

Band together , call police to stop gangs , drugs from ruining Brightmoor area

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Q. I have lived on Detroit's northwest side for the last 23 years. Our area is probably infamous for torn-up neighborhoods and abandoned homes. Every so often we will have **police** raids on drug houses in our Brightmoor area and, for a little while, many of us feel like this last raid will finally bring us permanent relief. But, like clockwork, we have the **gangs** coming back, again and again. What are we going **to** do and whom are we going **to call to** really bring us true relief?

A. I realize that many of your neighbors have been living through some very trying times in the Brightmoor area in your fight against **gang** -related activity. You are absolutely correct in feeling that something has **to** give. You are making progress, because drug-related crime is down in the city of Detroit and, **to** some degree, in your area. You have **to** keep fighting back and, at the hint of **gang** activity resurfacing, you or your neighbors should immediately file a complaint with the 224-GUNS 24-hour hotline.

Q. If we report the activity **to** the **police** , do they actually have **to** be right in front of the drug home or see the **gangs** before they will do anything?

A. If the **police** actually witness it when they make a run and can identify where it is coming from and the actual perpetrators involved, then those persons will be written a ticket and will have **to** appear in court.

Q. If we file a report, do we have **to** show up in court and testify?

A. I understand that testifying in court can be a very difficult experience for an individual. This is why it is so crucial that you and your neighbors involve your block clubs, neighborhood watch groups and neighborhood associations in documenting the **gang** -related activity in your area. So, if you have **to** go **to** court **to** testify, you can do so as a group.

Q. I'm all for the let's do this **together** stuff, but is there any way we could be involved, pick these **gang** bullies out of a **police** line up and still remain anonymous?

A. The question you have **to** ask yourselves is whether or not you want these bullies in your neighborhood **to** continue **to** subject you **to** **gang** terror. Remember, it is much more difficult for a **gang** bully **to** prey on a united group of neighbors. Secondly, if anonymity is absolutely critical **to** you and your neighbor is aware of suspect **gang** activity or you believe that someone is carrying a gun either in a school, on the street, or in the neighborhood, you should **call** 224-GUNS.

The **police** will take an incident report and you will be treated anonymously. This is a new century and you and your neighbors have a neighborhood and a future worth fighting for. Good luck and let me know how things work out.

If you have questions or concerns about issues that impact you or your neighbors, fax Kevin Fobbs at (313) 961-2895, or contact him via the Internet at KFobbs@ix.netcom.com or write him in care of The Detroit News, 615 W. Lafayette Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48226. Readers who live outside the Detroit area can read his column in the Detroit News Online edition at <http://detnews.com>

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