



HANDLE WITH CARE MISSOURI

PROTECT • HEAL • THRIVE

AN ANNOUNCEMENT FOR MISSOURI LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The MISSOURI JUVENILE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION, in cooperation with the MISSOURI STATE HIGHWAY PATROL, MIAC DIVISION, COURAGE2REPORTMO, is pleased to announce that our trauma-informed initiative, **HANDLE WITH CARE MISSOURI**, will be immediately accessible to all Missouri law enforcement agencies and schools effective **SEPTEMBER 1, 2024**.

HANDLE WITH CARE MISSOURI is a program designed to help traumatized children heal and thrive by ensuring that children who are exposed to trauma receive appropriate interventions to help them achieve academically and potentially divert them from being inserted into Missouri's juvenile justice system. Exposure to violence and trauma can seriously undermine a child's ability to focus, behave appropriately, and learn. It often leads to academic failure, truancy, suspension or expulsion, dropping out, or involvement in the juvenile justice system.

IT WORKS LIKE THIS: **STEP ONE:** If a law enforcement officer encounters a school-age child during a call involving a traumatic event, that child's name, and three words – **HANDLE WITH CARE** – are forwarded to the school before the start of the next school day. **NO OTHER INFORMATION IS PROVIDED.** **STEP TWO:** As a result of the HWC MO notification, the school knows to **OBSERVE** the student and be prepared to use trauma-informed interventions if the student begins to experience difficulties at school. **STEP THREE:** If school-based interventions do not appear to be making a positive impact, the child and family can be linked to community mental health support.

HERE'S WHAT YOUR AGENCY CAN DO NOW:

(1) Included here is a link to the **HWC MO** notification. This URL is for law enforcement use only. If you are an existing HWC MO site, you don't need to do anything. If you are a new site, please download this URL. **NOTE: All 611 Missouri law enforcement agencies will be activated in this database by September 1. If you do not currently see your agency listed, you can still download the notification form and begin making HWC MO notifications on September 1.**

(2) Included here is a [link](#) to a brief tutorial about how a **HWC MO** notification is made.

Beginning September 4, MJJA will sponsor monthly **HANDLE WITH CARE MISSOURI** informational meetings on the first Wednesday of each month from 10:00 – 11:00 am. Here is a link to participate in the monthly meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82282831500>

For more information about **HANDLE WITH CARE MISSOURI**, please visit our website at www.handlewithcaremo.org or email Tammy Walden, School Response Coordinator, tammy@mjja.org.

