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## LCSO offers Teen Driver Improvement Program *Pre-registration required*



LCSO Deputy Grant Sandlin teaches about driving safety in the Cedar Key School Media Center. The four-hour program includes the first 90 minutes indoors, then there is golf cart driving and then a return indoors to wrap up the lessons.

Story and Photos By Jeff M. Hardison © June 28, 2017 at 4:37 p.m.

LEVY COUNTY -- The Levy County Sheriff's Office has started its 11th Annual Teen Driver Improvement Program this summer.

There were not enough participants for the program to happen on Wednesday (June 28) at Chiefland High School, but there were enough at Cedar Key School on Tuesday (June 27).

LCSO Sgt. Max Long of the Community Relations Division is heading the program again this year. Joining Sgt. Long are LCSO deputies Grant Sandlin, Keith Osteen, John Gulleddge and Chase Gregory.



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**Before the cones were dropped, the two golf carts are seen at Cedar Key School. Due to a lack of participation Wednesday, no video was taken at Chiefland High School, although there had been a plan (by a journalist) to demonstrate via a video how distracted driving can cause injury, death and property loss – when it can be avoided by drivers paying attention to driving.**



The LCSO is striving to help students between the ages of 15 and 19 years old become even more aware of the importance of abiding by the law and common sense in regard to aggressive driving, distracted driving and impaired driving. The fourth element where the program focuses is upon reminding the young drivers about seatbelt use being a method to save lives.

This free program is open to all Levy County students who have a current operator license or learner's permit.

Sgt. Long and Deputy Sandlin said, too however, that students from Gilchrist and Dixie counties are welcome, and so are any students who are visiting relatives in this

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part of Florida during the summer.

The four issues are the key points for the classes that go from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. each day. Lunch is not served, however the Cedar Key School participants were offered a free lunch on Tuesday. One of those three students chose against accepting that offer.

Parents will want to be aware that the four-hour program includes a graphic presentation that shows students the consequences of bad driving choices.

There is classroom instruction, videos, Power Point presentations.

There is hands-on golf cart driving. In those sessions, the students first drive through a course marked by orange cones. Then they drive through the course while trying to tend to the distractions caused by cell phone use while driving. In the third round through the orange-cone obstacle course, the students are wearing goggles that cause their eyes to see a distorted view of the obstacle course -- which represents being impaired by using alcohol or other mind-altering drugs.

Parental waivers are required due to the graphic nature of some parts of the presentation.

As of June 22, there were 1,721 students who have taken this course, Deputy Sandlin said. The LCSO has provided it to other agencies and at other places, though, and those numbers are not calculated.

Students must pre-register. If at least three students do not show up, then the program will be cancelled for that day.

To register, call Sgt. Max Long at 352-486-5111, extension 256, or send an email to [mlong@levyso.com](mailto:mlong@levyso.com).

Classes are from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (There is no lunch.) Following is the tentative schedule for the rest of the summer:

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## **WILLISTON HIGH SCHOOL**

Wednesday, July 12

Thursday, July 20

Wednesday, July 26

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## **CHIEFLAND HIGH SCHOOL**

Tuesday, July 11

Wednesday, July 19

Thursday, July 27

## **BRONSON HIGH SCHOOL**

Thursday, July 6

Tuesday, July 18

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## **CEDAR KEY SCHOOL**

Thursday, July 13

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## **YANKEETOWN SCHOOL**

Wednesday, July 5

Tuesday, July 25