

Franklin township: best place to stay?

Business



FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP, NJ- That night seemed like any other night for Franklin Township residents, but what happened that night shocked many. July 15, 2007, 18 year old Franklin High School student Ammar Malik Simmons, was shot to death because he failed a “ G-check”, a quiz to determine if you are truly in a gang or not. At this time, Fabian Austin, 18, Xavier Bailey, 17, and Michael Covil, 16, all part of the gang, “ Bloods”, faced countless amounts of charges following the death of Simmons.

Austin was faced with reckless manslaughter and simple assault, while Covil received second degree aggravated assault and third degree terroristic threats. Bailey got hit the hardest, receiving first degree murder and second degree possession of a weapon for shooting and killing Simmons. While friends and family gathered around in grief they asked, “ How?” stating, “ Ammar was never like that and was never involved in any sorts of gangs.” He always “ shared his generosity and if he was still alive today, he would be sharing his love with all of you.” Days before the shooting of Simmons, another violent crime was committed in the streets of Franklin.

Keenan Sanders, 20, was stabbed in the neck in front of his house by his ex-girlfriend’s brother. Though it may be shocking that these juvenile crime rates in Franklin seem to be so unexpected and high, Franklin Township is in the 58% percentile for violent crime and the safety rating is proven to be 2. 8 out of 5. In the past five years more than 3 murders have been committed or connected to juveniles. Franklin has been surpassed the average amount of gangs in a municipal.

With an average of 9 gangs in total, it is thoroughly worse than 98% of all the counties. Bloods, Latin Kings, Crips, MS-13, Pagans Motorcycle Club, Eighteenth Street Gang, Five Percenters, La Mugre, and Other all walk the streets of Franklin. Even though this may all be so surreal, Keenan Sanders was not the last to die in Franklin. Terrell Spruill, 15, was chatting with a group of friends when Michael Ramsey drove by and killed him with a single bullet that struck him in the abdomen. Ramsey who was a proud member of Somerset Estates, “ better known as the Grove,” hated Spruill because he was from another neighborhood, which was he considered “ an enemy.

” Nobody really knew why he chose Spruill, but when Franklin High learned their football runner- back died, they were crushed. “ He was so into sports, and dreamed one day he would make it into the NFL,” said one of his classmates who used to play with him. After the deaths of all these students, Franklin was fed up and vowed that violence would never interrupt in their town again. A crowd of more than 100 gathered in Somerset to pay their respects for the ones who lost their lives due to violence. Franklin never seemed to be like this, ranked one of the best places to live in 2008 and traditionally being a farming community in New Jersey, what really like is Franklin behind the scenes? Slowly forming into a massive suburban community with fast- growing developments, Franklin’s residents felt some massive change too. Most people wouldn’t be able to imagine the gangs, drugs, and poverty that people encounter in the small parts of Franklin, which was originally traditional and a simple place where any person would love to stay.

The youth, who are from the small part of Franklin, dealing with the drugs and gangs always end up the way people will see them being. Forming new gangs or being part of the older ones, kids like these always seem to be the ones making the crimes in Franklin. Kids who try to stay away from the violence always seem to name these kids as the “darker side” of their school. “Nobody wants to mess with those kids, because if they do, life would be hell until the day you graduate from high school,” said a Franklin Middle School student, who deals with these types of issues everyday from going to school. Most kids feel these are the only ways they could finally be accepted into something and make friends, but some people know gangs or anything else could ruin their life or future.

“People always be asking me to be a part of their gang and stuff, but I know it’s all useless. There is really no point of it, doing stupid hand signs all the time you know gangs always roam around our school and I want to be successful, not going around doing stupid things,” said an anonymous student who goes to the high school located in Franklin. Another student said the same thing stating, “People doing hand signs all the time is mostly how we know about the gangs and the fights they have is ridiculous, there’s really no point to it.” Even though Terrell Spruill never got to play for the NFL or Ammar Simmons or Keenan Sanders never got to do what they inspired to, there justice was put to a case. Juvenile crimes came to a sudden drop in 2009, but they seem to be coming out again and it seems crimes connected to juvenile delinquencies would never be able to stop no matter how hard we try in Franklin. The things kids go through is enough to think about, but the things they can do is something people wonder about every day.

Why do kids do these things? It's the answer we've been looking for, but nobody truly understands.