

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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St. Cloud, MN—On January 20, 2010, Minnesota D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) will celebrate 20 years of service to Minnesota children and families. A year of special activities will commemorate the event.

The D.A.R.E. program was developed as a pilot program in 1983 in Los Angeles. This was largely in response to a large increase in drug use and abuse creating increases in crime. D.A.R.E. was a program that utilized specially trained, uniformed, law enforcement in the classrooms to gain the attention of the students and to provide information about their neighborhoods. These officers saw the ineffectiveness of reacting to the problem and wanted instead to prevent it.

As the drug problems carried into the Midwest, Attorney General Skip Humphrey sent Norm Coleman (who worked for Skip Humphrey at that time) to learn about this D.A.R.E. program. Under the direction and leadership of Attorney General Humphrey and Norm Coleman, the Minnesota project quickly took off and became a lead program in the country.

In 1990, Norm Coleman signed the Articles of Incorporation setting up Minnesota D.A.R.E., Inc. as the nonprofit to manage D.A.R.E. programming for Minnesota.

Today, Minnesota D.A.R.E. is much more than a drug and alcohol prevention program. This program is recognized and remembered by many as a friendship between a “cop and a kid.” Hundreds of officers have been specially trained by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. These officers touch over 70,000 students annually in grades Kindergarten through High School. After 20 years in Minnesota, we are now preparing to reach a second generation of D.A.R.E. students.

This one time drug prevention program now takes on many safety issues our young people face—bullying and cyberbullying; respect and friendship; Internet Safety; gangs; role models; and prescription and over the counter drug abuse. Community presentations are now presented to parents, grandparents, and others in the community. Special events or positive alternatives are conducted to include the entire family. Many other collaborators have joined the program like the Minnesota National Guard Counterdrug Unit and the Minnesota Pharmacists Association/Foundation. Foundations, corporations, businesses and hundreds of individuals come together to support our young people.

With so much attention on the high costs of health care; the lack of support for prevention is once again being brought to the table. We know that prison does not work. Treatment is a difficult road. Social services and hospitals cannot handle the load. All are very costly. In the

meantime, lack of insurance for drug abusers, crime, and family issues impact all Minnesotans. Prevention just seems logical. We are talking about our children.

Join Minnesota D.A.R.E., our officers, students, alumni, educators, and supporters in celebrating our accomplishments and entering another decade of support for our children and families.

For more information contact Minnesota D.A.R.E., Inc. at 1-800-990-DARE (3273), MNDARE@aol.com or go to www.mndare.org.

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