

# Interaction between society and the police: necessity or waste of time? forensic medical institutes: places only of suffering or can pain be alleviated and knowledge disseminated?

## Abstract

This article aims to present a proposal for a change in the conduct of the Police Institution within Forensic Medical Institutes and Regional Units of the Technical-Scientific Police of the Civil Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro, transforming an environment of pain and suffering into a less distressing space and one conducive to the dissemination of knowledge.

**Keywords:** interaction, police, society, pain, knowledge

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**Claude Jacques Chambriard**

Professor at the Department of Trauma and Orthopedics, UFRJ, Brazil

**Correspondence:** Claude Jacques Chambriard, Professor at the Department of Trauma and Orthopedics, UFRJ, Master's Degree in Orthopedics and Traumatology, Specialist in Orthopedics and Traumatology, Hand Surgery, Reconstructive Microsurgery, Bone and Connective Tissue Tumors. Occupational Physician, Lawyer, Postgraduate in Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure, Forensic Medical Examiner at the Homicide Division of the Capital – Civil Police of the State of Rio de Janeiro (PCERJ), Brazil

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## Introduction

### Social responsibility and reputational capital: a path toward corporate sustainability

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a principle that promotes ethical and sustainable corporate practices, seeking to balance economic, social, and environmental interests.

Companies that adopt good governance practices, respect for human rights, and transparent interaction with stakeholders often enhance their reputational capital—an intangible asset that strengthens trust and loyalty among consumers, investors, and communities. Stakeholders—groups directly or indirectly impacted by organizational actions—range from internal employees to society as a whole.

Incorporating the interests of these groups into strategic planning not only reduces the risk of conflicts but also generates long-term benefits such as competitive advantage and brand value. Furthermore, good social responsibility practices can be translated into concrete actions, such as implementing diversity and inclusion programs, initiatives to reduce carbon emissions, and community development projects. These measures reinforce the organization's ethical commitment and promote alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The relevance of human rights in the corporate context is also undeniable.

Respect for decent working conditions, the elimination of discriminatory practices, and the fight against child labor or conditions analogous to slavery are fundamental principles that help organizations mitigate negative impacts and build fairer and more balanced relationships. As argued by Carroll (1991)<sup>1</sup>, social

<sup>1</sup>Archie Carroll's (1991) pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility

responsibility should be integrated at four levels: economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic. In this sense, adopting responsible practices is not only a moral imperative but also a strategy to strengthen long-term organizational sustainability.

Based on the concepts of Social Responsibility, the following question arises:

### Is interaction between society and the police important?

Certainly, the interaction between the police and society is a matter of utmost importance for public safety and the maintenance of democratic order. Below are some key points highlighting its importance:

**Improved trust and cooperation:** When the police and society establish a relationship of trust and cooperation, there is a significant increase in the effectiveness of police actions. The population feels safer and more confident in police work, and officers gain more information and support to carry out their duties.

**Identification and resolution of problems:** Interaction allows community demands and needs to be understood and addressed more effectively. Police officers can identify issues affecting the population, including violence, crime, and other conflicts, and act more assertively in resolving them.

**Crime prevention:** Interaction between the police and society helps prevent crime and promote public safety. When the population becomes aware and engaged in community safety, crime rates tend to decrease. Joint efforts enable the development of more effective prevention strategies.

(CSR) holds that organizations should satisfy four levels of responsibility simultaneously: **Economic** (be profitable), **Legal** (obey the law), **Ethical** (be ethical), and **Philanthropic** (be a good corporate citizen).

**Improvement in police work quality:** Community feedback and criticism allow police officers to adjust their approach and improve their relationship with the public. Interaction also provides opportunities for additional resources and training.

**Strengthening democracy:** Transparency, dialogue, and public participation in public safety actions contribute to stronger democratic institutions and increased legitimacy.

In summary, interaction between police and society is fundamental for public safety, crime prevention, improved police performance, and the strengthening of democracy.

### Legal framework

The forensic examination of the body (corpus delicti examination) is a crucial legal procedure in the investigation of bodily injuries and violent deaths.

**Legal provision:** It is established by law as a means of proof. Article 158 of the Brazilian Code of Criminal Procedure states that such examination is mandatory when the offense leaves traces.

**Proof of materiality:** It is essential to demonstrate the existence of bodily injury or violent death. Without it, investigations may not be concluded, or charges may be dismissed due to lack of evidence.

**Determination of circumstances:** The examination helps identify cause of death, type of injury, level of violence, and other relevant factors.

**Basis for judicial decisions:** Judges rely on this evidence to determine penalties, acquit defendants, or establish compensation.

**Protection of victims' rights:** It supports the granting of protective measures and ensures proper legal recognition of harm suffered.

### Waiting room environment in forensic medical institutes (IML) and technical-scientific police units (PRPTC)

The waiting room in forensic institutes is an environment that can evoke intense emotional responses.

**Sadness and emotional pain:** Many individuals are seeking information about deceased loved ones.

**Expectation and anxiety:** Waiting for identification results or forensic reports generates uncertainty.

**Need for information:** People seek clarity regarding deaths or examinations.

**Delays in service:** Prolonged waiting increases distress.

**Need for emotional support:** Presence of family or friends is often essential.

In summary, this environment is marked by sadness, anxiety, expectation, and a strong need for support and information.

### Method

An attempt was made to create a more welcoming and informative environment to distract attention and provide educational content.

Banners and a mannequin were placed in the waiting room, and oral feedback was collected from visitors.

### Objectives included:

- I. Reducing emotional stress
- II. Providing distraction
- III. Promoting learning opportunities
- IV. Humanizing services
- V. Improving service quality

### Importance of using banners

**Attention-grabbing:** Strategically placed banners attract public attention.

**Versatility:** Customizable in size, format, and content.

**Cost-effectiveness:** Lower cost compared to other media.

**Durability:** Resistant to environmental conditions.

**Visual impact:** Effective communication through images and colors.

### Project presentation

During 2022 and part of 2023, with proper authorization, an initiative was implemented at the Technical-Scientific Police Unit in Niterói, Rio de Janeiro.

Themes included:

- I. Accident prevention (diving, traffic safety)
- II. Care for the elderly
- III. Conduct during police encounters
- IV. Respectful behavior in sensitive environments
- V. Alcohol and driving
- VI. Domestic and water-related accident prevention
- VII. Disease awareness and treatment

A mannequin dressed in a police uniform was used to attract attention.

### Use of mannequins

- I. Captures attention
- II. Raises awareness
- III. Simulates real-life scenarios
- IV. Stimulates curiosity

In summary, mannequins proved to be an effective communication tool.

The following section presents the sequence of banners used and their arrangement in the waiting room of the PRPTC-Niterói.

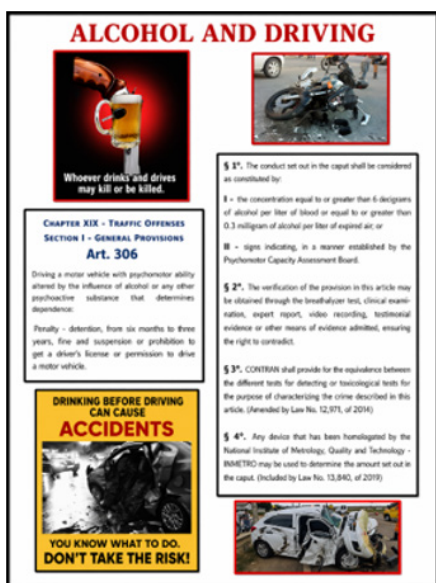
In the illustration provided alongside, we present the banner conveying messages about the importance of wearing seat belts in the rear seats of motor vehicles; the importance of not diving into unknown waters and its possible consequences; and the need for care of elderly individuals within the family environment.



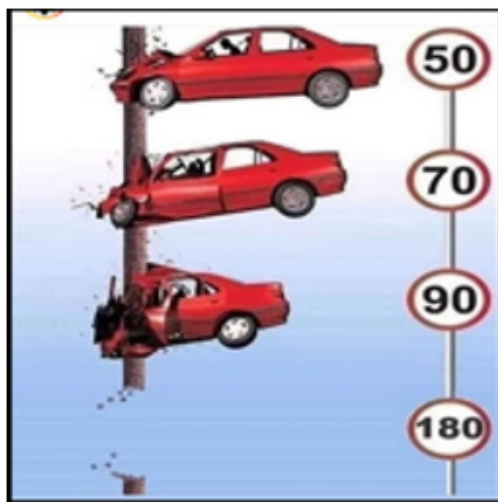
In the illustration provided alongside, we present the banner conveying the message of the importance of maintaining respect when facing a police approach.



In the illustration provided alongside, we present the banner conveying the message about the dangers of alcohol consumption when driving motor vehicles and its possible consequences.



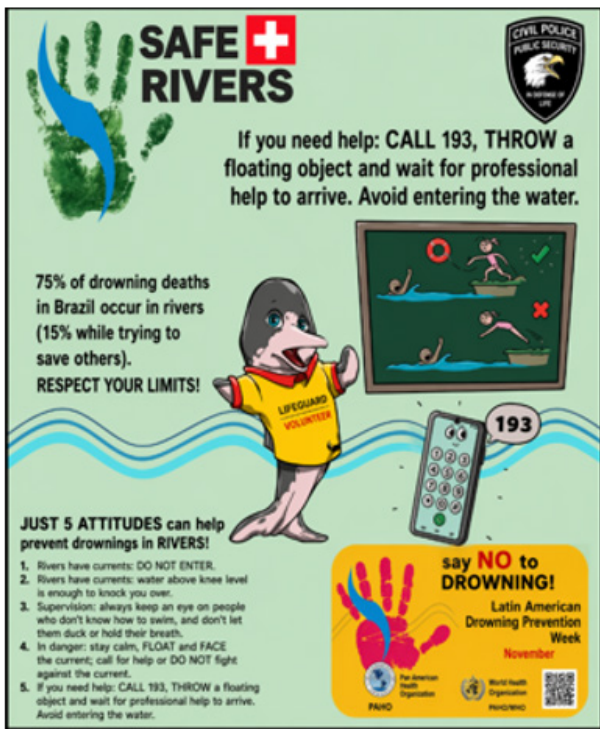
In the illustration provided alongside, we present the banner conveying the message regarding the consequences of collisions involving motor vehicles, considering speed as a determining variable.



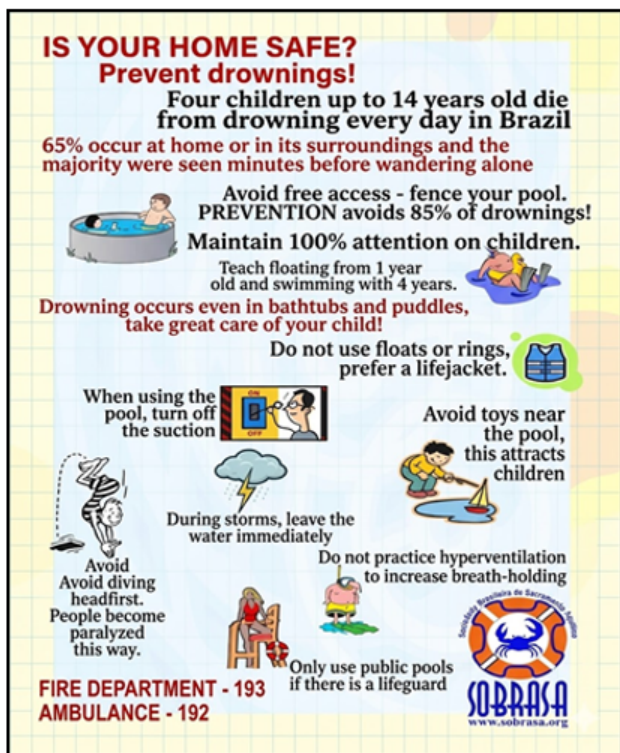
In the illustration provided alongside, we present the banner conveying the message regarding the dangers of the use of illicit drugs.



In the illustration provided alongside, we present the banner conveying the message regarding the proper conduct in cases of drowning in rivers.



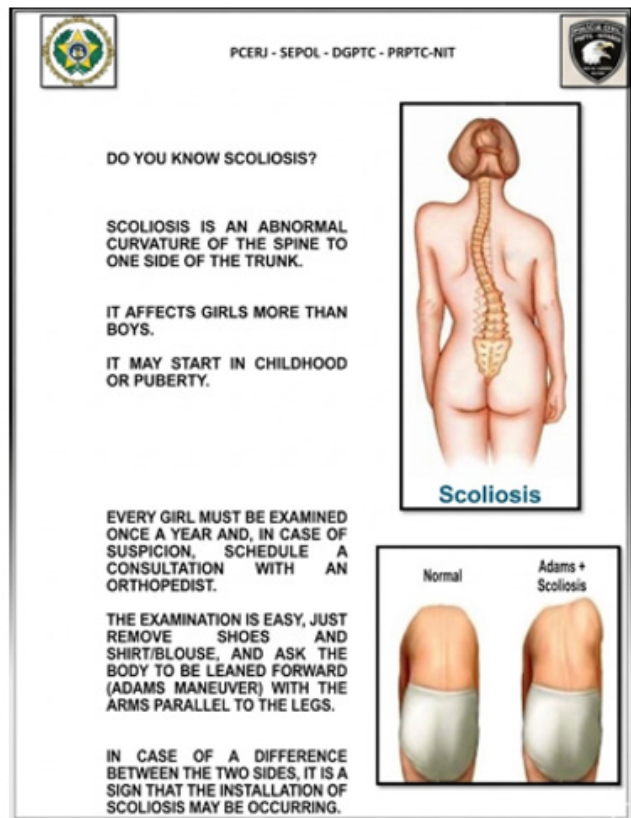
In the illustration provided alongside, we present the banner conveying the message regarding appropriate conduct in home care for the prevention of domestic drowning incidents, whose victims are children.



In the illustration provided alongside, we present the banner conveying the message regarding appropriate conduct while awaiting assistance inside PRPTC-NIT.



In the illustration provided alongside, we present the banner conveying the message regarding a disease that affects the population insidiously and that, when diagnosed, often no longer allows for conservative treatment, thus making surgical intervention necessary.



In the illustration provided alongside, we present the mannequin used in the campaign, affectionately referred to as "Steve."



### Concluding remarks

During an approximately one-year period (2022–2023) at PRPTC-NIT, we sought to interact with the society that comes to us, creating a more welcoming and informative environment.

For this purpose, banners and a mannequin were used, presenting themes related to the prevention of various types of accidents, such as diving into unknown waters, the use of seat belts in the rear seats of motor vehicles, care for the elderly, appropriate conduct during police approaches, respectful behavior within the premises considering others' pain, alcohol and driving, prevention of accidents in rivers, lakes, and homes—particularly avoiding the drowning of children—and, finally, awareness of a disease that affects the population insidiously and that, when diagnosed, often no longer allows for conservative treatment, thus requiring surgical intervention.

The use of banners as a communication strategy is supported by studies demonstrating their effectiveness in attracting attention and conveying information efficiently.<sup>1,2</sup> Likewise, the use of mannequins as visual and symbolic elements has been shown to influence perception and social behavior, contributing to engagement and awareness.<sup>3,4</sup>

As a result, we observed an extremely positive outcome, with individuals, at least temporarily, diverting their thoughts from their problems and emotional distress. This finding aligns with studies that highlight the importance of environmental and psychological interventions in reducing stress and emotional burden in sensitive settings.<sup>7,8</sup>

It was also rewarding to observe that children who attended this unit—often victims of violence—were able, even if briefly, to shift their attention to “Steve,” and even take photographs with him; this was also observed among police officers.

We were called upon to conduct a scoliosis prevention campaign at a government school, to examine children of the age at which the disease—scoliosis—appears. We were also instructed to send articles to schools to disseminate information about how the police cared for the population. Finally, the study center of the Rio de Janeiro state civil police began using the article as a reference in instruction classes for the new policies.

Finally, we were able to assist four individuals who identified scoliosis in their relatives due to the banner displayed. Two of these cases involved relatives of employees at this unit, and, with the support of specialist colleagues, they were referred for care and are currently undergoing treatment.

At present, the program has been discontinued.

### Conclusion

In view of the facts presented, we conclude that it is indeed possible to create a welcoming and informative environment in Forensic Medical Institutes (IMLs) and similar settings (PRPTCs), resulting in a reduction of emotional stress among individuals awaiting assistance in places traditionally associated with pain, sadness, and despair. Furthermore, the interaction between institutions and society plays a fundamental role in strengthening trust, legitimacy, and cooperation, as demonstrated in studies on procedural justice and police legitimacy.<sup>5,6</sup>

### Acknowledgments

None.

### Conflicts of interest

The author declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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