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Drop your clothes for D.A.R.E.

By Nancy Parsons

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In 2010, Chester County Sheriff Richard Smith reinstated the Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program in the Chester County Schools.

"We have officers who are certified D.A.R.E. instructors that teach students in Chester County at an age-appropriate level the truth about drugs and violence in order to change normative beliefs and build their value system for improved decision making skills in their area," Smith said.

Smith said Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) is a scientifically researched SAMSHA/NREPP endorsed program.

"Drug abuse and violence have far-reaching effects in our society and threaten the mental and physical health of our young people and families," Smith added. "I am a firm believer that D.A.R.E. education in Chester County has made a positive difference, helping to deter problems before they start and assists law enforcement agencies with fulfilling their mission to reduce crime."

Through the S.C. D.A.R.E. Training Center, educational supplies are provided such as D.A.R.E. workbooks and certificates to sheriffs and police departments within the state.

"This is accomplished without any cost to the taxpayers of our county," Smith said.

A partnership was formed by D.A.R.E. America and the Mid Atlantic Recycling Bin Program (M.A.C.) to raise funds for D.A.R.E.

training. M.A.C. places clothing recycling bins throughout South Carolina. The bins are blue or tan, clearly marked for clothing donations and collected by M.A.C. They sell the items to third world countries and provide a portion of the funds collected from donations in our area to D.A.R.E. America. Chester County is allowed to utilize a portion of those proceeds.

Funding is strictly handled through D.A.R.E. America, held in a trust account, and they approve and pay for all training supplies ordered by the S.C. D.A.R.E. Training Center.

Bins are being placed at Chester County Recycling Centers for citizens of Chester County to recycle clothing and help support the D.A.R.E. Program of Chester County. The first bin was set up at the Beltline Recycling Center on Monday, Nov. 21.

"This will improve the health of our planet and aid in reducing stress on our landfill while providing effective drug and violence prevention education here in Chester County," Smith said.

Last year, two Chester County Sheriff's Department reserve officers taught the D.A.R.E. program to 800 students. This year, the program is expected to reach over 2,000 students.

"I would like to thank the county supervisor and recycling coordinator for allowing us to place the bins in the recycling centers," Smith said. "Please help support this program by bringing your clothes to the recycling centers."

Chester County recycling centers are at 524 Beltline Road, North Cisco off Dawson Drive -651 Lowrys Road, Lando - 3834 Edgeland Road; Great Falls - 5079 Great Falls Highway; Fort Lawn on S.C. Highway 9 - 5800 Hightower Road; 1129 Armory Road, Fort Lawn on U.S. Highway 21 - (Landsford Canal) - 3725 Catawba River Road, Catawba; Lewis Turnout at Campbell's - 1962 Saluda Road, West Chester on S.C. Highway 9 - 2431 Pinckney Road; S.C. Highway 321, Blackstock - 1924 Old Columbia Road, Blackstock; S.C. Highway 72 Stone Road - 2487 West End Road and the landfill is at 2351 Peden Bridge Road.

All sites and the landfill will be equipped with clothes recycling bins. The hours of operation are Monday - 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Wednesday - 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Friday - 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday - 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The centers are closed on Tuesday and Thursday.