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Auxiliary police presence boosted after school

Another measure to keep kids safe on way to and from classes

ELMWOOD PARK – Parents and motorists may notice the presence of an Elmwood Park auxiliary police officer on Fullerton Avenue keeping a watchful eye on students walking home from Elmwood Park High School in the afternoons, after school. The move builds on the success of expanded auxiliary police hours in and near parks during the summer months.

"We want be proactive and make sure we're doing all we can to keep kids safe as they head home each afternoon," Village President Angelo "Skip" Saviano said. "We're using our current auxiliary force, but expanding their presence."

Initially, the officer will be on foot, walking with kids after school along Fullerton Ave. as far as 75th Ave. Saviano said the officer's schedule and location could change, depending on the need.

"This is just a starting point, and we will evaluate as we go," Saviano said. "The important thing is that we're utilizing our resources more strategically in order to maximize our effectiveness and keep kids safe."

Saviano also said that there was no specific incident that triggered the staffing change. "We're doing this proactively as we work to maintain safety throughout our village."

In addition, Saviano urged parents to talk with their children about recognizing potentially dangerous situations. "It's always important that parents know where their kids are at all times and to make sure they have your cell phone and office numbers so they can reach you in an emergency."

Saviano also encouraged parents to remind their teens about putting down mobile devices while walking. Cell phones and other handheld gadgets are causing teens to be more easily distracted, which is leading to greater risk not only for those driving but teens walking to and from school.

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