IACP

Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents

Executive Briefing

BJA
Serving the Leaders of Today, Developing the Leaders of Tomorrow
Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents

Section I: Purpose
Section II: Model Policy
Section III: Implementation
Section I: Purpose
Arresting Parents: Risks to Children

- 50-60% of inmates have children
- 2.7 million children have a parent in prison or jail
- Parental incarceration rates are rising (122% in mothers)
- Nearly 50% of children exposed to family violence witnessed an arrest
- Link of parental arrest to trauma
- Significantly worse life outcomes
Arresting Parents: Risks to Agencies

- Officers and agencies may have a legal obligation to children’s safety
- Harmful outcomes for children = officers or agencies held accountable for negligence
- Agency liability for failure to train
Improving Outcomes for Children and Your Agency

• Swift placement
• Responsible adults, known to the child
• Ideally outside of official custody
Challenges for Responding Officers

• Competing demands for attention and efforts
• Time constraints
• Unpredictability
• Lack of training
• Don’t understand or believe it’s part of the job
• Partners may not be available, appropriate to involve, or aware of law enforcement practices
• Finding appropriate placements for children, in cases of child abuse or neglect or when no caregiver is available
Section II: Model Policy
IACP/BJA Model Policy: Purpose

• Agency collaboration with key partners to minimize potential trauma to children of arrested parents
• Train officers to identify and respond effectively to a child who is present, or not present, at the time of his/her parent’s arrest
• When possible, divert children from official custody and place them with a responsible caregiver
IACP Model Policy

- Chief Executive Responsibilities (Agency Coordination and Training)
- Pre-Arrest Planning
- Making an Arrest
- Determining Appropriate Placement of a Child
- Interacting with a Child
- Booking
- Follow-up
- Documentation
Section III: Implementation
## Implementing the Model Policy: Agency Level Changes

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<tr>
<th>Changes Within Agency</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Interagency Agreements/Practices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Routine follow up on well-being of children</td>
<td>• Agency training— safeguarding children pre,</td>
<td>• Agreements with Child Welfare Services and/or</td>
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<td>• Resource directory for officers</td>
<td>during and post-parental arrest</td>
<td>childhood mental health partner for onsite help</td>
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<td>• Agency training - child development and age-</td>
<td>• Routine multidisciplinary evaluation of impact</td>
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<td>appropriate language</td>
<td>and coordination</td>
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<td>• Agency training -- trauma and its effects on</td>
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<td>children</td>
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<td>• Training for partners on police protocols</td>
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Implementing the Model Policy: SOP Changes

**Pre-Arrest**
- Dispatcher inquiries
- Officer inquiry
- Arrest timing
- Resource prep

**Arrest & Booking**
- Officer inquiries & observations about children
- Treatment of arrestee
- Placement options
- Interacting with children

**Post-Arrest**
- Follow up with child and caregiver
- Documentation and recordkeeping
More Information and Resources:

International Association of Chiefs of Police
Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Project
44 Canal Center Plaza, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314
1-800-THE-IACP X 831
http://www.theiacp.org/cap