



April 12, 2018

# A Great Time in D.A.R.E.

By Ethan

D.A.R.E. is a 5th grade program that I participated in this year. It was an unforgettable experience. I learned many things that will improve my communication skills, help me make decisions, and know what to stay away from.

What is D.A.R.E.? D.A.R.E. is a 5th grade program that helps children in real life situations, and helps with what to avoid when growing up. We have had lessons over bullying, drug and alcohol abuse, communication skills, etc. We have learned statistics, how to make responsible choices, and about bullying.

Drug and alcohol abuse is a problem. 75,000 Americans die of alcohol related problems per year. Even legal drugs like tobacco have their large tolls. There are 200 known chemicals in tobacco. 400,000+ Americans die of tobacco related causes per year. In D.A.R.E., we have learned to walk away if we are near drug and alcohol problems.

Every day we need to make safe and responsible choices. Should we spend our money or not? Should we play outside in the rain, or not? We all need to make these tough decisions. In D.A.R.E., we have learned to use the D.A.R.E. Decision Making Model. (D.D.M.M.) It says to define, assess, respond, and evaluate. We define our options, assess what could happen with each option, make our decision or respond, then evaluate our decision.

Bullying is a huge topic. People are made fun of. People are bullied online or using social media. People are physically hurt. All are bad, and all need attention. In D.A.R.E., we have learned to tell someone who, what, when, where, and why. In reporting bullying we have learned to tell an adult who did it to whom, what happened, where it happened, and why was the person being a bully.

Communication is a thing that can gain and lose people friends. If we talk respectfully, we could gain friends, but if we talk disrespectfully, we could end up losing friends. We have to do the right thing. In D.A.R.E., we have learned to be confident when speaking, but not be rude or disrespectful. Keep confidence, but don't get overconfident.

D.A.R.E. was a great experience. We have learned to avoid drugs and alcohol, how to make good choices, and how to communicate effectively. D.A.R.E. is a program that has helped me in having a better life. The previously mentioned skills have already shown a great change in my life, and will do a great deal of help in the future.

I, Ethan Snyder, pledge to be drug free, alcohol free, not bully, and try my best to stop bullying.

WARD / NORTHWESTERN