

Police Partner with 7-Eleven for Operation Chill

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WEST LINN - The West Linn Police are partnering with 7-Eleven's Cool Promotion By Handing Out Free Slurpee "Tickets" for Good Deeds.

The uniformed officer approaches a group of kids, hands them "tickets" and says, "You have the right to...a free Slurpee drink." That's how 7-Eleven Inc.'s Operation Chill—the chain's community program that rewards "good behavior" with a treat and helps build positive relationships between local law enforcement agencies and young people—works.

Through Operation Chill, law enforcement officers from participating local police and sheriff's departments can "ticket" youngsters caught in random acts of kindness, good deeds or involved in positive community activities with the free beverage coupons. Appropriate "offenses" might include helping another person, wearing a bicycle helmet while riding or skating, deterring crime or participating in a police athletic league. Each coupon can be redeemed for a small-size Slurpee drink at participating 7-Eleven stores.

Since the program's inception in 1995, more than 10 million Operation Chill coupons have been distributed to hundreds of law enforcement agencies across the country in areas where 7-Eleven operates stores. During the upcoming summer months and back-to-school season, one million Slurpee coupons will be given to kids in more than 300 cities, towns and counties.

Operation Chill was developed by 7-Eleven to reward and encourage good behavior by youngsters during the hot summer months when communities may experience increases in loitering, shoplifting and graffiti. The coupons also can be used to support law enforcement agencies' community relations projects.

Police officers can be intimidating to many children and teens. But, by distributing free Slurpee beverage coupons to good kids doing good things, local police departments across the United States can take that factor out of their encounters with youngsters.

"Operation Chill continues to be one of our most popular community projects," said Mike Suppe, 7-Eleven's loss prevention manager for southern California. "Kids love it because they love Slurpee drinks. Police officers love it because it gives them a positive reason for them to approach youngsters and thank them for being good citizens."

He added, "Rewarding a million kids with free Slurpees for doing something right is the right thing to do for a lot of different reasons. Operation Chill helps build strong relationships in the community and recognizes young people's good deeds."

According to Suppe, police departments start contacting 7-Eleven earlier each year to sign up for the annual program. Cities already participating in this year's program include Los Angeles, San Diego, New York, Boston, Orlando and Tampa, Florida, Dallas, Denver, Las Vegas and Richmond, Virginia.

"This is a great opportunity for our officers to interact with the youth of our community in a fun and positive way" said West Linn Police Chief Terry Timeus "It also helps reinforce positive behaviors, especially with helmet wear. West Linn has had several serious crashes this summer involving teens on bikes and skateboards without helmets on."

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