

LESSONS IN UNIFORM



POLICE ENGAGEMENT: CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If children encounter fear in police interactions, They learn that authority is something to be afraid of.

If children see shouting and force, They learn to expect violence in crisis.

If children are ignored in moments of pain, They learn their needs don't matter.

If children are treated like problems, They learn to see themselves as broken.



BUT

If children are met with calm voices, they learn that not all emergencies have to hurt.

If children are seen and spoken to with respect, They learn they are worthy of care.

If children are comforted during chaos, They learn that safety can exist—even in hard times.

If officers kneel to their level, They learn that power can come with compassion.

If children watch officers listen, They learn their voices matter.

If officers explain what's happening, Children learn to trust instead of fear.

If children are gently connected to help, They learn that asking for help is a strength.

If officers show kindness in hard moments, Children learn that even in crisis, people can choose to care.

If children live through trauma, They carry it—but how they carry it depends on who is there.



AND IF CHILDREN MEET LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINED TO SUPPORT—NOT PUNISH—



They learn that healing is possible,
That people can be safe helpers,
And that even in the hardest families, change can begin with compassion.

Written for the National Association for Children of Addiction by Tian Dayton, PhD

