IACP

Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents

BJA
Serving the Leaders of Today, Developing the Leaders of Tomorrow
Training Objectives

• Explain how children of arrested parents are at greater risk for negative physical and emotional health consequences
• Outline the key components of the IACP/BJA Model Policy
• Describe recommended practices for officers when parents are arrested, both when children are present and not present
• Identify what additional resources officers should seek to safeguard children of arrested parents.
Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents

Section I: The Why
Section II: The What
Section III: The How
Section I: The Why
Scope of the Problem

• 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
Scope of the Problem

Figure 4
Number of Children under Eighteen with a Parent in Prison or Jail, 1980 to 2008

Adverse Childhood Experiences

ACEs = ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

The three types of ACEs include

**ABUSE**
- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual

**NEGLECT**
- Physical
- Emotional
- Divorce

**HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION**
- Mental Illness
- Incarcerated Relative
- Mother treated violently
- Substance Abuse
Psychological Trauma is an Injury

It is an individual’s response to an event or series of events that causes psychological, physiological and brain injury.
Arrested Parent ≠ Trauma

The arrest of a parent is an event.

Trauma is the potential reaction to an event.
What contributes to a child experiencing the arrest of a parent as potentially traumatic?

• Seeing a parent arrested by police
• Seeing a parent upset
• Being separated from a parent

• Sense of chaos and disorder
  • Loss of control
  • Feelings of helplessness
• Not knowing what will happen next
Parental Arrest: Risks to Children

Video Scenario 1 Part 1
Parental Arrest: Risks to Children

Video Scenario 1 Part 2
Challenges for Responding Officers

- Competing demands for your 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 issues
- Finding appropriate placements for children, in cases of child abuse or neglect or when no caregiver is available
Section II: The What
IACP/BJA Model Policy: Purpose

• Minimize trauma experienced by children from a parent’s arrest and separation from the parents
• Establish new and enhance existing collaborations with key partner organizations
• When possible, divert children from official custody and place them with a responsible caregiver
• Maintain integrity of the arrest and safety of officers, suspects, and other involved individuals
IACP Model Policy

- Policy
- Coordination and Training
- Pre-Arrest Planning
- Making an Arrest
- Appropriate Placement of a Child
- Booking
- Follow-up
- Documentation
Section III: The How
## Implementing the Model Policy: Agency Level Changes

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

Post-Arrest
- Follow up with child and caregiver
- Documentation and recordkeeping
Pre-Arrest

- Know what you are going to find in the house
- Decide when it is best to make the arrest given the situation with children
- Go in prepared with the right resources
“Know Before You Go” Activity

• How can you know if there are children involved in any particular arrest situation?

• If you learn that there are children, how can you gather the information you need to prepare to help them?
Timing for Parental Arrest

• If possible, when children are not present
• If children will need to be removed from the scene quickly, arrange for Child Welfare Services (CWS) to join you
• During a time when parent-child separation will be shortest
• During a time when interpreters are available
Resources to Bring

- Child Welfare Services (CWS)
- Child mental health community partner
- Interpreters
- Checklist
- Resource list
Arrest and Booking

• Where are the children?
• Who will take care of them?
• Will the child be allowed to speak with the parent?
• Sight/sound separation
• Do not leave until the child is taken care of
• Follow-up if child is not home
Placement Options

- With the other parent
- Friend, family suggested by arrestee
- Child Welfare Services (CWS)
The Big Question

Who is looking after the children?
Documentation and Follow-Up

• Identity/biographical information
• Any special needs (medical, developmental)
• Contact information for potential caregivers
• School information
• Final placement determination
• Full list in arrest checklist
Put it All Together Activity

Video Case Scenario
Put it All Together Activity

Video
For More Information, Contact:

International Association of Chiefs of Police
Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Project

1-800-THE-IACP x 831
www.theiACP.org/CAP

www.bja.gov/Publications/IACP-SafeguardingChildren.pdf