

Solving the
Crime symptom.

Turning **OFF**
the School-to-
Prison Pipeline.



—
21 february 2017

—
**thomas p
kunesh**
City Council
Candidate
District 8

—
**Chattanooga TN
t · 7 march 2017**

—
tom8@kunesh.net
423 596 3793

kunesh: Crime is *NOT* The Problem

Contrary to current political mantra, Crime is not Chattanooga's major problem. In this City Council election, the single biggest issue asked over and over again at the beginning of every candidate forum, is Crime. How bad is it? What to do about it? Is the Mayor's 'Violence Reduction Initiative' working?

Crime is the *symptom*. **Inequality** is the problem.
We can't get rid of the *symptom* until we solve the problem.

The vast majority of violent assaults happen between people who know each other: gang members killing their own - suicide by gang; families and friends attacking themselves. The symptoms are intra-community violence and stealing. The problem is lack of real opportunity to get out of the Detroit donut of poverty that Chattanooga has built in between its Downtown and the Suburbs. East Chattanooga. The South Side. The Projects. Urban Chattanooga. Most people know these codewords for saying 'the poor side of town'. The ring around the Downtown. Where the median household income is \$20,000 and less. The City of Chattanooga continues to fail these communities.

Employing more police to park more police cars around shootings that have already happened is not going to solve any problem except police employment. We can, we do, throw cops at the symptom, but cops don't solve inequality. The problem of inequality starts much earlier.

We've heard of the School-to-Prison Pipeline. We have it here in Chattanooga. Every time we have an assault or stealing, we have a break in that pipeline. And the person/s who break out of the pipeline get put back into the prison system. And the cops clean up the spill.

The surest indicator of a future in the School-to-Prison Pipeline is a kid's ability to read in the 3rd grade. Read well > you stay in school and outside the pipeline. Read poorly > you're a prison resource.

We stop this problem by providing early childhood and pre-school education programs to all families in the City's neighborhoods, providing them free, and with other resources, like good Recreation (YFD-Youth&Family Development) Centers where kids can have a safe environment to study and play, off the streets and away from harmful influences.

We stop this problem by teaching parents how *To Parent* - as an active verb, like *First Things First* is doing.

We stop this problem by placing our City's recruiting efforts into hiring Black Male Teachers to replace the generations lost to the School-to-Prison Pipeline, missing as role models to ALL our children, black and white, male and female, to create a generation of diverse leadership - in ten years - for Chattanooga.

Most of all, we can - we *must* - do this *now*. And we can pay for these simple solutions without raising taxes. We can do it by simply requiring that our City Council be better stewards of our tax monies, and give LESS money away in corporate welfare PILOTs, and use Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) with PILOTs to pay for a better pre-school educational infrastructure that the City itself has control over. [see Chattanooga's death toll: goo.gl/h5Ecnm]

*tom kunesh is a US Navy veteran where he served in the Persian Gulf & Spain. He and his wife Julie have three daughters in local urbanly-diverse public schools and local charter school. He is working to halt the Central Avenue North extension & save the Lincoln Park Historic District as well as the old Citico site on Riverside Drive. Kunesh is a candidate for City Council District 8. **VOTE!** Tuesday 7 March.*