



CITY OF DURHAM
Office of Public Affairs
101 CITY HALL PLAZA
DURHAM, NC 27701



For Details, Contact:
Kammie Michael
Public Information Officer
(919) 560-4322 x29195
Kammie.Michael@durhamnc.gov

News Release

Durham Police Department

For Immediate Release: June 22, 2009

Police Asking for Information on Shootings

The Durham Police Department is asking for information about three recent incidents involving innocent young victims being struck by gunfire. Investigators do not believe the cases are related.

At this time investigators have some leads in all three cases, but not enough information to file charges. Investigators believe young adults were involved in all three cases.

“We are asking the community to help us solve these cases. We know that there are people who have information on these shootings and we need them to come forward,” said Durham Police Chief Jose L. Lopez Sr.

“I know some people may be apprehensive about providing information, but we need your help to make this a safer community for all of our children in all of our neighborhoods. If you have apprehensions about providing information, please call CrimeStoppers at 683-1200. You can provide information and be anonymous,” said Mayor William V. “Bill” Bell.

The most recent incident occurred Saturday night on Atka Court off Holloway Street. A 16-year-old female was standing in the parking lot with several people shortly before midnight when a male approached the crowd and fired shots. The 16-year-old was shot in the back of the head and was taken to Duke University Hospital for treatment. She is in stable condition today. A male was seen running to a dark-colored SUV that was parked near the scene. The SUV, which was occupied by three other people, sped from the scene.

On June 14, a 7-year-old boy was shot in the buttocks in the 2300 block of Hart Street. The victim was walking with two other juveniles when numerous shots were fired from a gray vehicle similar to a Chrysler PT Cruiser. Bullets also struck two parked vehicles and a stop sign.

On May 23, a 7-year-old female was shot in the foot while standing outside an apartment at 1126 South Hoover Road. According to witnesses, shots were fired from a green 4-door vehicle, possibly similar to a Ford Escort. Police believe another person returned fire at the vehicle.

Officers went door-to-door in the apartment complex on Hoover Road asking for information after the shooting and Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) held a Community Response on Hart Street. A PSN Community Response is planned for 5 p.m. Wednesday on Atka Court. In addition, representatives from the North Carolina Child Response Initiative have made contact with the families of these victims to offer mental health services to the victims and their families.

Bell called for the community to work together so that crimes like these can be prevented. “Our young people need jobs. These young people also need mentors and people who care about them,” he said.

City Manager Thomas Bonfield echoed the need for community involvement. “It is disheartening that there are people in our community who obviously don’t care about the safety of our children. When we have made arrests in similar cases, we find that the suspects have in many cases dropped out of school and have prior criminal records,” Bonfield said.

“We as a community cannot let this continue. I urge residents to become involved in Project Safe Neighborhoods, Partners Against Crime and other community groups. We must bring our collective forces to bear and not just count on law enforcement to fix the problems,” he said.

Durham County District Attorney Tracey Cline emphasized the need for people with information to come forward. “In order for my office to fully prosecute the people responsible for these crimes, the first step is for people with information to share it with investigators. In order to keep Durham a safe place, we must all play a role in watching out for each other, especially those who are innocent victims,” she said.

Anyone with information about these crimes is asked to call District 1 investigators at 560-4281 or CrimeStoppers at 683-1200. CrimeStoppers pays cash rewards for information leading to arrests in felony cases and callers never have to identify themselves.