

MAYOR'S MESSAGE
Craig A. Stough 8/29/2024

“L.E.A.D.”

The City of Sylvania is updating its D.A.R.E. classroom programming with the new L.E.A.D., curriculum which started the week of August 26, 2024. Police Chief Danilynn Miller prepared the following update for us:

In 1984, under the leadership of Chief Gerald Sobb, the Office of Community Affairs was created in the Sylvania Police Department. This office was designed to provide a police and community liaison. One of the primary responsibilities of this office was to develop comprehensive programs that could be taken into the Sylvania Schools and outreach to the children of the community. Some of the programs that developed out of this were Stranger Awareness, Bicycle Safety, Safety City, and Drug and Alcohol Awareness programs.

In 1990, Chief Sobb sent two officers, Sgt. Jeff Lingo and Patrolman Kevin Crowell to 80 hours of training to teach a program called D.A.R.E. D.A.R.E. stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education and was developed to be taught by in-service officers. These two officers started teaching this program to Sylvania School students in January of 1991.

Here we are, 33 years later and when I speak to families and ask about their memories, D.A.R.E. is a common memory and most former students can even recall their D.A.R.E. officer! We have seen many benefits from our officers forming these relationships with the school staff and students over the years. When D.A.R.E. was formed in the mid-1980's the world was very different than it is now. While D.A.R.E. has been a very valuable program for our youth and the community, Chief Miller and the Community Affairs Officers have been researching another program called L.E.A.D. L.E.A.D. stands for Law Enforcement Against Drugs and Violence. L.E.A.D. is being taught in many schools in our region and there have been positive reviews from the schools, students, and officers involved.

L.E.A.D. has partnered with the Mendez Foundation to deliver their evidence based, *Too Good* Curricula. This program is continually being updated by full time prevention specialists to ensure it stays relevant. The curricula is recognized on the following registries:

- National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA)
- Institute of Education Services (IES) What Works Clearinghouse

L.E.A.D. *Too Good* Curricula also aligns academically with:

- National (CDC) and State (DOE) Health Education Standards
- American School Counselors Standards for Students-Competencies and Indicators

We currently have three of our Community Affairs officers trained to teach the curricula, with one of these being our current D.A.R.E. Officer, Jerry Barnswell. We are all excited about bringing this new program to our community. The L.E.A.D. program will offer everything that the D.A.R.E. program has, but in a new and up to date way. The programs built in student engagement methods, such as curricula-based games and skits will help the students learn and retain the information they are learning better than before. The L.E.A.D. program also allows,

and encourages, more collaboration amongst police, educators, and counselors. Instead of only police officers receiving the training, educators and counselors can also be trained to deliver the curricula, allowing the program to be expanded into other grades. This expansion will create a greater prevention outcome for students, as Sylvania City Police has already teamed up with Sylvania Prevention Alliance. Sylvania City Police is also pleased to verify that they have been working closely with Sylvania Township Police to ensure both departments are ready to make the change to the L.E.A.D. program. With both police departments on the same page, the new curriculum begins this year in the Sylvania Schools with the 5th grade students.



Chief Danilynn Miller and Mayor Craig Stough