



Sharing Ohio's Best Program

Recognizing Outstanding Community Policing



Agency of the Month

Forest Park Police Department

November 2021

First Responders Educating Safety & Health (FRESH)

Forest Park Police has actively pursued community relations for years. Six years ago the Community Response Specialist became an official position at the police department. The position had many obstacles at the beginning but in the last couple of years, despite COVID, the position has flourished.



The Community Response Specialist (CRS) works with schools, businesses, churches, daycares, and individuals in the community. The CRS conducts activities which focus on personal safety, summer safety, bike safety, stranger danger, identity theft, gun safety, emergency preparedness, and various other topics.

The CRS officer also collaborates with a myriad of community agencies in conducting outreach initiatives such as "Back to School Supply drives for local students", Tornado and Hurricane Relief efforts, and "Produce pop-ups" for families in need. These collaborative efforts are in conjunction with the local Free Store Food Bank, "We Thrive Forest Park", Winton Woods School District, The Forest Park Senior Steppers, and several local churches.

While all of the ventures mentioned are worthwhile and help bridge the gap of community trust with law enforcement, one program is unique to Forest Park and has a deep impact on our youngest community members. That program is the FRESH program. (First Responders Education Safety and Health) Police Officer Rebecca Davis, assigned as the Community Response Specialist, schedules time to visit various daycare facilities within the community. Each daycare is scheduled a visit at least two times each month, many times "Officer Becca" visits much more often at the delight of the children, and the teachers.

At each visit, Officer Davis provides a story, along with a lesson. Examples are; Little Red Riding Hood- don't talk to strangers, Goldilocks- don't go in stranger's house or touch things that don't belong to you, Little Blue Truck- sometimes we need to slow down and just be kind to each other, Pete the Cat, and many, many more. At the conclusion of story time and the never ending question and answer session, the children participate in exercises with Officer Becca. The exercises include; jumping jacks, pushups, pretend basketball (they dribble, dribble, dribble then jump shot), and other exercises. After each session the children line-up for "high fives!"

The prompting of Officer Davis to start this program with the youngest of our community began after she heard, way too often, a parent say "See that officer over there- you better be good or they will take you away." As a police officer and a parent herself she knows, as we all do, it is one of the worst things a parent can say to a child. Police Officers want children to run to us not from us. To trust the adult in a police uniform. The FRESH program is designed for children, at an early age, to see up close and personal the police uniform, and the human adult wearing it and to reinforce the lesson that officers are there to help- not to be feared.





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Officer Davis ensures during the FRESH presentations that all of the children have a chance to see the uniform, learn about the tools the officer uses to protect people, so that a greater understanding is developed. Officer Davis also lets the children put on her ballistic vest so they can see how it feels and make the children feel special. Officer Becca is hoping that through FRESH she can “catch” our young people at a young age and influence them in a positive manner.

