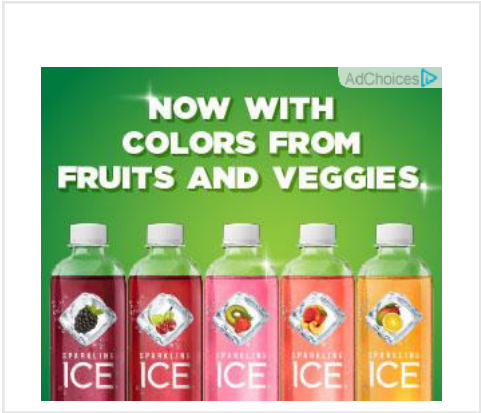


Cheektowaga officer recounts saving toddler

Police found a 3-year-old girl Tuesday night in a hot car, with her mother, who was unresponsive and suspected of being under the influence of heroin.

CHEEKTOWAGA, NY - A Cheektowaga police officer just so happened to be in the right place at the right time – in saving a toddler who was in a hot car, as that child's mom was allegedly passed out on drugs.

"I've been on countless overdose calls over the last couple of years but nothing to this degree," said Cheektowaga police officer Chris Wierzbowski, who was on routine patrol Tuesday night.



On his mind was his next call of a missing person.

He just so happened went through the intersection at Genesee Street and Harlem Road in Cheektowaga. But, as Wierzbowski was going through the intersection he says he saw a suspicious vehicle in the corner of this parking lot that was parked and it had the headlights on and the left turn signal going.

He says he approached the car.

"All of a sudden this little kid jumps from the floorboard of the vehicle on the passenger seat," Wierzbowski said.

Wierzbowski says he found the girl's mother, 28-year-old Jade Nikel of Cheektowaga, in the driver's seat slumped over, with a needle in her arm, unresponsive.

Because the doors were locked and the windows were up, Wierzbowski's only option was to grab out patrol car a tool police use to break windows.

"Once I broke the window I felt this big rush of hot muggy air coming from the vehicle," Wierzbowski said. "just as I was getting ready to give this lady a dose of naran she finally came to and woke up."

Nikel was arrested on charges that include reckless endangerment and possession of a controlled substance. Police say her daughter had to be treated at the scene for dehydration and was left in the care of her grandmother.

"The best way I can describe was it looked like she literally just got out of a swimming pool," Wierzbowski said.

The right place at the right time. We can only imagine what could've happened if Officer Wierzbowski wasn't there to begin with.

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