

BADGES FOR BASEBALL PODCAST SERIES

TOPIC: CHILD PROTECTION

Q: What is your name?

A: Joellen Malstrom

Q: What organization do you work for and what is your position?

A: I work for the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation and am the EVP of Administration.

Q: How long have you been in Human Resources?

A: I've been working in Human Resources for 25 years.

Q: What inspired you to go into Human Resources?

A: After I graduated from high school and during the summers when I was home from college, I worked for the state government in Maryland in the Human Resource office. Back then, it was called Personnel.

Q: Why is it important for organizations to have child protection policies in place?

A: Children are very vulnerable and it is up to organizations to protect them as best as they can. Having a policy in place lets other organizations, potential employees and volunteers know that you are very serious about protecting the kids you serve. A potential volunteer or employee may think twice about working at an organization that has a child protection policy in place because they know that you are checking backgrounds and educating the staff about what to look for and what to do if they see inappropriate behavior.

Q: What is a mandated reporter? And who is considered to be a mandated reporter?

A: Mandated reporters are people who have regular contact with vulnerable people, in this case children, and are legally required to ensure a report is made when abuse is observed or suspected. Mandated reporters are teachers, child care workers, health care providers, police officers and first responders.

Q: What role do (or can) law enforcement play when it comes to protecting children?

A: Police officers can build trusting relationships with kids. The children will hopefully feel comfortable confiding in the police officers if there is a problem. Police officers would also be able to tell if there was a change in the child's behaviors and they could work to figure out if there had been abuse. The police officers can be seen as a positive influence in the lives of the children, which could make them more willing to share any concerns or problems they are having.



Q: What are steps that law enforcement agencies can take to protect the youth they work with?

A: Most law enforcement agencies conduct background checks when employees are first hired. Background checks should be run annually to ensure the most up-to-date information and should be done via finger printing, if at all possible. Mentors should make sure they are not alone with the youth they work with and that they have forged open and trustworthy relationships. Agencies can review the policies and procedures they have created to ensure that they protect children. They can also create opportunities in schools and in the community for positive interactions with officers and engage youth and communities.

Q: What are the measures they can take in regard to screening, recruitment and incidents?

A: Law enforcement agencies can continue to conduct background screens on all new employees and mentors and ensure that they are provided with the most up to date resources.

Q: What steps do law enforcement officers need to take prior to volunteering in the *Badges for Baseball* program and prior to working with youth?

A: All law enforcement officers must complete and submit a background check form, they are only able to participate in the *Badges for Baseball* program if their check comes back without any negative findings. All mentors in our Badges program are also required to log into our resource portal and watch the training videos that are provided.

Q: What resources are available to law enforcement in regard to child protection?

A: The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation provides a great deal of information for law enforcement in our portal. We have an entire tab devoted to child protection which includes policies, information about background checks, reporting forms and training videos and other resources. We worked very closely with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to create these resources.

