

To: **All Community Center Neighbors, Supporters, and Program Partners**

From: Paul Holtrop
Streams of Hope Executive Director

Date: January 7, 2012

Re: **Friday Evening Event**



I am writing this afternoon to provide more information on the event that took place at our Streams of Hope (SoH) Community Center last night. I have very mixed emotions as I am troubled by the close impact of crime in our neighborhood, while also extremely grateful that the situation was not significantly worse.

On Friday evening, an SoH recreational program leader was using our gym facility to host a party on behalf of one of our regular program participants, a well-known and respected young man who is an East Kentwood High School student. Some uninvited young men attempted to join the party inside the facility, and were turned away. While this conflict was being addressed, several shots were fired from guns brought to the site by these uninvited guests.

Our program leader was wounded by this gun fire, and was hospitalized. I am very thankful to report that he is expected to recover fully. We are so blessed that this was the only injury. He will be able to share more about his condition soon, and we will be sure to pass that along. Please join in praying for his speedy recovery!

Streams of Hope leadership is committed to fully cooperating with the Kent County Sheriff Department in their investigation of this crime, and will also complete an internal review of the entire situation. Our on-site programming will continue as many neighborhood families count on us, and kids enjoy participating in after-school activities at our site.

This incident obviously shows the tremendous need for positive intervention in our community, and shows exactly why Streams of Hope exists as a faith-based, community development organization. Research shows that kids with positive activities, encouraged by supportive adults are far less likely to engage in crime or substance abuse.

Our resolve to live our mission remains strong: to demonstrate God's love and foster sustainable change through services that build relationships, meet family needs, and promote a healthier community. This event gives us additional opportunity to make a difference in our neighborhood, and already this morning I have observed so many people rallying to provide immediate assistance.

Thanks for your prayers, support shown in many ways, and continued encouragement.