

Lending a helping hand

By Gordon Jackson, The Brunswick News - 9/29/2014



Chris Carswell shows the contents of the police K-9 kits he donates to police departments. (Bobby Haven/The Brunswick News)

Chris Carswell is always looking for ways to stay busy so he won't have time to dwell on his own struggles. And he believes one person can make a difference.

Chris, 15, of Brunswick, has been in and out of hospitals much of his life after complications from what should have been routine tonsil and adenoid surgery.

Since then, he has had a stroke, started having seizures in 2007, lost vision in one eye and faces more surgery in January.

Cardiologists, neurologists, genetics specialists, orthopedists, ophthalmologists and pediatricians are a regular part of his medical treatment.

"My childhood has been and continues to be governed by medical challenges," he said.

But those challenges failed to stop him from helping out when he can.

He recently helped the Camden County Sheriff's Office get eight first-aid kits specifically designed for its K-9s and bloodhounds. He also donated one to the Glynn County Sheriff's Office.

The kits include peroxide to treat poisoning, eye wash, gauze and materials to treat gun shot wounds and other medications.

"I wanted to have a distraction from my medical problems," he said.

Capt. William Terrell, a Camden sheriff's spokesman, said he and other deputies appreciate Chris' support.

"We've got an amazing relationship with this young man," he said.

Chris said his support for local law enforcement has been therapeutic.

"It helps keep my mind off my health problems," he said.

Chris said his upcoming surgery could keep him hospitalized for up to three months.

His website, 1Boy4Change, challenges other youths to get involved in their community.

"Unfortunately, the world is run by adults, and most adults have stopped believing that they can do anything to change the world," he said. "That's why it's time for kids to speak up. Kids aren't afraid to think about how to make life in our world better and kids still believe that they can make a difference."

Dogs have received lots of support recently in Camden County. Earlier this month, a Girl Scout raised funds to donate respirators specifically designed for dogs. The kits include masks of different sizes to help revive dogs suffering from smoke inhalation.

Chris said the first aid kits are not complicated and should be easy to use.

"It's pretty much self explanatory," he said.