

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[DATE]

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[CITY/COUNTY] Police, School, and Mental Health Leaders Launch ‘Handle with Care’ Program to Help Kids Who Suffer Violence, Trauma

([YOUR CITY/COUNTY], [DATE])—[YOUR ORGANIZATION] today announced a partnership with [SCHOOL, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND/OR MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERS] to launch the “Handle With Care” program to support children facing trauma.

“[Handle With Care](#)” enables police to notify schools if they encounter a child at a traumatic scene, so schools and mental healthcare leaders can provide trauma-sensitive support right away.

On [DATE OF STAKEHOLDER MEETING] police, schools, mental health leaders and other stakeholders met virtually to learn about and discuss the program. Since then, they have established a notification system, and joined over 65 other U.S. cities that have started their own Handle With Care program.

[QUOTE FROM SCHOOL OR POLICE LEADERS]

[EXAMPLE QUOTE: “We are excited to work with such great partners on a program that will help students achieve at their highest levels despite whatever traumatic circumstances they may have endured.”]

Handle with Care has three components:

- [LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY] will send a notification to [SCHOOL] when they encounter a child at a traumatic scene. Police don’t send incident details to schools, just three words: “Handle With Care.”
- [SCHOOL] will distribute the notification to the appropriate teacher and/or counselor so they can monitor the student’s behavior virtually and determine what trauma-sensitive support the child may need, such as re-teaching lessons, or alerting the counselor to contact the student virtually.
- If needed, the counselor will make a referral to [MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER], who will coordinate with the parents/caretakers and the school to provide therapy via telehealth.

The local effort was supported by the *Salud America!* “Handle With Care Action Pack.” The Action Pack, which provides free template materials, resources, and technical assistance, was created by Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez, director of the *Salud America!* Latino health equity program at UT Health San Antonio and Darr of the West Virginia Center for Children’s Justice, which began Handle With Care in 2013.

To get involved in [YOUR CITY/COUNTY]’s Handle With Care program, please contact [CONTACT NAME] at [CONTACT NUMBER].

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Share on Twitter and Facebook: Local police, schools, and mental health leaders are launching Handle With Care initiative to provide a trauma-sensitive safety net for children facing trauma.

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About Handle With Care

In 2011, the West Virginia Children's Justice Task Force, in collaboration with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the South District of West Virginia, formed a subcommittee to explore the problem of children's exposure to trauma and violence and programming to mitigate the negative effects of trauma. They developed Handle With Care, and in 2013, piloted the program in one elementary school. Since then, over 65 cities across the country have implemented the program.

About *Salud America!*

Salud America! is a national Latino-focused organization that creates culturally relevant and research-based stories, videos, and tools to inspire people to start and support healthy changes to policies, systems, and environments where Latino children and families can equitably live, learn, work, and play. Latinos are a rising U.S. powerhouse, but they face barriers to be their healthiest and suffer high rates of obesity and other health disparities. *Salud America!* and its award-winning multimedia communications help our social and online network—more than 250,000 moms and dads, providers, researchers, and community and school leaders—push for healthy changes in schools and communities to build health equity for Latino and all kids. *Salud America!* is led by health disparities researcher Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez and supported by a passionate team of communicators at UT Health San Antonio, thanks to funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and others.