

PRESS RELEASE



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WARSAW – Indiana Lakeland Girl Scout Brownie Troop 16 proved that planning, budgeting, task management and measurable outcomes can help you reach your goals while at the same time being a lot of fun! These young philanthropists, consisting of 12 first graders from Eisenhower and Washington Elementary Schools, learned to make a plan, set it into action, track their progress and attained their goals while also providing emotional support to other children in trauma when they donated 13 teddy bears to the Indiana State Police.

Starting in early October, Co-leaders Ann Lindquist, Heather James and Jessica Grossman, discussed with the girls what a service project was and introduced the idea of Operation Teddy Bear, a program designed to assist children in traumatic situations such as being ill, injured in an accident, transported in an ambulance, experiencing abuse or other emotional injury, being lost or involved in a fire.

The girls set a goal to purchase 14 bears to be donated to the Indiana State Police. Each troop meeting, the girls brought in change that they collected or earned through chores to donate to their service project. To help the girls learn to track and measure their progress, Lindquist and James created a poster of a teddy bear to use as a visual aid for the girls. At the end of each meeting the money was counted and the results posted on the poster. Lindquist said, “We spent a lot of time counting pennies!”

As the weeks passed the girls could see exactly how their dedication and hard work was paying off. “The girls were really excited to see the bear poster each week and see just how far they had come. They could see that at first they had raised enough money to fill in the toes, then to the belly, and then clear up to the eye balls!” said Lindquist.

Lindquist and James spent a portion of each meeting discussing the service project, the goals they set, where the bears will go and why. Said James, “We wanted the girls to understand what some children go through and how they might receive these bears. It isn’t like going out to the store to purchase one. The girls’ hard work really means something to a child that may have suffered a trauma. It lets them know someone is thinking about them.”

On February 12, 2008, Sergeant Lou Brown visited the Brownie Troop meeting and on behalf of the Indiana State Police, accepted the donation of teddy bears. The officer spent a few moments with the girls explaining where the bears would be used and how their donation would impact their community. The girls learned the teddy bears they worked so hard for would be distributed to local State Troopers for children in Kosciusko County.

Indiana Lakeland Council serves girls and adults in Noble, Whitley, Kosciusko and Elkhart counties. To learn more about Girl Scouting see www.indianalakeland.org or call toll free at 866.223.7740.