

# ACES 9-1-1

(Adults Calling Emergency Services)

*Your Winning Hand in Teaching Adults the Proper Use of 9-1-1*

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In 2007, the Communications Division of the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office received approximately 170,000 9-1-1 calls. Of those calls, 27,000 were of a non-emergent nature. That's 27,000 times a highly trained 9-1-1 operator was tied up with routine calls that could have, and should have, been directed to a regular public safety telecommunicator. The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office provides 9-1-1 service for 45 of the county's 53 municipalities at an average cost per call of \$4.32. Thus, non-emergent calls on the 9-1-1 emergency number created an additional cost to municipalities of \$116,640. If that's not bad enough, the real danger is that these non-emergent calls to 9-1-1 tie up 9-1-1 operators, and keep them from handling real emergency calls for assistance.

The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office Communications Division teaches first graders the proper use of 9-1-1 through its "S.E.E.K. 9-1-1" (Sheriff's Emergency Education for Kids) program and has taught over 30,000 students since its inception. It became apparent that Monmouth County children had a better understanding of the proper use of the 9-1-1 emergency number than their parents or grandparents did. An adult educational program was needed to teach adults the proper use of 9-1-1 to help save lives and also to save money.

On May 22, 2008, Sheriff Kim Guadagno unveiled the "ACES 9-1-1" program at Howell Senior Center. "ACES" stands for Adults Calling Emergency Services and 9-1-1 is the emergency number to call. The concept for an adult educational program for 9-1-1 was developed by Public Safety Telecommunicator Kristin Aras. While attending a one-week instructor certification program at the Monmouth County Police Academy, Kristin made a lesson plan for one of her required presentations on a program that would teach adults the proper use of 9-1-1. Kristin brought this concept to Sheriff Guadagno who, immediately seeing the value in the program, assigned Senior Public Safety

Telecommunicator John Cuccia and Undersheriff Ted Freeman to work with Kristin on the development of the program. Partnerships were forged with the Monmouth County Office on Aging and the Monmouth County Department of Economic Development and Tourism, and work began on a video-based program on 9-1-1 education for adults.

John Wanat, Executive Director of the Office on Aging, contributed the concerns of seniors on the use of 9-1-1. Rick Brancadora of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism contributed his videography and film-editing expertise to the project. The final product was "ACES 9-1-1," a video-based program that teaches adults the proper use of the 9-1-1 emergency number.

"ACES 9-1-1" starts with explaining the "Chain of Survival" which consists of the Citizen Link, 9-1-1 Operator and the Emergency Responder. The most important person in that chain is the Citizen Link, for that link provides the information and updates needed by the other two. The differences between a normal call and a 9-1-1 call are explained, with emphasis on the additional number of rings required to make the 9-1-1 connection. How cell phones work in the 9-1-1 system is also reviewed to provide a better understanding of the value of that vital communications tool.

The "ACES 9-1-1" video illustrates scenarios in which 9-1-1 should and should not be used. These differences are reviewed immediately after the video with a PowerPoint presentation as well as a brochure that is given to all participants.

At the National Sheriffs' Association annual conference in June of 2008, Ted Freeman met with National Association of Triads Director Ed Hutchison and the president of the 9-1-1 Cell Phone Bank, James Mosieur, to review the "ACES 9-1-1" program. As a result of that meeting, the 9-1-1 Cell Phone Bank and National Triad

