

CITY OF DETROIT
DEPARTMENT REPORT AND INFORMATION COMMITTEE
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(This is the fourth in a series of articles from the Detroit Police Department on steps citizens can take to better protect themselves, their families and their property.)

Perhaps violation of the Detroit curfew ordinance is not the greatest crime in the world, but it certainly is a step in the wrong direction, according to the commanding officer of the Detroit Police Department Youth Bureau, Inspector Leonard Sznewajs.

More than 1,000 juveniles were ticketed for violating Detroit's curfew ordinance last year.

The City ordinance states that juveniles in the age groups listed below must not be on the streets, playgrounds, vacant lots or in any other unsupervised areas between the hours indicated: Those under 12 years of age are restricted from being outside between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. Twelve and 13-year-olds are restricted between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. The deadline for those 14-16 years of age is midnight, except on Friday nights, when the limit is extended to 1 a.m.

This ordinance does not apply to juveniles accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or an adult designated by the parent or guardian. The juvenile also is exempted from the ordinance when on an emergency errand or a business matter as directed by the parent or guardian.

(more)

"There is more to a curfew violation," said Sznewajs, "than the breaking of a rule. If a youth is picked up for breaking curfew unbeknownst to the parents, we do not ticket the parents.

"But, if the youth is on the street, is knowingly breaking the curfew, and his parents allow him to break that curfew for no reason, then we have a youth and his parents who do not respect the law or the authority behind that law."

In such cases both the juvenile and the parents are subject to ticketing.

This violation and this disrespect tend to lead to other more serious infractions of the law, he said.

"Kids out on the street with nothing to keep them busy soon will find something to do---often the illegal type of activity."

Perhaps a couple of kids on the corner will decide to see who can hit the street light with a stone. The Public Lighting Commission reports that it cost \$32,380 to replace globes and lamps broken through vandalism from May, 1968, to April of this year.

Or perhaps they can occupy themselves by knocking over a park bench or two. The Department of Parks and Recreation reports the bill for vandalism to its facilities last year ran \$112,000.

Another favorite target of idle hands after curfew is the school---scene of discipline and homework for youths during the day. The Detroit Board of Education reports \$791,390 lost through vandalism in 1968.

If it is a short step from curfew violations and the associated disrespect for authority, to the malicious destruction of property, how much further is it to more serious crimes?

Last year the Youth Bureau interviewed 28,533 boys and girls.

The Police Department also recovered \$144,737 in stolen property from juveniles.

To help protect young people from the temptations and bad influences to which they may be exposed through infractions of youth laws, Sznewajs feels that it is vital that the youths and their parents know and understand such ordinances.

A summary entitled "Laws Teen-agers Should Know" is available through the Public Information Center, 325 Police Headquarters, 1300 Beaubien, Detroit 48226.

Contained in this folder are summaries of laws and ordinances on many areas of concern to parents and youths.

BB GUNS: Minimum age for purchasing a BB gun is 18. Boys or girls under 18 cannot carry an uncased BB gun in a public place except when accompanied by an adult. A BB gun may not be fired across a sidewalk, street or alley, or so as to endanger life or property.

POOL HALLS: Persons under 18 are not allowed to play in a billiard or pool room unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

THEATERS, BOWLING ALLEYS, PLACES OF AMUSEMENT: Those in the following age groups must not be in theaters, bowling alleys or places of amusement after the times indicated unless accompanied by a parent or guardian---under 12, after 7 p.m.; 12-13, after 10:30 p.m.; 14-16, after 11:30 p.m., except Friday, when the time is extended to 12:30 p.m.

DAMAGES: Parents of children 17 or younger may be required to pay for property damage caused by their children up to \$1,500. This was changed from a limit of \$500 last year.

DANCE HALLS: Persons under 17 years of age are prohibited from being in public dance halls unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Special teen dances must have police approval, adequate chaperones, and must close by 11:30 p.m. Those 14-16 may attend these special dances unaccompanied.

DRINKING: No one under the age of 21 may purchase, possess or transport any alcoholic beverage (except under certain employment conditions).

DRIVE-IN RESTAURANTS: It is unlawful to drive into or through a drive-in restaurant for a purpose other than obtaining food. Unnecessary noise and the throwing of refuse also is unlawful.

WEAPONS: Possession by persons under 21 years of age of any instrument capable of causing injury is prohibited. Use of a knife as a tool in work or trade or when required as a legitimate recreation or character-building program such as Boy Scouts, and when traveling to and from such activities is permitted.

LOITERING: Those who impede or divert the normal course of others by their actions or who disturb others by their remarks are considered disorderly persons and are subject to prosecution.

PARKS: Objectionable noise and disorderly conduct are prohibited in public parks. Posted restrictions on the use of the park must be obeyed.

SCHOOLS: Everyone except school employees, regularly enrolled students, and parents must have the written permission of the principal to enter and remain in the school.

It is unlawful to force a student to give or lend money. No one under the age of 16, or any enrolled day school student shall be permitted to remain in any commercial business place such as a drug store or restaurant during school hours.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: Playing games in streets and alleys is prohibited. Interfering with traffic is also a violation.

STREET TRADES: Street trades consist of such jobs as peddling, shoe shining, soliciting subscriptions or collecting funds. Girls under age 18, and boys under age 12 are prohibited from engaging

in any street trade. Males under 17 may not engage in any street trade between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m., except that boys 14-16 may sell or deliver papers or periodicals until 10 p.m.

Youths may not engage in street trades during school hours except when legally excused from school.

WORK: Youths must secure a work permit from the Detroit Board of Education for each job.

Questions about these ordinances can be answered by the Youth Bureau, 224-4030.

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