

# Live Oaks resource officer ‘there for the kids’

3:03 pm, Sep 15, 2011 | Written by John Seney | 0Comments |

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MIAMI TWP. – For Steve Burgess, school resource officer at Live Oaks Career Campus, the job is all about “being there for the kids.”



“They (the students) understand I’m here for them,” said Burgess, who has been the resource officer at the school for 11 years.

“Even after graduation, they come back and talk,” Burgess said. “That’s why I love this job.”

Burgess joined the Miami Township Police Department in 1997, having previously worked in law enforcement in the Dayton area.

He started out as a patrol officer, but when the resource officer position at Live Oaks opened up, Burgess said he would “give it a try.”

“It’s been very rewarding to get to help young people, to get to be a mentor,” he said of the job. “It’s good for them to see a police officer in a different light – as someone they can talk to.”

Burgess said the kids at Live Oaks are there because they want to get their career going.

“These kids in my opinion are really good kids,” he said. “We’re here to help them, not arrest them.”

Drug possession is one of the most common reasons students get in trouble at the school.

“If a kid gets caught with drugs, we have to figure out how to help him,” he said.

Burgess tries to get the student in a program that will address his problem.

“I’m going to treat them like adults, but with that comes responsibility. Kids want to be treated as adults,” he said.

Burgess has an office at the school, but spends a lot of time just walking the halls, talking to the kids informally.

He also has formal classroom sessions where he talks about topics such as safe driving, the effect of drugs on the brain, bullying and how to interact with police officers.

Joe Moon, assistant dean at Live Oaks, said Burgess adds to the safety and security students feel. "What makes Steve good is the relationship he has with students," Moon said. "He is able to prevent a lot of issues."

Burgess recently received The Ohio School Resource Officers Association's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Burgess has been active in the association since its formation and has served as its president.

Even as budgets are cut, more and more schools are seeing the need for resource officers, he said.

"It's important to have somebody at the school," he said.

Burgess said the association conducts training for resource officers and other school staff members.

There are more than 700 school resource officers in Ohio.

Burgess grew up in the Dayton area and now lives in Warren County with his wife and three children.

His outside interests include coaching youth sports, being involved with his church and golf.

For more about the Ohio School Resource Officers Association, see the website [www.osroa.org](http://www.osroa.org).