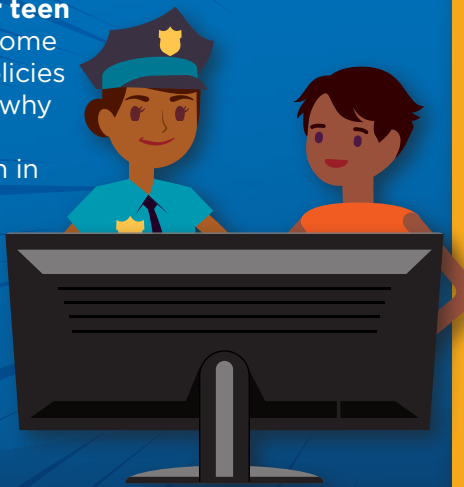


Navigating the Views of the Profession in the Media

Your teen will read and see opinions from their peers, the media, and organizations that paint the profession in a negative light. Work with your teen to understand these negative viewpoints and share tools to help your teen be mindful of the information he or she is consuming.

- Help your teen develop **critical thinking skills** to gather all the facts of an incident before forming an opinion.
- Explain there are **missing pieces to every story**. Often the community may not fully understand law enforcement policies and procedures. Similarly, your teen should continuously strive to understand how history and community opinions can influence the perceptions of their peers.
- **Make your teen aware** of some agency policies to explain why you might take action in a specific situation.



Is it my job to defend you?

Children of law enforcement grow up with a very different and personal perspective of law enforcement than their peers. Remind your teenager that it is **not their job** to defend the law enforcement profession or completely disclose your profession unless he or she wants to. Instead, encourage your teen to focus on your role within an agency such as investigations or traffic enforcement and highlight your work with the community.

If your teen is experiencing bullying or harassment because of coming from a law enforcement family, **make the school aware and encourage your teen to walk away** from the situation. If harassment continues, speak with the school about additional or administrative intervention.

If your child is faced with a difficult conversation with a peer, **discuss healthy conflict-resolution and communication skills** your teen can use.



Vicarious Trauma and Fear

Teenagers with access to social media and news stories may experience stress from seeing the extent of the risk officers face in the field every day. **Encourage discussion of their feelings and fears**. Find an outlet such as a sports team or school club for your teen to channel their attention towards or seek out someone your teen can speak with who is familiar with the challenges of law enforcement. Speak with your teen about proactive measure you take to stay safe on duty such as always wearing your vest and buckling your seatbelt in a patrol car.

For more information about the Institute for Community-Police Relations, please visit: <http://www.theiacp.org/ICPR>

This publication is one in a series.

For more family support resources please visit:

<http://www.theiacp.org/ICPRlawenforcementfamily>

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