

Many schools have police officers stationed on campus. Other schools may call police to respond to particular situations. Even though you are in school, you still have rights when interacting with police.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:
POLICE IN SCHOOLS

PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS
Practice saying these **3 things**:

I DO NOT
CONSENT
TO THIS
SEARCH.

AM I
FREE TO
LEAVE?

I WANT TO REMAIN SILENT & I
WANT TO SPEAK TO A LAWYER.

SEARCHES

Can a police officer search me or my possessions without a warrant?

GENERALLY, NO. police need a warrant (an order signed by a judge) to search a student or her possessions. An officer may still search you without a warrant if there's an emergency or if you agree to the search.



Do I have the right to refuse if an officer asks to search me or my possessions?

Officers without a warrant may ask you for permission to search. You can say, **"I DO NOT CONSENT TO THIS SEARCH."** You cannot be punished for refusing to allow a search.

Can a police officer search my locker?

YES. lockers are considered school property, so schools can agree to the search. If you have possessions in your locker (like a purse or backpack), the officer probably can't search them without a warrant or other exception.

QUESTIONING

Can a police officer question me in school? Each school has its own policy. Most schools encourage officers to question students off campus, but do allow officers to question students in school if the officer requests it. If an officer suspects you of a crime, he or she has to advise you of your right to remain silent before questioning you.

Do police officers have to tell my parents before questioning me in school?

It depends on the school and your age. Each school has its own policy about whether it has to tell parents before officers question students. Most schools notify parents of students under 12 if an officer is questioning the student. Schools don't usually notify parents of older students.

Do I have the right to remain silent?

YES. It is your choice whether or not to speak to an officer. If you choose to speak, keep in mind that your words can be used against you. If you don't want to talk to an officer, you should first ask **"AM I FREE TO LEAVE?"** If the officer says you are free to leave, you

should go. If the officer says you are not free to leave, you should say **"I WANT TO REMAIN SILENT AND I WANT TO SPEAK TO A LAWYER."** Then, you should not speak to an officer until after you speak with a lawyer.

ARRESTS

Can I be arrested at school? YES, but only if the officer has probable cause to believe that you committed a crime. Probable cause means the officers knows facts (not a rumor or a guess) that make it more likely than not you committed a crime.



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If you are arrested, **ask for a lawyer RIGHT AWAY.** Do not speak or answer questions until you can talk to a lawyer. Do not resist or fight the officer. Ask for the officer's name and badge number.

Can I be handcuffed or physically restrained by a police officer in school?

YES, but only under certain conditions. A student can be handcuffed or restrained if he or she is under arrest, or if it is

necessary to stop behavior that poses a risk of serious harm to others or to school property. You shouldn't be handcuffed or restrained as a form of ordinary school discipline.

COMPLAINTS

Can I complain about the behavior of the officer? YES. You can make a complaint if the officer physically assaults you, curses at you, touches you inappropriately or makes inappropriate comments, makes negative comments about your race, religion, gender, accent, national origin or sexual orientation, or acts inappropriately in other ways. You can make complaints to the school principal and school district superintendent and to law enforcement, such as the local police or the sheriff.

Remember the officer's badge number and name and write down everything that happened as soon as you can.



Write down the names and phone numbers of witnesses.