



Handle With Care NC

cinc

Community
Impact
North Carolina

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Program Requirements (All templates will be included in the Appendix)

Participants will adhere to the fidelity of the infrastructure provided in the implementation phase of Handle With Care NC (HWCNC). Additions or variations will be introduced after the program is installed and will not be identified as HWCNC.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

- Minimum key stakeholder representation: School, Child Care Agency, Law Enforcement, Mental Health Provider. Teams are encouraged to include other key stakeholders i.e., child protective services workers, victim advocacy programs, community programs, parent organizations, etc.
- Commitments from local leaders (county school superintendent, principal, chief, sheriff, mental health provider)
- Team Leaders: school, law enforcement and mental health providers must designate a person who will serve as the Team Leader for their discipline. The Team Leader will act as a liaison between key disciplines.

TRAINING:

- Law enforcement supervisors, teachers and staff, and mental health partners will jointly attend a one-hour presentation providing an overview of the impact of trauma on children, the impact of trauma on learning, key elements of HWC NC, and strategies for successful implementation.
- School personnel will conduct a book study or other strategic planning session to identify and assess issues impacting their students and specific individual, classroom and school wide interventions.
- Law enforcement supervisors must provide training to officers on department policy to identify, document and report children encountered on the scene of calls. Officers must be familiar with appropriate on-scene response when children are present to ensure the impact of trauma is minimized.
- Mental health providers are strongly urged to be trained and certified in Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

FORMS

- Key stakeholders must develop protocols and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) utilizing examples of existing agreements and protocols developed by the West Virginia Children Exposed to Violence Initiative
- Schools and other school personnel must utilize required forms (HWC form, if additional mental health services are required, there will be an informed consent needed. student handbook notification, brochures, etc.)
- Template forms are adaptable to include your coalition's information; however, you will not remove any logos or recognition of developers/presenters.

ON-SITE COUNSELING

- School commitment to provide space at school for counseling.

COLLABORATION

- Partners should be able to routinely assess gaps/barriers in the program and needed improvements.
- Law enforcement will enhance and nurture positive relationships with students by routinely visiting, eating lunch and interacting with students in a non-crisis situation.

DRAFT

Henderson County NC is among the first counties in North Carolina to implement Handle With Care NC in partnership with Community Impact NC. Their trauma informed community and collaborative nature give them a solid foundation for this program. They will serve as a model example of what this program can mean to one's community.

“Handle with Care further emphasizes the strength of our community to protect our youth. We are proud to partner with CINC as well as our schools and law enforcement to implement this vital resource.” Julie Huneycutt, Executive Director, Hope Coalition

“Making a difference is the number one reason we wear the badge. We are proud to be a partner in “Handle With Care” where we will not only be able to make a difference, but where we can make a difference in lives of the most important people in Henderson County, OUR CHILDREN!! All children deserve the opportunity to be successful and this program can help them along that path.” Sheriff Lowell Griffin

“Educators looking to wrap support all of the way around our students know that safer students are more successful students. Programs like Handle With Care allow school counselors, school social workers, teachers, and other school staff to more quickly respond when something in a young person's environment has the potential to adversely affect the student's social or emotional well-being - and their ability to learn.” Matt Gruebmeier, Director of Student Services, Henderson County Public Schools



Summary:

Handle With Care (HWC NC) NC will be implemented in conjunction with North Carolina coalitions. This initiative allows for early intervention to address Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) while providing protective factors. HWC NC is a simple model that allows law enforcement to quickly inform a child's school if he/she has been in the home during a domestic dispute, warrant execution, or unintentional drug poisoning. This allows the child's teacher and additional school staff to be informed of the child's trauma, without specific detail. Any incident requiring the Department of Social Services or Child Protective Services DSS or CPS will not require a HWC NC notice to the school. School staff can then best respond to and support the child if concerning behaviors are expressed.

HWC West Virginia Model

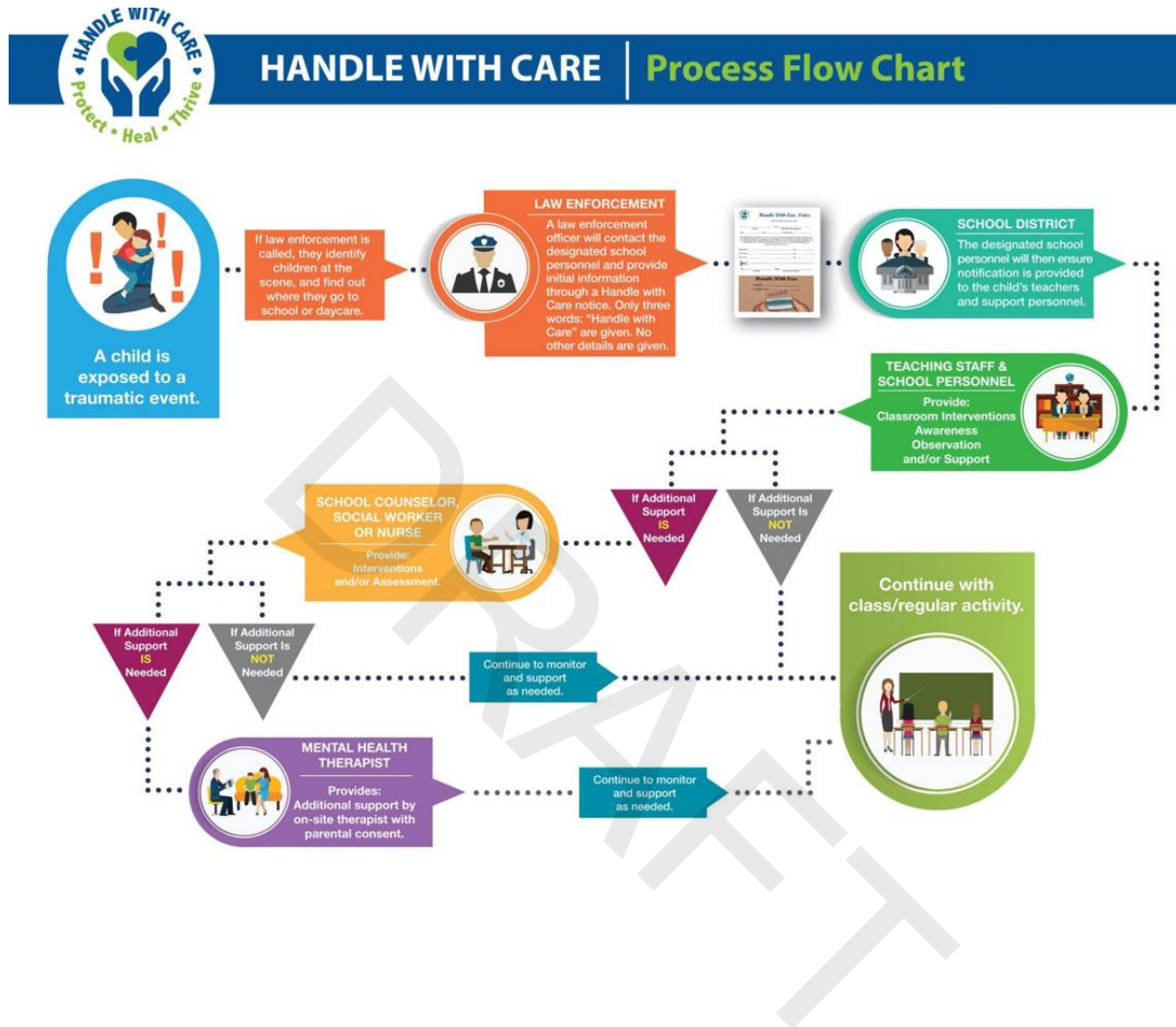
<http://www.handlewithcarewv.org/>

HWC NC will be modeled after the West Virginia Defending Childhood Initiative known as Handle With Care. "The goal of the Initiative is to prevent children's exposure to trauma and violence, mitigate negative effects experienced by children's exposure to trauma, and to increase knowledge and awareness of this issue" the HWC Model states "if a law enforcement officer encounters a child during a call, that child's name and three words, **HANDLE WITH CARE**, are forwarded to the school/childcare agency before the school bell rings the next day. The school implements individual, class and whole school trauma-sensitive curricula so that traumatized children are "Handled With Care". If a child needs more intervention, on-site trauma-focused mental healthcare is available at the school" (WV Center for Children's Justice, n.d.). The goal is to offer a child's school and caregivers notification that there has been a traumatic event. The initiative was launched by the United States Attorney's Office in Drug Market Intervention efforts. Communication between Law Enforcement and the school system is simple, a Handle with Care notice with no other details.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Components of this program were developed with guidance and technical assistance from the Massachusetts Advocates for Children: Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative, in collaboration with Harvard Law School and the Task Force on Children Affected by Domestic Violence. Special thanks to Joe Ristuccia, Ed.M., co-author of *Helping Traumatized Children Learn*, Edward Jacobs with the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office in Brockton, MA, and Huntington, WV community activist and volunteer Leon White.

Flow Chart



Training Video

<https://vimeo.com/380526937>

Suggested Coalition Action Plan

1. Share information with coalition members of trauma informed communities. Use information from this packet and videos to share the concept.
2. Determine the key sectors who need to be involved with this initiative to make it a sustainable strategy. Use coalition, community, and individual meetings to discuss and assess the need and interest in HWC NC.
3. Meet with stakeholders to plan the policy which will work for their community. If there is not capacity to implement, determine what resources are needed to develop needed capacity. If there is adequate capacity, proceed with policy development. The stakeholder participation is mandatory and a Memorandum of Understanding should be signed. Stakeholder participation is mandatory and will be expressed in the form of a MOU.
4. Law Enforcement will evaluate their current process and how HWC NC notices could most easily be incorporated. Once their process is complete, school administrators will determine how they will best field the mandatory notices.
5. A packet with multimedia and face to face instruction will be used to train law enforcement, school faculty and staff, and mental healthcare professionals to implement HWC NC. All stakeholders will have a mandatory meeting with the 6.5 minute training video and policies previously determined by leaders.
6. An evaluation process will be determined and recorded by the parties interested in assessing the effectiveness of HWC NC.

Suggested metrics could include:

- a. The number of notices reported to dispatch
 - b. The number of notices delivered to school systems
 - c. The number of interventions
 - d. The number of classroom disruptions
 - e. Number of positive interactions with law enforcement and students in the school setting
2. Stakeholders will schedule meetings the first year to determine effectiveness, review data, and evaluate effectiveness. Continuation will be determined after one year.
(This action plan should be adapted to the specific needs of the community)

FAQ

1. What is childhood 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 life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. (SAMHSA, 2014, p. 6)

2. How to determine if children in your community face trauma?

A trauma-informed child and family service system is one in which all parties involved recognize and respond to the impact of traumatic stress on those who have contact with the system including children, caregivers, and service providers. Programs and agencies within such a system infuse and sustain trauma awareness, knowledge, and skills into their organizational cultures, practices, and policies. They act in collaboration with all those who are involved with the child, using the best **available** science, to maximize physical and psychological safety, facilitate the recovery of the child and family, and support their ability to thrive” (Perry & Jackson, 2018).

3. Is your community Trauma Informed?

It is not enough to know trauma theory for a person or organization to be trauma-informed. A trauma-informed program, organization or system realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization. (SAMHSA, 2014, p. 14).

A trauma informed community is one which has intentionally trained many sectors and stakeholders in the foundation of trauma and its impact on development and learning. This is cross sectional and collaboration is needed for those impacted by trauma to have the support needed to address their traumatic experiences while providing support for the development of resilience.

4. Why should we be concerned about childhood trauma in prevention?

Protective measures need to be put into place to assist children in developing resilience. Without these skills, studies have shown that if experiencing four or more **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)** would increase the likelihood of “significantly increased risk of chronic disease such as cancer, heart disease, and diabetes as well as mental illness and health risk behaviors” (CDC, 2019)

5. What is Handle with Care?

It is a community collaborative effort between law enforcement and the school system as a way to share if a child has been exposed to a traumatic experience after law enforcement was called to a scene where the child is (HWC WV).

6. How did it start?

HWC began with the state police and Department of Justice in West Virginia. The pilot was in Charleston, WV in 2014.

7. Why could HWCNC be beneficial to students?

It is beneficial because proactive attention may reduce or avoid re-traumatization. People exposed to trauma are at increased risk of re-exposure. This can be influenced by their adaptations to the initial trauma, placing them in more high-risk situations. However, it can also be due to the way systems respond after a trauma. Overt and covert operations practices and power differentials can exacerbate already precarious (teacher- student) relationships. Sometimes we cannot avoid a potentially re-traumatizing experience such as a school discipline, medical examination or inpatient treatment, police interview or court appearance. We can work to minimize or eliminate the negative implications of these and other experiences. (Perry & Jackson, 2018, Table 0.3).

8. How can we implement HWC NC in our community?

There are important factors needed when implementing HWC NC. A community will need to be trauma informed to be equipped to meet the needs of the children involved. To assess the capacity for HWC NC, please contact Community Impact NC to explore options for introduction of this concept in your community.

9. Will law enforcement and teachers be equipped to treat children who have been exposed to trauma?

No. In fact, if trauma-informed schools are confused with trauma-specific practice too much will be asked of it. This can set up services and workers aiming to be trauma-informed to fail, or potentially do harm. Not every child or adult is ready for psychotherapy, let alone tackling trauma memories. We need to be careful we are not implying that every worker is a therapist or that every child who has suffered trauma needs therapy. They are likely, however, to benefit from a therapeutic, trauma-informed response. Someone once asked if teaching trauma-informed school meant training everyone to talk to children about their trauma. It doesn't! Indeed, that could lead to the child being triggered or re-traumatized every time a worker felt pressure to ask certain questions. Desensitizing a child to the effects of the trauma and trauma practices can be very detrimental to that child (Walsh & Benjamin, 2020) (Perry & Jackson, 2018).

10. What is the role of Mental Healthcare Providers and counselors?

A trauma-informed mental healthcare provider and counselors should be aware of the prevalence of both developmental adversity and traumatic experiences that can impact the lives of anyone in the school system (Walsh & Benjamin, 2020).

11. Is there a need for HIPPA or informed consent for family protection?

DRAFT_WORKING TO SOLIDIFY NC SPECIFIC LAW AS IT IS ASSOCIATES TO REPORTING.

12. Where has HWC been implemented?

It began in West Virginia. Since that time, it has been expanded into other states. Massachusetts, Ohio, and New Jersey have recently implemented statewide.

13. What is the cost for HWC NC implementation?

There is not a cost for HWC; however, notices and advertisements may have a printing and media cost associated. The program and support have no cost to the community coalition.

14. How can a community become more Trauma Informed?

Trauma informed training can be provided according to your location. One resource for developing a trauma informed community is the Center for Child & Family Health. Reaching out to organizations with therapist who are Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy certified learning collaboratives. These may be found with your local mental health providers or practices. You may also reach out to CINC at the contact listed below to be directed to other resources that may be available to you and your community.

Or you may research:

man<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/why/><https://traumasensitiveschools.org/why/>
and <https://mtss4success.org/resource/trauma-sensitive-schools-training-package>

15. What is Community Impact NC’s contact information to learn more about HWC NC?



References

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We can support kids exposed to trauma.



Trauma is not everywhere but it can occur at any time and anywhere!

Handle With Care NC program provides a process for law enforcement to notify schools if they encounter a child at a traumatic scene. Once notified, schools and mental healthcare leaders can provide immediate trauma informed support.

<p>The Issue:</p>	<p>Childhood trauma or Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), occurs when kids experience stressful events.</p>	<p>1 in 4 children in school have experiences a traumatic event(Maynard et al., 2019).</p>	<p>These children still have to go to class, carrying the burden of stress/trauma that can interfere with their education experience. Many times, their teachers & school staff aren't even aware of the child's traumatic experiences.</p>
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<p>Solution Step 1</p>	<p>Law enforcement encounter children at a scene, they ask the guardian if the child is in school in the district and if they would like to share a HWC NC notice with the school. Guardians can elect to share the child's name, age, and school with the officer.</p>
<p>Solution Step 2</p>	<p>Officers share a notice, with no specific details of the trauma, with the trauma informed school system.</p>
<p>Solution Step 3</p>	<p>Schools provide trauma sensitive support if it is required. Teachers are trauma informed, school system uses their triage process in the event the child needs additional support.</p>

Contact Community Impact NC at impactcarolina.org for support in implementing HWCNC in your trauma informed community. We can guide communities to unite law enforcement, schools, mental healthcare, and other stake holders to begin introduction of the HWCNC program modeled after HWC WV launched in 2013.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:
Components of this program were developed with guidance and technical assistance from the Massachusetts Advocates for Children: Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative, in collaboration with Harvard Law School and the Task Force on Children Affected by Domestic Violence. Special thanks to Joe Ristuccia, Ed.M., co-author of *Helping Traumatized Children Learn*, Edward Jacobs with the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office in Brockton, MA, and Huntington, WV community activist and volunteer Leon White.



HANDLE WITH CARE

Process Flow Chart

A child is exposed to a traumatic event.

If law enforcement is called, they identify children at the scene, and find out where they go to school or daycare.



LAW ENFORCEMENT
A law enforcement officer will contact the designated school personnel and provide initial information through a Handle with Care notice. Only three words: "Handle with Care" are given. No other details are given.



SCHOOL DISTRICT
The designated school personnel will then ensure notification is provided to the child's teachers and support personnel.

TEACHING STAFF & SCHOOL PERSONNEL
Provide:
Classroom Interventions
Awareness
Observation
and/or Support

SCHOOL COUNSELOR, SOCIAL WORKER OR NURSE
Provide:
Interventions
and/or Assessment.

If Additional Support **IS** Needed

If Additional Support Is **NOT** Needed

If Additional Support **IS** Needed

If Additional Support Is **NOT** Needed

Continue to monitor and support as needed.

MENTAL HEALTH THERAPIST
Provides:
Additional support by on-site therapist with parental consent.

Continue to monitor and support as needed.

Continue with class/regular activity.

HWC NC Checklist

Step One: Bring stakeholders together.

HWC NC requires collaboration with many stakeholders in the community. Not only will the multi collaboration ensure the start of a successful relationship, but it will also improve sustainability.

Step Two: Schedule a meeting to share the HWC NC concept with stakeholders.

_____ Schedule a meeting and location conducive to all stakeholders
This meeting will require room for 15 participants and audio or video capability
_____ Online or phone participation may be provided

Step Three: Identify stakeholders and extend the invitation

_____ Send the invitation template provided in the Appendix to invite participants.
Update with personal information, date, time, and location of meeting

_____ Send to all stakeholders. Partnership with your local coalition will be invaluable in building this collaboration. This is an intentional invitation. At large meetings will be conducted after stakeholder information meeting

(Possible Recipients)

- Schools- District superintendent, principal or vice-principals from each school, school nurses, counselors, attendance directors, and school social workers.
- Law Enforcement- Sheriff, state police representative, police chief or representative, dispatch representative, prosecuting attorney, law enforcement attorney, fire department, EMS, magistrate or probation representative.
- Child Protective Services, Department of Social Services representatives, CSM
- Child Care Services- Head Start representatives, Before/ after school directors, childcare agencies.
- Other stakeholders in the community- Commissioners, alderman, or other local government, judges, family court judges, family resource networks, civic organizations, victim advocacy organizations, community well-being organizations, media representatives, college or universities with education, child development, social work, and public health.
- Parent or student representatives
- Pediatric representative
- Mental Health representatives

Step Four: Meeting Agenda (Use provided sign-in sheet and have a recorder for meetings)

- Introduction of speakers (1-7 min)
- Hand out one pager, flow chart, and contact information (3 min)
- Power Point included in Appendix (30 min)
- Q & A
- Announce next steps and meeting information
- Remind of contact information for additional information

Material Provided:

- One Pager
- Flowchart
- Police Steps
- Police MOU
- School Triage Steps
- School MOU
- Notification Form
- News Release
- Social Media Release

Police Training: Policy will be determined and implemented according to individual precinct and department needs. This policy will require HWC NC leader, department and precinct representative, and dispatch. After policy is in place, collaboration with school systems for notice delivery method will be determined.

Law Enforcement will need to educate all officers participating in HWC NC to attend a 6.5 Roll Call meeting to become acquainted with the program and the process they will follow to deliver notices.

Additional training options could be providing officers on-scene responses when children are present. The University of Texas Health at San Antonio Teen Health created free trauma-informed learning modules for continuing education if needed.

- Trauma-informed Approach, Part I
 - <https://uthscsa.edu/learning-modules/teen-health/trauma/course-1/>
 - Password: UTteenhealth
- Trauma-informed Approach, Part II (covers mandatory reporting)
 - <https://uthscsa.edu/learning-modules/teen-health/trauma/course-2/>
 - Password: UTteenhealth

Periodic reviews of notices can ensure collection and delivery. Law Enforcement should have the coalition share provided local resources.

- Additional training, Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Training Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ir2xA6XniSA>

School Training: A community will need to have a foundational trauma-informed community and school to implement HWC NC. This foundation will provide the training

and strategic planning needed when adopting this concept. Trauma-informed schools will have received training, ability to assess issues impacting students, classroom, and school-wide trauma-sensitive interventions.

Free Resources from West Virginia Center for Children's Justice, Helping Traumatized Children Learn Volumes 1 & 2

- The West Virginia Center for Children's Justice recommends downloading a free copy of Helping Traumatized Children Learn Volumes 1&2 through the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative at link: <https://traumasensitiveschools.org/about-tlpi/> of Massachusetts Advocates for Children in collaboration with Harvard Law School.
 - o Helping Traumatized Children Learn: Vol 1
<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/tlpi-publications/download-a-free-copy-of-helping-traumatized-children-learn/>
 - o Helping Traumatized Children Learn: Vol 1
<http://www.handlewithcarewv.org/book-study/mobile/index.html>
 - o Helping Traumatized Children Learn: Vol 2
<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/tlpi-publications/download-a-free-copy-of-a-guide-to-creating-trauma-sensitive-schools/>
 - o Helping Traumatized Children Learn: Vol 2
<http://www.handlewithcarewv.org/docs/Book%20Study%20Teal%20Book%20TLPI%20eds%20.pdf>

Other resources may be provided upon request.

Mental Health Training: Trauma informed schools will have mental health support. There should be a designated location for counselors. They should also have an informed consent policy with the school and parents. It would be especially beneficial to have counselors certified as Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapist (TF-CBT).

The mental health component of Handle With Care is dependent on the school nurses, administration, counselors, and school board's recommendations as NC is not an expanded Medicaid state. Care will need to be provided even though there may not be sufficient funds for the family and child to participate. The lack of this resource being in place could re-traumatize the child. This is a crucial component for the community to provide to the children affected.

Learn more about TF-CBT here: <https://fcbt.org/frequently-asked-questions/>

Appendix D: Email For Group Meeting

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

Dear [Name],

Children may be exposed to traumatic events. This can often go unnoticed by those closest to the child. Many events are beyond our ability to control. We have an opportunity to adapt a concept in our community to support our students by starting a "Handle With Care North Carolina" program. I am inviting you to attend a stakeholder meeting, in an effort to start a Handle with Care NC program in our area.

Handle With Care enables police, when called to a scene, to notify schools if they encounter a child. This allows the school to observe and provide additional support right away if the child presents with symptoms associated with trauma. Police send no details and only the three words, "Handle With Care" with name, age, and school to the schools where the appropriate personnel are notified and then aware if additional care is needed.

You may find additional information from the developer at: <http://www.handlewithcarewv.org/>

Let us know if you would like to extend an invitation to someone else whom you feel could impact this initiative. Together, we can explore this opportunity to work together for the benefit of the children in our community. I look forward to seeing you there.

Thank you,

[Your Name, Title, Contact Information]

[Your logo]

Appendix E: Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[DATE]

Contact: [CONTACT NAME, PHONE, EMAIL]

[CITY, TOWN, COUNTY, MUNICIPALITY] Law Enforcement, School, and Mental Health Leaders Launch “Handle With Care North Carolina” Program to Help Children Who Suffer from Violence and Trauma

([YOUR CITY/COUNTY], [DATE] – [YOUR ORGANIZATION] is announcing a collaboration with [SCHOOL SYSTEM, LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND/OR MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERS] to introduce “Handle With Care North Carolina” to support children facing trauma.

Handle With Care North Carolina enables law enforcement to notify schools if they encounter a child at a traumatic scene, so schools and mental healthcare leaders can provide immediate trauma-sensitive support.

Recently, law enforcement, schools, and mental health leaders and other key stakeholders met to learn about and discuss the program. Since then, they have developed policy to provide a notification system to implement Handle With Care North Carolina. This is a simple notification with no details to inform the proper support that a child may have experienced a traumatic event at a scene. It in no way provides details or confers information to anyone but the appropriate school members so that, if needed, the child may get additional support at school.

[QUOTE FROM SCHOOL OR Law Enforcement LEADERS]

[i.e. “We are excited to work with such great partners to introduce Handle With Care North Carolina. It is every law enforcement officer’s wish that children get all the support possible to live happier and healthier lives while achieving at their highest levels.”]

Handle With Care North Carolina has three main components:

- [LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES] will send a notification to [SCHOOL] when they encounter a child at a traumatic scene. Police don’t send incident details to the schools, just the three words, “Handle With Care!”
- [SCHOOLS] will distribute the notification to the appropriate teacher or support personnel. They will monitor the child’s behavior. If there is no distress displayed, the day will progress as normal. If, however, there is distress, they will receive trauma-sensitive support. This may include extra time to rest, reteaching an assignment, providing missing materials, extension of book returns, or just an extra pat on the back. Rather than punitive treatment, the child might be allowed to go to the school nurse or counselor to share what they are feeling. It allows the child to know they aren’t alone.
- If needed, the counselor may refer the child to a [MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER], who will coordinate after informed consent with the parents/caregivers to provide additional support.

This effort is supported by [COALITION NAME]. To get involved or learn more, you may contact your coalition at [CONTACT INFORMATION] or Community Impact North Carolina at impactcarolina.org

—
Share on Twitter, local radio, newspaper, Instagram, Facebook, and local news

Social Media: Local law enforcement, schools, and mental health leaders are launching Handle With Care North Carolina initiative to provide a trauma-sensitive safety net for children facing trauma.

DRAFT

Appendix F: Handle With Care Notice

Handle With Care NC

From Law Enforcement to the School

To: _____ From: _____
[SCHOOL] [LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY]

Date: _____ Time: _____ Incident Date: _____

The child/children referenced below was on the scene of a police action in the last 24 hours and may exhibit academic, emotional, and/or behavioral problems because of exposure to a traumatic event. Please handle him/her with care. For more information go to:

www.handlewithcarewv.org

www.impactcarolina.org

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____ School: _____

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____ School: _____

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____ School: _____

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____ School: _____



To: _____ From: _____
(Teacher) (Principal/Counselor)



**Memorandum of Understanding
Between**

_____ **County School System
and**

_____ **Police Department, _____ County Sheriff's Department,
And _____ State Police Department,**

Notification of Exposure to Trauma

I. PURPOSE

The Larger Project. To further implement an initiative aimed at addressing children's exposure to violence and trauma. Childhood exposure to violence and trauma, without the rights support, is often associated with increased risk of poor outcomes in emotional, behavioral and physical health over the life span. Children exposed to violence and trauma are also at a higher risk of poor school related outcomes and are more likely to enter the criminal justice system later in life, which can contribute to generational cycles of violence and system involvement. This project directly addresses the goal of mitigating these negative impacts of exposure to trauma when it does occur, by providing support and on-site, trauma focused interventions by school staff and/or mental health providers, if necessary, to children identified by local law enforcement and school personnel.

Notification of Exposure to Trauma. Acknowledging the collaborative work already underway in the community around trauma and specifically around social and emotional health within the school system, this Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") will focus on notification to the school system by law enforcement when a child is exposed to trauma in the home or in the community to enable the child's school to handle the child with care upon his or her arrival at school the next school day following the incident. For the purpose of this MOU, the phrase "exposed to trauma" shall be construed broadly and by way of example and not by way of limitation, shall mean and include any event where a child is a victim or witness, experiences or is involved in, or is questioned relative to, any of the following: the abuse of a family member, loved one, or pet; abuse or neglect; child custody, visitation or support or other domestic relations controversy where there is law enforcement intervention; community violence; the commission of a crime; loss of a family member or friend; an overdose; the arrest of a family member; racism or any other form of discrimination; homelessness; mental illness and /or substance abuse by a parent or caregiver; hospitalization or family illness; incarceration of a parent or family member; sudden, unexpected or frequent changes in caregiver, school, program or home life; natural disasters; or similar acts or experiences. Should a law enforcement officer be uncertain as to whether or not to give notice to the school,

judgement should be exercised in favor of notification.

II. (_____) Police Department, (_____) County Sheriff's Office, (_____) State Police ("LE") Agree to:

- A) Send a notification to (_____) County School System identifying children that have been present for police interactions or otherwise exposed to violence or trauma in the community following the notification protocol as outlined below.
- B) Notification shall be given by sending an (method of sending) to (email, text, despatch) stating the child's name, approximate age, school attended if known, the approximate time of the event, and the acronym HWC.
- C) Notifications will contain no specific information about the incident in order to maintain privacy of the student and their family.
- D) Otherwise maintain the confidentiality of students and their families.

III. (_____) County School System (" _____ ") agrees to:

- A) Receive notifications, as described in section II A and B above from LE and disseminate them to the designated point persons within each school by forwarding to them the HWC e-mail notification from LE.
- B) Upon receipt of a Handle with Care notification identifying a child who has been exposed to trauma, the designated point persons within each school will then disseminate the notification to appropriate teachers, social workers, guidance counselors, and any other relevant staff.
- C) Provide identified students who are exhibiting behaviors that are not consistent with their normal manner a safe person and space where they can receive additional supports, such as postponing a test, accepting a missed assignment, or allowing the student to rest if he or she is having a hard time focusing or staying awake, but otherwise not addressing the child about the incident.
- D) Determine need for on-going counseling or other intervention if the student is not currently involved with mental health services.
- E) If necessary, the school may contact parents or guardians to obtain appropriate consents for on-going mental health services for the student.
- F) Provide education on trauma informed care to all school personnel, parents and guardians, as requested and/or as required by law.
- G) Maintain the confidentiality of student's information, including but not limited to academic records, health records, and mental health services. Notifications may be maintained for any purposes consistent with the purpose of this MOU, but shall not be part of any student's permanent record.

IV. TERMINATION, ADDITIONAL AGENCIES, AND LIABILITY:

- A) Any agency has the right to cancel this MOU with 30 days written notice to the other parties. Should any LE agency terminate this MOU, then the MOU shall remain in effect as to all other agencies.
- B) Additional agencies, whether or not a law enforcement agency, may become parties to this MOU with the agreement of “School”, which may be affected by the execution of an addendum to this MOU by such agency and “School”.
- C) Each party shall be responsible for the actions committed by that party and its agents. No party assumes any liability for any actions committed by any other party. However, each party to this Agreement agrees to cooperate fully with the other party in the defense of claims, pursuant to these provisions. This cooperation will include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - 1) Immediate notification to the other party of any accident or incident resulting in personal injury, damage or having the potential for liability;
 - 2) Immediate notification to the other party of any claim made against it alleging liability;
 - 3) Permit a party of this Agreement to conduct a parallel independent investigation of any incident, and/or
 - 4) Make personnel and records available for purposes of the investigation or defense of any claim and/or legal proceeding to the extent permitted by law.

This MOU shall remain in effect until terminated as provided herein.

Effective this _____ day of _____, 20____.

_____ **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

By: _____

_____ **SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT**

By: _____

_____ **STATE POLICE**

By: _____

_____ **COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

By: _____

HWC " _____ " County School System3 2021 Final Version

**Acknowledgement: Author Judge R. Michael Key, La Grange, Georgia*

DRAFT

**Memorandum of Understanding
Between
[____] School System and
[____] Mental Health Provider**

I. PURPOSE

To locally pilot an Initiative aimed at addressing children's exposure to violence and trauma. Childhood exposure to violence and trauma, without the right supports, is often associated with increased risk of poor outcomes in emotional, behavioral, and physical health over the life span. Children exposed to violence and trauma are also at a higher risk of poor school related outcomes and are more likely to enter the criminal justice system later in life, which can contribute to generational cycles of violence. This project directly addresses the goal of mitigating these negative impacts of exposure to trauma when it does occur, by *providing on-site, trauma focused interventions by qualified mental health providers, to children identified by local law enforcement and school personnel.*

II. SCHOOL STAFF AGREES TO:

- A) Make a referral to (Mental Health Provider) for on-site Trauma Focused intervention to children and their families that have been exposed to violence or trauma following the referral protocol as outlined below.
- B) Make a referral to (Mental Health Provider) for children and their families who would benefit from on-site mental health interventions following the referral protocol as outlined below.
- C) Provide (Mental Health Provider) access to relevant student records as needed and as authorized by the child's parent or guardian.
- D) Coordinate with (Mental Health Provider) to schedule therapy sessions at the least disruptive time for the student.
- E) Maintain the confidentiality of students' mental health services.
- F) Provide non-identifying, aggregate data, reports and documentation of this pilot project upon request.

III. (Mental Health Provider) AGREES TO:

- A) Provide on-site Trauma Focused interventions to children and their families who have been exposed to violence or trauma according to their available resources.
- B) Provide on-site mental health intervention to students and their families as identified by school personnel or self-referral.

- C) Coordinate with school personnel to schedule therapy sessions at the least disruptive time for the student.
- D) Participate in a meaningful way in any MDT, SAT, or other meeting, deemed necessary by school personnel, and as authorized by the child's parent or guardian.
- E) Provide psychological test results, treatment recommendations, accommodation recommendations and status updates to key school personnel as authorized by the child's parent or guardian.
- F) Provide psycho-education regarding trauma and its effects and other disorders of childhood to school personnel, parents and guardians, as requested.
- G) Maintain the confidentiality of student's academic records and mental health services.
- H) Provide non-identifying, aggregate data, reports and documentation of this pilot project upon request.

IV. REFERRAL PROCESS:

SCHOOL:

Upon receipt of a Handle with Care Form, identifying a child's exposure to violence or trauma, school personnel will...

- A) Provide an ongoing assessment of the child's need.
- B) Determine need for professional Trauma Focused or other intervention.
- C) Gain appropriate consents from the parent or guardian.
- D) Notify (Mental Health Provider) of referral via a Clinical Referral Request Form.

MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER:

Upon Receipt of Clinical Referral Request Form, (Mental Health Provider) will...

- A) Contact the Parent or Guardian to schedule initial intake assessment, within 48 hours of receipt.
- B) Coordinate with school personnel to identify the least disruptive time in the child's schedule for ongoing trauma focused and other intervention.
- C) Provide ongoing on-site trauma-focused and other interventions to identified child.
- D) Keep School personnel informed of status of service provision.



V. TERMINATION AND LIABILITY:

A) School has the right to cancel this MOU with 30 days written notice to (the Mental Health Provider).

B) (Mental Health Provider) has the right to cancel this MOU with 30 days written notice to the School.

C) Each party shall be responsible for its negligent acts or omissions and the negligent acts or omissions of its employees, sub-contractors, officers or directors to the extent allowed by law. Each party shall indemnify, defend and hold its truees, directors, officers, affiliates, employees, sub contractors and agents harmless from and against any and all claims, causes of action, penalties, fines and forfeitures (including without limitation, reasonable attorney's fees) imposed upon or asserted against the other party or any of its trustees, directors, officers, employees, sub-contractors or agents as a result of any action or inaction by each party in performing its obligation.

D) This MOU is valid from , _____ to _____.

Signed,

_____,
Clinical Director Date
Mental Health Provider

_____,
Principal Date

School

Police Procedure: Notification to Schools

Specific policy for notice delivery will be determined by the counties law enforcement.

When police identify a child, according to their predetermined criteria, while on the scene of a call, they collect the child's name, age, and school. This is added to a provided notice. They then send that confidential HWCNC Notification Form to the school district or childcare agency according to their delivery policy.

Possible delivery systems:



Notification Policy:

NOTHING ABOUT THE TRAUMATIC INCIDENT IS SHARED WITH THE SCHOOL AND GUARDIANS ARE IN CONTROL OF INFORMATION BEING SENT.

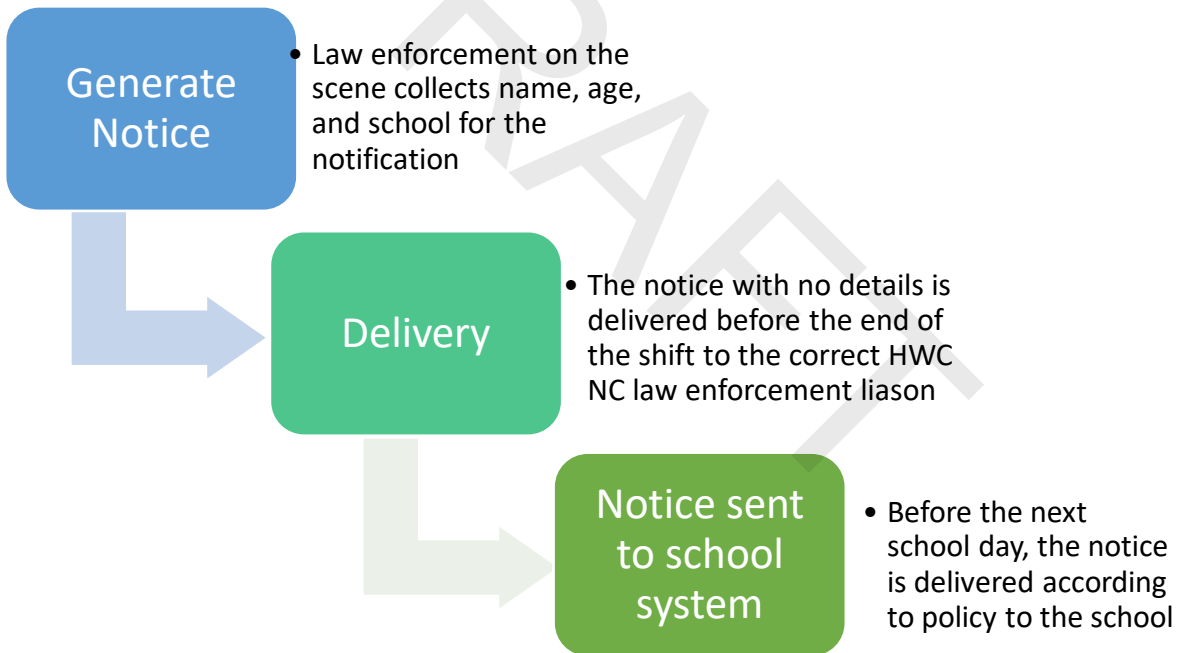
LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICY:

- ✓ Determine what situations allow for production of the notice
 - ❖ i.e. domestic violence, meth lab explosion, drug raid, shooting, etc.
 - ❖ If a child is present, cautiously address the child on their level to ask if they are okay. Ask for name, age, and school



- ❖ If Department of Social Services, or Child Protective Services are being contacted, no notice is necessary
- ❖ If a child is on the scene, even if they don't reside in the home, notices can be beneficial
- ❖ Clarification should be provided that this is not a child investigation in any way
- ✓ Generate the Notice according to policy and deliver it asap to the required system. Law enforcement liaisons will need to be identified to send the notices to the appointed school account.
 - ❖ Email (An independent email account could be created managed by the designated LE/ school liaison)
 - ❖ Dispatch
 - ❖ Text
- ✓ Have a central email established to keep a record of the notices for data collection. This information is confidential.

Example



Once the notice is delivered to the school contact, there is nothing left for law enforcement to do.

Some precincts and departments have adopted wellness and community building by visiting the school shortly after events to show the child normalcy. Participating in lunch or a visit to the classroom may be helpful with school coordination. The officer doesn't identify the child other than saying hello and chatting with them. There should never be acknowledgment of the incident which produced the notice. Additional community building may be provided if law enforcement is interested.

School Procedure: Notification of Relevant Staff

Specific policy for notice delivery will be determined by the school system leaders.

When police identify a child, according to their predetermined criteria, while on the scene of a call, they collect the child's name, age, and school. This is added to a provided notice. They then send that confidential HWCNC Notification Form to the school district or childcare agency according to their delivery policy.

Possible delivery systems:



Notification Policy:

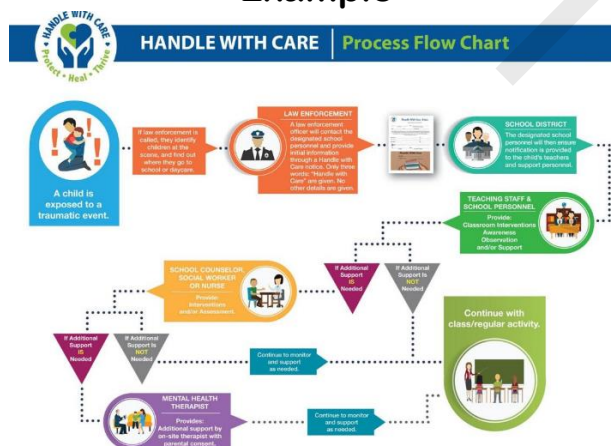
NOTHING ABOUT THE TRAUMATIC INCIDENT IS SHARED WITH THE SCHOOL AND GUARDIANS ARE IN CONTROL OF INFORMATION BEING SENT.

School System POLICY:

- ✓ Develop the delivery system
 - ❖ If email, create a HWC NC specific email and only share the account with approved liaisons
 - ❖ Keep law enforcement policy and contacts available in the original email for easy retrieval
 - ❖ Do not delete emails purposes of data collection (No information or details of the incident or about the child will be

- used. The only data will be used is community or notice delivery information)
- ✓ Notifications should be delivered to the appropriate people before class starts
 - ❖ Email (An independent email account could be created managed by the designated liaisons)
 - ❖ Physical note to the teacher
 - ❖ Text
 - ✓ Determine liaisons responsible for checking the designated unit for notices each morning before school starts.
 - ❖ This could be SROs, staff, director of school counselors, or director of school support, school nurses, or social worker
 - ❖ There should always be a backup liaison in the event someone is not available to check.
 - ❖ The liaison needs to have access to all schools participating in HWC NC and have contacts for each school
 - ❖ The notice is delivered to the child’s school liaison. Each school will need a designated person or persons to deliver the notices
 - ❖ The child’s name and Handle With Care is all that is delivered to the teacher
 - ❖ The teacher will do nothing but observe
 - ❖ If additional care is needed, protocol will be followed
 - ✓ Have a central email established to keep a record of the notices for data collection. This information is confidential.

Example



Some precincts and departments have adopted wellness and community building by visiting the school shortly after events to show the child normalcy. This depends on the schools ability to facilitate. Participating in lunch or a visit to the classroom may be helpful with school coordination. The officer doesn't identify the child other than saying hello and chatting with them. There should never be acknowledgment of the incident which produced the notice.