

## Students graduate DARE program

Written by Lt. Bill Davis

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More than 700 Bossier 5th graders will participate in a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) graduation ceremony to be held at eight elementary schools throughout Bossier Parish this week.

The D.A.R.E program is a semester-long curriculum taught by Bossier deputies to give students the skills they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs and violence. The deputies also show the students how to resist peer pressure, how to avoid bullying and learn to live productive lives.

Graduations are as follows:

- Dec. 3, 9:30 a.m., Bossier Elementary
- Dec. 3, 1 p.m., Curtis Elementary
- Dec. 4, 9 a.m., Benton Elementary
- Dec. 4, 1 p.m., Elm Grove Elementary
- Dec. 5, 9 a.m., Carrie Martin Elementary
- Dec. 5, 1 p.m., Waller Elementary
- Dec. 6, 9:30 a.m., Central Park Elementary
- Dec. 6, 1 p.m., Plantation Park Elementary

“The D.A.R.E. instruction is one of the most productive programs aimed at teaching our children about the dangers of drugs and violence and helping them make wise choices in order to avoid those harmful behaviors,” said Bossier Sheriff Julian Whittington, a former D.A.R.E. instructor and mentor.

The Bossier Sheriff’s Office has three deputies who teach D.A.R.E. to all 5th graders in Bossier Parish schools and one deputy who teaches middle school students in a pilot program that began this school year.

Deputy Randy Pease says one of the primary messages for his students is that life is full of choices, and the decisions you make have consequences.

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"I would rather them learn from someone else's mistakes so that they don't have to make the same mistakes," said Pease, an 18-year D.A.R.E. officer with the Bossier Sheriff's Office.

D.A.R.E. instruction will begin in the spring semester for 5th graders at the remaining elementary school in Bossier Parish.