



Movie theater security gets undercover help

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Movie-goers feeling a little uneasy in wake of
Police get help from undercover inner city volunteers.

CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y. (WIVB) — Some movie-goers are feeling a little uneasy as they seek to escape from the problems of the day.

Thursday's headlines of another fatal theater shooting in Lafayette, Louisiana is cause for concern.

"It makes me feel like I need to watch my back more," said Araynah Dover, as she entered the Regal Cinema at the Walden Galleria in Cheektowaga.

Cynthia Faison Goyner said "I'm concerned because the world is changing, period!"

Cheektowaga Police have trained to confront an active shooter. There was a major drill at the Galleria last year.

"You hope a tragedy like this never comes to your community," said Cheektowaga Police Chief David Zack. "But you hope, if it does, that you've done enough training and preparation in advance. That's what we've tried to do out here."

When blockbuster movies come to town, especially those that attract a younger crowd, Cheektowaga police will work with inner city groups whose leaders will go inside the theaters undercover and look for anything suspicious.

They have established a close relationship with officers, and will immediately report strange or disruptive behavior.

Dwayne Ferguson, President of the MADD Dad's organization, said he will talk to patrons who are acting-out. Sometimes book bags will be checked to make sure no one is bringing weapons into the theater.

"If they see something going on they'll shoot us a text," said Cheektowaga Police Officer Emil DeVincentis. "We're in the theater within seconds."

Leonard Lane, President of the group called F.A.T.H.E.R.S, said "They move very quickly because they work right with us. They are right by our side all the time."

The hope is that movie-goers, and all who seek to enjoy themselves in public entertainment venues, will not feel that they have to be looking over their shoulder.

"It's sad obviously what happens, with shootings and stuff," said Regal Galleria movie-goer Luke Hannon. "But you can only control what you can control."

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It really doesn't matter if it's a no smoking zone gun free zone sign doesn't make any

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