



November 10, 2005

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

GUN HOTLINE ANNOUNCED IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Sheriff Ricky Headley takes pride in heading up program that concentrates on school safety to promote a violence free learning environment

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Beginning November 14, 2005, gun free school zone posters with the theme, “Be Cool Don’t Let Guns Rule,” will appear in all schools in Williamson County, Tennessee. The new initiative intends to aid in keeping guns out of school, allowing children and teachers to focus on learning. As students walk their school halls, they will see a new poster on bulletin boards warning against bringing firearms onto school campuses.

The poster highlights the emphasis placed by the Williamson County Sheriff’s Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the United States Attorney’s Office, Williamson County Crime Stoppers and the Williamson County Schools to keep guns out of schools and fully investigate tips or other reported information. Students are encouraged to report firearms they see or hear about to the Williamson County Crime Stoppers at 615-794-4000, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Callers to Crime Stoppers can remain anonymous and qualify for a \$500 reward if their information leads to the recovery of a firearm at a school or prevents a firearm from entering a school campus.

Sheriff Ricky Headley of the Williamson County Sheriff’s Department had been a tremendous catalyst in making the “Be Cool Don’t Let Guns Rule” program a reality. “A program like this one relies on a continuous partnership. It not only relies on law enforcement, Crime Stoppers and school personnel, but it depends on the voice of the children and adults of Williamson County. This program is good common sense. It is a very simple but effective communication tool in keeping the kids, teachers and parents of our county safe.”

--more--

The “Be Cool Don’t Let Guns Rule” program strengthens the link between educators and law enforcement. Dr. Rebecca Sharber, Director of Williamson County Schools, has become a vital law enforcement partner to the Williamson County Sheriff’s Department and ATF in keeping schools a safe place to learn. “It is important that the entire community works together to keep our students safe. We are grateful for this partnership,” stated Dr. Sharber.

Special Agent in Charge James Cavanaugh of the ATF Nashville Field Division stated that, “The gun hotline and poster are valuable tools helping keep our schools safe. One step in preventing violence in our schools is preventing guns from getting there in the first place. The combined resources involved in this effort will vigorously investigate and prosecute anyone who is providing firearms to juveniles or bringing a firearm on any campus.”

The poster, which was designed and printed by ATF, strongly warns that bringing a firearm onto any school campus, including after hours school-related events (i.e., football games, plays, etc.), is a violation of both state and federal law. It is also a violation of both state and federal law to provide a firearm to anyone who then brings the gun to a school campus.

Besides the hotline, illegal guns on any school campus in Williamson County can always be reported to any School Resource Officer. The hotline is also expected to help authorities identify and investigate other criminal activities beyond the scope of the immediate classroom.

Additional information can be obtained from:

ATF Special Agent Eric Kehn, Public Information Officer
Nashville Field Division
615-335-7098

Captain Alan Laney
Williamson County Sheriff’s Department
615-790-5784