

# Pittsburgh Police



Sex Assault Family Crisis Unit

# Unit Makeup

- 2 Sergeants
- 12 Sex Assault / Child Abuse Detectives
- 2 Missing Person Detectives
- 1 Domestic Violence Detective
- 1 Megan's Law Detective

# Responsibilities

- Investigates all sexual assaults, both adult and child, within the City of Pittsburgh.
- Investigates all physical abuse of children.
- Investigates crimes enumerated in Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code.
- CYF authority is found in Title 23 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code.

# Investigations

- Investigation initiated upon receipt of police report, childline, or when responding to the scene/hospital.
- Investigation entails victim and witness interviews. Evidence collection, including community assistance (surveillance cameras) Actor interrogation.
- Confer with District Attorney's office about filing charges.
- Child victims are forensically interviewed at Children's Hospital or A Child's Place of Western Pa.
- According to Pennsylvania Law, a child is 12 years of age or younger.

# Difficulties / Obstacles of Sexual Assault Investigations

- Majority of Sexual Assaults are committed by someone the victim knows.  
Family member, friend, loved one, authoritative figure.
- Because of a known actor, the victim often doesn't report it immediately, also known as "delayed reporting".
- Most assaults happen "behind closed doors". There are no witnesses.
- Many assaults occur over time, up to many years, especially with child victims. This leads to the lack of evidence.
- More specifically with "college rapes", drugs and/or alcohol play an important part on consensual versus non consent in proving a case.
- Because the case relies solely on the victim's statements, the jury is instructed: "If the victim's testimony, standing alone, is believed by you (jury), that is sufficient evidence to find the defendant guilty"

# 2018

- 1584 cases investigated
- 120 arrests made

# PAAR

- Pittsburgh Action Against Rape
- Provides legal advocacy and trauma based therapy/counseling
- Advocates assists detectives with communicating with the victims.
- Advocates stay by victim's side during entire court proceedings.

# Megan's Law

- 473 registrants living in the City of Pittsburgh
- 450 registrants employed in the City of Pittsburgh.
- Personally checks each address for compliance yearly.
- Misconception: All registrants cannot be around children, schools, playgrounds, etc.



# Domestic Violence

- All domestic violence reports are vetted by the Domestic Violence Detective
- Detective follows up with the victim
- In 2018 there were approximately 9,960 domestic violence reports vetted but not necessarily all cases needed follow up investigations.

# Missing Persons

- 955 total cases in 2018.
- Most cases are repeat runaways.
- Elderly persons go missing because of pre-existing medical problems.
- Depending on the circumstances surrounding the missing person, Homicide Detectives get involved early on in the case.
- Sometimes the missing person is found deceased. Detectives will try to determine if the death was the result of suicide, accident, or homicide.