

Press Release

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D.A.R.E. TO BE FIT RAISES OVER \$1,0000 FOR THE ONALASKA D.A.R.E. PROGRAM

On May 19th Officer Leah Myers, Onalaska Police Department's D.A.R.E./G.R.E.A.T. officer along with community volunteers spent the morning chasing children through Rowe Park as the first D.A.R.E. to Be Fit fundraiser kicked off. Participants ran a 1K fun run/walk interspersed with four fun activity stations designed to increase balance, coordination and fitness. There was no registration fee instead participants were given pledge sheets to raise money.

"We had one D.A.R.E. student raise \$300.00," said Myers, "Jonathan Groves, a Pre K student from Eagle Bluff really went the extra mile. His Mom Jennifer Rude and his Dad Jake Groves came out to cheer their son on as he ran. It was easy to see how proud both parents are of their son, deservedly so. It was great to see all the parents cheering their children in as they crossed the finish line, it was a real family event."

Though the first year was a bit of a slow start with 30 participants Officer Myers is confident that D.A.R.E. to Be Fit will grow next year.

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"Everyone participating had a great time," said Myers, "the La Crosse Radio group was on scene keeping everything lively with music and Kwik Trip and WalMart were kind enough to make donations to help make the event a success. D.A.R.E. and G.R.E.A.T. are about more than drug and gang prevention. Both of these programs teach young people the importance of making good, healthy choices. We decided on a fitness activity as a fundraiser because childhood obesity is a growing concern in this country. The participants in this run made the choice to get off the couch, put down the video game and get out into the sunshine and enhance their physical fitness. We wanted to show that physical fitness and good choices can be fun."

The Onalaska Police Department is planning to make D.A.R.E. to Be Fit an annual event in May.