

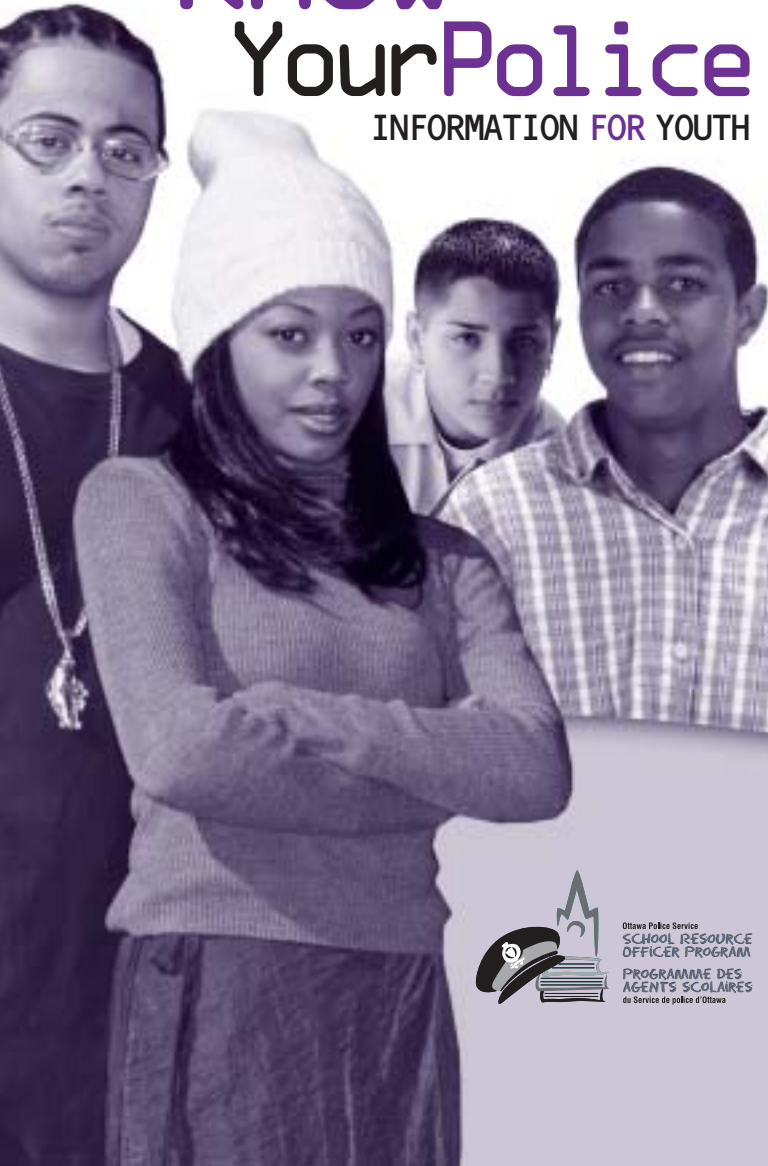


OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA

Working together for a safer community
La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe

Know YourPolice

INFORMATION FOR YOUTH



Ottawa Police Service
**SCHOOL RESOURCE
OFFICER PROGRAM**
**PROGRAMME DES
AGENTS SCOLAIRES**
du Service de police d'Ottawa

www.ottawapolice.ca

Your Police

Police officers are part of your world. They have a sworn duty to preserve the peace, prevent crimes, enforce the law, preserve life, and other important stuff. They exist to help you, your family, your friends, your neighbours and every person or group that lives in, works in or visits the Ottawa area.

Common Questions

Being a police officer can be both challenging and dangerous, but most of all, it's a rewarding profession. Police are trained to place a great deal of emphasis on safety and communication skills. Sometimes, though, people don't really understand what officers do, or why they do it in that way. Here are some of the most common questions that Ottawa Police officers have been asked by area youth.

How should I act if police approach me?

Be yourself. Police are good people with a number one priority of looking out for your safety. If you're stopped or questioned by an officer, approach him or her with respect. Communication is key to avoiding a confrontation. While there's no legal obligation to assist a police officer with an investigation, try this:

- If asked your name, consider identifying yourself. When people refuse to identify themselves, it makes the officer feel like that person is trying to hide something.
- Make eye contact. Have no fear — police officers are there to help you.



- Keep your hands visible to the officer at all times — officers are trained to be on the lookout for weapons.
- Never run away from the police. If you've done nothing wrong, there's no reason to run away.
- Know your rights — see the "Your Rights" section of this pamphlet.

What if the police stop me while in my car?

The *Ontario Highway Traffic Act* says driving is a privilege, not a right. Police can stop a vehicle to identify the driver, check valid insurance, determine the owner of the vehicle or to verify the condition of the vehicle if safety is a concern. You can be stopped at any time. If an officer asks you to stop:

- Slow down and pull over safely when you can (remember, they always identify themselves with official identification).
- Stay in the driver's seat with both hands in sight on the steering wheel. Don't get out of the car unless asked to do so.
- Comply with the officer's request to see your driver's license and/or other documents (make sure to always travel with your driver's license, the car's registration certificate and proof of insurance). If they're in your pocket or purse, the glove box or under the seat, tell the officer and then get them slowly.
- If you want to explain something, do it before the officer returns to his or her vehicle. The officer can't void a ticket once it's been written. If you think you've been treated unfairly, present your case in traffic court within 15 days (and not to the officer along the roadside).

If I deal with a police officer, will my parents find out?

Sometimes, depending on your age and the circumstances, an officer is required by law to contact your parents or the Children's Aid Society (e.g., in the case of serious injury or arrest and when an officer determines you need protection). In some cases in Ontario, your parents can be held liable for your actions under the *Parental Responsibility Act* (e.g., paying for property damage) and they will be contacted. In other instances, it's at the officer's discretion whether a particular incident warrants contacting others, such as your parents. Overall, police officers are trained to try to handle any situation with your best interest in mind.

Why do I see the same police officer at my school all the time?

Every school in the City of Ottawa is assigned a School Resource Officer (SRO) as their personal police contact. SROs are specially trained officers that work closely with youth, their families and school officials to help resolve any incidents that may come up. SROs are very approachable, and they always have the student's best interest in mind. No need to fear, talk to your SRO.

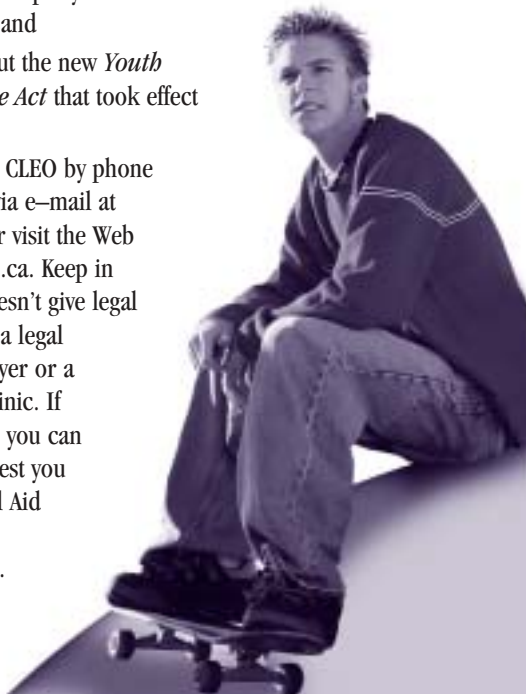
My School Resource Officer is: _____

Your Rights

Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO) is a great source of legal information for youth. It has a whole series of information about the law, including:

- the consequences of having a youth record (e.g., getting a job or travelling);
- an explanation of the different kinds of court orders, and what can happen if you disobey them;
- legal advice about talking to police, including what a 'statement' is and about the right to remain silent;
- hiring and working with a lawyer and how to get legal help if you cannot afford a lawyer; and
- information about the new *Youth Criminal Justice Act* that took effect in April 2003.

Get in touch with CLEO by phone at 416-408-4420, via e-mail at cleo@cleo.on.ca or visit the Web site at www.cleo.on.ca. Keep in mind that CLEO doesn't give legal advice. If you have a legal problem, see a lawyer or a community legal clinic. If you live in Ontario, you can find the clinic nearest you by visiting the Legal Aid Ontario Web site at www.legalaid.on.ca.



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Make the Right Call!

Every call is important, but not all calls are life-threatening, and not all calls are police emergencies. Whatever the case, we're here to help. You have a role to play: "Make the Right Call."

9-1-1

Life-threatening emergency
or crime in progress

230-6211

TTY  232-1123
Other emergencies

236-1222

Community Police Centres and
all other enquiries

