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San Diego Police Ready Nation's First Childcare Center to Open in New Year

POLICE AGENCIES ACROSS U.S. LOOKING TO SAN DIEGO AS MODEL FOR INNOVATIVE POLICE-LED SOLUTION

SAN DIEGO – After years in the making, the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) and Police Officers Association held a ribbon cutting event today as the agency readies to open the nation's first childcare center customized to meet the needs of law enforcement. *Due to safety concerns, the location of the center is not being publicized.*

"Thanks to our Police Officers Association and funding secured by Sen. Toni Atkins, we are leading the way when it comes to supporting our law enforcement community," Mayor Todd Gloria said. **"This first-in-the-nation childcare center is another way we are showing our commitment to recruit and retain our police officers."**

Led by the San Diego Police Officers Association and championed by Mayor Todd Gloria and Chief David Nisleit, the childcare center will be the first to offer San Diego Police officers extended-hour childcare at affordable rates thanks to a public-private partnership.

"The San Diego Police Department is proud to be leading the nation in efforts to create pathways for working parents to have quality childcare while pursuing a career in law enforcement," Police Chief David Nisleit said. **"This childcare center has been years in the making and is a great example of innovative, police-led solutions that benefit our officers and our communities who depend on them."**

The center will provide childcare at 50% of the market rate to SDPD officers and offer extended hours to accommodate non-traditional work schedules and call-out situations of police officers. KinderCare is the approved childcare provider and will also pay its employees 20% above market rate salaries.

The facility includes an outdoor play area, infant area with cribs, changing tables and refrigeration, a play and learning space for multi-aged children, restrooms fitted to serve children, toys and learning equipment, and more.

“The SDPOA takes pride in leading the development of innovative solutions that aid in recruiting, retaining and enhancing working conditions for our officers,” Jared Wilson, SDPOA President said. “Establishing a childcare center that caters to the unique needs of our members is vital, especially for parents who dedicate their lives to protecting the City while on duty.”

In an innovative approach, KinderCare is currently working with a waitlist of parents to determine their needs and maximize the number of available spots at any given time to provide more flexibility with officer schedules. The center is anticipated to open in January 2024.

“We know childcare is an essential benefit to every working family: Data shows that more than half of parents would stay in their current jobs if they had a childcare benefit,” said Dan Figurski, President of KinderCare for Employers and Champions. “For SDPOA parents, many of whom spend long hours every day ensuring the safety of their community, childcare is vital to their ability to do their jobs. We’re honored to support SDPOA parents by caring for their children.”

The initiative is funded for three years and includes a \$3 million investment from State grants secured by Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins that was allocated in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget, with additional philanthropic support from KinderCare and the Cushman Foundation’s Making a Difference for San Diego grant program. The total for the three years is approximately \$5.7 million.

Since the initial announcement in 2022, law enforcement agencies across the nation have reached out to San Diego for guidance to replicate this childcare model for other police departments.

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