

## DETROIT: MURDERED BOY'S DAD TO DO TIME OVER DRUGS

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The father of one of two boys killed in the high-profile Mansfield Street drug murders is facing nearly three years in prison after pleading guilty to selling cocaine two years ago.

**Darren Johnson Sr.**, 38, of Detroit pleaded guilty Sept. 11 in U.S. District Court to a charge of distribution of cocaine. He was arrested in 2005 after he sold 9 ounces of cocaine to an undercover federal agent in Detroit, according to court records.

**Johnson**'s 11-year-old son, **Darren Jr.**, was shot and killed Feb. 23 along with his 13-year-old cousin, Orlando Herron, when a group of people stormed a home on Mansfield, looking for drugs and money.

During sentencing Wednesday for two of the convicted killers, Sonya O'Neal and Robert Reed, the elder **Johnson** charged at O'Neal and had to be restrained by deputies. O'Neal and Reed were sentenced to life in prison for first-degree murder.

**Johnson** has been free on a personal bond and is to be sentenced Jan. 14 in U.S. District Court in Detroit. He faces 27 to 33 months in prison, according to court documents.

"He accepts full responsibility, and to the best of my knowledge his situation in federal court is totally unrelated with what happened with his child," **Johnson**'s lawyer, Warren Harris, said Thursday.

An Oct. 5 document discussing **Johnson**'s conditions for pretrial release recommends a referral for mental health treatment.

In the case of the killings of the two boys, Wayne County Circuit Judge Craig Strong repeatedly referred to the drug trade as he sentenced O'Neal and Reed.

Four other suspects have pleaded guilty in the case and will be sentenced this month.

Although there was no evidence that the two boys dealt drugs, they were shot in the home of their cousin Ronell Thompson, 23, an admitted drug dealer.

Strong admonished the boys' families for allowing them to hang out in the house of a drug dealer. **Johnson** testified that he did not know Thompson was involved in drugs and he felt comfortable with his son at the home.

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo

CAPTION: **Darren Johnson Sr .**, 38, at sentencing for two of his son's killers

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