

July 31, 2014

Richard Yeider, Foreperson  
2013-2014 Grand Jury  
County of Humboldt  
825 Fifth Street  
Eureka, CA 95501-1153

Foreperson Yeider:

I write in response to the letter that I recently received from you dated July 31, 2014. Hopefully, the enclosed information will answer the request that you have made but if not, please feel free to contact me.

### **How Do We Deal With Children in Crisis?**

**Recommendation R1:** *Crisis Intervention Training should be mandatory for all law enforcement officers. The Citizen Enforcement Liaison Committee and the Department of Health and Human Services have offered to pay for such training.*

**Recommendation 1 will be implemented, when funding is provided.**

The Fortuna Police Department is a strong supporter of formal Crisis Intervention Training within Humboldt County. We have a total staff of 25 (sworn and non-sworn) of which 22 have received the CIT training. Of the three that have not attended the CIT training, two are the newest officers with the department (1 year and 6 months respectively) and the other is a dispatcher, who had previously been scheduled to attend but due to unforeseen staffing issues, we cancelled the training. Each year we review our training files and register any staff members who have not received this training when our training budget and staff levels permit. In April, 2011, Chief Dobberstein received a Certificate of Recognition for his commitment to this training program. The certificate from CIT states "He understands the delicate nature of crisis negotiation and continues to support and educate his officers and dispatchers in working with mentally ill citizens who come to their attention".

**Recommendation R2:** *The curriculum of Crisis intervention Training should include responses to children younger than 16 in a life-threatening situation.*

**Recommendation 2 should be implemented.**

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The Fortuna Police Department supports adding to the curriculum of the Crisis Intervention Training components necessary to address children in crisis under the age of 16.

**Recommendation R3:** *Professionals of Child welfare Services (CWS) should be called as first responders in addition to police when children are in crisis, whether or not such children are already CWS clients.*

**Recommendation 3 should be implemented when adequate funding and staffing is available, however, CWS workers should not act as “first responders” unless directed so by law enforcement.**

The Fortuna Police Department supports Child Welfare Services being involved but not necessarily as a “first responder”. CWS should be called in after the scene has been secured and made safe; however, on occasions when the FPD has requested CWS, we have found a significant lag time in response to the scene. This may be due to the fact that CWS offices and staff are located in Eureka and often coordinating placement of the child prior to taking custody of the child, and drive time, contributes to the time and resources that these situations require.

Hopefully, the information provided meets your request. If you should need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



William Dobberstein  
Chief of Police

Cc: Honorable Dale A Reinholtzen, Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, County of Humboldt  
825 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Eureka, CA 95501