

ON THE JOB

CRIMINAL JUSTICE UPDATE

COVER STORY

NOW SHOWING

**Virtual-reality training
for law enforcement
will soon be available to
agencies statewide**

Law enforcement training in Ohio just got a lot more interesting, a lot more realistic and a lot more practical.

That's because the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy, part of the Attorney General's Office, is adopting the emerging technology of virtual reality (VR) to prepare the state's 30,000 law enforcement officers and its recruits for the demands of the job.

To that end, OPOTA is in the very early stages of distributing VR headsets to training sites around the state. The headsets are loaded with six videos that focus on suicide prevention, the teen brain, mental health, domestic violence, irate families and school violence. The videos are designed to strengthen an officer's crisis-management techniques by developing their critical thinking and communication skills.

Because the videos were filmed with 360-degree cameras — a technique that records the view in every direction at the same time — users feel as if

Instructor Barry Wisecup
uses the goggles at OPOTA.

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My office is committed to providing the highest standard of training for Ohio's 30,000 peace officers.

Fulfilling this vow means evolving. It means embracing emerging technology and adopting evidence-based practices. It means making training more consistent for all officers regardless of the size of their departments or the size of their budgets. It means changing how and where we deliver training and using experts with real-world experience. And it means measuring our results.

The end goal, of course, is not only to reduce crime, but also to reinforce public trust and to ensure the safety and well-being of our officers.

I've talked about this since Day 1 because it's among the most important parts of my job as attorney general — supporting the men and women who have answered the higher calling of law enforcement.

As part of that ongoing mission, I established

the Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Police Training in Ohio last fall. I'm happy to report that the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission recently approved all the task force's recommendations, ushering in a new era of police training in the state. You can read more about the coming changes in this edition of *On The Job*.

Related to that, and as part of the overall training philosophy my office has adopted, the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy recently deconstructed and then reimagined its annual law enforcement conference to better serve the state's peace officers.

The new name of the event — the Law Enforcement Training Symposium, or LETS — reflects our efforts to advance the quality, comprehensiveness and effectiveness of training across the full arc of a peace officer's career.

In both cases — the Blue Ribbon Task Force and the LETS conference — we've solicited advice from our law enforcement community. It can't be done any other way. Policing in America is getting more demanding. New, complex challenges are constantly emerging. The people with the best

insights are those who wear the badge.

What we've done so far — starting with our overhaul of OPOTA, which we began several years ago — is part of a continuum of progress designed to help every officer in Ohio become a better trained, more knowledgeable, and more effective guardian of public safety.

In the end, what I ask of our officers is simply this: Take full advantage of the training opportunities you've been given. All the good things that make a society healthy and prosperous rest on the noble work you do.

Hope to see you in Sandusky on Sept. 30 for the Law Enforcement Training Symposium.

Yours,



Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General

LETS conference will include courses never offered before

OPOTA's annual law enforcement conference has been revised, renamed and relocated.

Now known as the Law Enforcement Training Symposium (LETS), the conference was overhauled to be more purpose-driven and to deliver immediate, concrete benefits for the peace officers who attend. OPOTA Executive Director Tom Quinlan said some offerings have never been offered before.

- For the first time, the conference will present the eight hours of continuing professional training (CPT) courses mandated by OPOTC: Legal Updates (2 hours); Responding to Mental Health Issues (2); Crisis Mitigation De-Escalation (2); Marsy's Law/Victim Rights (1); and NIBIN (1).
- For the first time, officers will have the opportunity to be certified as instructors of Virtual Reality Immersion, the next big thing in law enforcement training.
- For the first time, officers will have the opportunity to earn a firearms requalification program certificate. A person completing this course will be authorized to conduct



LETS
Law Enforcement
Training Symposium
Sept. 30–Oct. 1
Kalahari Resorts | Sandusky
For more information, visit
www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/LETS

annual mandated requalifications for veteran officers, a step on the way to becoming a fully certified firearms instructor. (To be clear, officers in this course will NOT be certified as firearms instructors.) Typically, a requalification course for pistol, shotgun and rifle would require 12 days of training and cost \$2,500; the symposium course is four hours and costs nothing beyond the conference registration fee.

In addition, the symposium will offer:

- A plain-clothes operative course, for officers who need to work directed patrols out of uniform.
- A course by BCI on what to expect after an officer-involved critical incident.
- A course on crowd control and dialogue teams.

And for the first time in at least eight years, the symposium will convene a meeting specifically for school commanders.

Typically held in Columbus, the conference will be in Sandusky this year, at the Kalahari Resort, a site that offers the opportunity for a fall family getaway. The event will include a vendor showcase and, on the Sunday before the symposium officially opens, a job and career fair, which will give officers and prospective recruits an opportunity to meet with agency and academy representatives from across the state.

Registration is expected to open in mid-July. Details will be posted at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/LETS as soon as the information is available.

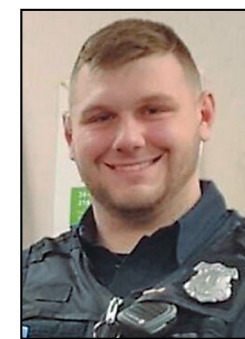
Euclid officer killed while responding to call

Euclid Police Officer Jacob Derbin was fatally shot in an ambush while answering a disturbance call on the night of May 11. The 23-year-old had joined the police force 10 months earlier and was engaged to marry his high-school sweetheart in July.

His death occurred on the eve of Police Memorial Week and nine days after Ohio's law enforcement community and Attorney General Dave Yost officially honored officers who had died in the line of duty in 2023.

"My heart burns with anger at this injustice," Yost said.

At about 10 p.m., Derbin and two other officers responded to 911 call from a woman who said she



was at her grandmother's house and that her ex-boyfriend, her child's father, was lurking outside and texting that he would kill her. The woman told police that the man was probably nearby and asked them to check the backyard.

Officers returned fire, but Vaughn fled on foot. After an intense manhunt involving multiple agencies, Vaughn was tracked the next day to a building in Shaker Heights, where he eventually killed himself following a lengthy standoff.

Vaughn had a lengthy criminal history, including convictions for felonious assault, receiving stolen property, and having weapons under disability.

Derbin's father is a Euclid police officer, and his grandfather was on the police force in Brooklynn Heights, where Derbin grew up.

Meyer said Derbin will be awarded his agency's highest honor, the Euclid Police Department Medal of Honor.

NEW LUSTER FOR FALLEN OFFICERS MEMORIAL WALL

This year's Ohio Peace Officers Memorial Ceremony, held May 2 at OPOTA, coincided with a major renovation. Thirty-two panels of polished black granite, freshly engraved with the names of 836 peace officers lost in the line of duty, were recently mounted on the face of the 24-year-old memorial wall. Time and weather had combined to degrade the legibility of the names. Dodds Memorials of Xenia was hired to do the renovation. The panels were engraved over two days by a computer-guided carbon dioxide laser. Polished black granite is extremely durable and requires minimal maintenance. "This work brings new luster not only to the memorial wall but also to the memory of every fallen officer represented there," Attorney General Dave Yost said. "It is our duty to make sure their names never fade into history."



To watch a video about the restoration go to <https://youtu.be/u2huTeVgHZw>.

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if they're part of the action. It's the difference between being inside a fishbowl and on the outside looking in.

"These VR goggles are the next best thing to real-world experience because officers are immersed in split-second decision-making scenarios," said Attorney General Dave Yost, who tested the headsets himself and admitted to feeling "shaken and sweaty" after the experience.

Although it doesn't replace existing teaching methods, virtual reality adds a new chapter in the evolution of law enforcement training, OPOTA Executive Director Tom Quinlan said.

For one thing, cinematic virtual reality — that is, VR that uses video instead of computer-generated images — simulates real life, including the tension and distractions typical of many service calls. VR training also adds more context to the situation being taught and, equally important, provides an opportunity for instructors to provide immediate feedback.

In addition, because VR training activates several senses at once and accommodates various learning styles better than traditional classroom courses, it generally improves a person's ability to process, distill and retain key information, enabling more thorough and faster learning.

Through the Attorney General's Office, OPOTA bought 160 Meta Quest 3 VR headsets. They will be distributed to OPOTA's six Close to Home regional training partners and to academies run by the Highway Patrol and by police departments in Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton, Toledo and Akron. OPOTA and its Tactical Training Center, both in London, will have headsets for in-house training, and OPOTA will set aside an additional supply to lend to agencies that request them.

By these various pathways, all 900 law enforcement agencies in Ohio will have access to VR training.

"We want officers to have a shared training foundation across jurisdictions, and this is one way to ensure that," Yost said. "More consistent training means safer streets for everyone."

The first step in the VR rollout, Quinlan said, is to certify instructors from each of the locations that receive headsets. That started in late June, with additional training to come. The instructor training is two days, eight hours a day. They will be taught to use the equipment and will go through the scenarios before taking the headsets

back to their locations for officer training.

Agencies that aren't provided with headsets — in other words, all but the very largest departments — have two options. They can either send officers for VR training to the OPOTA campus or a Close to Home regional site, or arrange to borrow headsets from OPOTA. Other borrowing options, depending on availability, are Close to Home partners and the major police academies. Before borrowing headsets, however, agencies need to have a certified trainer in-house or have one lined up from another agency.

Another option that agencies might eventually consider is buying their own headsets; in those cases, OPOTA will load the videos into the equipment.

Multiple lesson plans exist for each of the six videos because they can be used to train officers across a range of roles, including patrol officers, tactical officers and supervisors. Agencies can teach all six videos or select certain ones for focused training — for example, on school safety or suicide prevention.

Additionally, VR training can be used to fulfill the state's annual continuing professional training (CPT) requirement, but only if the VR training follows the lesson plans written by OPOTA.

Quinlan, who took over the top spot at OPOTA last year and led the Attorney General's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Police Training, said his goal over the next 12 months is to have at least 12,000 of Ohio's 30,000 officers trained on VR, including field training officers, first-line supervisors, and every recruit at the major police academies.

"We spent \$700,000 on this project," he said. "If we get 12,000 officers through the training, the cost per officer is just over \$58. That's a pretty good return on the investment — even better if you break it down by the number of hours each officer spends in training."

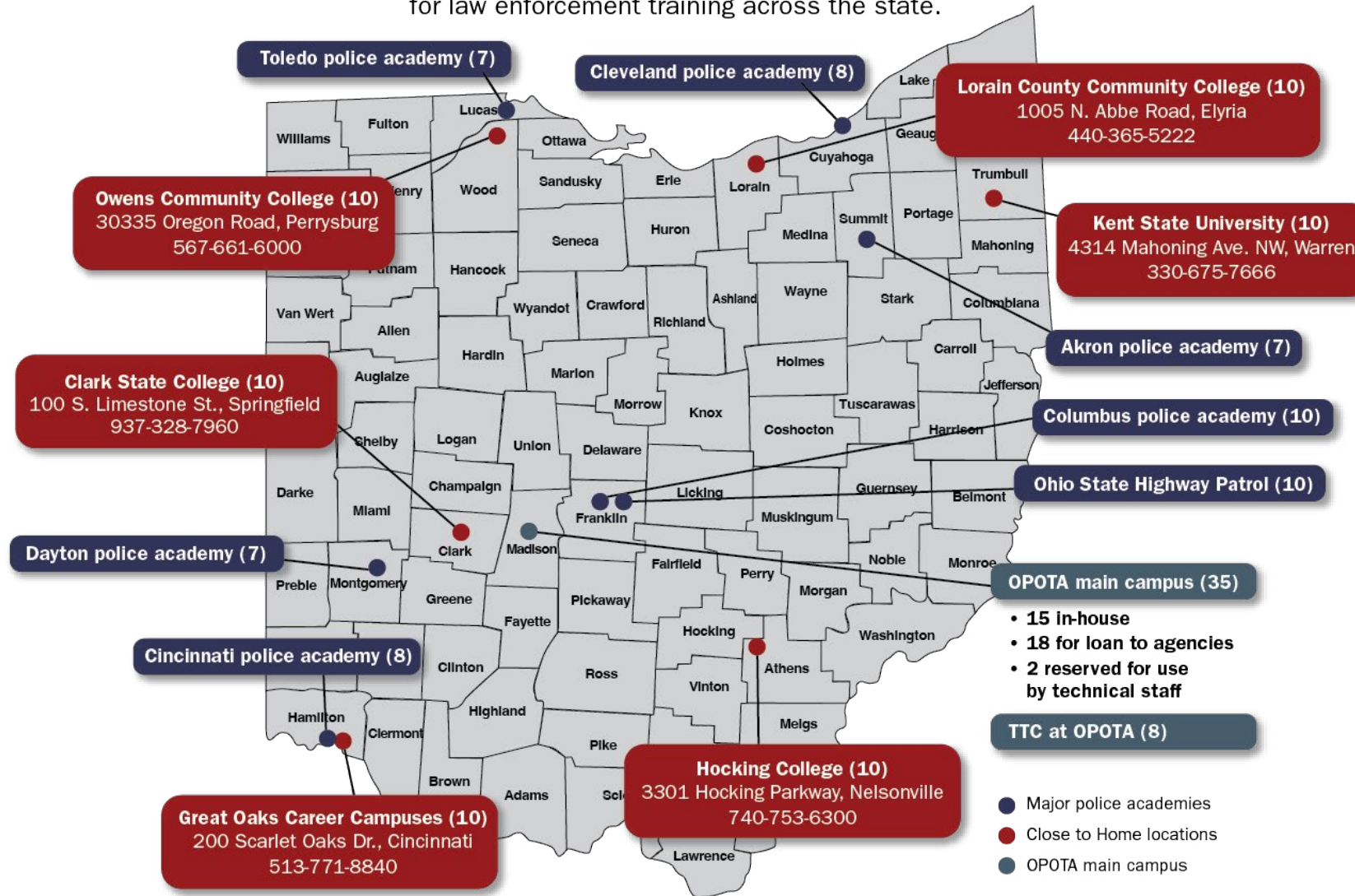
The scenarios were produced in collaboration with Ohio University, the Athens and OU police departments, and the Athens County Sheriff's Office.

Quinlan said his goal is to produce new scenarios every year, with work already underway on the next series, tentatively scheduled to launch in summer 2025.

At least a couple of the new scenarios will build on the first ones, he said: "We imagine it like a Netflix series, where people get used to the characters and their back stories. In that sense, it reflects reality — the fact that calls for service are frequently repeat calls involving the same people."

Where the VR headsets are going

The Attorney General's Office bought **160** virtual reality headsets and will make them available for law enforcement training across the state.



How to get VR training

The Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy will soon be distributing virtual-reality headsets to law enforcement training sites around Ohio. (See map.)

Before that happens, though, OPOTA will train and certify VR instructors from those sites. Agencies that want VR training but weren't provided with headsets might find that their best option, at least early on, is to send their officers to OPOTA or to a Close to Home regional site.

Later, as more instructors are certified, agencies will have the option to borrow headsets from OPOTA and — if availability permits — from Close to Home partners or police academies. Agencies seeking to borrow headsets need to have a certified trainer in-house or have one lined up from another agency.

Questions about the lending of VR headsets should be directed to Administrative Assistant Stephanie Parish at OPOTA. You can reach her by phone at (740) 845-2480 or by email at Stephanie.Parish@OhioAGO.gov.

Questions about VR training at regional sites should be directed to individual Close to Home partners. Contact information for regional sites is on the Close to Home Webpage at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/OPOTACloseToHome.



Hear more from the AG

"It's the next best thing to actually being on the street ..."

"We want to make sure there's a baseline of commonality across Ohio ..."

Hear from law enforcement

Sgt. John Earl, Whitehall Police:
"I was very drawn into it."

Lt. Amber Rich, Columbus Police:
"You feel like you're the third officer on scene."

Sgt. Justin Galbraith, Fulton County Sheriff's Office:
"It gives them a whole new perspective."

▶ To watch all of these videos, go to the playlist at <https://tinyurl.com/VRremarks>

Training overhaul gets green light

The Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTC) has unanimously approved the vision put forth by Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost's Blue Ribbon Task Force on the Future of Police Training.

The 11-member task force was convened by Yost in autumn 2023 to identify areas for improvement in basic and advanced peace officer training, determine recommended standards for new officers, outline expectations for instructors, and establish new training methods.

In February, the group issued seven recommendations:

- Update the Peace Officer Basic Training (POBT) curriculum.
- Establish certification levels to reflect an officer's training and experience.
- Create a Tactical Patrol Officer Program.
- Add new technologies and incorporate elements of reality-based situational decision-making scenarios into both basic and advanced training.
- Develop integrated lesson plans across training platforms.
- Focus continuing professional training (CPT) so that it keeps advancing police services.
- Expand annual firearms qualifications.

Three months later, OPOTC signed off on the recommendations, which require changes at the basic academy level, including adjustments to the physical-fitness standards required to graduate. Academies will also see a substitution of 72 hours of outdated curriculum with new courses on active shooter and threat response, critical decision-making, crisis mitigation and de-escalation, communications and mediation, and incident debrief. The new curriculum will take effect in July 2025.

In the meantime, several elements of the overhaul are being implemented.

"We're already updating lesson plans to include things like a community perspective, a supervisory perspective, an officer-wellness piece," said Tom Quinlan, executive director of the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy and chairman of the Blue Ribbon Task Force. "And we're already rolling out VR training across the state, already building out the Tactical Patrol Officer Program with the Ohio Tactical Officer Association, already updating CPT."

The recommendations that would alter basic training require amendments to Ohio Administrative Code. Yost's office will work with the legislature on that.

▶ The full task force report is available at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/The-Future-of-Police-Training-in-Ohio.

FELONIOUS FANTASIES

Detective's fake ads snare men looking for sex with moms and their underage daughters

Catching rats and other vermin starts with using the right bait, and when Detective Dan Haueter sets the trap, they come scurrying out of the shadows.

Haueter is a detective with the East Palestine Police Department and a member of the Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force.

What he catches are especially repugnant creatures. And the bait they're most drawn to are ads that Haueter posts on known prostitution websites — specifically, ads that appear to be posted by a mom offering herself and her underage daughter for sex.

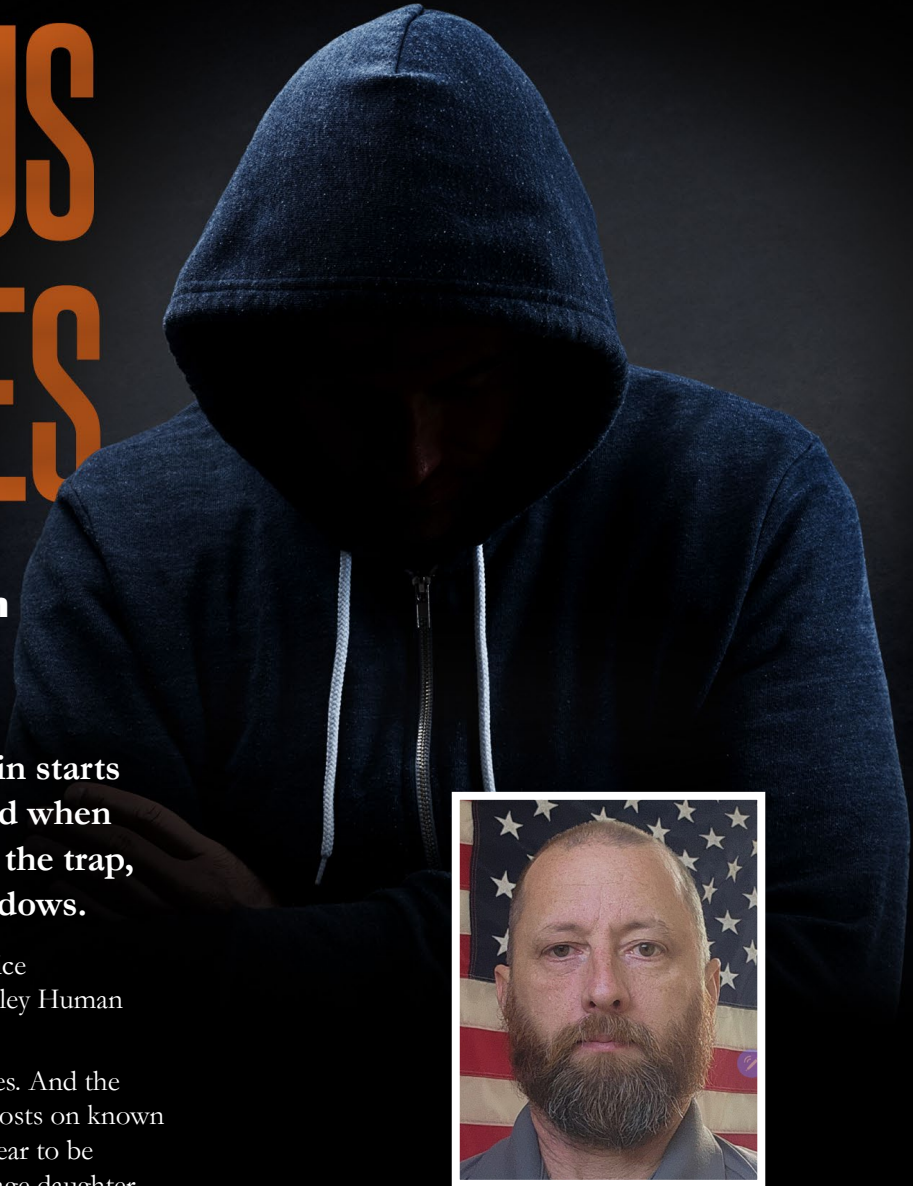
What usually follows is an exchange of messages with interested men that concludes with a meeting time and place. When the dupe shows up — and it's always a guy — Haueter or his fellow officers are there to arrest him.

Haueter doesn't limit himself — he and other task force members post multiple types of sex ads — but his mother-underage daughter ads generate the most hits. For comparison: During a three-day period in 2022, a mother-daughter ad he posted elicited more than twice the number of replies (67) than an ad for a 15-year-old runaway (32).

"After they're arrested, and sometimes even during the undercover conversation, some of these guys admit that sex with a mother and young daughter has always been a fantasy," Haueter said. "They say it's on their bucket list. They actually use the term 'bucket list.'"

Haueter has spent the past 18 years investigating cybercrimes against minors. He has been recognized nationally for his work and has had successful prosecutions in 18 states, Japan and the United Kingdom.

He will discuss his work at the Attorney General's 2024 Human Trafficking Summit on Aug. 7 at the Hyatt Regency Columbus.



“After they're arrested, and sometimes even during the undercover conversation, some of these guys admit that sex with a mother and young daughter has always been a fantasy. They say it's on their bucket list. They actually use the term 'bucket list.'”

Detective Dan Haueter
East Palestine Police Department and
Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force

His workshop — “Unmasking the Shadows in Undercover Operations: The Hidden Costs of Men Buying Sex” — addresses the disturbing reality of familial sex trafficking, the often-unseen victims, and the clandestine world of undercover advertisements.



About 20 years ago, just as the anti-trafficking movement was gaining traction in the United States, Haueter was in the early stages of his law enforcement career. At the time, America Online (AOL) chat rooms were wildly popular, but many of the rooms were sexual in nature — and some were virtual back alleys that attracted men seeking parents willing to traffic their kids.

“These rooms were always full,” Haueter said. “You have to remember that AOL limited the number of people in a chat room to 25 or something like that. There were always people waiting to get in. So, I started posting dad-daughter profiles and mom-daughter profiles in the chat rooms. And, I mean, they were by far the most popular profiles we put up.”

Stunned by the apparent demand, Haueter began researching family-facilitated human trafficking. What he learned is that the parent behind the depravity — sometimes a prostitute herself — is often pimping the child to support a drug habit.

That's not always true, though. In one case, he said, a mother in the state of Washington trafficked her young daughter in exchange for tennis shoes.



It isn't clear how common sex trafficking of minors is. Understandably, the sex trafficking of minors by a family member is even harder to pin down.

Haueter's experience provides a limited view, and mostly from the demand side.

Since 2021, his ads on prostitution websites featuring underage females have resulted in 106 arrests, and his ads for familial sex — typically mother-daughter sex — have netted 73 arrests. In both cases, they were all men.

A research study in the journal *Criminal Justice Review* concluded that statistics on the prevalence of domestic sex trafficking of minors — a category that doesn't distinguish between minors trafficked by family or by outsiders — “are elusive, often presented as crude estimates, and not based on a strong foundation.”

The nature of the crime works against detection. Victims are often very young with no sense that they're being exploited. Further, the person grooming the victims — maybe even abusing them — and then selling them for sex is often the very person they depend on for food, shelter,

HUMAN TRAFFICKING SUMMIT 2024

When: Wednesday, Aug. 7

Where: Hyatt Regency Columbus, 350 N. High St. (a new location this year)

Key facts

The focus will be the vital role that a continuum of care — an integrated system of services and resources — plays in helping survivors achieve long-term healing on what AG Yost calls the Highway to Hope.

The fee to attend is \$50 a person before July 1, \$75 after that date. Early registration is encouraged, as attendance is limited for workshops. On-site registration will not be available. The registration deadline is July 15, and no refunds will be given after this date.

To register and for more information, go to [https://ohioattorneygeneral-regfox.com/human-trafficking-summit](https://ohioattorneygeneral.gov/ohioattorneygeneral-regfox.com/human-trafficking-summit).

clothing and even love, or what they see as love, anyway.

Still, the piecemeal statistics that do exist on familial sex trafficking are shocking.

The *Criminal Justice Review* article noted the following:

- A 2022 report from Hawaii found that in 25% of child trafficking cases, the first trafficker was a family member.
- A report from Minnesota based on 2018 data found that 45% of victims were recruited by someone in the family and that 24% were actually trafficked by a relative.
- A 2020 report from the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services identified a “caretaker perpetrator” in 47% of child trafficking cases.

Haueter's goal in posting internet ads is to reduce demand, given that less demand means fewer victims. This approach reflects a radical shift in the fight against human trafficking in general — going after the buyers as well as the perpetrators,

while offering help to the survivors.

The websites where Haueter posts ads — all are foreign-based prostitution sites — allow users to specify regions.

“So I'll post for Youngstown, Pittsburgh, Warren and New Castle because they're within a half-hour, 40-minute drive,” he said.

The ads attract attention not only from people in the immediate area but also people living hours away, and from motorists and truckers passing through.

“We arrested a guy recently who drove two hours from Erie,” Haueter said. “And we got a guy from upstate New York who was on his way to Akron for a Porsche festival. He literally made a detour because he said he'd always fantasized about a mom and daughter.”



In Ohio, an adult arrested for soliciting sex with a minor — also known as importuning — is charged with a felony. The degree of felony depends on several factors, including the victim's age. In addition to serving prison time and paying possible fines, those found guilty must register as a sex offender.

Because of the volume of felony cases resulting from the mother-underage daughter ads he posts and the backlog it creates in the court system, Haueter periodically switches to ads focused on adults. The ads are still intended to curb demand, but adults arrested for soliciting sex with another adult are charged with misdemeanors, making the disposition of their cases simpler and faster.

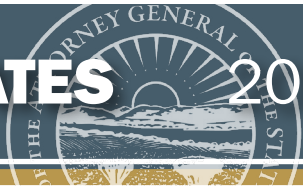
He eventually switches back to ads featuring only moms and underage daughters, complete with fake photos he generates — the trap that snares the big rats, Haueter said.

“I find that the guys we get with the mom-underage daughter ads are the ones who have the vast amounts of child pornography,” he said.

“We got a guy in 2021. He had something like 45,000 images of child pornography that he was distributing, including photos of his niece as he sexually abused her. He lived 20 minutes from us, in Saint Clair Township.

“Thanks to the ad, we got him.”

The Mahoning Valley Human Trafficking Task Force is led by the Mahoning County Sheriff's Office and includes resources from the Bureau of Criminal Investigation, New Waterford Police Department, Cortland Police Department, Austintown Police Department, Youngstown Police Department, the Ohio Investigative Unit and the Ohio State Highway Patrol. The task force is one of seven human trafficking task forces supported by the Attorney General's Ohio Organized Crime Investigation Commission.



NEWS UPDATES 2024

Mark Your Calendar

Save the Dates

HUMAN TRAFFICKING SUMMIT

Aug. 7 at Hyatt Regency Columbus. Registration ends July 15. Details at <https://ohioattorneygeneral.regfox.com/human-trafficking-summit>.



Sept. 30-Oct. 1 at Kalahari Resorts & Conventions in Sandusky. A job and career fair will be held on Sept. 29.

Registration opens in mid-July. Details at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/LETS.

ON THE JOB

CRIMINAL JUSTICE UPDATE

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VR TRAINING

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