

# Successor in His Own Right, Eddie Mitchell, Jr.



Eddie Mitchell, Jr., Syracuse native, has contributed to the encouragement of the youth in the Southside through his organization Team A.N.G.E.L. and community outreach for the last seven years.

The walls of Eddie Mitchell's office are lined with hundreds of black and white pictures and posters of youth and adults killed in Syracuse over the last ten years. He often sits in his office and reflects on how he could have easily been on that wall, adding 15-20 more people in the last few months. Some family, neighborhood friends and former classmates.

"I have to enjoy life now because that could have been me on that wall just like them," he said.



“I could see so much blood and my flesh. I laid in the back of the ambulance for a minute in shock. I thought it my life was over,” Mitchell said.



Mitchell’s feeling of lost hope is a common feeling for the youth in South Syracuse, growing up in a community plagued by guns, violence, and poverty. Last year was the [deadliest](#) year in Syracuse history with 26 homicides, mostly in the Southside community.

“Kids are a product of their environment, and I say this all the time, ‘when you’ve been subjected to it, you grow up doing it.’ We just have to change that for our kids,” Clifford Ryans, founder of [OG’s Against Violence](#) said.

In response to the violence and the impact it could have on children, Mitchell created Team A.N.G.E.L., a youth outreach organization teaching kids to stray away from violence and run towards education. He has helped over 500 kids in communities and schools through fundraisers, basketball tournaments, school dances, and turkey giveaways and more.

Every morning, he goes to Danforth Middle School and speaks to students. He’s guaranteed to be seen wearing customized Team A.N.G.E.L. gear—shirts, hat, jacket and sweats included.

“When he sees kids acting up or not going to class, he tries to instill in them the importance of going to school and making the right decisions,” Jennifer Reed, a teaching assistant at Danforth, said. “He’s experienced so much in his life and he’s still a successor.”

Mitchell grew up in the Southside of Syracuse, as well. Early on, he took a liking to sports—his outlet from the neighborhood. He used his personal

experiences with violence to bond with children whom may have similar experiences.

He met teenager Chuck Jones while speaking at Corcoran High School one day. He was a straight A student and Mitchell stepped in as his mentor. They were together just a few days before Chuck was stabbed at a party on Halloween night in 2013.

“It was a new feeling for me, losing someone so precious that you carried, just ripped away from you in a matter of minutes,” Lepa, Chuck’s mother said. “He was my first born, he taught me motherhood and how to love. He was my first true love.”



Eddie Mitchell finds satisfaction in knowing he impacted the life of any youth in a positive way. For now, Mitchell attends panel discussions as well as elementary and high schools in the Syracuse community, educating youth on the grand impact of nonviolence. He recently participated in a documentary with a local Syracuse hospital about the survival of gunshot victims. Mitchell is also working on a comic book series, *Adventures of Zeke, The A.N.G.E.L Kid*. It’s the tale of a young boy who helps a group of young kids transition through real life situations, such as bullying and violence.

“I’m a product of this community and through my organization, Team A.N.G.E.L., I try to give a positive outlook to the kids and show them they can still make something of themselves,” Mitchell said.

To help with his cause through volunteer work or donations, contact Eddie Mitchell Jr. at [teamangel1310@yahoo.com](mailto:teamangel1310@yahoo.com).

(Visited 219 times, 14 visits today)