




Beyond Bars: Choices and Consequences

A Proactive Initiative to Deter Youth Violence

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What is Beyond Bars?

- Launched in 2025 by Capital Region Crime Stoppers
- Addresses rising school violence in the Capital Region
- Vetted trustee-status inmates share personal stories of poor decisions, incarceration's impact, and life lessons
- Targets high schools and youth groups to prevent crime at its roots


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Why Now? The Rising Tide of School Violence

- Sparked by incidents: Gun at East Baton Rouge Parish school; Livonia High School stabbing
- Statistics: We have seen a 20% increase in school threats in 2024
- Goal: Proactive deterrence through authentic voices
- Complements reactive efforts like "The First 48 Rewards Boost"

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Meet Our Speakers

- Desmond Kennedy: Serving 20 years for Home Invasion; now trustee sharing redemption story
- Rashawn Williams: Incarcerated for life for 2nd Degree Murder; focuses on family impact and second chances
- Vetted by Louisiana Dept. of Public Safety & Corrections (Capt. Patrick Washington)
- Supported by Lt. Don Coppola, Crime Stoppers Coordinator and numerous Sheriffs in the 9-parish area we serve.

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How It Works



- 45–60-minute sessions: Personal testimonies, Q&A, discussion on choices
- Sites: High schools (e.g., Livonia HS post-stabbing), youth groups
- Logistics: Secure transport by LDPSC; interactive format
- Early Reach: 5 schools in pilot phase, 300+ students engaged

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Measuring Success



- Feedback: Sheriffs and educators "begging us to return" for larger groups
- Outcomes: Reduced incident reports in piloted schools; student surveys show 85% intent to make better choices
- Testimonials: "Changed my perspective" – Student, Livonia HS
- Broader Goal: Lower youth violence rates

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Challenges and Future Vision



1. Challenges: Scheduling
2. Wins: Strong buy-in from schools and law enforcement
3. Future: Train more inmates; digital stories for wider reach; evaluate long-term behavior changes
4. Call to Action: Join us—replicate in your regions!

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Questions?

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