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1789

HANDLE WITH CARE PROGRAM
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PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures regarding the department’s Handle With Care program.

POLICY: It is the policy of the Albany Police Department to refer school-aged children who have been exposed to a traumatic event to the school district for trauma-informed support.

DEFINITIONS: **Child** – A child means any school-aged person under the age of eighteen (18) and over the age of five (5), or as otherwise defined by State law; whether or not he/she is present at the scene of a traumatic event (as used herein, “child” refers to both an individual child and multiple children).

Parent – A parent means any adult who is legally responsible for the well-being, supervision, and care of a child. In most cases, this individual is a biological or adoptive parent, or guardian.

School District – School district means the City School District of Albany which serves nearly 9,700 students in 18 schools: twelve elementary schools, three middle schools, an alternative-education program for middle- and high-school students, the Albany International Center serving refugee and immigrant students in grades 6-12, and Albany High School, a comprehensive high school with a career and technical center.

School District Staff – School district staff means the more than 1,600 City School District of Albany faculty and staff that strive to provide an academically challenging, safe and welcoming experience for all students.

Individual Trauma – Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and physical, mental, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

Traumatic Event – Traumatic event means any experience that is emotionally painful or distressful, which often results in lasting mental and physical effects. A traumatic event or experience can impact the child’s ability to perform in school.

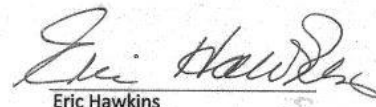
I. BACKGROUND:

- A.** The Handle With Care program was developed by the West Virginia Center for Children’s Justice to prevent children’s exposure to trauma, mitigate negative affects experienced by children’s exposure to trauma, and to increase knowledge and awareness of this issue.
- B.** The Handle With Care program promotes safe and supportive homes, schools and communities that protect children.
- C.** The Handle With Care program supports children exposed to trauma and violence through improved communication and collaboration between law enforcement and schools. The ultimate goal of the Handle With Care program is to help students to succeed in school.
- D.** The Handle With Care program provides the school district with a notification when a child has been identified at the scene of a traumatic event. Events include, but are not limited to:
 - 1.** Domestic violence situations;
 - 2.** Motor vehicle accidents;
 - 3.** Shootings;
 - 4.** Witnessing a violent offense;
 - 5.** Police action and enforcement; or
 - 6.** Any event that may be perceived as traumatic.
- E.** Each school-day morning, an email will be sent to the Albany City School District Pupil Personnel Office with the names and dates of births of any children present for a police interaction, as outlined in the below procedures.
- F.** Pupil Personnel will then disseminate the Handle With Care notice to the appropriate person at each school building.

II. PROCEDURES:

- A.** Officers will handle all calls for service in accordance with current guidelines as outlined in the department’s General Orders.
 - 1.** Officers shall note whether school-aged children (ages 5 to 18) are present during any call in which there is a possibility that the child was exposed to a traumatic event.
 - a.** It shall be noted, that the notation will consist of documenting the school-aged child’s pedigree information, which shall be listed as VI, WI, PI, etc. on the following departmental forms. No additional notation is needed.

2. Documentation will be made utilizing existing departmental forms. Appropriate departmental forms include:
 - a. New York State Domestic Incident Report (DIR);
 - b. New York State Incident Report (SIR);
 - c. Albany Police Arrest Record;
 - d. Contact Cards;
 - e. New York State Suspected Child Abuse or Maltreatment Report; or
 - f. Any other relevant reporting form.
- B. At the end of the shift, supervisors will scan and email copies of all DIRs where a school-aged child is documented, as well as all juvenile contact cards to the ICU supervisor.
- C. In addition, all other departmental reports/forms will be reviewed on a daily basis (Monday-Friday) by ICU personnel to capture any other school-aged children listed within said reports.
- D. Each school-day morning, the ICU supervisor will compile and forward a list of names to a designee within the Albany City School District Pupil Personnel Office.
 1. The Albany City School District Pupil Personnel Office will be responsible for disseminating the Handle With Care notice to the appropriate person at each school building, in accordance with Albany City School District policies and procedures.



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