

**CHAPTER 8**  
**SUPPORT GROUPS**  
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## CHAPTER 8

### SUPPORT GROUPS

1. CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS. Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.) is a nationwide peer support network that provides resources to assist surviving family members of law enforcement officers who have died in a line of duty death (LODD). The C.O.P.S. consist of law enforcement survivors who are able to assist recent survivors when coping with grief. Survivors are not only immediate family members, but friends and coworkers as well. The death of a uniformed member can have a devastating affect on an entire department and community. The C.O.P.S. network provides training and guidance to law enforcement agencies in order to better prepare them before, during, and after an LODD.

a. The C.O.P.S. local chapters provide a comfortable environment for relatives and friends of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. These support groups assist survivors in coping with their loss. Survivors, who share their experiences, help the more recent survivors with issues they are facing. Chapters also assist local agencies and coordinate survivor benefits for the family.

b. National C.O.P.S. coordinates nationwide programs for the spouses, children, parents, siblings, and coworkers of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.

c. National C.O.P.S. conducts survivor seminars at its National Conference in Alexandria, Virginia, which is held in conjunction with the observance of National Police Memorial Week.

d. May 15 of each year is National Law Enforcement Memorial Day. The Fraternal Order of Police Auxiliary and C.O.P.S. hold a candlelight vigil at the National Law Enforcement Memorial at Judiciary Square in Washington, D.C., and coordinate the National Law Enforcement Memorial Ceremony at the National Capitol.

e. Currently, California has three chapters of C.O.P.S.: northern, central, and southern. Chapter membership is a volunteer group comprised of survivors of fallen officers from nearly every agency in California.

f. National C.O.P.S. has a law enforcement liaison who assists survivors in the gradual transition from seeking assistance from the agency to which their loved one belonged, to various local and nationwide support networks. To obtain your local chapter information, contact the C.O.P.S. national office at (573) 346-4911. Information is also available on their Web site, at [www.nationalcops.org](http://www.nationalcops.org).

g. Funding for C.O.P.S. is received through tax deductible donations. Many donations come from friends and families of officers killed in the line of duty or the fallen officer's labor association. Contributions received are used for operating expenses and to assist a fallen officer's family.

h. The C.O.P.S. Executive Board and its members are active in lobbying for law enforcement survivors' benefits, victims' rights, and legislation supportive of law enforcement objectives. Survivors actively participate and render support during trials and appeals, and parole hearings for assailants of law enforcement officers.

i. Concerns of Police Survivors Kids. Ronald McDonald House Charities and various other charitable organizations have provided donations to fund C.O.P.S. Kids. This group was formed to provide psychological counseling to dependent children of officers killed in the line of duty in accordance with federal guidelines for qualification.

j. Concerns of Police Survivors Camps/Retreats. National C.O.P.S also offers the following programs annually to survivors:

- (1) Spouses' Retreat;
- (2) Kids' Camp – for surviving children ages 6-14 and their surviving parent/guardian;
- (3) Outward Bound Adventure – for surviving teenagers and young adults 15-20;
- (4) Parents' Retreat – annual retreat for surviving parents;
- (5) Siblings' Retreat;
- (6) Adult Children's Retreat;
- (7) Extended Family Retreat;
- (8) Coworkers' Retreat;
- (9) Young Adults' Camp – for surviving children and siblings age 15-20;
- (10) Fiancés'/significant others' Retreat; and
- (11) Coworkers for Couples' Retreat.

2. PARENTS OF MURDERED CHILDREN. Parents of Murdered Children (POMC) is a national organization formed for the purpose of helping the parents of homicide victims. The organization provides: self-help groups, advocacy and information referrals, conferences and workshops, various written publications on grief, general information, and services.

a. Parole Block Program.

(1) The Parole Block Program allows survivors to participate in the parole process.

(2) The POMC group circulates petitions to stop the parole or the early release of convicted murderers.

(3) Occasionally, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Enforcement and Planning Division, and Research and Planning Section will notify agencies of an upcoming parole hearing for an inmate convicted of the death of a uniformed member. This information should be immediately forwarded to the Department and the commander overseeing the jurisdiction where relatives may be residing.

b. Questions regarding this program should be directed via mail to POMC, Parents of Murdered Children, Inc., 635 West 7 Street, STE 104, Cincinnati, OH 45203, or via telephone at (513) 721-5683.

3. COMFORT ZONE CAMPS. Comfort Zone Camps create an environment where grieving children can have fun and break the isolation death often brings, while learning valuable coping skills for their daily lives. A Comfort Zone Camp is the nation's largest bereavement camp. Comfort Zone Camps are offered free of charge to children ages 7-17 who have experienced the death of a parent, sibling, or primary caregiver. The camps are held year-round in California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Virginia, and North Carolina.

4. VICTIM ASSISTANCE.

a. The National Center for Victims of Crime is a resource center for victims of crime. They can be contacted via mail at National Center for Victims of Crime, 2000 M Street NW, Suite 480, Washington, D.C. 20036, or via telephone at (202) 467-8700.

b. Local District Attorney's offices typically have a Victim Assistance Program. For information, contact your local District Attorney's office.

5. CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL DEPARTMENTAL LIAISON. The commander of the Office of Employee Safety and Assistance shall serve as the Department's liaison in coordination with departmental participation at the state and National memorial events.