

A. **PURPOSE.** The Grand Rapids Police Department recognizes the impact of its involvement with youth. While youth are afforded the same constitutional protections as adults, the Grand Rapids Police Department acknowledges and appreciates the need for additional protective measures while encountering youth.

B. **GOALS**

1. To recognize that youth are still in the stage of developing and learning, and may have already experienced trauma that is shaping their behavioral response.
2. To recognize that the formal juvenile justice process should be avoided, unless clearly indicated by the youth's behaviors and unless alternatives do not exist.

C. **GENERAL PROCEDURES**

1. Officers shall take the following factors, if known, into consideration when interacting with youth, including but not limited to:
 - a. Nature of the complaint or contact, including probability of possessing a weapon
 - b. Age, intelligence, mental capacity, and physical condition
 - c. Prior contacts/history with officers
 - d. Likelihood to comply with parental control
 - e. Cooperation and attitude of all parties and the likelihood of the offense being repeated
 - f. Likelihood that the youth can be successfully referred to a supporting social service agency
2. When interacting with youthful offenders, officers should consider a wide range of alternatives and select the most reasonable, and least restrictive, alternative consistent with public safety, officer safety, maintenance of public order, department policy and the rights of the youth, including, but not limited to:

- a. Warning, with no enforcement action taken
 - b. Refer the youth and parent/guardian to a Diversion Program (i.e. The Bridge, HQ, etc.)
 - c. Citation (Municipal Civil Infractions and Traffic Citations)
 - d. Referral to family court in lieu of a custodial arrest
 - e. Custodial arrest with lodging at Kent County Juvenile Detention
3. If a youth has been patted down, searched or handcuffed, officers shall notify the youth's parent or guardian. The notification may be either in person or by telephone and shall be documented in the field interrogation or incident report, along with the identity of the parent or guardian who was notified. If the officer is unable to notify a parent or guardian, every attempt shall be documented in the field interrogation or incident report.
4. When safe, under the totality of the circumstances, officers shall consider a youth's age, whether known or objectively apparent to a reasonable officer, when determining whether or not to apply handcuffs or restraints.
5. If, during a preliminary investigation or contact, it is determined that a youth is not a suspect, all efforts should be made to ensure the youth is not left unattended for the duration. These efforts shall be documented in the incident report and may include, but are not limited to:
- a. Placing the youth(s) with a non-offending parent or guardian
 - b. Utilizing appropriate resources, such as Children's Protective Services (CPS) or the Domestic Assault Response Team (DART)
 - c. Assigning an officer to the youth(s), when reasonable and practical