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# The Florida Police CHIEF

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## SHOWING PATRIOTISM OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

CALEA ANNOUNCES 2002 COMMISSION AND BOARD • CHANGE IN COMMAND AT LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING INSTITUTE • SHOWING PATRIOTISM OF SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS • PORT ORANGE TAKES FIRST PLACE FLORIDA K-9s AVAILABLE FOR WORK • QUALITY CRIME PREVENTION TRAINING

# Showing Patriotism of School Resource Officers

*Tom Sanchez, Lieutenant, Hollywood, Florida, Police Department, Youth Services Section*

During this time in our country, what are we doing as SROs to visibly show our patriotism to the children? Patriotism is defined as the love of and devotion to one's country. As School Resource Officers know, their actions reflect the child's perception of them. SROs are also a government symbol, the defender of good and the warrior against evil. The police hold the line between order and disorder.

A local survey by the Miami Herald newspaper asked what character traits parents wanted taught in the classroom. The survey indicated that one of the traits parents thought were important for their kids to learn was patriotism.

The following are ideas to bring patriotism into schools.

- Invite Military personnel with their equipment into the school. Opportunities for these events are on career day, special events, or as a finale for a DARE/GREAT graduation.
- Police (trading) cards are also popular. A patriotic theme can be to have an SRO or SRO vehicle in front of a patriotic symbol such as National Monument. Postcards and posters can be created.



- Another way to show patriotism is to sell flag pins with your Department's name on it and donate the proceeds to slain police and firefighters from New York or other charities. Police Explorer Cadets can sell the pins in the schools they attend.
- During the holiday season, the Department can sponsor "Bring a Soldier Home for Holiday Dinner" event. This program can make displaced soldiers feel at home in our communities.
- Displaying patriotic symbols in the SRO office is also another idea. Just remember anything in excess is not good (does it look like a military recruiting office?).

Schools are terrorist targets so don't compromise the SRO program to increase security at other locations. Our children ARE our most valuable possession. The patriotism Police Officers show today with our children will affect their attitude, loyalty, and commitment toward our country in the future.



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