

What are the goals of the Fox Chapel Area School District School Police?

The goals of the Fox Chapel Area School District School Police are threefold: 1) serve as mentors and counselors; 2) serve as guest speakers; and 3) serve as law enforcement officers. First, school resource officers (SROs) mentor and counsel students on law-related issues, in addition to providing advice to students or redirecting them to the appropriate resource(s), if necessary. In terms of being guest speakers, SROs believe the classroom is the best place to build positive relationships with students. The SROs have a captive audience and an opportunity to engage one-on-one with the students. Lastly, SROs are law enforcement officers whose goal is keeping students safe. Providing students with a safe school environment is important for allowing them to concentrate on their studies and hopefully achieving better grades.

In addition, Officer Joseph Kozarian, Fox Chapel Area's chief of school police/school safety and security coordinator, with the support of the Fox Chapel Area School Board and district administration, wants to reduce the referrals of students to the juvenile justice system.

Are Fox Chapel Area school police used as disciplinarians?

No. SROs are not disciplinarians and are not used for that. Discipline is a school issue, not a law enforcement issue. SROs are a resource and a role model whose purpose is to provide a safe learning environment.

Do Fox Chapel Area SROs have the same authority as the township police and SROs?

Under Act 67 and HB 49 in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, SROs have the same authority as the township SROs. This was authorized by the courts. SROs have the right to exercise the same powers as exercised under authority of law or ordinance by the police of the municipality in which the school property is located.

How are relationships going to be maintained with township police? Is the D.A.R.E. program going to continue?

The township and borough police chiefs and officers have been very supportive of Fox Chapel Area's SROs. The officers from the schools have a great working relationship with the municipal patrol officers. The D.A.R.E. program is currently being reviewed. If the decision is made not to use the D.A.R.E. program, the officers in the schools will offer some other anti-drug curriculum that is more hands-on. This education could include, for example, the use of a special type of goggles that simulate the experience of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In addition, Fox Chapel Area's SROs intend to incorporate a drug kit that teaches students facts about the types of drugs that are prevalent so students know to stay away from them. Finally, the SROs are planning to invite officers who patrol the streets and deal with drugs every day to

serve as guest speakers to show students the first-hand dangers of becoming involved with drugs.

What additional training do Fox Chapel Area's SROs receive in regard to working with students, including those with disabilities and special populations?

The SROs receive training on the following topics:

- Foundations of School-Based Law Enforcement
- Ethics and the SRO
- The SRO as a Teacher/Guest Speaker: Effective Presentations
- Understanding Special Needs Students
- The SRO as an Informal Counselor/Mentor
- Social Media and Cyber Safety
- Understanding the Teen Brain
- Violence and Victimization: Challenges to Development
- Sex Trafficking of Youth
- School Law
- Developing Successful Relationships with Diverse Students
- Effects of Youth Trends and Drugs on the School Culture and Environment
- Threat Response: Preventing Violence in Schools
- School Safety and Emergency Operations Plans
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Additionally, the Fox Chapel Area school police force condemns racism of all forms and believes that **all** people deserve the same fairness, respect, dignity, security, and justice. Fox Chapel Area's SROs have all taken a 40-hour course through the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), in which SROs are taught about implicit bias, including how to recognize it in themselves and how to overcome it. This module has been part of the basic SRO course for many years. Officer Kozarian has also taught this module for years. Officer Kozarian's experience shows that using best practices, including selecting SROs carefully and providing them with effective, specialized training, leads to community satisfaction with SRO programs. Fox Chapel Area's school police help to bridge the gap between law enforcement and students, building positive relationships that can last a lifetime, while helping to protect schools from a wide variety of threats.

What are some valuable resources where I can learn more about SROs?

NASRO's 2012 report, "[To Protect and Educate](#)," shows significant decreases in juvenile arrests during a period in which the implementation of SRO programs increased.

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention recently released [data that show a continued decrease](#) in juvenile arrests nationwide through 2018.

In addition, the Police Foundation's ["Averted School Violence" database](#) contains many reports of SROs preventing on-campus violence, thanks to information gained through positive relationships these officers built with students.