

DEATH CLOAKS SCHOOL IN GRIEF - DEANTOINE A SWEET, POPULAR FIFTH-GRADER

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Wednesday, June 5, 2002

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DeAntoine Trammell was the kind of kid who stood out in the right ways. He was thoughtful, helpful, well-liked by teachers and students at Bow Elementary in Detroit.

He was supposed to receive a basketball trophy Tuesday. Teachers had planned a small celebration for the school team at 4 p.m.

Instead, the school's principal spent the afternoon typing a letter to send home to the parents of her 662 students, telling them that DeAntoine, a 10-year-old fifth-grader, had been killed by a gun. He is the metro area's 13th homicide victim 16 or younger this year, according to a Free Press review of medical examiners' records.

Bow Elementary Principal Lynnette Blocker was trying to cope with her own shock when she had to inform students and teachers of the death.

"As soon as they found out, the whole building fell apart," Blocker said. "They began to cry from grades one all the way to five."

Douglas Kendrick, 24, is in police custody as prosecutors consider charges in connection with DeAntoine's death Monday at a home on Detroit's east side. **Kendrick** and DeAntoine both lived there.

Kendrick could be arraigned on charges today or Thursday, said Rebecca Tenorio, a spokeswoman for Wayne County Prosecutor Mike Duggan.

Residents of the home on Manning said **Kendrick** came home drunk and distraught. He threatened to kill himself, stuck a handgun in his mouth, then fired it twice while standing in the kitchen, they said.

Both bullets pierced a wall into a bedroom filled with six children, including DeAntoine.

DeAntoine's mother, Regina Trammell, recalled the frantic episode Tuesday in her mother's apartment in downtown Detroit. Seated on her lap was **Kendrick**'s 1-year-old son, Doug Jr.

Trammell said she grabbed the gun as **Kendrick**, her sister's boyfriend, fired it and dropped it. She took the gun outside and threw it on a neighboring lawn to get it away from him.

"Call the police," she screamed to neighbors.

She didn't know anyone had been hurt.

Then her oldest son, 14-year-old Shawn Trammell, walked out, carrying her youngest.

"I just fell in the street, crying," she said.

She recalled that Shawn shouted to her: "Come on Mama, come on. He's breathing."

The boy's family rushed him to a clinic on Gratiot near State Fair. But Trammell said they were turned away because the clinic, which is not a trauma center, could not treat the child. DeAntoine, who been hit by a bullet in the back, died late Monday at St. John Hospital in Detroit.

"It's not fair that he's gone," his mother said. "He had nothing to do with it. And you can't call this an accident when someone puts their hand on a gun and pulls the trigger."

DeAntoine, his mom said, loved sports, video games, cartoons and pizza. He had recently enjoyed the movie "Spider Man" and stayed up late Sunday to watch the NBA Western Conference finals.

"He's in another world now, and he doesn't know why," his mother said. "He doesn't know why he got shot in the back."

Blocker, whose husband is a retired Detroit police officer, said the boy often helped in the school cafeteria and was good with younger students.

"This is very frightening," Blocker said. "I don't think folks realize the severity of guns. Guns are destroying our society."

On Saturday, DeAntoine was to take a trip to Bloomfield Hills. His new mentor Keefe Brooks, 48, a lawyer, wanted to introduce DeAntoine to his family.

DeAntoine was Brooks' first match in the V.I.P. Mentors program. Brooks said he met him and his mother a week ago.

He said he wanted to show DeAntoine the possibilities his life held. "I'd hoped to expose him to successful people in the city, to help him to build positive images and role models," Brooks said.

"I cannot bear the thought of my match having been taken from our world before I even got to know him," he said. "I cannot bear the thought of more children being slaughtered in our city."

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Caption: Photo; Photo RICHARD LEE/Detroit Free Press

Basketball teammates and cheerleaders from Bow Elementary sign a ball in remembrance of DeAntoine Trammell. The students -- from left, Martina Jones, Denziel Van Horn, Thomas Martin and Kenyoan Richardson -- planned to give the ball to DeAntoine's mother. DeAntoine Trammell, 10, was killed late Monday.

METRO AREA'S YOUNG HOMICIDE VICTIMS

Thirteen metro Detroit children 16 and younger, including 10-year-old DeAntoine Trammell, have been homicide victims this year, according to a Free Press review of medical examiner records.

Not pictured: Jameise Scaife, 3 days old; Joseph Walker, 16; Brennon Cunningham, 3, and Irisha Keener, 3. Ajanee Pollard, 7
Destinee Thomas, 3
Alesia Robinson, 16
Christopher James, 11
Brianna Caddell, 8
Cherrel Thomas, 15
Irika Peterson, 14
Tiffany Taylor, 15

Memo: SEE RELATED STORY, PAGE 1A; SIDEBAR/CUTLINES ATTACHED IN CAPTION

Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: NWS

Page: 1A

Index Terms: DEANTOINE TRAMMELL ; CHILD FATALITY ; DETROIT ; DEATH ; HOMICIDE ; SHOOTING ; CHILD ; SUMMARY ; STATISTIC ; NAMELIST

Record Number: 0206050351

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