

# Munford Crime Prevention Newsletter • June, 2024

## Community Survey

The Community Survey is available at [tiptonconstables.org](http://tiptonconstables.org)  
The purpose of the Community Survey is to gather the thoughts and opinions of the members of our community. These are presented to our government officials to inform them of the needs in our community. If you haven't taken the community survey, please consider taking it at: [tiptonconstables.org/survey](http://tiptonconstables.org/survey)

Results of the survey will be presented here in the crime prevention newsletter. You can sign up for the electronic version of the newsletter at [tiptonconstables.org](http://tiptonconstables.org)

## June Driver Safety Tips

**Tip#20 There is safety in numbers.** Whenever possible, travel with a companion. Keep a cell phone in the vehicle and know the area you are traveling in. Keep your doors locked at all times and never pick-up or stop for a stranger. If you must travel alone, file a "travel plan" with friends or relatives, especially for long trips.

**Tip#21 Being Followed?** Come to us. If you believe you are being followed in your vehicle:

- Do not stop or pull over.
- Immediately call 911 if you have a cell phone available. Follow the dispatcher's instructions.
- Do not drive home.
- If possible, drive directly to the local police station.
- If you do not have a cell phone, start blowing your horn to draw attention to yourself.
- If you see a police officer(s), stop and ask for assistance.
- If you must stop without police assistance, find a well-lit and very populated business to stop at.

**Tip#22 Insurance is Mandatory.** State law now requires proof of vehicle insurance to be carried and displayed upon request of a police officer. Failure to provide proof of insurance could result in a \$100 fine and the suspension of your Tennessee driving privileges for up to one year. Tennessee Law TCA – 55-12-139



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## Points of Interest

- Tips: Summer Crime Prevention
  - Home Security
  - Personal Safety
  - Vacation Safety
  - Outdoor Safety
- Working together with a Neighborhood Watch can keep us safer.
- How to handle adolescent drug abuse.
- How to be a good witness and questions from 911.
- How to stay connected

## Summer Safety & Preventing Crime



### Starting a Neighborhood Watch

A neighborhood watch program is a group of people living in the same area who want to make their neighborhood safer by working together and in conjunction with local law enforcement to reduce crime and improve their quality of life. Neighborhood watch groups have regular meetings to plan how they will accomplish their specific goals and leaders with assigned responsibilities. Neighborhood watch empowers citizens and communities to become active in emergency preparedness, as well as the fight against crime and community disasters.

#### Would you like to start a neighborhood watch program on your street?

We will help you... Please gather a list of at least 8 individuals in your neighborhood that would commit to working towards your neighborhood watch and let's schedule a meeting to help you get started.

With summer just around the corner, it's time to enjoy the sunny days and warm nights. However, as we take advantage of the beautiful weather, it's important to stay vigilant and proactive about safety. Summer often brings an increase in certain types of crime, so here are some essential tips to help you protect yourself, your family, and your property.

#### Home Security

- Upgrade Locks and Security Systems - Ensure that all entry points, including doors and windows, have sturdy locks. Consider upgrading to smart locks and installing a comprehensive security system with cameras and alarms.
- Use Timers for Lights and Electronics - Set timers for your lights, TVs, and radios to create the illusion that someone is home, even when you're away. This can deter potential burglars.
- Maintain Your Property - Keep your yard well-maintained to give the impression that your home is occupied. Overgrown lawns and accumulated mail can signal that no one is home.
- Install Motion-Activated Lights - Place motion-activated lights around your property, particularly near entrances. These lights can startle and deter intruders.
- Neighborhood Watch Programs - Join or start a neighborhood watch program. A close-knit community can effectively monitor suspicious activities and enhance overall safety. We can show you how at: [www.tiptonconstables.org/nwatch](http://www.tiptonconstables.org/nwatch)

#### Personal Safety

- Stay Alert and Aware - Always be aware of your surroundings, especially in crowded or unfamiliar areas. Avoid distractions like looking at your phone while walking.
- Travel in Groups - Whenever possible, travel with friends or family. There's safety in numbers, especially when walking at night or in isolated areas.
- Secure Your Belongings - Keep your valuables close and secure. Use bags that can be zipped up and avoid displaying expensive items such as jewelry or electronics.
- Choose Safe Parking Spots - Park in well-lit and busy areas. Lock your vehicle, and never leave valuables in plain sight. Use anti-theft devices if you have them.
- Limit Alcohol Consumption - While enjoying summer festivities, be mindful of your alcohol intake. Being under the influence can make you more vulnerable to crime.

#### Vacation Safety

- Inform a Trusted Neighbor - Before leaving for vacation, let a trusted neighbor know. They can help keep an eye on your property, collect your mail, and ensure everything looks normal. Consider signing up for vacation patrol at: [www.tiptonconstables.org/vacation-patrol-request](http://www.tiptonconstables.org/vacation-patrol-request)

- Be Cautious with Social Media - Avoid posting your travel plans or photos in real-time on social media. Broadcasting your absence can make your home a target for burglars.
- Use Hotel Safes - When staying at a hotel, utilize the safe to store your valuables. Always lock your room and use additional security measures provided by the hotel.
- Blend in with Locals - Avoid looking like a tourist. Dress casually and avoid displaying maps or guidebooks conspicuously. This can help you blend in and avoid being targeted.
- Prepare Emergency Contacts - Keep a list of emergency contacts, including local authorities and nearby friends or family. Know the location of the nearest embassy or consulate if traveling abroad.

### Outdoor Activity Safety

- Plan Your Outings - Inform someone about your plans and expected return time when heading out for activities like hiking, biking, or exploring new areas. Stick to known paths and avoid secluded areas.
- Carry Essential Items - Always carry identification, a fully charged phone, and necessary supplies like water and sunscreen. This ensures you're prepared for emergencies.
- Respect Nature and Wildlife - Follow local guidelines for outdoor activities. Avoid restricted areas and keep a safe distance from wildlife to prevent dangerous encounters.
- Stay Hydrated and Protected - Bring enough water and wear appropriate clothing, including sun protection. Being well-prepared reduces the need to seek help from strangers.
- Listen to Your Instincts - If something feels off, trust your instincts. Remove yourself from potentially unsafe situations and seek help if necessary.

Summer is a season for fun and relaxation, but it's also a time to stay vigilant about safety. By following these crime prevention tips, you can enjoy the season while protecting yourself, your loved ones, and your property. Remember to stay aware, be prepared, and prioritize safety in all your summer activities. For more information on crime prevention and safety tips, visit our website at: [www.tiptonconstables.org/info](http://www.tiptonconstables.org/info)

Stay safe and make the most of your summer!

## What Every Parent Needs to Know About Adolescent Substance Use

Adolescent substance use is a critical issue that parents must understand and address proactively. As children transition into teenagers, they may encounter opportunities to experiment with drugs and alcohol, which can lead to serious long-term consequences. Here's a guide on what every parent needs to know about adolescent substance use, including the risks involved, warning signs, and strategies for prevention and intervention.

## Are you concerned about church safety?

Our Tennessee Constable for Munford is offering FREE church safety & security classes for our local church leaders. Please influence them to visit [tiptonconstables.org](http://tiptonconstables.org) for class schedules and offerings to make sure our community is prepared.

## Stay Connected

For the latest updates on community safety, crime prevention tips, and local events, we encourage you to visit the Tipton Constables Facebook page. Stay informed about the efforts of our dedicated law enforcement officers as they work tirelessly to keep our community safe. By following the page, you'll gain access to valuable information, timely alerts, and opportunities to engage with your local constables. Join the Tipton Constables Facebook community today and be an active participant in fostering a safer, more connected neighborhood.

Your involvement makes a difference!

## Prevention Strategies

Proactive communication is key to preventing adolescent substance use. Here are effective strategies parents can employ:

**Education:** Educate your children about the dangers of drugs and alcohol from an early age. Clear, factual discussions can demystify substances and reduce their allure.

**Open Dialogue:** Foster an open environment where your children can discuss their feelings and pressures without fear of judgment or harsh consequences.

**Set Clear Expectations and Consequences:** Be clear about your expectations regarding drug and alcohol use and consistent in the consequences of breaking those rules.

**Be a Role Model:** Demonstrate healthy coping strategies for stress and anxiety. Your behavior can provide a powerful example for your children.

**Monitor Activities:** Know your teenager's friends, where they spend their time, and how they use their free time.

## Understanding the Risks

Adolescence is a period of significant physical, emotional, and social development. During this time, teenagers are particularly susceptible to the allure of substance use due to peer pressure, curiosity, and the desire for independence. The primary risks associated with adolescent substance use include:

- **Health Problems:** Substance use can interfere with normal brain development, leading to cognitive issues and, potentially, long-term psychological disorders.
- **Addiction:** Teenagers have a higher risk of developing addiction as their brains are still developing. Early exposure to drugs or alcohol can lead to more severe substance use disorders later in life.
- **Academic and Social Consequences:** Substance use can result in poor academic performance, loss of interest in school, and strained relationships with family and friends.
- **Legal Issues:** Possession and use of drugs can lead to legal troubles, which might impact a teenager's future, including college admissions and employment opportunities.

## Recognizing the Signs

Early detection of substance use can significantly alter the course of a teenager's development. Common warning signs include:

- Changes in mood, such as irritability or mood swings.
- Withdrawal from family and changes in social circles.
- Loss of interest in hobbies and activities they once enjoyed.
- Declining academic performance.
- Unexplained changes in behavior or appearance.
- Secretive behavior, lying, or increased demand for privacy.

## Intervention and Support

If you discover that your adolescent is using substances, it's critical to respond calmly and constructively. Consider the following steps:  
**Seek Professional Help:** Consulting with professionals such as counselors, psychologists, or pediatricians can provide guidance specific to your child's situation.

- **Supportive Communication:** Focus on expressing concern and support rather than anger. Let them know you're there to help, not punish.
- **Treatment Options:** Depending on the severity of the substance use, treatment options may include therapy, medication, and support groups. Tailor interventions to fit the needs of your teenager.

## Conclusion

Adolescent substance use is a pressing concern that requires informed, proactive, and supportive responses from parents. Understanding the risks, recognizing the signs, and effectively communicating with your teenagers are crucial steps in preventing and addressing this challenging issue. By providing a supportive environment and seeking professional help when necessary, parents can play a pivotal role in guiding their children through these formative years safely.

## Being a Good Witness

Being a good witness means not placing yourself or others in danger. Remain calm enough to call the police and provide critical information. Statistics show that 64% of victims don't report their crime to the police. Some people's instincts are to scare suspects away, chase after them or confront the suspects after seeing a crime occur. It's better not to confront or get involved in a conflict with the suspect. Call 911 at the first sign of suspicious activity.

From a time line perspective, there are three categories of crimes.

- A crime which is about to occur.
- A crime in progress
- A crime which has already occurred.

When you call the police to report a crime, one of the first questions the dispatcher may ask you is, "Is this an emergency?" An emergency is any situation requiring immediate assistance and these are divided into two separate categories:

- Crimes against persons. (These types of crime are considered high priority)
- Crimes against property.

If you are call 911 for one of the two emergencies listed above, the dispatcher will immediately ask you the location of your emergency.

The next question the dispatcher may ask is, "What are you reporting?" You should respond by simply stating what the crime is. For example, "Someone just robbed me," or "I'd like to report a hit and run with injuries," or "A woman is being beaten by a man," or whatever the case may be.

As you are speaking on the phone, the dispatcher is typing the information into a computer and dispatching the call to an officer at the same time. If you start babbling, the dispatcher will abruptly guide you back to the correct line of questioning. Remember, the dispatcher is not intentionally being rude, but they have a job to do.

The sooner a crime is reported to the police, the higher the chances of apprehending the suspect. Often times, after a "fresh crime," if other officers happen to be in the area when the call was received, and they have a reasonable suspicion that the person or vehicle they just stopped is connected to the crime, the police will detain the person or people matching the suspect description.

If you are the victim or witness of a crime, the police will advise you that they have someone detained that they would like you to look at. This is known as a "Show Up." You will be advised that the person being detained may or may not be the guilty party. The police may then drive you to the location of the detainee to see if you can make a positive identification. In cases where a suspect is arrested sometime after the crime, perhaps several hours or days later, you may be asked to view a photo lineup.

No crime is too small to report and any/all questions you may have are worth asking. Remember, keeping your eyes and ears open at all times will make you a better witness. You never know when you are going to have to report or witness a crime.

## Description of the Suspect

- Gender — male or female?
- Race — White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, etc.?
- Age — Approximate? Height/Weight?
- Hair color, length and/or facial hair?
- Clothing description? (Including the bad guy's shoes (sometimes a criminal will change their clothes but they will not change their shoes.)

## Calling 911

A series of questions will follow:

- Where exactly did (or is) this crime occurring? (Exact address or landmarks.)
- What exactly happened? Are there any injuries?
- When did it occur? Is it still occurring?
- How long ago? (Time frame: 10 minutes ago, an hour ago, yesterday)
- Who was involved? Suspect? Victim?
- What was the suspect's last direction of travel? (Example: landmarks; name of streets, etc.)
- Were there any weapons involved? Remember, anything can be considered a weapon . . . a fist, gun, knife, car, hammer, bat, etc.

## Core Values

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Integrity

Service before self

Excellence

Compassion



## What's a Constable?

Constables operate as individually elected officers at no cost to the citizens or governments of the county. Constables supply their vehicles, fuel, and equipment. They stand ready to aid or assist all citizens and/or agencies within the county. The Tennessee Constable is a non salaried office!

The mission of the Constable's Office is to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Tipton County by working collaboratively with area law enforcement, General Sessions court, and our community to prevent crime, enforce the law, increase mobility and target violent offenders for prosecution.

They supplement the county Sheriff's Office and local Police Departments. Constables are also at the disposal of the various fire departments, EMS units, and rescue squads as well as any state or federal agency which might have use of their services.

## Tipton County Constables

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Darren Smith  
Tennessee Constable, Munford  
Box 1488  
Munford, TN 38058  
tiptonconstable@gmail.com

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