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## The General

06-25-2003, 11:43

Research: Teens victimized in police Explorers program  
Wednesday, June 25, 2003 Posted: 9:32 AM EDT (1332 GMT)

(AP) -- At least a dozen teenagers assigned to work with police departments as part of the Boy Scouts' Law Enforcement Explorers program have allegedly been sexually abused by officers during the past year. In the past five years, such molestations number at least 25, according to criminologists' research being released Wednesday.

Sponsors have promised reforms to the program, which attracts tens of thousands of teens annually.

Among recent cases:

- The East Ridge, Tennessee, police department suspended its Explorer program after Officer Keith Maynard, 31, was charged with two counts of statutory rape and two counts of aggravated child molestation, accused of having sex with a 15-year-old girl in the program. He is awaiting trial.
- In Haltom City, Texas, former police officer John Ross Ewing, 28, was indicted by a grand jury in March on charges that he sexually assaulted two male Explorer scouts, ages 15 and 16, at his apartment.
- In San Bernardino, California, Freddie Lee Johnson, 34, pleaded guilty in April to having sex with a 16-year-old girl on a scout-related camping trip. According to court records, the girl woke up in her tent and found the officer on top of her. He was sentenced to 60 weekends in jail.

"I was scared that if I said anything, I would get into trouble and I would have to leave the sheriff's department," the victim said in a statement at the sentencing hearing.

Her mother added: "We trusted him. How could we not? He was a law-enforcement officer. He was our daughter's (Explorer) adviser. He was invited to our daughter's graduation dinner at our home. ... He shook our hands, gave me hugs, and all of the time, he was betraying our trust."

Law Enforcement Explorers is a co-ed program affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America. The broader scouts Exploring program also places 14- to 20-year-olds with firefighters, medical providers, lawyers and others to learn about those careers.

I was scared that if I said anything, I would get into trouble and I would have to leave the sheriff's department.  
-- 16-year-old girl who was sexually abused

In 2002, about 43,000 Explorers were assigned to police and sheriff's departments around the United States.

Boy Scouts of America officials said they were surprised and concerned to learn of the incidents.

"One child, 12 children, it's always one too many," said Boy Scouts of America national spokesman Gregg Shields.

"I really don't understand why this is happening," said John Anthony, executive director of the Learning For Life program, which oversees Explorers.

Anthony's office is reinforcing youth protection guidelines with all law enforcement Explorer programs and requiring supervisors to go through training about how to protect participants from abuse.

The extent of the abuse is detailed in research that will be released Wednesday by University of Nebraska criminal justice professor Samuel Walker and his colleague Dawn Irlbeck, who study police sexual abuse of women.

Almost half of the reported teenage victims of police sexual abuse in the past decade were enrolled in police Explorer

programs, they found, with the rest abused during arrests, traffic stops and in other situations.

"When you have repeated incidents across the country, a new one every month, that's a real problem," Walker said.

Even where abuse is not alleged, critics have faulted some programs for endangering teens.

Explorers have been used on undercover pornography stings in which they enter adult bookstores and purchase materials banned for their age group. In other cases, scouting officials said, they have been allowed to drive marked patrol cars, which could expose them to harm from gang members and drug dealers.

"Stings are prohibited and always have been prohibited," said Shields, the Boy Scouts spokesman. "These are juveniles and it's just not proper."

The Explorer program's own written guidelines discourage the practice of allowing teens to drive patrol cars, noting, "This is potentially putting inexperienced (immature) youth in harm's way."

Under those guidelines, unsupervised, one-on-one contact between Explorers and officers is banned, with one exception -- during certified law enforcement ride-alongs. But this is when many of the reported cases of abuse have taken place, the research found.

"I think it's a program that allows inappropriate contact between the officers and the kids without the proper supervision," said attorney Todd Walburg, who represents a former Explorer alleging in a lawsuit that David Kalish, who ran for Los Angeles police chief last year, sexually abused him while in the program during the 1970s. Kalish, 49, has been suspended as deputy chief, pending grand jury action.

But others emphasize the benefits of the program.

Sgt. Rick Martinez of the Anaheim, California, police said he was inspired by his experiences as Explorer 30 years ago to join the force.

Abuse is "a rare and unfortunate instance," he said. "But keep in mind there are thousands of kids who go through this program without abuse, exposing them to career options and teaching them to help their communities."

Even so, Martinez is all too aware that problems can happen.

He resumed his position as the program's adviser last year after the former leader, 31-year-old officer Jason David Rosewarne, was charged with having sex with a 17-year-old female Explorer.

Rosewarne, who resigned, was charged October 25 with one felony count of oral copulation with a minor.

But the married father of two may never go to trial. Rosewarne, who was born in Britain and has dual citizenship, recently moved with his family to the London area. Prosecutors initially said they would seek extradition, and a judge issued a warrant for his arrest. But because the age of consent is 16 in Britain, he will not be returned to the United States.

Even when officers are convicted in this country, sentences are often light, records show.

For example, in March, a judge reduced charges against former Woodlake, Calif., police officer Eric Martinez from three felony charges to a misdemeanor after the officer, in a plea deal, admitted he had sex with a 17-year-old girl in the Explorer program. He was ordered to perform community service and was placed on probation.

**Mo Trooper**

06-25-2003, 12:31

I can't believe the one guy only got 60 weekends in jail. He should be put away for much longer.:mad:

**K9 Police**

06-26-2003, 00:46

Agreed.

How many times has the media printed positive articles regarding explorers? It seems as though it is always shown when there is a negative light regarding a controversy.

As I have seen many times before, a few can ruin it for everyone.

K9

**Rookie23**

06-26-2003, 10:49

I have to say I am surprised there isn't more disgust being shown here. There is more concern with the media's representation of the explorer program than the total violation of trust performed by these officers. Being in law enforcement puts you in a difficult position to act perfect, and to abstain from putting yourself in a position which would be unfavorable to yourself and your department. These officers went way beyond any violation of a law, they violated young children and this is unreal. I am disgusted that this has happened, but I shouldn't be surprised because seems as though anyone can be a pedophile nowadays. I just hope when I become a state trooper that the public can view me as someone to trust and confide in, hoping that the public doesn't put me in that group of bad apples. I had to let this out, thanks for allowing it.

**Kahuna5150**

06-26-2003, 11:09

Originally posted by Rookie23

Being in law enforcement puts you in a difficult position to act perfect, and to abstain from putting yourself in a position which would be unfavorable to yourself and your department.

Well being in law enforcement does not mean you have to act perfect. It just means you have to live your life "above boards" and in a way that shows people you not only enforce the law, but also follow it. This also applies to whom you associate with on and off duty. Obviously you want to ensure the public trust and not give any indication of impropriety. It is disgusting that an \*ADULT\* would take advantage of a minor in anyway sexually. I know it is even more disturbing when that adult is a law enforcement officer. I don't think you're going to find any arguments for the officers in these situations. They know better and should not have done it. End of story. That is why it is so crucial that officers (who work with and/or around Explorers or Cadets) maintain a level of professionalism and separation.

I know having been an Explorer myself and having had advised Explorers, I have \*OFTEN\* seen full time police officers get into inappropriate relationships with Explorers. When I say inappropriate I don't mean sexual, but rather they become more of "buddies" than officer/explorer. It's hard to remain 100% separated from these young people. Explorers are likeable kids and \*MANY\* of us have allowed ourselves to become more friendly than we probably should. Again I don't mean this in a sexual or physical way (although that does go on per the article).

I have seen many male and female explorers taken under the wing of officers. Off duty they hang out, go to the movies, eat dinner, etc. This is usually the male explorers with male officers (as most male officers are afraid of any accusations that they are getting involved with female explorers). These explorers become "one of the guys". It's a bad combination in most cases. You have police officers (often not much older than the explorers themselves) hanging out with people that idolize them in many ways. That's quite an ego boost. Then you have explorers that are so anxious to be cops and accepted they go overboard trying to fit in. A lot of us (police) eat up the attention and really try to show off with the younger guys that look up to us. I have actually seen a 17 year old Explorer chewing tobacco with the officer he was riding with. Inappropriate? YES... Does it go on? YES...

Fortunately I think the sexual side of it is fairly minimal (as in occurrences, not in the severity of it happening even to 1 explorer). Again you have young (or sometimes older officers) who are getting their egos stoked by young attractive female explorers and they cross the line. I had several explorers I really liked when I was a patrol officer. They were great \*KIDS\*. It was hard not to invite them to hang out and hit the movies (when the rest of my shift was getting together on a Friday night), but I resisted in order to maintain that separation. Even the 18 year old Explorers (whom many officers considered fair game) were a no-no in my book. Just not worth hurting feelings and not very fair when you're a friend one day and then ordering them around like a kid the next.

I just hope when I become a state trooper that the public can view me as someone to trust and confide in, hoping that the public doesn't put me in that group of bad apples. I had to let this out, thanks for allowing it. [/QUOTE]

Lofty goal! If you become a state trooper many in the public will view you as someone they can trust. At the same time the public will also almost \*ALWAYS\* put you in the same group of "bad apples" when something negative in law enforcement happens. This is the nature of the beast that is law enforcement. The good stuff usually gets buried on page 10 and the bad stuff is on the front page. I never worked for LAPD, I was not at the Rodney King incident, I have always been an upstanding officer (in my own opinion of course :) ) yet when Rodney King happened I was \*CONSTANTLY\* taunted and told, "Rodney King, Police Brutality, You gonna beat me? All cops use too much force" etc. etc.

We all seek that praise and attention for a job well done. Many times we get it, but many times we do not. I try not to take anything personally from the public (in general terms), what I take personally is the \*FEW\* "bad apples" that screw up and bring the heat on the rest of us who tow the line on a daily basis.

Kahuna

**K9 Police**

06-26-2003, 12:34

Well said! I'll just say "ditto" to all of the above instead of repeating all of it again!

K9

**Paul E. Nunis**

06-26-2003, 18:49

Anyone who equates a job title with perfect behavior, whether the title is police officer, priest, general, doctor, judge, university chancellor, high school coach, or President of the US, is in for some serious disappointment.

The criminals follow the crime, and where there are children, you will \*\*\*ALWAYS\*\*\*find those who prey on children. The predators will do anything, even taking a job as a police officer, to get in contact with their prey.

And just because this sort of thing is inevitable doesn't mean that there is no disgust over it.

take care

Paul

**ATF SAC**

06-26-2003, 21:27

Just want to stand with Paul on this. Years ago dropped into a Southeast Asia staging area where they sent a crusty GB sarge to pick me up. Son of a gun looked on that day the way I did after 6 month. Good guy, and he told me this, "Son, draw a circle around your feet, that will be the front line." You know, that turned out to be the best advice I got in Vietnam and LE. Big Optimist me, but way it is is the way it is.

Point? Explorers a great program, but a program that will bring out the worst as well as the best. Happy to have supported it, happy to have watched carefully what was going on. Always on, always the law, that's the core of this business.

**astor211**

06-27-2003, 01:40

Being an explorer was THE best time of my life. Better than HS, better than college, and probably better than actually being a LEO (All the fun, no paperwork, no IA hearings, no citizen review boards!)

That's interesting, what Kahuna said about LEOs liking the admiration from the explorers. I never thought of that. I sure did admire them. The ones I got to know well really liked me riding with them, and I certainly enjoyed that acceptance.

About a month ago, an explorer with the department I use to be with (San Diego Sheriff) was shot in the elbow during a pretty bad gunfight.

I hope these incidents don't cause the Boy Scouts to cut the LE explorer program or limit what explorers can do. It's a wonderful program, you get to see and be a part of things that most other young people don't (unless they come from a bad neighborhood :( )it will certainly give you a taste of LE at a young age, and it doesn't hurt on a resume.

Astor211

**Kahuna5150**

06-27-2003, 11:29

Originally posted by astor211

Being an explorer was THE best time of my life. Better than HS, better than college, and probably better than actually

being a LEO (All the fun, no paperwork, no IA hearings, no citizen review boards!)

Funny you should say that astor... I tend to agree in many ways! I think the key to having such a good time as an explorer is the innocence factor. When I rode out with officers I was just so happy and excited to be there. No paperwork (other than filling out some reports or tickets if the officer allowed it), no real responsibility, no IA's, and at 3am when you're tired and it's boring, you can go home where the officer had to stay and finish the shift.

I think that's why I was drawn to the explorer program later on in my life (once I was a LEO). I really enjoyed being around that new, fresh, innocent energy. Seeing explorers put on gun belts with red guns for scenarios, watching them do building searches, etc, etc reminded me of how fun it was when I did it.

I guess it's a lot like taking your kids to Disneyland. It'll never be as fun for you at Disneyland as it was when you were a kid yourself, but the next best thing is watching the excitement on a kids face and being able to relive those moments through them.

I talked to a friend the other day about our explorer years. We both agreed that we never felt more like cops than when we were explorers... Were we dorky? YES! did we know anything NO! Was that ignorant bliss? YES!!!!

On a side note... Did you ever notice (or has anyone around explorers) how each explorer tends to gravitate to 1 or 2 particular officers and then slowly begins to act, dress, and become that officer? I flipped through some old pics that my friend (former explorer) had. He is wearing the same glasses, gloves, and other items as the officer he worshipped. Same laugh, same mannerisms. He even got the same kind of car (Trans Am). We look back at it and laugh now.. It's even funnier to see the current generation of explorers that have started their emulation process. God help the one that picks me! (if ever).

:)

Kahuna

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