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Kettering Safety Village offers preschoolers help

By MARY SIKORA
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As 4- and 5-year-olds prepare this summer to take their first steps out into the world of school and buses and traffic, there is a helping hand being offered at the Kettering Safety Village.

This year, the safety village — in its 15th year of operation — has been changed from its old permanent location at Ernst School to Orchard Park School, 800 E. Dorothy Lane. And it will be sporting a new look.

The pre-kindergartners who take advantage of the safety program, which is sponsored by the Dor-Wood Optimists and aided by the City of Kettering, will learn to negotiate through a tiny village with tiny cars, complete with all the problems they may encounter in real life.

Not only will they be learning traffic laws (how to cross streets, how to use school buses and bicycle safety), but they will also be taught the importance of knowing their names and telephone numbers and how to handle strangers.

AT THE same time they are learning all about safety in the streets, their parents will be invited to learn all about what their children are being taught and more.

The Safety Village has not only been moved, but it has been renovated by the Dor-Wood Optimists and volunteers.

The little houses and stores and traffic

signs have been repainted by the Optimists. The cars the children use to learn street safety were sanded down by students at Barnes Junior High and painted for free by the Earl Scheib Paint Shop.

According to Dr. Jerry Barnett, chairman of the Safety Village project this year, and also the director of pupil personnel for Kettering schools, the project renovation, which cost the Optimists \$1,500, was aided by at least 25 persons involved in the Saturday morning work which began in January.

At least five youths from the Juvenile Court were at the last two work parties which included the painting of the blacktop surface and the setting up of the little buildings.

THE CITY'S traffic engineering division made new traffic signs and are putting the proper stripes down the middle of the "streets."

Barnett said that the young people from Juvenile Court were there as a part of a program to help "work off some of their difficulties."

The entire project is a complete involvement of the city's traffic and engineering division, the police department, the Dor-Wood Optimists and, indirectly, the school system.

Parents of preschoolers interested in taking advantage of the classes which begin June 16 should call 296-2405 for applications or more information.



(L-R) Jerry Barnett, Bob McCoy and Jim Arnold put finishing touches on the sign

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