



Department of Justice

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE RELEASE GROUNDBREAKING MODEL POLICY

Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents

WASHINGTON – The Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs (OJP), in partnership with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), today released a seminal model policy regarding police interaction with children who are impacted when a parent is arrested and law enforcement carries out its investigative and arrest responsibilities. Reflecting the collective input of a wide range of subject-matter experts and stakeholders, and understanding that interactions between children and law enforcement create lasting impressions, the resulting model policy, *Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents*, provides strategies for law enforcement to improve their procedures and positively impact the communities they serve.

“Limiting a child’s exposure to potentially traumatic events is an operationally sound and necessary law enforcement strategy,” said Deputy Attorney General James Cole. “It is also consistent with law enforcement’s duty to serve the community as a whole. It is an important part of the principles of community policing, problem solving, and conflict resolution.”

Funded through OJP’s Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), *Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents* is an important resource for law enforcement. Law enforcement agencies will find the information contained in this document highly instructive as they seek to enhance their policies and procedures and gain understanding about the trauma children experience when law enforcement carries out its investigative and arrest responsibilities.

“Trauma associated with the arrest of a parent can have devastating and long term effects on the life of a child,” said Cecilia Muñoz, director of the White House Domestic Policy Council. “This administration is committed to advancing policies and programs that support the children of incarcerated parents and ensure that their futures remain bright with possibility. Implementation of this new protocol, first announced in 2013 during a White House Champions of Change event, will help limit these children's exposure to trauma and encourage positive interactions between members of law enforcement and the communities that they serve.”

In addition to the development of the model policy, IACP is developing a training curriculum that will be delivered through webinars and a number of training sessions at conferences around the country.

“Police officers are confronted with significant challenges and responsibilities when children are present or in need of care and supervision following the arrest of a parent,” said BJA Director Denise E. O’Donnell. “We are pleased to partner with IACP on a new model policy that provides sound, practical, and child-focused guidance on how police can join with their community partners to best meet the needs of children in these difficult circumstances.”

A copy of the report can be found by visiting the BJA website at www.bja.gov/Publications/IACP-SafeguardingChildren.pdf

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