



May 13, 2021

Event

Before we get started



Handlewithcarewv.org

Crimes Against Children Regional Training
3/24/16 • WV Center for Children's Justice • Martinsburg, WV
Register Now!



WEST VIRGINIA CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S JUSTICE
PROTECT • HEAL • THRIVE

Handle With Care ▾

WV Children's
Justice Task Force ▾

WV Alliance for Drug
Endangered Children ▾

Human Trafficking
Task Force ▾

Recognizing/Responding
to Child Abuse ▾

Contact Us ▾



The "Handle With Care" Model:

If a law enforcement officer encounters a child during a call, that child's information is forwarded to the school 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.

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WV Center for Children's Justice



Handle With Care



- A program aimed at ensuring that children who are exposed to crime, violence or abuse receive appropriate interventions so they can succeed in school to the best of their ability.
- Research shows that trauma can undermine children's ability to learn, form relationships and function appropriately in the classroom.

FOCUS BEHAVE APPROPRIATELY LEARN



One out of every 4 children attending school has been exposed to a traumatic event that can affect learning and/or behavior

It happens everyday . . .



HWC Timeline



- 2009 Office of Juvenile Justice Survey
- 2010 Attorney General Eric Holder launched DCI
- 2011 WV Children's Justice Task Force formed a subcommittee to look at programming
- 2012 Developed the **HWC** program
- 2013 Piloted the **HWC** program
- 2015 WV State Police launched HWC statewide
- 2018 Stakeholder meeting in every WV county
- 2020 HWC is in 35 states around the country

Wild Wonderful West Virginia



In West Virginia



Jobs – Loss of Coal Jobs

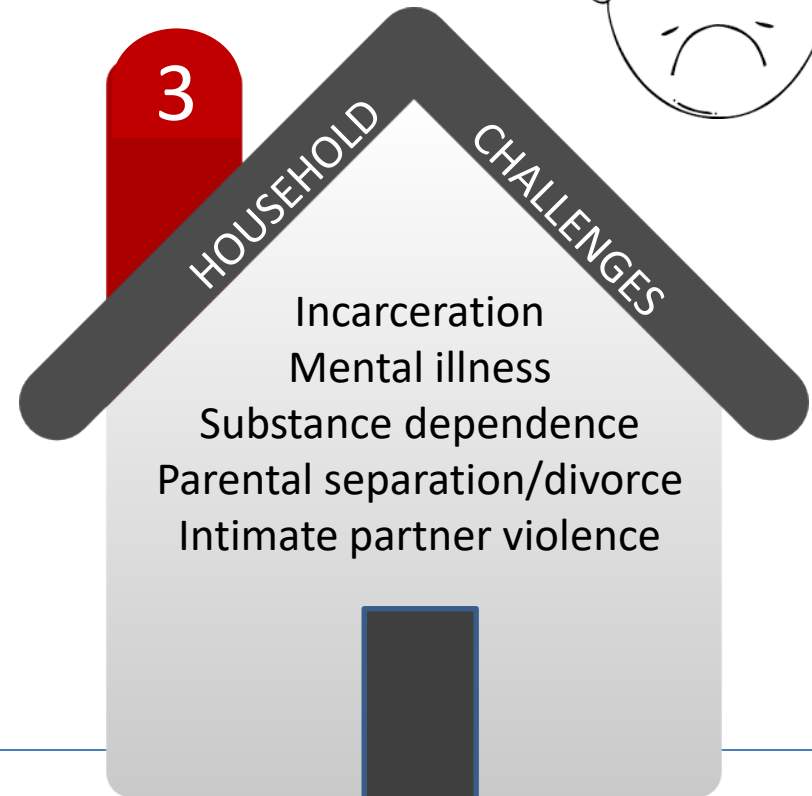
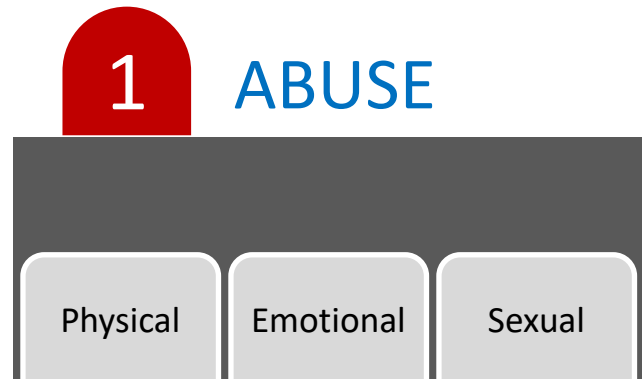
Ground Zero for the Opioid Crisis

24.6% of our kids live in poverty

High rate of Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

Adverse Childhood Experiences

are linked to risky health behaviors, chronic health conditions and early death



COVID 19

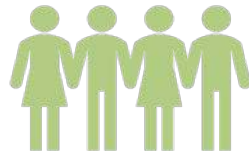
Adverse Community Experiences



- Housing Instability
- Food insecurity
- Unemployment/lack of paid leave
- Lack of access to technology
- Lack of access to primary care/screening
- Higher risk factor of mortality due to chronic disease

Between the
drug crisis,
poverty and
the pandemic,

It's tough to be
an at-risk kid
right now.



Lead the nation in
removing kids



2nd in Grandparents
raising Grandkids



High rate of transient
and displaced children



**ACEs tend to get passed down
from generation to generation.**



**Our Drug Endangered
Children are having Drug
Endangered Children**



The Drug Crisis in WV

Law Enforcement

EMS

Public Health

CPS

Schools



Kids at Risk Tend To

- Skip school
- Become involved in things they should not be involved in
- Some end up meeting Law Enforcement



Which Can Lead to Serious social problems

Homelessness, Inability to sustain employment,
Delinquency, violence, and criminal behavior,
Long term use of health, behavioral health, correctional and
social services,
Compromised ability to parent





Handle With Care



- 1. Police encounter kids at the scene and send “heads-up” HWC notice to the school.**
- 2. Schools prep trauma-sensitive support for these kids.**
- 3. Mental health providers partner for on-site therapy.**



HWC PILOT



Handle With Care Notice

From Law Enforcement to the School

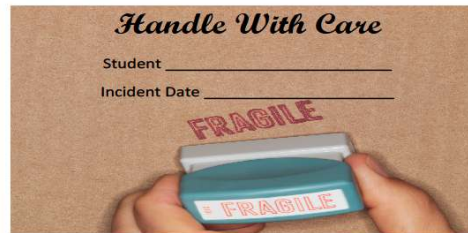
To: _____ From: _____
(School) (Law Enforcement Agency)
Date: _____ Time: _____ Incident Date: _____

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

Childs Name: _____ Age: _____
Childs Name: _____ Age: _____
Childs Name: _____ Age: _____



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



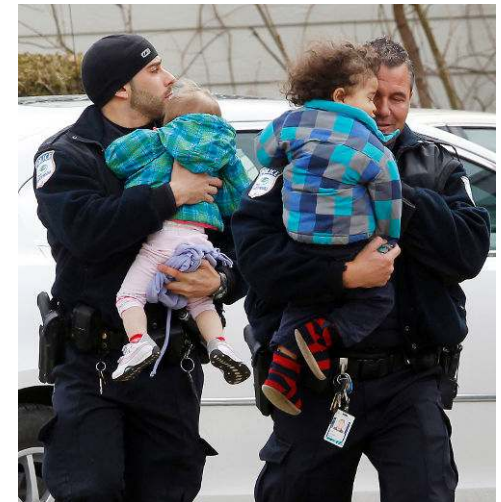
Charleston PD

Mary C. Snow Elementary

Who gets a HWC notice?



- A child exposed to crime, violence or abuse.
- If you have to ask “Should I send a HWC notice?” then you need to send one.
- Send one on every child, it’s not our place to judge what is traumatizing



Building Relationships





This Simple HWC Notice

Provides Law Enforcement with the ability to alert the school that this child was involved in a police incident last night and may have academic, emotional or behavioral problems.

No details are given

Just 3 simple words, Handle with Care

**Notices are sent year round
even when school is out!**



HWC Notice

- It arrives at the school before the start of the next school day.
- Need to know basis only
- Does not stay in child's permanent record
- Include childcare serving agencies
- School Internal HWC's are very beneficial
- **It does not mean you approach the child**

So, you want more details . . .



CAN'T DO IT!

Violates confidentiality

Violates other agencies policy's

Jeopardizes victim safety

Who receives the HWC notice at the School District?



In WV we have a HWC Coordinator in every county

Law Enforcement notifies the HWC coordinator

The HWC Coordinator notifies the Principal who notifies:

Essential Notifications

- Only teachers who works with the child
- Counselor
- School Nurse

Optional notification

- Superintendent
- Bus drivers
- Child Care serving agencies

The Solution

A Trauma Sensitive School/Agencies



A respectful and safe environment where children can build positive relationships with adults and peers, learn to manage their emotions and behavioral responses, and find academic success.

Can Trauma Impact School Performance?



Lower GPA

Higher rate of school absences

Increased drop-out

More suspensions and expulsions

Decreased reading ability

Can Trauma Impair Learning?



- Adversely affect attention, memory, and cognition
- Reduce a child's ability to focus, organize and process information
- Interfere with effective problem solving and/or planning
- Result in overwhelming feelings of frustration and anxiety

Traumatized Children Experience Physical and Emotional Distress



- Headaches and stomachaches
- Poor control of emotions
- Inconsistent academic performance
- Unpredictable and/or impulsive behavior
- Overreacting to bells, physical contact, door slamming, sirens, lighting, sudden movements
- Intense reactions to reminders of their traumatic event

A School wide Approach to Trauma-Sensitive Supports



*No one-size fits all
approach

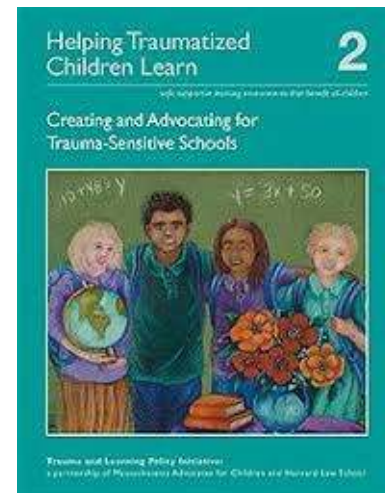
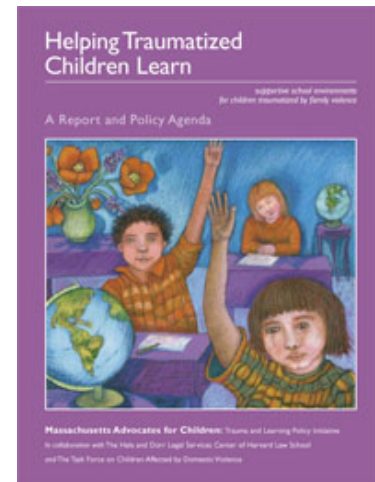
- Benefits all children whether or not we know they are traumatized
- Involves the whole school staff
- Provides teachers with the supports they need to address trauma's impact on learning
- Looks at child's behavior from a different perspective

Become a Trauma-Sensitive School



- Blueprint for educators and communities to ensure that children traumatized by exposure to violence succeed in school
- Understand the impact of trauma on learning & educate staff
- Develop a plan to integrate trauma-sensitive routines & individual student supports

<http://www.massadvocates.org/download-book.php>



Why create a trauma sensitive school system?



Schools provide possibilities for traumatized children to forge relationships with caring adults and learn in a *supportive*, *predictable*, and *safe* environment.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Need



Food, sleep, and clean clothes

Safe, predictable and supportive environments

Connection to a caring adult; clear expectations and boundaries

Empowerment for self-confidence

Choice to develop decision making skills



When a Student is in Crisis

DO NOT



- Argue or get into a power struggle
- Raise your voice
- Handle the situation in public or in front of student's peers
- Use punitive punishment



Misbehaving again!

This kid is giving me a hard time.

How can I get him to stop?

Hmmm. Behavior is communication.

This kid is having a hard time.

How can I help him?

School Response without HWC Intervention



Comes to school without homework

Naturally he got a zero

Fell asleep in class

Lost his recess

Got into a scuffle at lunch

Received detention

Didn't bring permission slip for field trip

Had to stay back and read in the library

School Response with HWC Intervention



Comes to school without homework

Math teacher gave extra time to do homework and offered 1:1 help if he needed it

Fell asleep in class

Sent to the school nurse to get some rest

Got into a scuffle at lunch

There was no scuffle because he was rested and supported throughout the morning. He had a good lunch with no issues

Didn't bring permission slip for field trip

Homeroom teacher made a phone call to his family and got verbal permission over the phone

What if school interventions are not enough?





HWC In Summary

- Identifies the kids most at risk
- Provides teachers with a heads up
- Connects children with accessible mental health services if needed
- Strengthens and improves relationships in the community.
- Improves academic, social-emotional and behavior outcomes for kids

In closing



Success in school is success in life.
Let's help children succeed in school everyday to
the best of their ability!



**Call the WV Center for Children's Justice
and we will help you get started**

304-766-5898

www.handlewithcarewv.org