

Cops nab 3 for car break-ins Teens from page A1

BY GARY WORONCHAK STAFF WRITER

Three suspected thieves cruising through apartment complex parking lots on Eight Mile Road found out they were being watched by police early Wednesday morning.

The trio was arrested on the parking lot of Newport Creek Apartments after they allegedly broke into two parked cars.

Police began following a 1996

Ford Explorer around 1:45 a.m. after seeing it pull into various driveways on Eight Mile.

After pulling in and out of Topiolo Village, the Explorer went into Greenwoods Village, where police saw it circle several lots near different apartment buildings in the complex. Then it drove to Newport Creek.

The suspects got out of the Explorer and began to look inside parked cars with flash-

lights, according to reports. Police said they watched as windows were smashed to get into a 1997 Pontiac Sunfire and a 1988 Dodge Ram van.

They got back into the Explorer and began to drive, with headlights off, deeper into the apartment complex, at which point two squad cars stopped the vehicle and arrested the three young men.

In the Explorer police found two cellular phones and stereo equipment thought to have been taken from the cars broken into.

Arrested were an Oak Park man, 20, a 19-year-old Southfield resident and a Detroit, 16.

As they were being booked at the police station, the 20-year-old allegedly said that it "was nothing, it's all part of doing business."

They got older they're going to be valuable.

"They think, 'If mom and dad can't handle it, how can little ol' me handle it?'"

Davis Counseling Center treats teens for mood disorders, substance abuse and social problems. Farmington Youth Assistance, a non-profit agency, is also seeing more teens who are depressed.

Adolescents are confused about who they are, said social worker Karen MacKenzie. That feeling is pervasive whether the teen is from a two-parent or one-parent home.

"They don't have a sense of place or belonging," MacKenzie said. "As a function of that, their self-esteem gets affected."

"They have what they need and get what they want from their parents. Because things come too easily to them...they don't get to build a sense of identity of what you make or do yourself."

Danielle said her job at Domino's Pizza helps her through bleak times.

"You have something to do with your time instead of just thinking about it," she said.

Danielle describes herself as an average student, getting Bs. She wants to go to college, get a good job and "make some money."

High expectations send a steady stream of stressed teens to school social workers like North Farmington High's Darcie Layne.

"I see these kids stressed out by ACT scores, who's going to get into what college..." said Layne, a school social worker for 18 years. "Parents inadvertently give kids messages that they want them to succeed, which is great."

"But sometimes parents get tunnel vision, which we all do as parents. You get tunnel vision and you forget to listen to what your kid is telling you what he or she wants and that can be stress-

ful. I think parents mean well."

Peer pressure is another factor. "I've never met a kid who said their peers affect them," Layne said. "At the same time, you walk into a high school and every kid seeking to be an individual is wearing the same flannel shirt, the same tie and the same hat."

Stress manifests itself in many ways. Layne said she's seeing more kids with eating disorders, taking antidepressants, and using drugs and alcohol.

A few students told her they've considered suicide. Most are depressed, though, Layne said.

"They don't walk in and typically say, 'I'm considering suicide,'" MacKenzie said. "You watch for the signs."

"The rule of thumb is you ask them point blank. Most of them say they just feel sad."

For other teens in similar situations, Danielle offers this advice: "Get help. It really works."

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Liaison from page A1

out permission from the students or their parents.

Judge Fred Harris' ruling in 47th District Court upheld a subpoena from Farmington Hills police on the basis that the interviews with students were not a protected internal investigation once Officer Fox was brought into the matter.

That, according to Ballard, is the heart of matter that needs clarification: Is a police officer acting as a liaison officer there to investigate criminal matters or as an advisor who is a representative of the law enforcement community?

"Where is the point where it switches between police officer and liaison officer? It's a gray line, there's no doubt about that," said Ballard. "When the officer is there on a police matter, they're there with different criteria than as a school official."

Judge Harris' ruling meant that Clarke either had to turn over information she thought was confidential or file an appeal of the judge's decision. The principal opted to turn over the evidence after discussions with attorneys and parents.

"The case is closed, but the discussion on the issues will now begin," said Ballard. "We think there is a difference between a police officer and a police liaison officer, and we think there needs to be a discussion on it."

He pointed out that Judge Harris, despite ruling that the principal should turn over the evidence, recognized the broader issues in the case by granting a motion by Clarke's attorney for appeal, which meant the evidence did not have to be presented until another hearing.

However, Hills police Chief Bill Dwyer said earlier that the

role of a police liaison officer is clear.

"His responsibilities include investigating any violations of criminal law. He is a law enforcement officer. He is not there strictly as a social worker or a friend," Dwyer said.

Ballard's opinion differed. "The police officer in the school is there to represent the police community within the school system," he said.

Ballard acknowledged that the discussions between various affected agencies may not resolve the dispute.

"At some point, the matter may require legislation to clarify it," Ballard said.

Meanwhile, with the matter that inspired the broader debate now closed, an attorney for Clarke said the principal did what she could to protect the trust of students.

"She fought the good fight," said Carrick Craig, the Ann Arbor attorney who helped make that case that she should not turn over information to police that she received in confidence from two students. "The judge gave her her day in court."

It was expected that an appeal would have been lengthy and costly.

Sometimes you have to make decisions based on internal factors," Craig said. "It is difficult to fight everything to the bitter end."

Because the school's police liaison officer was present during some interviews, according to the ruling, he was privy to any information about the case.

According to Craig, one of the key distinctions the judge didn't address was that the police didn't call for Clarke or assistant principal Ron Jones to testify. The written statements subpoenaed by the police were not taken in front of Officer Fox.

Both Craig and City Prosecutor Steve Meads said they were surprised that there was little case law on point concerning the issue of what teachers and administrators can keep confidential and under what circumstances.

The attorneys also agreed that had the police not been involved, a judge could have ruled differently.

"Certainly that would have been a much tougher call," Meads said. "There are exemptions from privileges on the books, but I don't think any of them are specific to this situation."

Under those circumstances, Craig said "a much more strenuous appeal" would have had a better chance.

Clarke has said that she is not sure of what the impact will be on her role and issues of privileged information.

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by Herbert M. Gardner, D.D.S. & Martha P. Zinderman, R.N., D.D.S.

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CLARIFICATION

A story in the Feb. 16 issue regarding goals for Farmington Hills city officials discussed their plans to push for a telephone surcharge to help pay for the 9-1-1 service. The story should have said that such a plan would need the support of County Executive L. Brooks Patterson.

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