

B4 Daily Press, Friday, Sept. 25, 1987

Truck found ■ Program targets drug abuse

Continued from Page B1 Knobling, 20, of Hampton, and Edwards, 14, of Newport News, were found dead about a mile from the James River Bridge and the refuge parking lot where Knobling's abandoned pickup truck had been discovered Monday morning. Both had been shot execution-style.

The two had met Saturday night and apparently went off together after midnight. The truck is a popular "barnes" for Peninsula teenagers, and Diann surmised they encountered their killer there. The sheriff said he is not sure whether the couple was killed by someone they knew or whether they were selected by chance.

Right now we're just doing old-fashioned police work: looking for a gun or a cartridge and talking to as many people as possible. Diann said. "I think we're making progress."

Advisers looked for a gun in the James River with a metal detector and other police officers scoured the beach for spent cartridges. Diann said police don't have a motive, don't know the type or size of the gun, and can't

Continued from Page B1 tion, outpatient treatment, psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors and the court system — without success.

So they sent their son to Straight, and are participating in the program themselves. "This could be a first resort if enough parents just knew about it," Anne said.

There are 53 Hampton Roads teens in the program, 10 of them from the Peninsula.

A non-profit agency that began in Florida 10 years ago, Straight gets 70 percent of its operating money from clients. The rest comes from donations.

The program costs about \$25 a day, or from \$8,000 to \$10,000 a year.

The teens in the program are kept in "host homes" in Springfield in Northern Virginia. There will not be a local host-home program until next year.

After 45 days of group counseling and interaction they are sent back home for the remainder of their 12 months in the program.

A key to the treatment is the help youths give each other in a "flip-flop" of the peer pressure

that got them into trouble with drugs and Andy Reading, director of the Hampton Roads program.

While in host homes with families of teens known as "old timers" who are in the final stage of the program, they are not allowed to leave without permission. If they leave, they are treated as runaways and are returned to the program as soon as they are located.

"Some of the host families install alarms on windows and doors so they know when someone leaves, and sometimes the bed of an 'old timer' is pulled to block the bedroom door to keep a newcomer from leaving," Reading said.

Although the teens are sometimes kept against their will, it is not an infringement of their rights, he said.

"They are playing around with a fatal illness and distorting their lives," he said.

"Parents have to step in and take control. There is a subtle culture out there exploiting people, and we are trying to give them their rights back. The kids are treated with respect and love. We have perhaps the highest success rate in the country."

Youth Challenge, a religious agency in Newport News providing a free program for about 40 people in several buildings, does not believe in forced treatment, director Troy Collier said.

The only long-term residential facility on the Peninsula, Challenge takes only volunteers, including people to whom the courts have provided the choice of treatment or jail, he said.

"We are not a lockup," he said. "You cannot help someone who doesn't want to be helped."

Richard Gall, director of Alternatives Inc., an agency providing outpatient drug counseling to about 1,400 young people in Newport News and Hampton, said that though some youths need a heavily structured regimen, it would not be right for others. Most can do better in something other than long-term residential care, he said.

Alternatives' philosophy is to treat young people in the least restrictive environment in the least restrictive form, Gall said.

Straight advocates intensive participation by parents. While the youths are given 15-hour-day treatment in Springfield, the parents are attending Virginia

Beach meetings and learning coping techniques.

While in Springfield, the youths can see their parents twice a week in open meetings. If a participant is not working to overcome drug use, he or she is not allowed to speak to the parents, Reading said. The parents, however, can speak to their child in a one-way conversation through a microphone, he said.

At home, in the other phases of treatment, the emphasis is on repairing the deteriorated family relationships, the return of the teens to school, establishment of helpful social activities and encouraging the teens to help others avoid drugs, Reading said. Six months of additional help is provided, including counseling and conferences with parents, children and staff.

Straight's treatment includes the 12 steps that Alcoholics Anonymous uses in its program of recovery. Once the teens graduate from Straight, they are encouraged to attend meetings of AA and Narcoet Anonymous, he said.

Girl described as 'bright'

Continued from Page B1 Robin later went to Charter Colonial Institute in Newport News where she had a psychiatric evaluation. She was diagnosed as being generally depressed and was taking medication, her mother said.

Robin was "extremely bright" but too much so. She needed to be kept interested and constantly challenged in order to do well," Edwards said.

The family, though not as close as Edwards would have liked, enjoyed camping.

But "we were not able to do as much as we would have liked together because of our conflicting work schedules," she said. Both parents worked different shifts.

"We weren't a perfect family, but there was a lot of love, teasing and kidding around," she said.

Since Robin left Charter Colonial in August, Edwards said the family has been making "more of an effort to see each other's point of view. We've tried to give her more freedom."

Although Robin's grades at Huntington Middle School were poor, Edwards said her daughter had been making strides this year and from taking French had expressed an interest in becoming an exchange student.

"Our personal feelings are they were just at the wrong place at the wrong time. They may have disrupted a drug deal or something like that," she said.

Asked if Robin had ever visited the nearby preserve area before, Edwards said, "She had known about it, but whether she's ever been there herself or with friends, we don't know."

"Even if police don't find who murdered Robin and David, there's a higher being, God. They are not going to get off scot-free. They will be punished one way or another," Edwards said, referring to her daughter's killer.

She believes Robin and Knobling had met for the first time Saturday night when they went to a movie in Newport News.

"The first time I heard of him was on Tuesday when the police showed me pictures of his truck and my daughter's tennis shoes," she said.

The Edwards family has established a scholarship fund, named after Robin, to help troubled youths and runaways who may need food, counseling and shelter. Donations may be made to the Robin Edwards Memorial Scholarship Fund in care of The Kin House, 1520 Aberdeen

White says officers need direction

Continued from Page B1 The chief said he is formulating new policies giving the officers more guidance and attention, which he said would improve morale.

White said he would discuss details of the new management plan once he checks it with Murphy. "I'm sitting here working on it right now," he said.

White said he is confident about the proper training of officers, Hebel said, which he said "probably has not been emphasized."

White, who has been chief for 11 years, said training has been a problem, but "we have taken some big steps with that. There is still some more we want to do."

White will make changes that will satisfy the council and the city manager, Forrest, however, said the council eventually may have to step in.

"If they (the Police Department) don't make the improvements, I think there ought to be some replacements" from the chief, down, Forrest said.

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