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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**Ferguson Police Department Upgrades Humvee for D.A.R.E Program**

(Ferguson, Mo.) Feb. 6, 2017 - In an effort to attract and engage with the community, specifically school aged children, the City of Ferguson Police Department decided it was time to update a surplus vehicle for their D.A.R.E program from a standard van to a Humvee.

"We wanted something that would appeal more to children," Ferguson police officer Michelle Merriwether said. "We hope that it will get them excited and enthused to see us coming down the street."

The police department received the Humvee in 2011 and students from the North County Technical Auto Body program painted the Humvee for free. The all black Humvee has bold red letters with the D.A.R.E mascot, Daren the Lion displayed on it. "This Humvee is sure to catch the attention of kids," added Officer Merriwether.

On the back of the Humvee lists the definition of D.A.R.E:

- Define – Describe the problem, challenge or opportunity
- Access – What are your choices?
- Respond – Make a choice. Use the facts and information you have gathered.
- Evaluate – Review your decision. Did you make a good choice?

Standing for Drug Abuse Resistance Education, D.A.R.E is a program that police departments around the country use, getting officers into the elementary and middle schools to teach kids the inherent dangers of recreational drug use, peer pressure, and violent behavior. "We just want to teach kids to make good decisions in their everyday lives," Officer Merriwether said.

The new D.A.R.E Humvee will be up and running within the next few weeks. It will only be used at special events, like parades and youthful gatherings, and will not be used for patrol or police functions. You can catch the upgraded Humvee at the first official D.A.R.E dance of the year held Feb. 24, from 6-8 p.m., located at Ferguson Middle School.

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