



# HANDLE WITH CARE (HWC) GEORGIA

## What is Handle With Care (HWC) Georgia?

The Handle With Care (HWC) program is a simple yet powerful way for police to quietly alert a child's school that the child was present during a potentially traumatic event such as domestic violence, an arrest, or a serious accident. The school receives a notice with only the child's name, age, and school (no details of the event) along with the message: "Handle With Care." This confidential communication helps ensure the child receives extra compassion, flexibility, and support the very next school day.

## Why is it important?

Trauma can disrupt a child's ability to focus, learn, and feel safe at school. Experiences like violence, neglect, or loss affect brain development and behavior. Handle With Care provides schools a simple way to support children quietly and compassionately helping them feel seen, supported, and not overlooked - giving children a better chance to recover, stay in school, and thrive.

## How does it work?

- **Law Enforcement** identifies children at the scene of trauma and sends a confidential "Handle With Care" notice to the child's school before the next school day.
- **Schools** discreetly let staff know to be flexible, pay attention, and respond with care—without asking questions or talking about what happened.
- **Mental Health Partners** step in when more support is needed. Onsite therapy can be offered with family consent.

## How can we get started?

Handle with Care (HWC) Georgia is championed<sup>2</sup> by Resilient Georgia and the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy. Resilient Georgia Regional Coalition Partners are currently building trauma-informed communities with HWC support by bringing together key partners. Local regional coalition partners can also be a valuable resource for school and law enforcement staff, offering training and support in trauma-informed care and approaches. For more information or to join the Georgia HWC Task Force, register by clicking [here](#).

- Over two-thirds of U.S. children report experiencing at least one traumatic event by age 16.
- Children who face trauma are 2× more likely to struggle in school and display behavior challenges.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are linked to higher risks of depression, substance use, and chronic health issues in adulthood.
- Having a trusted adult in a child's life can help protect them from the effects of trauma and build their strength to cope and thrive.