



Handle With Care St. Louis LAW ENFORCEMENT

Trauma in children turns off the learning switch and turns on risky behavior. Kids at risk tend to skip school, use drugs, become violent, commit crimes, and end up meeting law enforcement.

HANDLE WITH CARE

Handle With Care (HWC) is a program designed to enhance communication between law enforcement, community mental health services and supports, and schools regarding children's exposure to traumatic events. HWC is aimed at ensuring that children who are exposed to crime, violence, and abuse receive appropriate interventions so they can succeed in school to the best of their ability.

Law Enforcement Plays a Crucial Role In the HWC Program

If law enforcement is at the scene and children are present, these children are at risk of entering our systems. Unless this child receives a mandated report, they are never identified or receive services.

These children often come to school the day after the event, traumatized. Research shows that trauma can undermine a child's ability to learn, form relationships, and function appropriately in the classroom.



When to send a Handle with Care notice:

*Anytime a child is
present on a call!*

- Arrest of household member
- Search warrant served in residence
- Drug/alcohol overdose of a family member
- Death/suicide of family member
- Incident of domestic violence
- Physical/sexual abuse
- Community violence
- Forced displacement from residence
- House fires



It's EASY to Make a Difference!

When law enforcement encounters children at the scene, they will collect the following information for each child:



- 1 CHILD'S FULL NAME
- 2 SCHOOL THEY ATTEND
- 3 CHILD'S DATE OF BIRTH

Send this information to the HWC school contact before the start of the next school day. School staff will then "handle the child with care" and provide supports to address the trauma so the child can learn. Mental health services will also be available for those children who need further services.



For more information on Handle With Care and Law Enforcement protocol view the video at: www.handlewithcaresstl.org