



CONNECTICUT
Education

Handle With Care

An alert system initiated by first responders for students who are exposed to trauma-inducing experiences outside of school.

The Problem

- From a national survey referenced by Handle with Care Massachusetts:
 - 60% of American children have been exposed to **violence, crime, or abuse**.
 - 40% were **direct victims of two or more violent acts**.
- Extended exposure to violence and trauma can negatively impact a child's ability to learn and thrive in school. **Potential consequences include academic failure/grade retention, truancy, suspension/expulsion, drop-out, and involvement with the juvenile justice system.**

A Solution: What is Handle With Care?

An alert system initiated by first responders for students who are exposed to traumatic incidents, such as domestic violence, drug overdose, and other trauma-inducing experiences outside of school. Through school-community partnerships, this initiative confidentially alerts schools to observe the student and determine whether there is need for additional support, as well as respond with empathy if their behavior is dysregulated.

Mission

To provide context for educators and school staff if a child's behavior in school is altered because of an incident and to be proactive in the provision of supports. Ultimately, the goal is to optimize a school's response and promote student success.

Benefits

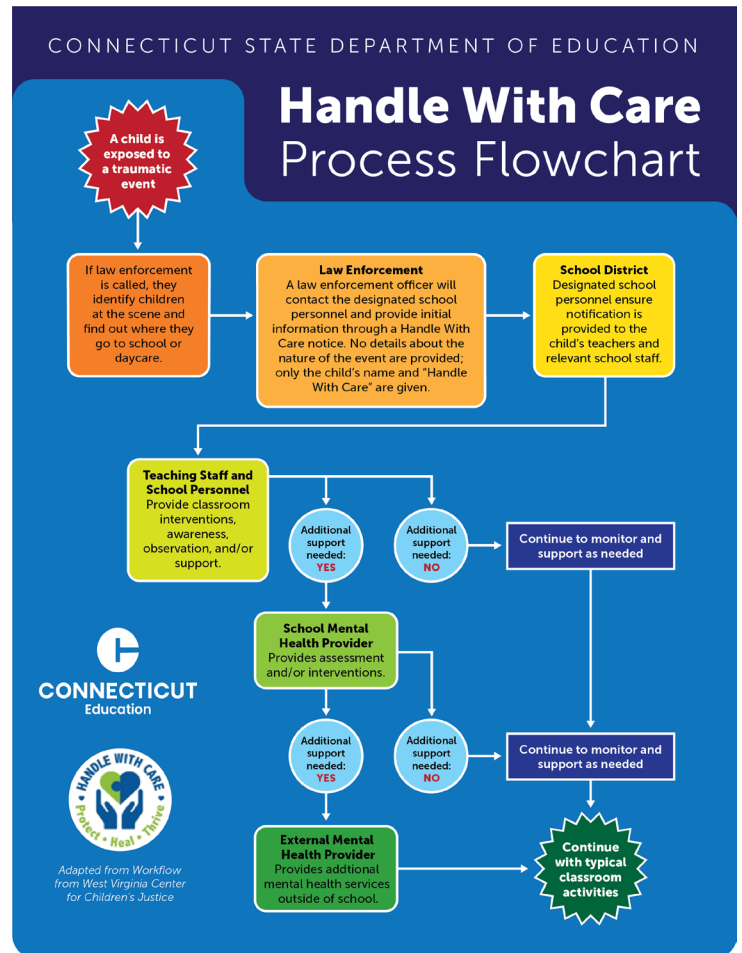
- Immediate notification for school staff
- Supports children who are exposed to trauma in their home, school, or community in connecting with appropriate resources
- Promotes positive relationships between families, schools, and law enforcement

Do we have Handle with Care in Connecticut?

Enfield, North Haven, and East Hampton are currently implementing Handle with Care in their school districts!

Common Key Stakeholders

Child exposed to violence or trauma, law enforcement officer/Child Protective Services worker, superintendent, principal, school mental health providers, teacher(s), families, community partners.



See larger version on next page.

Handle With Care Process Flowchart



If law enforcement is called, they identify children at the scene and find out where they go to school or daycare.

Law Enforcement
A law enforcement officer will contact the designated school personnel and provide initial information through a Handle With Care notice. No details about the nature of the event are provided; only the child's name and "Handle With Care" are given.

School District
Designated school personnel ensure notification is provided to the child's teachers and relevant school staff.

Teaching Staff and School Personnel
Provide classroom interventions, awareness, observation, and/or support.

Additional support needed: **YES**

Additional support needed: **NO**

Continue to monitor and support as needed

School Mental Health Provider
Provides assessment and/or interventions.

Additional support needed: **YES**

Additional support needed: **NO**

Continue to monitor and support as needed

External Mental Health Provider
Provides additional mental health services outside of school.



Adapted from Workflow from West Virginia Center for Children's Justice.