

Grand Chute Police receive "Buddy Bags"

GRAND CHUTE, Wis. (WBAY) - Comforting kids during crisis is now a little easier in Grand Chute thanks to a donation from the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers.



The Grand Chute Police Department is now better equipped to help kids in crisis, using donated Buddy Bags which will be carried in all department squad cars.

According to Officer Travis Waas with the Grand Chute Police Department, "They're filled with a plush toy. We have coloring books, a book to read, crayons and an informational card for 211 that's put out through the United Way."

The Buddy Bags are the brainchild of the Heart of the Valley YMCA which unveiled them back in the spring of 2015 with the Fox Valley Metro Police Department. Kaukauna police also carry the bags.

Just like those departments, in Grand Chute, officers will use the Buddy Bags any time they respond to a situation where a child is involved, whether it's a house fire, car crash, domestic disturbance, or anything else. The bags and their contents create a connection between the cops and the kids in crisis.

"This is a way for them to humanize themselves, give them a gift, talk to them, bridge that gap between trauma, relief and relaxation," adds Sharon Johnson from the Heart of the Valley YMCA.

Officer Waas says, "This is something happy that an officer can present to them and take their mind off what's going on."

The Wisconsin Timber Rattlers paid for the Grand Chute supply of Buddy Bags, a partnership they were able to create with the help of the United Way.

"The community gives our team so much, so we're always as a staff and a team looking for different ways we can give back to the community as well so we're excited to hear from Grand Chute PD how this works in the community," says Dayna Baitinger from the Timber Rattlers.

The YMCA is hoping to find sponsors, like the T-Rats, willing to invest in their Buddy Bags for all squad cars in the Fox Valley.

<http://www.wbay.com/content/news/Grand-Chute-Police-Receive-Buddy-Bags-452574173.html>