

**TITLE: HANDLE WITH CARE**

**Codified: 1405**  
**Effective: Immediately**  
**Amends:**  
**Revised: October 9, 2019**

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**I. PURPOSE**

A. The purpose of this policy is to explain the Handle with Care program and outline the process in which the program is to be used.

**II. POLICY**

A. It is the policy of the Bradenton Police Department and its employees to alert school officials whenever a child has been identified at the scene of a traumatic event, via the Handle with Care program. The program is intended to notify the school/day care facility that a student has been exposed to a potentially traumatic event in the last 24 hours and may exhibit academic and/or behavioral problems.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

A. **Handle with Care:** A county-wide trauma informed response to child maltreatment and children’s exposure to violence.

B. **Child:** Any child under the age of 18, who is currently enrolled in a school which falls in the 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court or a day care facility in Manatee County.

- C. **Traumatic Event:** A traumatic event can be anything that could detrimentally affect a child's psyche. Examples of a traumatic event would be the arrest of a family member, witnessing malicious wounding, being exposed to a death, etc.

#### IV. **PROCEDURE**

##### A. Reporting Officer

1. The primary officer on a call in which a child has been exposed to a traumatic event is responsible for assessing that child for a Handle with Care report. If it is reasonable to believe that a child was exposed to a traumatic event, the officer will email the Handle with Care notice to the designated school official, as well as the on duty Watch Commander. This form will be utilized for all children under the age of 18, who are currently enrolled in a school which falls in the 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit or a day care facility in Manatee County.
2. The officer will not provide any details on the nature of the call or traumatic event and will only fill in the required information on the form.
3. The officer will document in their report that a Handle with Care notice was sent to the appropriate school representative.
4. The officer will send this form regardless of whether school is currently in session. This form will be used for all children exposed to traumatic events, to include infants who are in day care.

##### B. Supervisor

1. The supervisor reviewing any report in which a child was feasibly exposed to a traumatic event will ensure that a Handle with Care notice has been sent.

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