

Edwardsville Police get into the holiday spirit with annual Shop with a Cop event

by Steven Spencer, Staff Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville Target and Burger King saw a lot of smiling police officers and children Saturday morning for the Edwardsville Police Department's annual Shop with a Cop event.



The event is coordinated by the Edwardsville Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 244. For the last eight years, officers within the department have reached into their own pockets and spend their day off helping to make the holidays a little more special for local kids in the community.

Officer Rick Thompson said it's always an incredibly special day.

"There's a few things that happen every year, and every time that they happen they still surprise me," Thompson said. "The kids, you actually have to tell them to shop for themselves. All they want to do is get something for someone else."

Thompson said that the department makes sure to not leave any siblings out either and if they end up going over at the cash register nothing goes back on the shelves.

"The officers open up their personal wallets and start handing money out," he added. "There's no way were putting stuff back if we go over. You'll see officers swiping their own credit cards throughout the whole entire thing. You'll see citizens that are out shopping and think it's so cool and hand out a \$20 bill or even a \$100 bill.

Right before shopping at Target the kids and officers made a stop Burger King for breakfast. Thompson said the first year the proximity just made sense to have breakfast at Burger King. Once it came time to pay the bill the restaurant felt just as obligated as the department to help the kids and covered the meal, which Officer Thompson said resulted in the breakfast becoming a regular part of the annual event.

"The citizens and the city of Edwardsville support their police like no other," Officer Thompson added. "They see us out and they come talk to us. They thank us. It's great to be able to give back to the community and let them know how much they mean to us. Especially when it's children, every cop has a soft spot kiddos."



