



Deborah VanVelzen

Deb VanVelzen has been a law enforcement officer with the Des Moines Police Department since 2004. In 2005, she was assigned to the School Resource Officer Unit where she was assigned to Iowa's largest high school. In the Fall of 2019, Deb accepted the position as Youth Services Coordinator within her department overseeing youth mentoring and diversion programs. Prior to her law enforcement career, Deb was a school teacher for eight years, teaching students with special needs and coaching high school athletics.

Deb currently serves on both the Iowa and the National Association of School Resource Officers Board of Directors. She has developed curriculum for NASRO's Basic and Advanced Courses and has traveled national and internationally as an instructor for NASRO.

Deb has her bachelor's degree in Education from Simpson College (Iowa) and is a veteran of the Iowa Army National Guard (Combat Medic). She has two daughters and an amazing husband, Joe.

THE TRAUMA-INFORMED SRO

For many students that are victims or witnesses of crime, the school resource officer is often the first contact they will have with the justice system. In order to develop and preserve effective and meaningful relationships with students, it is imperative that SROs and other school stakeholders be able to understand, recognize and address trauma in our youth.

This training will provide an overview of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma and the impact it has on developing youth. In addition, ACEs and its correlation to the School to Prison Pipeline will be examined. Trauma-informed policing practices will be discussed with an emphasis on emotional grounding techniques, trauma-informed interviewing strategies and community-based programs that provide a defense to the negative outcomes of childhood trauma.