

AT AGE 14, GUNMAN KILLED CLASSMATE

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Michael Schofield, who killed four people in an attempted robbery of a convenience store in Westland on Thursday, shot and killed a classmate at Murray Wright High School in Detroit in 1987. On Friday, his earlier victim's stepmother said the Detroit man should not have been released from prison.

"They let him go and they shouldn't have," Doris Jackson of Detroit said Friday. "He couldn't have learned anything. He wasn't rehabilitated. That's what's wrong with the system."

Schofield's name wasn't made public then because he was only 14 and protected by confidentiality laws not in effect today.

But the April 16, 1987, murder of Chester Jackson Jr., a 17-year-old star football player at Murray Wright, shook Detroit officials from their complacency about juvenile violence and influenced Detroit Public Schools to install metal detectors at all city high schools.

Doris Jackson said during the court hearings **Schofield** said he had dreams about Chester beating him up.

"It's apparent that he was just crazy," Jackson said.

Under state law at the time, **Schofield** was too young to be charged as an adult and juvenile court hearings were closed to the public. The Free Press successfully sought to gain access to **Schofield**'s trial but had to agree not to publish the boy's name. Later that year, the state Supreme Court and the Legislature agreed to open juvenile court proceedings to the public beginning Jan. 1, 1988.

In August 1987, Wayne County Juvenile Court Visiting Judge Paul Mahinske found **Schofield** guilty of second-degree murder, two counts of felonious assault in the woundings of two other students, and using a firearm while committing a felony. **Schofield** was committed to the then-Department of Social Services (now called the Family Independence Agency) for treatment until age 19.

He was admitted to the maximum security W.J. Maxey Boys Training School in Green Oak Township on Oct. 29, 1987, an FIA spokeswoman said Friday. He was released into a less-secure program on March 10, 1989.

By the time **Schofield** turned 19 in 1991 he had progressed in the state's rehabilitation program to the point where he held a job and was living in an apartment on his own.

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