

Cincinnati police break up two violent gangs, make 41 arrests in Avondale crackdown

Part of Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence

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The Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence helped drop crime by 50 percent in five month period.
VIDEO BY WCPO

CINCINNATI – Police broke up two violent gangs, made 41 arrests and reduced violent crime in Avondale by 50 percent through a five-month operation, officials said Wednesday.

Police said they rounded up dozens of members of the Savage Gang and Valley Boyz. The gangs were involved in serious crimes, they said.

The effort was part of the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence and followed two homicides in January on Irving Street.

"We're taking the most violent offenders off the street -- the ones who are out robbing people at gunpoint, the ones who are involved in the felonious assaults ... the shootings," said Sgt. Jeff Scholl.

"When you start disrupting these networks, you are affecting their ability to commit the crimes that they are," said Capt. Mike Neville. "So, with our targeted persons and those that became associated with them, through our efforts, you'll start to see that web of sorts start to dissolve."

Police also worked with property owners to evict gang members and suspected criminals from at least eight locations where there have been multiple violent crimes.

Nine people were evicted from an apartment building at 3522 Reading Road, where there have been four shootings this year – including the death of a 14-year-old.

Police noted that there have been no calls for violent crime there in the past 60 days.

Police executed a search warrant Wednesday at 666 Glenwood Ave. That's where police believe a lot of the truly bad guys go to meet. The warrant could disrupt that activity.

"People allow others to come in and visit them. They establish residence and kind of push the renter aside and take over and they have nothing to lose," Neville said. "They build off of that and they establish their operation inside of an apartment complex. It's very difficult for us to get to. I will tell you that the property owners have been very cooperative with us and we will continue to grow this. We are not completed."

Neighbors say they appreciate the change.

"It makes their quality of life a whole lot better because, I mean, that's what they want," said Fulton Jefferson, Avondale Community Council President. "They're free to walk around. They ain't got to worry about nobody doing any shooting."

Even on Irving Street.

"As bad as this had been with homicides and gangs, they were out there having a birthday party with kids and a few weeks later playing soccer," Neville said. "To me that tells quite a bit of success to the people that live in this area."

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