



COLERAIN TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Colerain Township is the second largest Township in Ohio and the Colerain Township Police Department comes up equally large in serving their community through a variety of programs.

Effective police and community engagement begins with communication. The Colerain Township Police Department maintains an information- rich website. However, the website is not just informational -- it strongly encourages communication with specific areas devoted to “Contact Us”, Citizens’ Surveys and Citizens Feedback. Colerain’s Chief Mark Denney continually stresses communication. Chief Denney and his staff encourage all citizens to freely voice their opinions. The Colerain Police Department also has a Facebook page which is used frequently to share information and to promote on-going interaction and communication. As Chief Denney states, “be transparent and genuine and people will trust you”.

The Colerain Police Department stresses having community programs which fit the needs of citizens. As Chief Denney states, “not everything will work, the key is to be proactive and reach out before there are problems.” Colerain is very proud of their Police Explorer Program. The program targets young adults between the ages for 14-21. This program exposes attendees to “real world policing”. Explorers become familiar with patrol procedures, investigations, court systems, crime labs and much more. In addition to promoting interaction between young adults and the police, there are additional benefits. Chief Denney sees the value of using the Explorer Program to help their agency with future recruiting, especially minority recruiting. And the program also is aimed to help young people to avoid the types of mistakes which might disqualify them from being future police candidates.

Effective community policing recognizes current problems and creates programs to address those problems. Colerain Township like many communities is experiencing an “opiate epidemic” and no community is immune from this issue. **Colerain has developed a program to deal with the nearly 400% increase in drug overdose deaths which Ohio has experienced since 2000.** The Colerain Police Department has formed a Quick Response Team (QRT) to address the overdose increase. The QRT is made up of a police officer, a fire fighter and an addictive services counselor. The goal is to have the team visit with an overdosed individual within 3-5 days of the event and to encourage treatment. **The program has met with staggering success.** Almost 70% of individuals who are touched by the QRT seek treatment. And most importantly, Colerain Township has realized a 40% reduction in overdoses since implementing this program.

What is the reaction from individuals who have benefited from this program? Chief Denney mentioned that the word “surprise” best summarizes the reaction. “They are surprised we care” said Chief Denney.

The challenges of policing in today’s current environment are significant. But having strong community police programs in place helps to meet today’s challenges. One of Colerain Township Police Department’s key values is to “treat citizens with dignity, respect, fairness and compassion”. **As Chief Denney states, “our citizens trust us”. In today’s environment there may not be a higher compliment or more important statement.**