

I D.A.R.E. TO LIVE A DRUG FREE LIFE!

Faith Duensing Husker

In the **D.A.R.E.** program it's amazing to think how much we have learned in the last 7 years. From kindergarten until now we have learned a ton of things. From what number to call when you need help and what a firefighter does, to what smoking can do to your body and the harmful effects of marijuana.

Officer Lindquist taught us that to solve a problem you can use the **D.A.R.E.** decision making model. You **D**efine the problem, **A**ssessthe choices, **R**espond, and **E**valuate your decision. We have come a long way in our 10 **D.A.R.E.** lessons.

Officer Lindquist taught us about the danger of peer pressure. Peer pressure can get you to do some of the things that you do not want to do. Peer pressure is one of the hardest situations to deal with. It is difficult to say no to your friends because you have always been with them and don't know what to do or say to them. You can surround yourself with your friends that you know will not put you in that situation and so you will always have someone to talk to when you need it. Friends are good to have around you.

I have learned a lot about the harmful effects of drugs and the damage that they can do to your body. A drug is any substance that changes the way your mind and body works. The younger that you are when you start the shorter amount of time it takes to get addicted to the drug. When someone does drugs they are not the only person that is effected, they can affect others by drinking and driving, and many other ways.

Alcohol is illegal for anyone under the age of 21, but even people who are older than that can abuse their power of being able to drink by drinking too much alcohol. Drinking too much alcohol can result in loss of coordination, poor judgment, slurred speech, loss of self-control, memory lapses, or slowed reflexes.

It is illegal to sell tobacco to anyone under the age of 18. Smokers have more colds and upper respiratory problems. It also causes them to have a lot of breathing problems. Smoking is the #1 cause of lung cancer. Cigarettes contain nicotine, a substance that causes addiction. Smoking tobacco can cause shortness of breath and dizziness.

There is more tar in marijuana than in tobacco smoke. Marijuana smoke contains 50% to 70% more of some cancer causing chemicals than tobacco smoke. Marijuana is illegal in all of the United States. Marijuana can be very addictive and users have an increased risk of getting cancer from it.

I have learned a lot about all of the different drugs: alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco and the harmful effects that they can have. I have learned about the power of peer pressure and how to deal with the pressure. One of the most important things that I have learned is that you can

always go to parents and teachers if you need to talk. Drugs will always be a part of our world, but what I now know is that you have the power to decide how to deal with it.

I thought that the **D.A.R.E.** program was very helpful. At first I didn't realize how dangerous all of these drugs could be until I learned more about them and how to say no to them through the **D.A.R.E.** program. This program teaches kids to say no to drugs and to stay healthy. I think that it is important to stay drug free and healthy because as kids we still have a lot to learn and a long way to go. I pledge to stay drug and violence free. I pledge to stay true to what Officer Lindquist has taught us and to what we have learned through the **D.A.R.E.** program.