

Autism and De-escalation

*GPSTC Police Legitimacy, Procedural Justice, and
Community Relations Curricula*

Online Training Course

Program of Instruction



Georgia Public Safety Training Center
Instructional Services Division
November 2017

Autism and De-escalation

2 hours

Purpose

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a familiarization of Autism Spectrum Disorder and an understanding of how to effectively engage a person with autism during an emergency. This course is presented as an interactive online course, and the students will complete activities throughout the course.

Instructional Goal

The instructional goal for Autism and De-escalation is to familiarize officers the Autism Spectrum Disorder and introduce scenarios in which officers will practice de-escalation skills and other techniques to effectively engage someone with Autism.

Intellectual Property Notice

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Evaluation Plan

A written examination should consist of 20 multiple-choice questions designed by the agency instructor. The questions must follow the prescribed method of test development according to POST Uniform Academy Rules and Regulations.

The quality and effectiveness of this course should also be evaluated through feedback from course participants using course evaluation forms, observation by instructional supervisors, and feedback from graduates.

Autism and De-escalation

Terminal Performance Objective

During a citizen encounter, the officer will practice de-escalation skills and utilize techniques to effectively engage someone with Autism, in accordance with the concepts included in the GPSTC Police Legitimacy, Procedural Justice, and Community Relations Curricula.

Enabling Objectives

- 1.1 Explain Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disabilities.
- 1.2 Describe escalation and law enforcement's role.
- 1.3 Discuss de-escalation strategies.

Topical Outline

- I. Course Introduction
 - A. Introduction Video & Instructions
 - B. Activity
 - C. Reading assignments
 1. Course Introduction
 2. Terminal Performance Objective

During a citizen encounter, the officer will practice de-escalation skills and utilize techniques to effectively engage someone with Autism, in accordance with the concepts included in the GPSTC Police Legitimacy, Procedural Justice, and Community Relations Curricula.

3. Enabling Objectives

- a. Explain Autism Spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities.
- b. Describe escalation and law enforcement's role.
- c. Discuss de-escalation strategies.

II. Module 1: Autism Spectrum Disorder

- A. Reading Assignment: "Cop shoots caretaker of autism man playing in the street with toy truck."
- B. Autism Spectrum Disorder Presentation
- C. Video Presentation
- D. Knowledge Check

III. Module 2: Escalation and Law Enforcement

- A. Escalation and Law Enforcement Presentation
- B. Video Presentation
- C. Reading Assignment
 1. "The Police Need to Understand Autism."
 2. "FOUND: Crews locate missing girl with autism after daylong search."
 3. "Autistic Boy, 4, Found Dead After Vanishing From Grandma's House."

IV. Module 3: De-escalation Strategies

- A. De-escalation Strategies Presentation
- B. Video Presentation
- C. Reading Assignment: "Autism & Law Enforcement: 25 Field Response Tips" by Dennis Debbaubt.

V. Course Conclusion

A. *Learning Activity*

B. Final Exam

Student Resources (Optional recommended readings)

1. GCAL Handout
2. Communication Overload Processing Sensory
3. First Responder Information
4. Wandering Prevention and Safety Information Sheet
5. Meet the Police Toolkit
6. Big Red Safety Toolkit

Instructional Guide

This block of instruction could be enhanced by the use of additional videos, a practical exercise, role-playing, or demonstration.

Instructor References

The instructor should identify current references for this block of instruction, including, but not limited to, the Peace Officer Reference Text, the Georgia Criminal and Traffic Law Manual, and the Georgia Criminal Procedure Manual for Peace Officers, as amended.

The following references were used in the original development of this course.

De-escalation. (n.d.) Merriam-Webster's online dictionary. Retrieved from <http://beta.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/deescalation>

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Ohio Attorney General's Office.

DeWine, Mike. (2016). The Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission: Constitutional Use of Force. [PowerPoint slides].

DeWine, Mike. (2015). The Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission: De-escalation and Mental Health. [PowerPoint slides].

Garner, G. W. (2002, October 1). Survive Encounters with EDPs - Article - POLICE Magazine. Retrieved from <http://www.policemag.com/channel/patrol/articles/2002/10/officer-survival.aspx>

Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police Mental Health Ad Hoc Committee to Address Mental Health Issues in Law Enforcement. (2014). Mental health and law enforcement encounters: A review of current problem and recommendations. Retrieved from http://www.gachiefs.com/pdfs/NEWS_GACP%20Mental%20Health%20Report.pdf.

Mason, C., Burke, T. W., & Owen, S. S. (2014, February 4). Responding to persons with mental illness: Can screening checklists aid law enforcement. Retrieved from <https://leb.fbi.gov/2014/february/responding-to-persons-with-mental-illness-can-screening-checklists-aid-law-enforcement>

Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). (2015). Re-engineering training on police use of force. Washington, DC: Police Executive Research Forum.

Thompson, G., & Jenkins J. (2010). Verbal judo: The gentle art of persuasion. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Watson, A. C., Swartz, J., Bohrman, C., Kriegel, L. S., & Draine, J. (2014). Understanding how police officers think about mental/emotional disturbance calls. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 37(4), 351-358. doi:10.1016/j.ijlp.2014.02.005