



# DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT

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**Florida D.A.R.E. Training Center**

Florida Department of Law Enforcement

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## **Executive Summary**

As we wrap up the ending of another amazing year, we want to recap some of the highlights for 2017 in the Florida Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program. We hosted two D.A.R.E. Officer Trainings this year, the 80<sup>th</sup> class at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), Miami Regional Operations Center, and the 81<sup>st</sup> class at Lake Technical College's Institute of Public Safety in Lake County. We were particularly excited to host our second class of the year in Lake County, as Sheriff Peyton Grinnell would like to resurrect D.A.R.E. in Lake County schools. Lake County Sheriff's Office was one of the five new law enforcement agencies in the State of Florida to join the D.A.R.E. family in 2017. Because of these new agencies the Florida D.A.R.E. Training Center partnered with D.A.R.E. America for our D.A.R.E. Officer Trainings, and this partnership contributed to a savings of \$53,370.37 to the program.

As in the previous class, we continued to connect with the community and help families in need. The students, mentors, and training staff had a special opportunity to visit the Orlando Union Rescue Mission to help serve meals and teach a D.A.R.E. lesson to the children. D.A.R.E. officers serve as an important link to the community; we will continue to try to incorporate this community outreach in future trainings.

Another highlight in 2017 was the first jointly sponsored 2-day D.A.R.E. recertification class by FDLE and the Florida Association of School Resource Officers (FASRO). We were excited to see the level of participation, and we hope this will continue at future FASRO conferences.

This year also brought some internal additions to the Florida D.A.R.E. Training Center with Government Analyst Lindsey Cole joining the team. Ms. Cole brings years of experience in training, government round table coordination, and analytical skills to the program. We are delighted to have her as part of the team. We have also brought on a new educator, Annette Castor. Ms. Castor has spent 22 years teaching in Collier County, FL. She currently is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Osceola Elementary School where she has had the pleasure of welcoming the D.A.R.E. program into her classroom for the past 16 years. She is excited to share her passion for the positive impact D.A.R.E. has had on her students.

As we look forward to 2018, we are starting to prepare for our next D.A.R.E Officer Training to be held at the Omni Hotel on Amelia Island, January 29 – February 9, 2018.



Inspector Jay Best  
Florida D.A.R.E. Coordinator



## 2017 D.A.R.E. OFFICER TRAININGS



D.A.R.E. Class 80  
January 2017  
Miami, FL



D.A.R.E. Class 81  
June 2017  
Lake County, FL

## **Making a Difference: Florida DOT Class 81 Gives Back to the Community at the Orlando Union Rescue Mission**



D.A.R.E. Florida Coordinator Jay Best organized the Thursday D.A.R.E. Officer Training (DOT) graduates to celebrate at the Orlando Union Rescue Mission rather than at a hotel or a restaurant. This was a good example of reaching out and connecting to the community.

Florida DOT Class 81 served over 200 meals to homeless families in the Central Florida area. Since 1948, the Orlando Union Rescue Mission's purpose has been to bring hungry, hurting, and homeless families to a new life, new goals, and a new future in Christ. All 26 members of this class donated their time on June 15, 2017 after class to give back to the community; and to also teach a D.A.R.E. lesson to homeless children, who are often forgotten.

## **Lake Sheriff Bringing Back Drug-Education Program**

*By Jason Ruter, Orlando Sentinel*



Lake County Sheriff, Peyton Grinnell

A law enforcement officer practicing a drug-education awareness course for elementary students tried to get a group of deputies excited.

“What time is it?” Martin County Deputy Sheriff Andrea Olson asked the group. The muffled response prompted her to goad them, “Louder, louder!” This time the deputies—portraying schoolkids in a mock exercise—offered a full-throated response: “D.A.R.E. time!”

Olson was taking part in a certification course for Lake deputies who will teach the Drug Awareness Resistance Education—or D.A.R.E.—program to fifth-graders. With Florida’s opioid crisis looming in the background, Lake County Sheriff Peyton Grinnell wants to resurrect D.A.R.E. in Lake schools after it was dropped because of budget concerns in 2013.

Though studies have criticized the program for not preventing drug use, proponents say it has been adapted based on research and has been rebounding in Florida as sheriffs’ budgets improve along with the economy.

“In ’07, ’08, you started seeing it go [away] in many local municipalities,” said Jay Best, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement’s statewide coordinator for D.A.R.E. “But it’s coming back faster than we ever thought it would.”

D.A.R.E. in Florida spiked before the recession with 65,000 fifth-graders learning the dangers of marijuana, tobacco, and peer pressure. It hit a low point in the state in 2014, reaching just 19,000 students, but has been making gains since.

Grinnell, who was elected in November, pledged during his campaign to revive D.A.R.E.

More than 75 percent of all school districts in the U.S. once participated in D.A.R.E., founded in 1983 by the Los Angeles Police Department. That included Orange, Seminole, and Osceola counties.

It fell out of favor in school districts after scientific studies from universities and government departments found that D.A.R.E. had no demonstrable impact on students who took the course versus those who didn’t.



"I've always been interested in the war on drugs... [and] the majority of D.A.R.E. research shows that D.A.R.E. does nothing," said A.J. Marsden, a professor of human services and psychology at Beacon College in Leesburg who wrote her graduate paper on the subject.

Marsden, who went through the D.A.R.E. program as a fifth grader in 1989, remembered how the original course fell flat with her and her peers. She said D.A.R.E. used scare tactics to try to discourage kids from using drugs, and students tuned out.

"I remember in the D.A.R.E. program they said strangers would just approach me and ask me to try marijuana," she said. "I have never had that happen."

But Collier County Sheriff's Cpl. Kenneth Vila, a 24-year educator in the program and the 2015 national D.A.R.E. Officer of the Year, said the program has shifted.

D.A.R.E. has cut many lessons, he said, and now has a course called "Keepin' it REAL" that focuses more on how to evaluate and make tough social decisions.

"It's not so much about drugs anymore," he said. "D.A.R.E. is about being ... a person who communicates well with others... Kids are going to party, but if you can help them make right decisions, it's worth it."

Earlier this month, two dozen deputies from around the state gathered in Tavares to go through an 80-hour D.A.R.E. certification course taught by Vila and others.

Deputies showed cartoon videos featuring kids faced with tough choices and then reviewed it in a mock class setting. Afterward, they implemented a new alternative D.A.R.E. moniker: Define, Assess, Respond, and Evaluate, to see how it applied.

"These are real stories told by kids to kids," Vila said. "It's something they can relate to."

While D.A.R.E.'s former curriculum was bashed by researchers for not being evidence-based, many have supported the new model of interactive learning. But a 2011 University of California study concluded more time and study would be needed to fully see the fruits of the new D.A.R.E. model.

For Grinnell, the program projected to cost \$480,000 doubles as an opportunity for building relationships with the community.

"A lot of these students are in single-parent homes," he said. "...We've had D.A.R.E. officers in the past that have actually been seen as father figures for that child."

Even though six deputies have completed their certification, Grinnell said he won't be ready to launch the program for the coming school year. First, he said, he will need budget

approval from county commissioners to replace the D.A.R.E. officers, so he is projecting to reintroduce the program in the 2018-19 school year.

Other Central Florida sheriffs also think it's important to try to keep kids off drugs.

The Orange County Sheriff's Office taught the second-most fifth-graders in the state before the recession but discontinued the D.A.R.E. program in 2009 when the agency switched to a drug-resistance curriculum developed in house called M.A.G.I.C.

Similarly, the Seminole County Sheriff's Office dropped D.A.R.E. for its own "Focus on Safety" program in 2013.

Both of those sheriff's programs embrace a broader approach to drug-education than "Just say no." Grinnell said D.A.R.E. has done the same.

"The D.A.R.E. curriculum has moved away from being solely drug-based education," he said. "It's more focused on life skills, conflict-resolution, and good choices."



## **In Memoriam**

### **Deputy Monica Sauls**

It was said, “Anyone who knew her couldn’t be in the same room with her and not be happy, and anyone in the room who didn’t know her soon would.”

Monica Sauls, having served the Highlands County Sheriff Office (FL) for 41 years, retired in 2012. Monica devoted most of her law enforcement career serving as an advocate for children. It was reported on June 22 that Monica passed at the age of 63.

Monica was a D.A.R.E. officer and mentor for more than 20 years. She had a positive influence not only on students in Florida, but also on many D.A.R.E. officers.

“Her passion was kids, both their happiness and their safety,” said Susan Benton, former Highlands County Sheriff. Shortly after graduating high school in 1971, “Sauls started work at the Sheriff’s Office as a secretary, then as a dispatcher, and then got certified as a deputy.”

She started working with kids in 1974 as an investigator of juvenile crimes and was instrumental in launching the county’s D.A.R.E. (Drug Awareness and Resistance Education) program, serving many years as a school resource deputy. She also established public education programs on drug abuse, sexual assault, career awareness, home security, child abuse, and crimes against the elderly.

Monica will be missed.



## Florida D.A.R.E. Program Statistics

Agency (*New Agency)	Elem. Schools Taught	K-4 Students Taught	5th/6th Grade Classes Taught	5th/6th Grade Students Taught	Middle Schools Taught	7th Grade Classes Taught	7th Grade Students Taught	Certified D.A.R.E. Officers
Aventura Police Department	1	110	6	114	0	0	0	1
Coconut Creek Police Department	3	0	25	565	0	0	0	6
Collier County Sheriff's Office	35	17500	165	3500	0	0	0	43
Coral Gables Police Department		0	3	100	0	0	0	2
DeLand Police Department	2	0	12	350	0	0	0	2
Doral Police Department*	9	0	46	1069	0	0	0	10
Eatonville Police Department	Did	Not	Report					
FL School for the Deaf & Blind PD	2	78	5	42	0	0	0	1
Florida State University PD	Did	Not	Report					
Gadsden County Sheriff's Office	9	645	21	411	7	11	286	4
Gilchrist County Sheriff's Office	Did	Not	Report					
Gulf County Sheriff's Office	2	0	7	135	2	7	142	2
Hallandale Beach Police Department	2	179	9	155	0	0	0	1
Hendry County Sheriff's Office	6	0	24	650	2	0	0	3
Highlands County Sheriff's Office	10	0	24	860	0	0	0	7
Holmes Police Department	1	200	3	65	0	0	0	2
Indian River County Sheriff's Office	11	400	43	1010	0	0	0	7
Key Biscayne Police Department	2	205	9	248	0	0	0	1
Lake County Sheriff's Office*	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Marco Island Police Department*	1	400	5	110	0	0	0	2
Margate Police Department	5	80	19	450	3	0	0	7
Marion County Sheriff Office*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Martin County Sheriff's Office	17	0	78	1650	1	0	0	7
Miami Police Department	45	0	210	6735	0	0	0	12
Miami Springs Police Department*	2	0	2	25	0	0	0	2

<b>Agency</b> (*New Agency)	<b>Elem. Schools Taught</b>	<b>K-4 Students Taught</b>	<b>5th/6th Grade Classes Taught</b>	<b>5th/6th Grade Students Taught</b>	<b>Middle Schools Taught</b>	<b>7th Grade Classes Taught</b>	<b>7th Grade Students Taught</b>	<b>Certified D.A.R.E. Officers</b>
Miami-Dade County PD	99	0	373	7593	0	0	0	18
Miccosukee Police Department	0	45	0	0	0	0	0	1
Naples Police Department	4	0	14	300	0	0	0	4
Nassau County Sheriff's Office	7	2	41	865	0	0	0	1
New Smyrna Beach Police Department	4	970	10	535	0	0	0	1
Ocala Police Department	17	0	49	1089	1	1	6	3
Ocoee Police Department	5	0	30	660	0	0	0	1
Okeechobee County Sheriff's Office	7	0	25	550	0	0	0	7
Orange City Police Department	2	60	10	210	0	0	0	2
Orange Park Police Department	Did	Not	Report					
Ormond Beach Police Department	9	0	25	800	1	0	0	1
Oviedo Police Department	Did	Not	Report					
Pinecrest Police Department	2	10	13	320	0	0	0	2
Pinellas Park Police Department	6	3	0	0	6	0	0	2
Punta Gorda Police Department	1	0	5	94	0	0	0	1
Sarasota County Sheriff's Office	3	0	18	369	0	0	0	3
Sebastian Police Department	2	0	8	210	1	0	0	2
Sebring Police Department	2	0	6	165	0	0	0	1
Seminole Police Department	0	25	0	0	15	0	0	1
Sunny Isles Beach Police Department	1	0	10	206	0	0	0	2
Sweetwater Police Department	Did	Not	Report					
Vero Beach Police Department	3	0	9	210	1	1	25	3
Village of Palmetto Bay	4	1	18	450	0	0	0	3
Village of Pinecrest*	2	300	12	300	0	0	0	2
West Miami Police Department	2	0	2	120	0	0	0	1
Winter Haven Police Department	10	950	38	750	0	0	0	1
<b>2017 - Totals</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>22163</b>	<b>1456</b>	<b>34150</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>199</b>

## **Calendar Year 2017 Expenditures**

Salaries and Benefits	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>\$124,744.57</u></b>
Expenses	Telephone Postage Printing Travel Supplies  <b><u>Total</u></b>	\$ 54.77 \$ 534.50 \$ 341.93 \$ 11,873.32 \$ 1,966.03  <b><u>\$14,770.55</u></b>
Contracted Services	Training Mail Service  <b><u>Total</u></b>	\$ 3,000.00 \$ 69.14  <b><u>\$ 3,069.14</u></b>
<b><u>Total Estimated Expenses for 2017</u></b>		<b><u>\$ 142,584.26</u></b>



