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OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS RELEASES TOOLKIT TO AID POLICE RESPONSE TO CHILDREN EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE

WASHINGTON – Acting Assistant Attorney General Alan R. Hanson today announced the launch of the Enhancing Police Responses to Children Exposed to Violence toolkit. The toolkit is designed to equip law enforcement professionals with trauma-informed, developmentally-appropriate tools to effectively respond to children who have been exposed to violence.

Funded by the Office of Justice Programs' [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\)](http://WWW.OJJDP.GOV), the toolkit contains protocols, checklists and other field-tested and research-informed resources to enable law enforcement leaders and frontline officers to improve responses to children who have encountered trauma.

“An officer’s response to children who have been exposed to violence can be critical to their recovery and a key factor in ensuring their resilience,” said Hanson, whose announcement was made during a special Congressional briefing as part of National Police Week. “This toolkit will help officers identify and minimize threats to child safety and foster closer engagement between law enforcement and youth.”

Officers trained in biological, neurological and psychological responses to trauma will be better prepared to recognize and identify these symptoms in their encounters with children and family members, and will be equipped to respond in ways that maximize both officer safety and positive outcomes for children and families.

“When children are not identified and supported in recovery following exposure to violence, they are at greater risk for a range of negative outcomes. Officers’ contact with those children can be crucial in how children recover following exposure to trauma,” said Eileen M. Garry, OJJDP’s Acting Administrator. “Now we have a framework that enables law enforcement to plan, train and respond to help children re-establish a sense of security and stability that is essential to recovery.”

The toolkit was developed under a cooperative agreement between the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Yale Child Study Center and OJJDP.

For additional information about the Enhancing Police Responses to Children Exposed to Violence: A Toolkit for Law Enforcement, visit <http://www.theiacp.org/children-exposed-to-violence>.

The Office of Justice Programs, headed by Acting Assistant Attorney General Alan R. Hanson, provides federal leadership in developing the nation’s capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice and assist victims. OJP has six bureaus and offices: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking (SMART). More information about OJP and its components can be found at www.ojp.gov.

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