



Ft. Pierce Police Department News Release



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R. Sean Baldwin

Chief of Police

34950

sbaldwin@fppd.org

920 S. U.S. #1

Ft. Pierce, FL

(772)461-3820

Chief gears up for meeting with local religious leaders

Faith-based Gang Prevention Meeting

When: Thursday, June 28, 2007

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Where: St. Lucie County School Board Office
4204 Okeechobee Road, Fort Pierce
(Old Orange Blossom Mall)

FORT PIERCE – In a unified effort to bring local churches to the table to discuss their role in addressing youth gangs and violent crime, Fort Pierce Police Chief R. Sean Baldwin and representatives of the Executive Roundtable of St. Lucie prepare to meet with area religious leaders.

Knowing that the police department “can’t solve this problem alone and it desperately needs the help of the community,” Chief Baldwin sounded call and has diligently worked to ensure that the word gets out. Pastors, residents and local media to help get the word out have been enlisted and the meetings organizers are optimistic the turn out will exceed expectations.

“Our children deserve a better life,” Chief Baldwin said. “I am convinced that our churches can help.”

Across St. Lucie County, and particularly around Fort Pierce, we are seeing increasing levels of youth gang involvement. While Fort Pierce has enjoyed incredible reductions in crime over the last several years, we still suffer from far too much crime. The department’s crime analysts are tracking 12 active gangs with more than 400 members and associates. Over the last five years we have seen nearly 20 murders and hundreds of shooting incidents directly relating to gang activity and youth crime.

“I know that with the help of the churches, we can change children’s lives by providing a path toward the future they deserve,” Chief Baldwin said. “God’s word tells us to “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). Let’s look toward this wisdom for an answer.”

Christine Epps, Executive Director of the roundtable, is planning a follow up meeting in July for faith-based organizations that need technical assistance with developing programs and preparing grant applications, Chief Baldwin said.

Audria V. Moore
Public Information Officer

Cell: 772-370-1848

5203

Fax: 772-465-5191

Office: 772-461-3820 ext.

Email: