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Home > News > Local & National

Local & National

New Thomas murder appeal

Monday, August 13, 2007

By Deborah McAleese

An advertising campaign was launched today by police and the parents of murdered Thomas Devlin in a bid to encourage the people harbouring his killers to come forward with information.

Speaking today, on the second anniversary of her son's death, Penny Holloway said that she is still struggling to cope without Thomas, and that the pain of losing him will never ease.

She added that knowing there are people willingly shielding his killers makes his death even more difficult to deal with.

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"It will never get any easier. You do the things you have to do, but when your child has been murdered life is never going to be the same again," she said.

"What is hard is that people in the community along the Shore Road have information that would lead to the arrest of the two people that are prime suspects in my son's murder, but they are choosing not to give the information to police."

The 15-year-old was walking home along the Somerton Road in north Belfast with two friends on August 10, 2005 when he was attacked by two men, one with a dog, and stabbed in the back five times.

He had just been to a nearby garage to buy sweets.

In a bid to catch his killers the new campaign is targeted in the Shore Road and Mount Vernon areas of north Belfast where police believe people know who killed Thomas and what they did immediately afterwards with their clothing and the weapon.

The officer in charge of the case, Detective Chief Inspector Nick McCaw, said: "The ad campaign will be concentrated on a limited number of poster sites, in a community newspaper and on a mobile display hoarding. Detectives will also be handing out leaflets in the coming days as part of renewed inquiries."

He added: "No one should forget what happened two years ago - a young lad went out with his mates to the shop for sweets and was brutally murdered by men armed with a knife."

"Thomas' parents have certainly not forgotten. The investigation team has not forgotten. I wonder how those who murdered him and those close to them who know what they did will ever be able to forget."

Launching the campaign Penny made an emotional plea to those who know what happened to her son to come forward with information.

"We have always said that if such a tragedy was to happen to any other family, we would do our best to help in any way. All we are asking is for those people who know about Thomas' murder to do the same for us."

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