

# BEACH BUZZ

Fall 2003

Volume 3, Number 6

a publication of B.E.A.C.H.E.S. Foundation and its Chapters  
view more Beach Buzz articles online by clicking here

"Keeping Our Beaches Bare"

## Research: Teens victimized in police Explorers program

*Editor's note: The following article was released by the Associated Press in June 2003. B.E.A.C.H.E.S. Foundation is disturbed by these and similar reports of child victimization at children's camps and programs that do not practice social nudity, and we have reported these concerns to Rep. Foley. We commend the Boy Scouts and the participating police departments for their fine intent, but insist that individuals charged with abuse be investigated, and prosecuted if these allegations are substantiated. To our knowledge, there have been no documented allegations of child molestation at the AANR Youth Leadership Camps.*

**A**t 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."

---

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

---

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.

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.

---

***Almost half of the reported teenage victims of police sexual abuse in the past decade were enrolled in police Explorer programs, . . . with the rest abused during arrests, traffic stops and in other situations.***

---

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. ✨