teen drug use and announced a \$350 million media blitz to get the word out. This is not wasteful spending. Drug use has climbed among teens during the past two years. It's not just marijuana use. More teens are using cocaine, LSD and heroin than ever. But

more youth also seem aware of the danger of illicit drugs. Surveys show that more than 70 percent of youth claim that they have never tried an illicit drug.

The number of teen deaths from drug overdoses nationwide has dropped sharply since 1970. And the overall rate of drug use among teens is actually lower than in the 1970s.

Violent Crime. Although teens accounted for one out of the five arrests for violent crimes in 1995, less than one percent of juveniles were arrested for any offense. While the murder rate among teens has risen dramatically, the sharpest rise has been among young Blacks. Most of this can be directly traced to the big increase in poverty and the drug trade in the inner cities.

The problems of teen violence and drug use are troubling and demand the continuing attention of state and local policy makers. It is folly, however, for the public to delude itself that the problem can be cured solely by tougher laws, longer prison sentences, curfews, anti-gang injunctions, and the death penalty. And there is strong evidence that trying and convicting teens in adult courts will increase crime. A 10-year study of juvenile criminals in Florida found that those tried as adults committed more serious and violent crimes faster after release from prison than those

tried in juvenile courts.

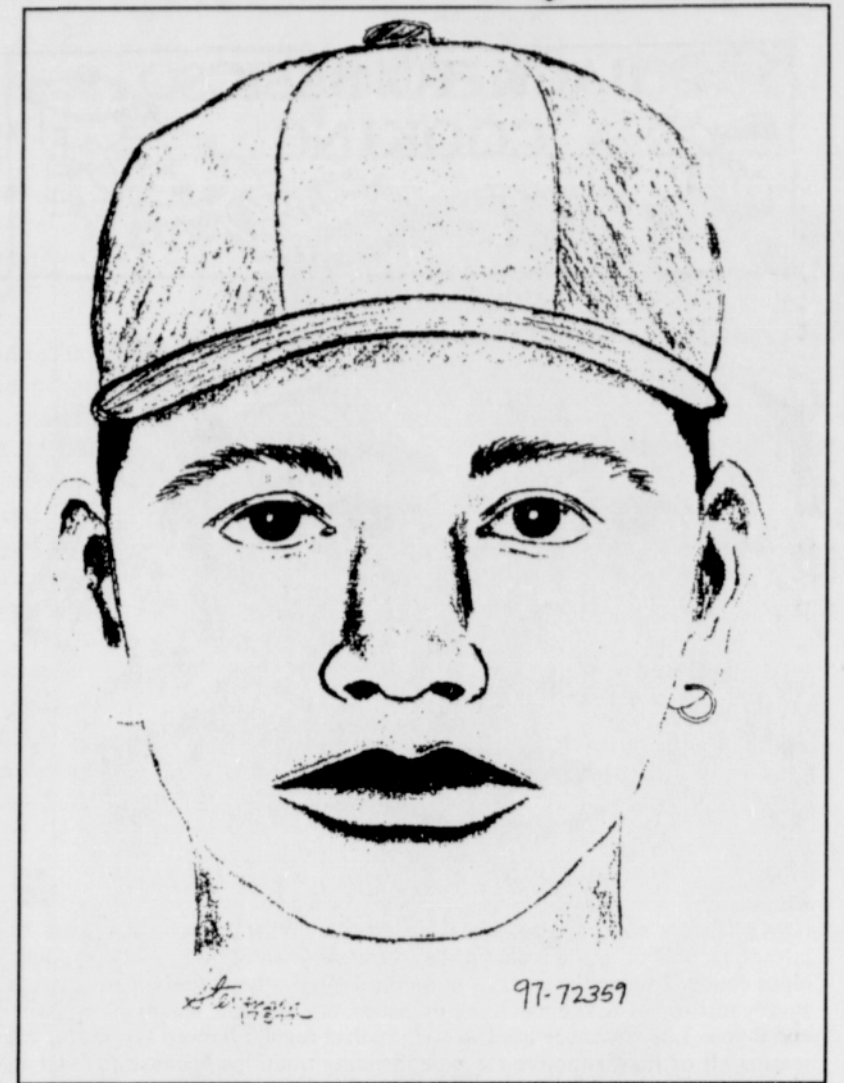
The battle against teen violence requires the efforts and cooperation of teachers, school officials, law enforcement, and most importantly parents. Since 1991, 16 states have enacted parental responsibility acts that hold parents accountable for their children's behavior. Also, a study of juvenile boot camp in Colorado, Ohio and Alabama found a significant rise in educational levels of the teen inmates. This is likely to translate into lower recidivism rates for teen offenders in the future. The Rand Corporation estimates that every \$1 million spent on education incentives for impoverished youth would prevent 258 major crimes.

The same amount spent on parent training would prevent 160 major crimes. This is a cheap and effective way to control crime when measured against the estimated \$30,000 it costs to incarcerate a prison inmate for a year.

Fortunately more teachers, administrators, law enforcement officials, and parents understand that the key to reducing juvenile crime is to spot troubled behavior early and quickly intervene.

This won't stop some troubled youth from becoming full-fledged predators, but it recognizes that most youth aren't bad. And that's good news.

## Crime Stoppers



### Kidnap/Sexual Assault

Portland Police Bureau detectives, in cooperation with Crime Stoppers, are asking for your help in identifying and apprehending the person responsible for attacking and sexually assaulting a young woman.

On Tuesday, July 15, 1997, at about 11:30 in the evening, the woman was walking home from work in the area of NE 117th Avenue and Shaver Street. She was approached by the suspect who engaged her in conversation. The two were walking together when the suspect grabbed the victim's arm and placed his hand over her mouth. The victim was forced into a con-

struction site where she was beaten and sexually assaulted.

The suspect is described as a male black in his mid-20's, 5'6" tall, with a heavy build, short black hair, and a light complexion.

At the time of the assault, he was wearing a gold hoop earring in his left ear, a light colored hat, and dark clothing.

Crime Stoppers is offering a cash reward of up to \$1,000 for information which leads to an arrest in this case or any unsolved felony crime, and you can remain anonymous. Call Crime Stoppers at (503) 823-HELP.

### Narcotics Search Warrant At Chevron Gas Station

3435 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard

On Thursday, September 4, 1997, at approximately 7:30 in the evening, officers from the Portland Police Bureau's Drugs and Vice Division (DVD), Northeast Precinct, and the Gang Enforcement Team (GET) served a Multnomah County District Court narcotics search warrant at the Chevron Gas Station, 3435 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Also named in the warrant were two individuals employed at the station's food market. Simultaneously, DVD officers searched a residence at 15857 E Burnside Street.

The search warrant was the culmination of several months of investigation by DVD officers into narcotics activity in and around the Chevron Gas Station. Numerous neighborhood complaints and information from Northeast Precinct officers indicated crack cocaine was being sold on the gas station lot by street corner dealers. Investigation determined that crack cocaine was also being sold from behind the counter of the station food market by store employees.

The arrested individuals and charges are: Dalbagh Singh, 36 years of age, of 15857 E Burnside Street, charged with two counts of Possession of a Controlled Substance - Cocaine, and one count of conspiracy to Commit Distribution of a Controlled Substance - Cocaine. Singh, who

worked at the Chevron Gas Station, was lodged in the Justice Center Jail with bail set at \$90,000.

Seized at the Chevron station were narcotics, cash and two firearms.

A second employee of the Chevron Station was taken into custody but not charged a this time.

In addition to serving the search warrant at the Chevron Station, officers were in the area looking for a number of individuals identified and wanted for drug involvement. But as officers approached the area of NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and NE Fremont Street, people scattered in all directions.

Three individuals were arrested and charged. They are: 21-year-old Milton Dwayne Ravin, of 4027 N Alaska, charged with one count of Distribution of a Controlled Substance - Cocaine, and one count of Possession of a Controlled Substance - Cocaine; 20-year-old Antonio Dee Carter, of 2545 E Burnside #27, charged with one count of Distribution of a Controlled Substance - Cocaine, and one count of Possession of a Controlled Substance - Cocaine; and, 16-year-old Phillshia Ann Davis, of 8139 N Fessenden, charged with three counts of Distribution of a Controlled Substance - Cocaine.

The investigation is continuing and additional arrests are anticipated.

### Victim Identified In Tri-Met Homicide

Johnny William Simmons, a 16 year old black male, has been identified as the victim in Saturday's Tri-Met shooting.

Family members recognized Simmons picture from a police drawing which had been shown by local media sources.

Simmons is believed to be from the Los Angeles area with family ties in Portland. Simmons was on leave from the Job Corp Program and wasn't expected back until after September 1, 1997.

### Fatal Accident

On Wednesday, September 3, 1997, at 2:30 in the morning, East precinct uniform officers were dispatched on a report of a car into a pole. Upon arrival officers found 21-year old Jeffrey Whitfield Rice, of Vancouver, Washington, who was a passenger in the vehicle, dead at the scene.

According to Fatal Traffic Accident Investigators, the vehicle, a Nissan 300ZX, was westbound on NE Glisan at a high rate of speed when it hit the curb, went out of control and struck a utility pole on the south side of Glisan.

## THE JOYCE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Joyce Washington was tireless in her devotion to children and building a better community.

The Portland Observer is continuing this loving legacy by awarding high school seniors from our community scholarships to help them achieve their dreams.

You can help by sending your contribution to the  
Joyce Washington

Memorial Scholarship Fund in care of Bank of America.

Your support will be truly appreciated.

Call your local Bank of America for more information.

## Thank you.