



LEON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Walt McNeil, Sheriff

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Deputy Shade McMillian

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LCSO Goes ALLin for Autism Awareness

Yearly, the light is bright for Autism Awareness during the month of April. Currently, autism affects one in 54 children, totaling over five million youth and adults. The time for greater inclusion has never been more important. The Leon County Sheriff's Office recognizes the power in acceptance and education when it comes to understanding autism and fostering greater awareness.

In 2020, The LCSO Autism Awareness Project began with its mission to continue training LCSO Deputies and support the Florida State University Autism Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD). LCSO is promoting awareness and acceptance by participating in the Autism Spectrum Disorder and Law Enforcement: Recognition and Response training offered by CARD. During this presentation on April 6th, LCSO school resource deputies will be provided information about the characteristics of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and how ASD may affect school success. They will review how to recognize the signs of autism and discuss response strategies to help deescalate challenging behaviors using video examples, discussions, and case studies.

LCSO is also proud to announce an autism commemorative patch designed by Nathan Yarusso of Scotland Yard Design Concepts with the assistance of 17-year-old Josef Marlowe. Marlowe, a local youth, has greatly benefited from CARD and was excited to give back to the center that helps him and so many others.

A vinyl version of the patch will be placed on several LCSO agency patrol vehicles during April. An embroidered version will be available for public purchase for \$10 with proceeds donated to CARD in support of their mission. Contact Captain Jimmy Goodman at goodmanj@leoncountyfl.gov to purchase a patch.

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