



Richland County Sheriff's Department South Carolina D.A.R.E. Training Center

DARE

September 24, 2007

To All Sheriffs and Chiefs:

Drug abuse and violence are problems that have a far-reaching effect in our society today. It threatens the mental and physical health of our young people and families, which directly threatens our entire society.

We need your help in our effort to turn around the young people who are making bad decisions. One of our major weapons in this fight is education. The D.A.R.E. program is a tool to assist us in our battle against drugs and violence. D.A.R.E. gives students, parents, and school personnel the knowledge to recognize danger signs and develop skills to take charge of their life.

Due to financial burdens, law enforcement agencies across South Carolina push aside the D.A.R.E. program so they can afford other needed enforcement programs. Believe me when I say, "I do understand". However, if we can show you ways to support your D.A.R.E. program or the ability to start a D.A.R.E. program Free of Charge in your community, would you be willing? I am a firm believer that D.A.R.E. does make a difference and will help deter some problems before they start.

I feel the reason some agencies do not implement D.A.R.E. is because they do not fully understand how it works. Some agencies are under the impression they must have one or more officers solely dedicated as D.A.R.E. Officers - this is just not true. If you do not have an officer (S.R.O.) in a school, have your line officers teach one or two classes then return to patrol. D.A.R.E. was started this way in the beginning. D.A.R.E. is a scientifically researched program constantly being updated. Our focus is on developing good decision making skills. D.A.R.E. Officers teaching students the truth about drugs and violence changes normative beliefs resulting in better decision making skills.

If you would like to learn more about D.A.R.E., please contact the S.C. D.A.R.E. Training Center, Deputy Arlene Sharpe by phone or email scdare@rcsd.net. Together we will help make a difference in our youth and our entire society's future!

Sincerely,

Leon Lott
Sheriff

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