



Compassion Coalition

Ways to Connect with Public Safety

“One reason why there is crime is because there is so much focus on crime. A focus on punishment, revenge, and labeling only perpetuates the problem. If you want the problem to go away, you have to put the focus on something positive.”

~Chris, former offender

Make a Difference through Prayer

- Pray for those who have been victims of crime, and for the offenders. Both need God's redeeming, restoring touch.
- Pray for police to receive God's protection, wisdom and grace as they serve the community.
- Pray for neighbors to come together in courageous unity against drugs, vandalism, and other threats to the safety of the community – and for churches to lead the way.
- Pray for "hard-core" young offenders whose hearts already have become hardened. Pray for Christians to pour God's love into their lives until they acknowledge their need and their hurt, and open their lives to be transformed.
- Pray for those who are most vulnerable to crime and violence: prostitutes, homeless persons, people with a disability, people who live in impoverished neighborhoods. Pray that their safety would become a shared priority for all in the greater Knoxville community.

Make a Difference Through Your Church

- Work with the police department to reach out to victims of crime in your community; offer counseling, prayer and other forms of assistance.
- Show support for the police in your community. Let them know you appreciate what they do and that you are praying for them. When appropriate, help build positive relationships between the police and the community by inviting a police presence at neighborhood events sponsored by the church (such as a block party or Christian concert).
- Help to mediate tensions between police and neighborhood residents when these arise by providing a safe forum where all perspectives can be heard and valued.
- Offer the church as a host site for juvenile offenders in the Restorative Justice program (865-251-1591; see below), or adult offenders assigned community service. Provide supervised opportunities for offenders to join the church in meaningful community service projects, while developing relationships and modeling the good news of Christ's love and forgiveness.
- Partner with programs that provide job training and placement services to young adults who might otherwise be tempted to earn money through illegal means. TRIBE ONE (865-546-4131, www.tribeone.com) is one example.



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- Work with public officials and resident groups to deal with abandoned properties, poor street lighting, known drug houses, or other dangers to the community.
- Organize fun neighborhood activities that help neighbors to get to know one another – strong community relationships deter crime.
- Start or join a Neighborhood Watch, which organizes members of a community to look out for one another and to contact the police about potential threats to public safety (<http://www.cityofknoxville.org/kpd/neighborhood.asp>).

Connect with organizations that focus on public safety in the Knoxville area:

American Red Cross: 865-584-2999, <http://www.knoxarc.org/>

A humanitarian, volunteer-led organization that provides relief to victims of disasters and helps people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.

- Become a local Disaster Volunteer to help people affected by local disasters such as house fires.
- Prepare comfort kits with personal items for families affected by disasters.
- Offer the church building as a shelter for disaster victims. Training is provided for church members interested in becoming shelter volunteers.

Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative: 865-215-7521, <http://www.knoxofsafety.org>

A public-private partnership that seeks to improve public safety by providing supervision and treatment to high-risk/high-needs offenders and their families, in order to help offenders make successful transitions back to the community.

Restorative Justice: 865-251-1591, <http://www.compassioncoalition.org>

A collaboration of Compassion Coalition partner churches, Knox County Juvenile Court, the District Attorney's office, and local nonprofits that gives juvenile offenders the opportunity to complete court ordered community service alongside supportive Christians.

- Become a Volunteer Site Coordinator, which means being a supervisor, role model, and mentor for the youth assigned to work at your site.
- Groups: Volunteer together at Restorative Justice community service sites.
- Families: By serving together as a family, you can make a significant impression on troubled youth who may not have grown up with healthy family dynamics.

The Royal Chaplain Corps: 865-455-7769, <http://www.royalchaplaincorps.com>

Supports first responders and their crews, and Knox county juvenile court staff and clients.

- Become equipped as a volunteer chaplain or chaplain's assistant to respond to victims of accidents, violence or crime.



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- Maintain a prayerful, compassionate "ministry of presence" in Knox County courts, attending to the spiritual needs of families, offenders, attorneys and court staff.

Safety City Knoxville (Knoxville Police Department): 865-215-7103,

<http://www.cityofknoxville.org/>

An educational program for elementary school children (K-4th grade) on vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and fire safety. Teaches skills to empower youngsters to avoid accidents and to develop good safety habits at an early age.

Safety Education Unit (Knoxville Police Department): 865-215-8633,

<http://www.cityofknoxville.org/>

Fosters police-community partnerships by taking a leadership role in the development of innovative, effective crime prevention programs.

Volunteers in Policing (Knox County Sheriffs Office): 865-215-5627,

<http://www.knoxsheriff.org>

VIP creates effective citizen partnerships that promote greater public involvement in maintaining a safe community.