

POLICE NAB BOY , 10 , IN HOME DRUG RAID

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A **10**-year-old **boy** found sitting **in** a closet atop packets of crack cocaine and heroin is believed to be the youngest suspected **drug** dealer ever arrested **in** Detroit, **police** said Thursday.

"This is the youngest I've heard of," said Inspector Rudy Thomas, head of the narcotics division. "It shows you how streetwise these kids can get."

The unidentified youth was **in** a foster **home** Thursday pending a hearing on whether he has been neglected by his 33- year-old mother, according to Wayne County Juvenile Court records.

Police raided the **boy** 's east side **home** , on Wayburn **in** the Mack-Alter area, Tuesday night after an informant twice bought **drugs** there. He was taken to the Wayne County Youth **Home** , but on Wednesday Juvenile Referee Paulette Lebost refused to authorize delinquency charges of possessing heroin and cocaine with intent to deliver.

Lebost also refused to release the **boy** to his mother, instead ordering the state Department of Social Services to take temporary custody and file a neglect petition against her.

Lebost said Thursday that she did not authorize the delinquency charge because the state will not make wards of delinquents under age 12.

"My options are to warn and dismiss or place him on probation. And probation to who?" she said. "Mom's house?"

In hearings scheduled to begin Sept. 14, a juvenile court referee will determine whether the **boy** was neglected. If so, the state could seek permanent custody and have the child adopted by another family.

According to court records, a **police** informant had bought **drugs** at the **boy** 's **home** twice **in** the past few weeks from a man **in** his 30s identified as "Toni."

Narcotics Sgt. Thomas McCann, who led the crew that raided the house Tuesday, said an undercover officer tried to make another buy Sunday.

"It was the kid he talked with and dealt with and the officer got the distinct impression the kid was **in** control and running the dope business," McCann said Thursday. "But the kid was out of dope."

Tuesday, "when we actually execute the search warrant, the kid runs through the house and is chased and runs to a closet and the officer gets him out," McCann said. "He's sitting on two bags."

The bags held 11 packs of heroin and 25 rocks of cocaine, according to court records. **Police** also confiscated a .38- caliber revolver from the **home** .

McCann said the man named "Toni" was not **in** the **home** when it was raided and the mother did not appear to be involved **in** the **drug** selling.

Neighbors said they were not surprised the **home** was raided, but did not expect the arrest of the 4-foot-6 -inch, 80-pound **boy** . "It was just like a dream when you see the **police** rushing up," said a 58-year-old neighbor who asked that her name not be used. "It made me sick to see the little child come out."

Neighbors said the **boy** 's mother ran after him crying, "Take me," but she was ignored by **police**.

McCann described the youth as "a nice, sweet-looking young **boy** " who started classes Tuesday at Jackson Middle School.

"He had new clothes on," McCann said. "It was the first day of school and he had his new school clothes on and I was looking at his class schedule on the table."

McCann said the **boy** , who turns 11 **in** November, was the youngest suspected **drug** dealer he's arrested **in** five years of narcotics work.

Neither McCann nor Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Thomas Doetsch objected to Lebest's decision to dismiss the delinquency charge.

Doetsch said, "The most the court could do to him is to put him on probation and that would be probation back **home** with the mother, the very place the crime was occurring.

"But if you don't do something about him now," Doetsch said, "you might as well write him off."

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