

GIRL DIED DIVING UNDER BED AS SHOTS STRUCK HOUSE \ 7TH-GRADER 'WAS SCARED

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Terrified by the unexpected gunfire that tore through her bedroom early Sunday morning, **Tanee Montgomery** struggled to duck under her bed for safety, but was stopped by a single bullet apparently meant for somebody else.

"She was scared. We all were scared and wondering just what the hell was going on. We were all just trying to get to the floor," said a 21-year-old man who lives at the house in the 18900 block of Braile where **Tanee** , 12, had been living for the last month.

" **Tanee** got up only to get down under the bed. That's when she just caught one," said the man, who asked that his name not be used.

Tanee , a seventh-grader at Emerson Middle School, was dead on arrival at Mt. Carmel Mercy Hospital about 4 a.m. Sunday.

She was the 17th youth under 17 killed by gunfire in the city this year, according to a Free Press tally of police reports; 81 others have been wounded.

Police said they had questioned several witnesses and suspects Monday, but had no one in custody in the shooting they said was in retaliation for an earlier argument at the Enchante, a nightclub at McNichols and Schaefer.

Tanee 's 17-year-old brother, Richard **Montgomery** , cousin Darryl **Montgomery** , 19, and another man allegedly were attacked at the club by about five youths just two hours before the shooting, police said. The three had returned to the Braile address after the attack, and shortly later the shooting took place, police said.

Tanee had been asleep for hours before she was awakened when several people in a car stopped in the rear alley and riddled the back of the house with at least a dozen bullets, police said.

"They're really just decent people. I don't understand this," said a neighbor who requested anonymity because he feared retaliation. "Like us, they are trying to make their place a home, not just a house," he said of the family **Tanee** had been staying with so she could finish the school year at Emerson.

Her mother, Carmen Manning, recently had moved to a house in the 1600 block of Clements from Vaughn, about six blocks east of Braile, said the 21-year-old man. Manning had wanted her daughter to stay with family friends so she wouldn't have to start at a new school until next year, he said.

"She had so many friends because she was just an all-around nice, sweet person," he said. "I know she was my little sister's best friend."

He said **Tanee** was fond of roller skating, dancing and rap music, but also took her studies, especially math, very seriously.

"You know, this neighborhood has slowly declined to the point that I don't think people have any value for life," he said. "You know, I think people just don't care."

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