



## **Handle with Care Program**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Handle with Care is a county-wide initiative between local law enforcement, Caroline County Emergency Services (CCES) and the Caroline County Public School System. The program promotes safe and supportive schools and communities by working to assist children who are exposed to trauma in the home or community in getting appropriate interventions to help them achieve academically at the highest levels.

### **II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Ridgely Police Department to support children in Caroline County when they have been exposed to a traumatic situation(s) and to be an active member and partner in the Handle with Care (HWC) program.

### **III. BACKGROUND**

In February 2018, Governor Hogan announced that Maryland will implement the Handle with Care (HWC) program statewide. At his direction, the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP) is implementing the Handle with Care model across the state to increase trauma-informed approaches and to address Adverse Childhood Experiences to prevent future victimization or criminality. Nine Maryland counties have adopted the Handle with Care including: Anne Arundel, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Washington, and Wicomico counties.

The Ridgely Police Department entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with other Local Law Enforcement agencies in Caroline County to participate in the Handle with Care program on September 10, 2019.

Handle with Care provides the school with a "heads up" when a child has been identified at the scene of a traumatic event. It could be a search warrant, a domestic violence situation, a drug raid at the home, the arrest of a parent, a shooting in the neighborhood, etc. Police are trained to identify children at the scene, get their name and age or date of birth and school, if possible. Police send the school system a confidential email that simply says ... "Handle Johnny with Care." That's it. No other details are given to the school.

#### **IV. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Handle with Care (HWC): Handle with Care is a county-wide initiative between local law enforcement, Caroline County Emergency Services (CCES) and the Caroline County Public School System. The program promotes safe and supportive schools and communities by working to assist children who are exposed to trauma in the home or community in getting appropriate interventions to help them achieve academically at the highest levels.
- B. Local Law Enforcement: Caroline County Sheriff's Office (CCSO), Denton Police Department (DPD), Federalsburg Police Department (FPD), Ridgely Police Department (RPD) and the Greensboro Police Department (GPD)
- C. Caroline County Public Schools (CCPS): Local School System
- D. Director of Student Services: A supervisor within the Caroline County Public School system who has been appointed the point of contact for the Handle with Care program.

#### **V. PROCEDURES:**

- A. RPD personnel, when responding to a call for service, whereby it has been determined that a child has potentially been exposed to trauma will determine the student's school location and send the Director of Student Services for Caroline County Public Schools (CCPS) a confidential email at [hwc@ccpsstaff.org](mailto:hwc@ccpsstaff.org), stating the child's name, age, school currently attending and the phrase "Handle this student with care."
- B. The Ridgely Chief of Police and Assistant Chief will be "CC'd" on the HWC email.
- C. The sending of the HWC email will be documented in any report/paperwork generated by the respective incident.