

Missing homework and falling asleep in class are common examples of misbehavior but, for some students, they are the first sign that they have experienced significant trauma. Handle With Care helps to distinguish between the two by creating a communication conduit between schools and law enforcement.

An estimated 60% of all children have witnessed violence, crime, or abuse. Each of these events and experiences holds the potential to negatively impact a child, but schools are rarely aware when severe incidents occur. Handle With Care creates this system through notifications, ensuring schools are able to offer the support children need to thrive and succeed.

### How It Works

- The program begins when a police officer responds to a potentially traumatic incident involving a minor, including arrests and domestic abuse.
- The officer sends the minor's name, age, and school to a central contact within the law enforcement agency, who then forwards it to a designated contact at the relevant school, excluding any details of the incident to protect the student's privacy.
- This designated contact would then forward or alert relevant staff who interact with the student, including the assistant principal, teachers, and guidance counselor who can further a supportive environment for the child.

### Expected Outcomes

- Handle with Care triggers school trauma protocols the same way seismographs trigger alerts for earthquakes.
- For instance, children who perform poorly in class may go to the nurse, and those who struggle on tests may be offered tutoring after class.
- Trauma-sensitive approaches encourage stable and supportive relationships, ensuring schools remain an environment where kids feel safe and increase educational, behavioral, and social outcomes.

### Precedent

- Handle With Care has been successfully implemented by states, counties, and cities across the country, including Maryland, Tennessee, and Kentucky.
- The program has been successfully piloted in Texas, where 13 schools have partnered with 3 police departments across San Antonio.

### Cost and Support

Apart from research, training, and administrative costs shouldered by Minaret Foundation, there is no cost associated with Handle With Care, as it wraps into existing law enforcement and school structures.