

# Alton PD Takes Kids On Shopping Spree During Annual 'Shop With A Cop'

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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ALTON - The Alton Police Department took 50 kids on a shopping spree for this year's Shop With a Cop event.

On Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023, officers and students from Alton Community Unit School District #11 went together to Target with approximately \$200 for each kid to buy whatever they wanted. The event is sponsored by APD and the Alton Police Youth Camp nonprofit, which uses fundraisers and donations to raise money for this annual holiday tradition.

“That’s what our nonprofit is all about, you know?” Sergeant Andrew Pierson said. “It’s very great. Some of the kids come prepared with lists they’ve made and they know what they’re doing. Some of them just wander through the aisles. And you see a lot, too, of the kids wanting to give to their siblings or their mom or their dad or grandma or whatever.”

There were a lot of smiles as kids led the officers through the store to pick out toys, clothes, sports equipment, video games and candy. Many kids were looking for gifts for their siblings and cousins. The officers helped them decide what to buy and keep track of their spending. Alton High School cheerleaders were also onsite to wrap gifts.

Pierson said the school district chooses kids who “could really use it” to participate in Shop With a Cop. He noted that this event brings officers into the community and helps them build positive relationships with young people.

“It’s very enjoyable. Very fulfilling,” Pierson added. “One kid came through, and he's buying for his whole family instead of just him. So that's pretty cool...It’s just to have give back and be a part of growing up and having that outlook on law enforcement. It’s everything.”