PRACTICES IN MODERN POLICING

POLICE-YOUTH
ENGAGEMENT

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POLICE-YOUTH
ENGAGEMENT

CONTENTS

As part of the Project Scout/Good Deed Program, a police officer in Doral, Florida, awards a child a certificate and prize to recognize good behavior.

INTRODUCTION

The Task Force on 21st Century Policing,[1] established by US President Barack Obama in 2014, heard from practitioners, subject matter experts, and other stakeholders through numerous listening sessions and written testimonies—both of which had a reccurring theme of juvenile justice. Working from the foundation of the task force's final report,[2] this guide demonstrates how positive police and youth engagement can increase public safety; reduce crime, victimization, and recidivism; and foster trust between young people and law enforcement. The guide includes background material on the issues surrounding police-youth interactions and examples of model programs for youth engagement.

Law enforcement's influence on youth

Youth interactions present a unique set of challenges and opportunities for law enforcement. For many youth, their first encounter with anything justice-related—whether in school, their neighborhoods, or social service settings—is through law enforcement. The nature and circumstances of this contact can have a significant and lasting impression on a young person.

Concerned adults, mentors, and role models can assist adolescents in achieving social competence and reducing problem behavior. Police officers are in a strong position to take on this role of influencing youth and promoting positive and productive outcomes when they interact. A law enforcement officer who builds a good relationship with youth can be a strong, protective figure for them.[3]

Officers have many opportunities to engage with young people. More than four million youth who are 16 and 17 years old have face-to-face interactions with law enforcement each year.[4] However, while research finds that positive interactions with police are predictive of positive attitudes toward the police, negative interactions are predictive of negative attitudes.[5] While juvenile arrests for all offense types have declined 65 percent since their peak in 1996, more than three million juveniles are arrested each year.[6] Of the 1,319,700 juvenile arrests in 2012 for most serious offenses, 224,200 arrests (17 percent) were

1. The task force comprised experts in the fields of policing, criminal justice, civil rights, academia, and other arenas, who worked together to identify best practices to reduce crime and build trust between the public and law enforcement. The task force's final report identified 59 recommendations and 92 action items. For details, see appendix A.

2. *Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing* (Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2015), 5, https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf.

3. *The Effects of Adolescent Development on Policing* (Washington, DC: International Association of Chiefs of Police, n.d.), 2, http://www.iacp.org/Portals/0/documents/pdfs/IACPBriefEffectsofAdolescentDevelopmentonPolicing.pdf.

4. Matthew R. Durose et al., *Contacts between Police and the Public, 2005*, Special Report (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007), 2, https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpp05.pdf, quoted in Lisa H. Thurau, "Rethinking How We Police Youth: Incorporating Knowledge of Adolescence into Policing Teens," *Children's Legal Rights Journal* 29, no. 3 (2009): 32, https://www.nlg-napap.org/sites/default/files/RethinkingPolicingYouthLT.pdf.

5. Elena T. Broaddus et al., "Building Connections between Officers and Baltimore City Youth: Key Components of a Police-Youth Teambuilding Program," *Journal of Juvenile Justice* 3, no. 1 (2013): 49, https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1P3-3688515171/building-connections-between-officers-and-baltimore.

6. "Juvenile Arrest Rates for All Crimes, 1980-2014," Statistical Briefing Book, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, December 13, 2015, https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/crime/JAR_Display.asp?ID=qa05200.

for larceny-theft, 140,000 (11 percent) were for drug abuse violations, and 120,100 (9 percent) were for disorderly conduct.[7] Arresting youth for minor offenses or for the purpose of teaching them to respect authority can have harmful, long-term consequences for young people and foster broader negative community perceptions.

Over the years, a number of studies have documented the strained relationship between law enforcement and youth, specifically youth who are (1) from urban environments, (2) from lower socio-economic areas, (3) male, and (4) a minority. These studies demonstrate that these youth may hold an implicit bias against police; moreover, they may demonstrate their perceptions of injustice and societal marginalization by acting disrespectfully toward police. Similarly, studies found that police officers may hold unconscious biases against minority youth and make assumptions about young people based on their race, age, dress, and appearance.[8]

Another factor that can complicate police-youth interactions is the fact that, as adolescents, their brain development differs from that of adults. One adolescent psychiatrist describing the interactions between the two groups said, "It's like we're talking French to kids, and they're talking Japanese. We've got a problem being heard because their brains are wired differently at this age."[9] Research reveals that the behavior of adolescents and their lack of logical reasoning can be attributed to their developmental stage, as the human brain does not fully mature until the mid- to late 20s. Some characteristics of adolescent thinking and behavior include impulsive, sometimes risky decision-making; an inability to grasp potential negative consequences; susceptibility to influence; and a tendency to question or fear authority.[10]

These behaviors and traits, while normal for adolescents, can lead to situations that involve a justice response; however, responders should take these same traits and behaviors into account. "Adolescents are fundamentally different from adults in ways that warrant differential treatment in the justice system."[11] When law enforcement officers must respond to a situation involving youth, officers can improve that interaction by approaching youth in a respectful, nonaggressive manner. Officers can emphasize that their primary role is helping people and try to establish a rapport with youth by listening to them, demonstrating patience, using age-appropriate language, and avoiding aggressive body language. Conversation, rather than confrontation, works best.[12]

With appropriate training in these areas—the basics of adolescent brain development and psychology, implicit and unconscious bias, and methods for interacting positively with youth—police officers will have the proper tools, strategies, and interventions to effectively deal with juveniles, particularly those who are combative or confrontational. Improvement in communication and understanding is an important step to improving trust and relationships.

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7.   Charles Puzzanchera, *Juvenile Arrests 2012*, Juvenile Offenders and Victims: National Report Series (Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2014): 3, https://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/248513.pdf.

8.   Broaddus et al., "Building Connections," 48–49 (see note 5).

9.   Cristina Dacchille and Lisa Thurau, "Improving Police-Youth Interactions," American Bar Association, April 2, 2013, https://apps.americanbar.org/litigation/committees/childrights/content/articles/spring2013-0413-improving-police-youth-interactions.html.

10. *Effects of Adolescent Development*, 3 (see note 3).

11. Laurence Steinburg, "Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice," *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology* 5 (2009): 459–485, quoted in *Effects of Adolescent Development*, 2 (see note 3).

12. *Effects of Adolescent Development*, 2–4 (see note 3).

A 2013 study found that police academy requirements for juvenile justice training range from no required training to 24 dedicated hours of training. Academies in 37 states spend 1 percent or less of their training hours on juvenile justice issues. Forty states focused their training solely on legal issues and the juvenile justice code, with no training on the psychological issues of youth or best practices for communicating with them. Only two states had a written curriculum that addressed youth development issues (e.g., adolescent problems and behavioral triggers). Only eight states addressed the issue of reducing law enforcement's disproportionate contact with minorities, and few educate officers on how to recognize and respond to youths' mental health, trauma-related, or special education needs.[13]

In addition to educating and training law enforcement officers, it is also important to teach juveniles how to effectively interact with police officers. These lessons do not have to take place in formal classes but can be taught through positive, non–law enforcement events, as set forth in pillar one of the final task force report. Building on existing community policing programs, law enforcement can have a positive influence on youths' perception of police and on police interaction with juveniles.

Youth engagement recommendations from the task force report

The final task force report recommended that communities adopt policies and programs that address the needs of at-risk youth and reduce aggressive law enforcement tactics. The report also identified promising practices in the area of police-youth interactions, specifically addressing the needs of juveniles who are most at risk for becoming involved in crime.[14] The task force suggested the following action items.

Law enforcement agencies should do the following:

- Reform the policies and procedures that push youth into the juvenile justice system.

- Create opportunities in schools and in the community for positive, non–law enforcement interactions with officers.

- Engage youth and communities in joint police-youth training academies, such as citizen academies, ride-alongs, and problem-solving teams.[15]

With school partners, law enforcement agencies should do the following:

- Create alternatives to student suspension and expulsion through programs that include conflict resolution, restorative justice, diversion, counseling, and family interventions.

- Use alternative strategies that involve juveniles in decision-making, including restorative justice, youth courts, and peer interventions

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13. *If Not Now, When? A Survey of Juvenile Justice Training in America's Police Academies* (Cambridge, MA: Strategies for Youth, 2013), 4, http://strategiesforyouth.org/sfysite/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/SFYReport_02-2013_rev.pdf.
14. *Final Report of the President's Task Force*, 47–48 (see note 2).
15. *Final Report of the President's Task Force*, 47–48 (see note 2).

- Adopt an instructional approach to discipline that helps students to model positive behavior and develop problem-solving skills.

- Develop school discipline policies, with input from those in the school community (e.g., teachers, students, and families), that prohibit the use of corporal punishment and electronic control devices.

- Implement a continuum of appropriate and proportional consequences to address continuous and escalating student misbehavior.

- Establish memoranda of agreement that limit the involvement of school resource officers in student discipline.[16]

With community partners, law enforcement agencies should do the following:

- Engage communities to have a role in programs and procedures that reintegrate juvenile offenders as they leave the justice system.

- Recognize youth voices in any decision-making process, facilitate youth-led problem solving, and fund youth leadership training.

- Create programs for positive and persistent interactions between law enforcement and community members.

- Develop community, school, and evidence-based programs that mitigate punitive solutions.[17]

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16. *Final Report of the President's Task Force*, 47–48 (see note 2).
17. *Final Report of the President's Task Force*, 47–48 (see note 2).

PROMISING PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Law enforcement agencies around the country, including the 15 model sites for the Advancing 21st Century Policing Initiative,[18] have developed and implemented many successful programs to engage juveniles through nonconfrontational activities and to promote positive police-youth interactions. Some of the most common programs nationally include the following:

- Explorer or youth academies offer young adults, who usually are between the ages of 14 and 21 and are interested in a career in law enforcement, opportunities to gain familiarity with the criminal justice system through training, practical experiences, and other activities.

- Police athletics or activities leagues (PALs) promote the prevention of juvenile crime and violence by building relationships among children, police, and the community through positive engagement in athletics and other activities.

- Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) is a gang and violence prevention program built around school-based, law enforcement officer–instructed classroom curricula. This program is intended as an immunization against delinquency, youth violence, and gang membership for children before they reach the prime ages for introduction to gangs and delinquent behavior.

- School resource officer (SRO) programs place specially trained law enforcement officers in schools to work closely with administrators in an effort to create a safe environment for students and staff by conducting crime prevention activities, responding to calls for service, documenting incidents, mentoring students, and making presentations on youth-related and law enforcement issues.

In addition to these long-standing programs, many agencies are responding to the final task force report with innovative and new programs that engage youth, promote healthy and safe choices, and give young people a voice in their communities.

Arlington (Texas) Police Department

Coach 5-0

The Arlington Police Department joined forces with the Arlington Independent School District Athletic Department to create a mentorship program between student athletes and police officers. Coach 5-0 began after the tragic death of a student athlete who was shot and killed during an altercation with a member of a local gang. The program is now active in more than eight high schools within the Arlington and Mansfield Independent School Districts. More than 65 police officers participate in practices,

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18. The Advancing 21st Century Policing Initiative, which IACP and the COPS Office created in 2016, provides evaluations and technical support to 15 law enforcement agencies, and published reports highlighting the agencies' program efforts constitute the Practices in Modern Policing series. For more details, see appendix B.

workouts, and games, serving as mentors to help male and female student athletes make good decisions both on and off the field or court. The goal of the program is to help inspire success on the field and in life. That goal is reached through the officers volunteering their time to mentor athletes and support the coaches' messages during team meetings.

Working with coaches, the officers help reinforce the messages of perseverance, discipline, and teamwork. They help the students to identify their skills and interests, to attain goals, and to solve problems. When necessary, officers also assist at-risk students in accessing social services. Each officer takes an individual approach to building a rapport with each teen, and that effort shows their genuine desire to connect. The supportive relationships thus formed have led to positive conversations about smart decisions and have helped the students learn important life skills that will extend past this program.

For more information about this program, visit "Youth Initiatives: Coach 5-0," Arlington Police Department, http://www.arlington-tx.gov/police/coach-5-0/.

MAY (Mentoring Arlington Youth) Program

The MAY Program was developed after the Arlington Police Department developed a team to examine juvenile offenses. An internal agency study showed that within a two-year span (2012–2014), 2,710 offenses were committed by youth between the ages of 12 and 15; African-American and Hispanic male adolescents committed 75 percent of those offenses, with an increase in criminal activity and recidivism as the youth grew older.[19] The study concluded that proactive youth engagement was the key to addressing juvenile crime and recidivism. Therefore, the police department designed a mentoring model to help young men within communities of color.

From this study and from the personal interaction between a young patrol officer and a youth the officer had arrested and was transporting to jail, the MAY Program was born. Working with the Arlington Independent School District and the Arlington Juvenile Courts, the program provides mentoring to seventh- and eighth-grade boys. The program's five goals are (1) to monitor, mentor, and motivate; (2) to "increase police legitimacy among youth through positive interaction and problem-based learning;" (3) to "create and influence positive behavioral support while building sustainable relationships;" (4) to "create social awareness" beyond the neighborhood of the juvenile; and (5) to "reduce juvenile recidivism."[20] The 12-month program provides interactive workshops on leadership, team building, education, and career development. The MAY Program fosters sustainable, long-term, one-on-one relationships between youth and adult role models through positive interaction, problem-based learning, and positive

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19. Tarrick McGuire, "Answering the Call to Mentor: 21st Century Policing through Youth Engagement," *Community Policing Dispatch* 9, no. 2 (February 2016), https://cops.usdoj.gov/html/dispatch/02-2016/answering_the_call_to_mentor.asp.
20. Arlington Police Department, "Youth Initiatives :: Mentoring Arlington Youth," City of Arlington, accessed January 18, 2017, http://www.arlington-tx.gov/police/mentoring-arlington-youth/.

Through the MAY Program, police officers in Arlington, Texas, provide mentoring to seventh- and eighth-grade boys.

behavioral support. These role models, who come from a wide array of professions and backgrounds, enhance youths' confidence by supporting academic achievement, increasing social and cultural awareness, and promoting personal development. The mentors also help ensure the youth understand the messages of the MAY Program.

The MAY Program also partners with the City of Arlington Municipal Court, the Arlington Clergy and Police Partnership, Amigos en Azul, the Arlington Alliance for Youth, the Arlington Police Foundation, and the African American Peace Officer Association of Arlington. Through these community partners, the program is able to offer the best resources, involve the community, and improve the Arlington Police Department's relationships with youth and with the broader community.

The MAY Program has had great success since its creation and recently received the COPS Office's 2016 L. Anthony Sutin Civic Imagination Award. The first cohort of the MAY Program, which included 10 mentors and 10 mentees, collected and evaluated statistical data to measure the effectiveness of the program. By the end of the program, parents reported that the MAY Program helped their sons make better decisions (50 percent). The MAY Program addressed issues specifically related to minority men and boys (100 percent). The mentees' behavior improved (66 percent), and the MAY Program helped

improve communication between parents and mentees (100 percent). Before the MAY Program, 22 percent of the mentees had received at least one citation from law enforcement; while in the program, none of the mentees received a citation, and their school discipline referrals reduced by 67 percent. In addition, teachers and school administrators reported seeing a positive change in the mentees; their behavior improved, and they were more respectful to staff, one another, themselves, and other students.

For more information about this program, visit Arlington Police Department, "Youth Initiatives :: Mentoring Arlington Youth," City of Arlington, http://www.arlington-tx.gov/police/mentoring-arlington-youth/.

Camden (New Jersey) Police Department

Project Guardian

Through a collaboration between the Camden Police Department and social service providers, Project Guardian addresses the fact that one-third of the city's violent crime in 2015 was committed by individuals ranging from 12 to 23 years old.[21] This diversion program works with at-risk youth who are involved with violence or illegal activity and shows them alternatives to criminal behavior. Police officers identify at-risk youth and send letters describing the program and its benefits to their parents and churches. The letter serves both as information about the program and a permission slip, which the parents sign and return to the police department. The officers, parents, faith-based community members, former gang members, at-risk youth, and service providers then stage interventions with the youngsters to address those issues that are identified.

There are four one-day interventions per year. The juveniles are excused from school and participate in community-building activities, such as making and delivering blankets for sick children in the hospital, to help at-risk youth break down barriers and to demonstrate opportunities for a better life. They also attend presentations given by the police chief, district attorney, and former at-risk youth and gang members who are now community activists. Last, a Project Guardian mentor who turned his life around after spending 10 years in prison lets the youth know that they are capable of making good choices, taking control of their own lives, and accepting the help offered to them.

The youth receive ongoing access to counseling, support services, and life skills training, as well as access to members of the city's school district and community programs, to help them build interpersonal connections and avoid a life of violence and crime. This proactive interaction provides encouragement for those most at-risk. Moreover, Project Guardian not only benefits the youth involved by showing them a safer, alternative lifestyle to gang life but also has value for the partners, the police department, and the community members involved in that the program reduces crime, improves quality-of-life issues, and increases community cohesion. Project Guardian is helping to change the way communities and police interact by developing positive relations with the community's youth.

For more information about this agency, visit "Camden County Police Department," http://camdencountypd.org/.

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21. Orlando Cuevas (assistant chief of police, Camden County Police Department), to The University of Chicago Crime Lab, Get in Chicago, and the MacArthur Foundation Grant Review Committee, March 3, 2015, 1.

Columbia (South Carolina) Police Department

Operation RISK (Rescuing Inner City Students and Kids)

Operation RISK is an educational program for children between the ages of 11 and 16 that focuses on deterring them from criminal behavior and association. Its goal is to educate youth on the importance of making good decisions and the potential consequences they can face if they do not. The program also gives parents opportunities to help their children avoid deviant and criminal acts.

Program participants are enrolled by their parents or guardians and undergo a daylong session in which they experience incarceration firsthand, under the supervision of Columbia Police Department officers. The police then connect the youth with the various resources offered through the police department, community partners, local businesses, and youth organizations. Once released back to their families, juveniles and their families remain in contact with the police department to further aid in the juveniles' overall development.

Operation RISK shows youth the direct consequences of bad choices that lead to criminal behaviors and actions. The program allows for a controlled and safe yet realistic experience in an effort to direct children down the right path. Through available resources and follow-up efforts, the Columbia Police Department ensures that Operation RISK has a lasting effect on the community, the parents, and, most important, the youth.

For more information about this program, visit "Risk Program," Columbia Police Department, http://columbiapd.net/risk-program.

Doral (Florida) Police Department

Juvenile Arrest/Runaway Follow-Up Youth Intervention Program

The Neighborhood Resource Unit (NRU), which comprises five officers and one sergeant, manages the majority of Doral's youth programming. The NRU team actively works together to produce quality community policing–based projects and programs.

Patrol officers who respond to criminal or destructive behavior from youth forward these contacts to the NRU for follow-up. The NRU officers assigned to the Juvenile Arrest/Runaway Follow-Up Youth Intervention Program follow up with juvenile offenders or their parents in an effort to prevent and deter future offenses.

NRU officers investigate a youth's home life and are able to provide assistance if necessary by leveraging connections with area resources. This program fosters unique relationships between officers, the youth, and their families, showing that the Doral Police Department truly cares about each and every case.

For more information about the NRU, visit "Neighborhood Resource Unit," City of Doral, https://www.cityofdoral.com/police/divisions/special-operations-division/neighborhood-resource-unit/.

Project Scout/Good Deed Program

The Project Scout/Good Deed Program is an effort to encourage more positive interaction between police and children in the community. Each NRU officer assigned to the campaign hands out at least one "good behavior ticket" per day on the streets or in the parks of specific communities selected for their levels of crime. Officers actively recognize kids' positive behaviors, such as participation in after school sport programs or community service. Students get a certificate or prizes donated from local businesses. This program not only encourages good behavior and positive actions but also helps officers connect with youth in schools and in the community in a non–law enforcement manner.

For more information about the NRU, visit "Neighborhood Resource Unit," City of Doral, https://www.cityofdoral.com/police/divisions/special-operations-division/neighborhood-resource-unit/.

Gun Lake Tribal Public Safety Department, Michigan

Annual Youth Camp

The Gun Lake Tribe's Jijak Campus is a former summer camp consisting of 176 acres of forests, wetlands, and open fields around Ingerson Lake in Hopkins Township. The campus is designed to be used as a living classroom. Components include powwow grounds, a maple sugaring building, a traditional garden, and camp facilities. During the tribe's annual summer youth camp, kids learn about many Gun Lake Tribe traditions and practices. The weeklong summer camp is an opportunity for up to 70 tribal youth to get together, socialize within their community, and engage in cultural teachings and activities.

Gun Lake tribal police officers assist with the youth camp by serving as counselors and by working and forging connections with the youth. The officers get to know the youth in a positive non–law enforcement way, which helps form bonds of trust between them. During summer camp, officers are exposed to Gun Lake Tribe traditions and practices and learn alongside the children; in this way, they show the community respect and genuine care and interest. Summer camp provides a foundation for long-term relationships.

Officers also use other community events, such as an annual powwow and community bicycle rides, to continue and strengthen relationships with tribal youth and the community as a whole. When former campers who have matured into young adults see Gun Lake tribal police officers again at community events, laughter-filled memories of shared camp experiences are frequently overheard. The connections between officers and the youth continue for a lifetime.

For more information about this agency, visit "Public Safety," Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake Tribe), http://mbpi.org/tribal-justice/public-safety/.

Indio (California) Police Department

Truancy Prevention Project

The Indio police department was one of six agencies that the US Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance selected to participate in its Smart Policing Initiative—a grant program that "partners local law enforcement with academic resources to tackle serious crime trends in specific areas."[22] The study[23] found that truancy and drop-out rates were "closely tied to burglary patterns in specific parts of the city."[24]

The Indio Police Department founded the Truancy Prevention Task Force to help parents and youth reduce school absences. Through this initiative, officers police hot spots for burglary and truancy. When task force officers find a student who skipped school, they issue the student a citation, bring the student back to school, and release him or her to either an SRO or legal guardian. The task force officers also work with SROs "to enforce truancy and conduct any follow-up or assistance outside of the respective schools (e.g., home visits [and] 'ditch' parties)."[25]

In addition to working with the task force, the SROs are present in the area schools to help school administration and teachers increase the safety of the school. The SROs guest teach on safety, crime prevention, and government. They also take on the role of mentor and are available to the students for help dealing with a wide range of issues.[26] The SROs also help teach parents the best strategies to deal with difficult and at-risk children. This training program, which runs for 10 weeks, covers topics such as "poor attendance and performance, alcohol and other drug use, gangs, runaways, and violent teens."[27]

Through other community events, local law enforcement engages juveniles to open the lines of communication between youth and the police. The Indio Police Department has hosted various youth forums at the Indio Teen Center, including presentations and interactive panels that address topics such as youth-community involvement and the negative consequences of school truancy.

For more information about the agency's SRO efforts, visit Indio Police Department, "Office of Community Safety," City of Indio, http://www.indio.org/your_government/police/ipd/support_service/office_community/default.htm.

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22. Tatiana Sanchez, "Indio Police: Study Links Truancy, Burglary," School Innovations and Achievement, May 2, 2013, https://www.sia-us.com/news-and-events/newsroom/indio-police-study-links-truancy-burglary.
23. Robert Nash Parker, *Indio, California, Smart Policing Initiative: Reducing Burglaries through Predictive Policing and Community Engagement* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2014), http://content.indiopd.org/pdf/2014SPI_Report.pdf.
24. Sanchez, "Indio Police: Study Links Truancy, Burglary" (see note 22).
25. Parker, *Indio, California, Smart Policing Initiative*, 13 (see note 23).
26. Parker, *Indio, California, Smart Policing Initiative*, 13 (see note 23).
27. *Quick List Youth Resource Guide* (Indio, CA: Indio Police Department, n.d.), http://www.indio.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=23452.

Louisville (Kentucky) Metropolitan Police Department

Youth-Police Advisory Council

The Youth-Police Advisory Council (YPAC) selects 30 high school students from the city of Louisville. The Louisville Metro Police Department selects students through an application with essay questions about a student's characteristics and viewpoints and through a telephone interview. The chosen high school students must be willing to state their opinions and object to others' opinions in a respectful group environment. The students must also be community oriented, self-motivated, and able to accomplish tasks without supervision.[28]

The group participates in a meeting, hosted by the chief of police, every other month for 12 months to discuss crime and safety and what is happening in the police department. The chief ensures the students have plenty of opportunities to voice their opinions and ideas regarding the different issues identified on a meeting's agenda and any other issues that affect youth in the community. The students are also able to voice their concerns about the department. Based on the information obtained during these meetings, many new initiatives, training considerations, and educational outreach efforts for teens are developed and implemented throughout the city.

The students get an invaluable look into the workings of the police department, including tours of its buildings and training facilities. In addition, the students have the chance to interact with different law enforcement leaders, who in the process become mentors; gain letters of recommendation for college; and earn community service hours toward school service requirements for participating in the council meetings.

For more information about this program, visit "Youth Police Advisory Council," City of Louisville, https://louisvilleky.gov/government/police/youth-police-advisory-council.

Books and Breakfast

Books and Breakfast began in New York City when volunteer tutors realized that some students were not doing well in their classes because they were either malnourished or did not have the proper reading comprehension skills. Some students skipped breakfast while others consumed unhealthy, highly pro-cessed foods, causing them to be either hyperactive or sleepy. Other students lacked the skills necessary to understand basic math word problems.

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28. "Youth Police Advisory Council Application," Louisville Metropolitan Police Department, accessed December 14, 2017, https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/police/community_relations/ypac_application_2017.pdf.

Seeing poor academic achievement in its schools, the Louisville Metropolitan Police Department adopted the Books and Breakfast Program for local schools. Each month, police officers serve a free, healthy, hot breakfast at a local church and provide free books to juveniles in the community who cannot afford books of their own. The goal is to distribute thousands of books to children in the Louisville area so they can read during breakfast. In the long term, the department hopes to positively impact these students' school experience, which will ultimately help them secure employment.

The department works with the community to help provide the location, the breakfast, and the books to the students. This community-police collaboration not only helps the program work more effectively but also allows the community to get involved with improving safety.

For more information about this police department, visit Louisville Metropolitan Police Department, "Police," City of Louisville, https://louisvilleky.gov/government/police.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

> "I tell all my officers when I swear them in, 'The day you raise your arm and you take that oath, to a degree you have lost your individuality because now you represent a thousand men and women wearing that uniform and your actions had better reflect positively.'"
>
> *– Jane Castor, Chief of Police (ret.), Tampa, Florida*

Based on the final task force report and its six pillars, on the Advancing 21st Century Policing Initiative, and on information gathered by the IACP's National Law Enforcement Leadership Institute on Juvenile Justice, the IACP has arrived at the following eight considerations for law enforcement agencies developing youth engagement strategies.

Consideration 1. Select and recruit new law enforcement officers who demonstrate positive qualities of an evolving 21st century officer and who exhibit sensitivity toward youth issues.

While there is not one model that describes the type of person who would make the best law enforcement officer in the area of youth engagement, some guidelines include the following:

- Hire those who embody the guardian mentality and who embrace community relationships.

- Seek candidates that reflect the community the agency serves.

- Recruit from local colleges and universities through a broad range of academic programs and clubs to identify those who are community service oriented.

- Recruit from local Boys and Girls Clubs and similar youth character-building and leadership programs to identify youth who are leaders.

- Require cadets to perform community service during and after the academy to engage with the community on a personal level.

- Evaluate and re-evaluate recruiting and hiring practices to ensure effectiveness in securing the type of candidates that can operate under a new set of expectations. If the recruiting practices are not making an impact in the community-police relationship, change them.

Consideration 2. Train and educate law enforcement officers and members of the community on adolescent brain development and behaviors.

Both academy and in-service training on interacting with youth will have a positive impact on police-youth relations. However, the onus is not only on the officer. Youth and the larger community should also be educated on the role of law enforcement, police procedure, and the laws.

- Agencies should consider incorporating some of the following topics into academy and ongoing trainings for officers: (1) adolescent psychology and development; (2) disproportionate minority contact; (3) conflict resolution, de-escalation techniques, and methods for avoiding use of force with confrontational juveniles; (4) identifying and appropriately responding to youth who have experienced violence, trauma, or abuse or who have a mental illness; (5) implicit bias and cultural awareness; and (6) communicating with youth.

- Trainings in middle and high schools should be held on topics that include the following: (1) constitutional rights, responsibilities, and the law; (2) law enforcement's responsibilities in the community; (3) implicit bias; and (4) communicating with law enforcement.

- Regular meetings, symposia, and trainings should be held jointly in the community. Both law enforcement and youth should attend. Open conversation and honest dialogue should occur and can go a long way in bridging any existing gaps.

- Training law enforcement on how best to communicate with youth during a tense confrontation, including explaining to the youth why the officer is taking particular actions or what the officer will do next—can help officers diffuse future situations.

Consideration 3. Identify youth and other leaders in the community who can help bridge the gap between youth and law enforcement.

There are many youth who are positive role models in their communities. Law enforcement agencies should include these youth leaders in discussions and activities regarding how best to engage with youth.

In addition, engage community leaders who during their youth were in trouble with the law, in gangs, or at risk but now have a positive impact on the community. The youth may better relate to these community leaders, and if the youth see that these leaders have a solid relationship with the officers, the youth may begin to see law enforcement in a positive, rather than negative, light. Both youth leaders and community activists can help dispel the notion that interacting with law enforcement makes one appear to be a snitch, which is often ingrained in children from a young age.

Consideration 4. Take advantage of the various types of social media platforms that youth use.

Law enforcement agencies should stay abreast of social media trends and new apps that youth use and should use these platforms to both engage and communicate with youth. Staying abreast of and using apps such as Kik, WhatsApp, GroupMe, and Whisper will give law enforcement credibility with youth and enable officers to listen to and engage with youth in an entirely new forum. These tools allow agencies to use a more informal approach and show the relatable human side of the agency and its officers.

Mainstream and social media often focus on negative police-youth interactions, so officers should constantly and continuously use social media to highlight positive work, interactions, and events in the community.[29]

Consideration 5. Create non–law enforcement interactions between officers and youth in the community.

Interactions between officers and youth should not be limited to enforcement actions resulting from crimes or other violations. Like many of the programs highlighted in this publication, there are a host of ways for the two groups to interact in a nonconfrontational and enjoyable setting.

Large programs like summer camps and smaller programs like movie nights or ice cream socials allow for youth and law enforcement to interact in an honest, authentic way. Through these interactions, both officers and youth will get to know one another on a personal level, not just by a uniform or clothing style.

It is important to start outreach and engagement activities when children are young so they can begin to form their own, positive opinions of law enforcement, establish long-term relationships with officers, and view officers as trusted community service members.

Consideration 6. Form or strengthen partnerships between officers and schools, district attorneys' offices, social service organizations, places of worship, local businesses, and other community stakeholders and collaborate on positive, proactive, and restorative strategies to engage youth and address juvenile justice issues.

Collaborating with schools is crucial when trying to engage youth. The results of this collaboration can encourage youth to graduate from high school and avoid criminal behavior or gang affiliations. Law enforcement and school administrators should include students in meetings and decisions. For example, rather than suspend or expel students who misbehave or cause problems, officers, school personnel, and the youth should create and implement alternatives to such punishment through restorative justice, youth courts, peer sentencing, counseling, diversion, or other interventions. Involving prosecutors and social service agencies can be an effective way to get youth the assistance they need, while avoiding punishing acts and refocusing their energy on obtaining their education.

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29. For more information about social media platforms, best practices, and model policies, visit the IACP Center for Social Media, http://www.iacpsocialmedia.org/.

Involving victims of crime can be a meaningful strategy as well. For example, in instances of graffiti or shoplifting, local business leaders can work with law enforcement and the student to arrive at a meaningful and personal way for the youth to make up for the damage caused. Similarly, religious organizations can assist by engaging a disruptive youth in its volunteer work, giving back to the community. As seen in the examples highlighted in this publication, the possibilities of community partnerships for youth engagement are limitless.

Consideration 7. Use existing and future studies on police-youth relations to implement what works best regarding youth interactions—and publicize the findings.

There is increasing focus across the justice system on using evidence-based strategies, and there are numerous resources to review research on youth programs. Representatives from a local college or university can assist with analyzing the research or conduct studies on what works best regarding youth interactions in a particular jurisdiction. Once the research findings are completed, the law enforcement agency should publicize the outcomes and announce that, when feasible, it will implement the changes to agency policies and procedures. It is important to publicize the findings in various ways so that the message is heard by youth, telling them, "We hear you and are trying to make changes to the way officers and youth interact." Use news conferences, make community presentations, and announce the efforts through traditional and social media.

Consideration 8. Institute regular health and wellness programs for officers, so they will be better equipped to stay calm and de-escalate situations in which juveniles question their authority.

As evidenced by pillar six (i.e., officer wellness and safety) of the task force report, the physical and mental health of law enforcement officers is vital to their interactions with the entire community. Agencies should institute health and wellness programs that not only protect officers in the streets or make them physically fit but also provide them with shorter shifts and outlets for the stress they face daily on the job.

Fitness boot camps, meditation classes, and individual and group counseling sessions should be available to all officers, and law enforcement executives should encourage them to attend.[30] When an officer interacts with a youth—and that youth is disrespectful, the officer will have more resources available to maintain a calm and orderly interaction if he or she is not overworked or stressed. As seen in some of the examples featured in this publication, some law enforcement agencies sponsor joint heath-focused activities for officers and youth, allowing them to build relationships while mutually improving their health and wellness habits.

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30. For information on ways to promote officer safety and wellness, visit "Center for Officer Safety and Wellness," International Association for Chiefs of Police, http://www.iacp.org/CenterforOfficerSafetyandWellness.

CONCLUSION

"Small, positive actions can and do make a big impact even while you may not immediately see or feel it."

— Youth participant at the IACP Police-Youth Engagement Roundtable, April 2016

Interacting with youth sometimes presents special challenges to law enforcement, but these interactions can also bring opportunities to intervene with youth in ways to reduce delinquency, crime, and victimization; improve education, health, and social outcomes for youth; and strengthen community relationships.

Adopting policies and programs that focus on the needs of at-risk youth are essential to fostering healthy relationships between law enforcement and youth. Training law enforcement officers on adolescent development and behavior is an important starting point for improving youth-officer communication and outcomes. As seen with the law enforcement agencies featured in this publication, there are many ways for law enforcement to proactively address the challenges and recommendations identified by the Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Some agencies identified ways to begin relationships with children at a young age, instilling trust early on, while others identified ways to engage youth who already have been involved in the justice system. Regardless of the strategies used, it is essential to engage the youth through positive, non–law enforcement activities that enable them to see law enforcement in a nonaggressive, humanistic light.

Using the broad set of concepts captured in the six pillars of the final task force report, law enforcement, together with community partners and stakeholders, can develop strategies that will address the specific needs, concerns, and goals of their communities. As the guardians of the community, it is up to law enforcement to lead change that will safeguard and protect youth and support safe, healthy, and productive futures for all community members.

APPENDIX A. HISTORY OF THE TASK FORCE ON 21ST CENTURY POLICING

Trust between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve is essential in a democracy. Following several high-profile events that exposed rifts in this relationship, President Obama established the Task Force on 21st Century Policing on December 18, 2014. The task force, comprising experts in the fields of policing, criminal justice, civil rights, academia, and other arenas, heard testimony from stakeholders around the United States and identified best practices to reduce crime and build trust between the public and law enforcement, with an emphasis on mutual respect and fair and equitable treatment.

The *Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing*[31] set forth six main topic areas, or pillars, found to be essential to healthy community-police relations: (1) building trust and legitimacy, (2) policy and oversight, (3) technology and social media, (4) community policing and crime reduction, (5) training and education, and (6) officer safety and wellness. Within these pillars, the task force laid out 59 recommendations with 92 action items. These practical steps provide a road map to help law enforcement and communities move forward to mend and strengthen relationships.

Pillar 1. Building Trust and Legitimacy

A law enforcement agency must not be seen by the community as an occupying force but rather as a legitimate, trusted, and fair authority. Embracing a guardian rather than a warrior mentality will help law enforcement gain the trust and respect of those they serve. This can be achieved through positive, non-enforcement activities (e.g., Coffee with a Cop, National Night Out, or officer athletic or activity leagues) that engage the community. The task force also recommended that agencies adopt procedural justice as their guiding principle and establish transparency and accountability to ensure that decision-making is understood by citizens. Last, creating a diverse workforce that mirrors the community will increase trust building.

Pillar 2. Policy and Oversight

An agency's policies should reflect community values. An agency can ensure this by developing comprehensive policies and responsive strategies "that reduce crime by improving relationships, increasing community engagement, and fostering cooperation."[32] Clear and comprehensive policies that ensure formal checks and balances and data analysis are critical. For example, an agency should make sure that its SRO policy states that SROs should never enforce school discipline rules and are there only to enforce crime problems.

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31. For background on the task force implementation, findings, and recommendations, read the *Final Report of the President's Task Force* (see note 2).
32. "Executive Summary," *Final Report of the President's Task Force*, 2 (see note 2).

Pillar 3. Technology and Social Media

Through the use of technology and social media, law enforcement can engage the community (particularly youth) and educate and inform citizens in an up-to-date and evolving way. Implementing new technologies can provide law enforcement agencies with an opportunity to engage the community in a discussion about their expectations for transparency, accountability, and privacy. Agencies also should monitor social media for enforcement purposes and learn about the issues that are important to the community. Using social media can also help keep the community informed about major events and provide up-to-date reports on live incidents.

Pillar 4. Community Policing and Crime Reduction

By encouraging and implementing policies that support community-based partnerships, officers can reduce crime and increase trust. Working alongside residents to identify problems and collaborate on "implementing solutions that produce meaningful results" for all engages residents, provides them with a stake in the outcome, and promotes mutual respect.[33]

Pillar 5. Training and Education

Cadets, line officers, and executives should respond to the challenges of modern policing. Academy and in-service trainings should focus on previously unaddressed subjects such as mental health, cultural differences, and youth brain development. High-quality, effective training, particularly that which comes from a highly regarded academic institution, will enable officers to better understand the diverse populations with which they work.

Pillar 6. Officer Wellness and Safety

The stress that accompanies being a law enforcement officer cannot be understated. For this reason, the mental and physical health of officers is crucial to effective and equitable policing, which is why promoting safety and wellness throughout an agency is important. Endorsing practices that support officer safety and wellness (e.g., evaluating and adjusting shift lengths or requiring officers to wear bulletproof vests) will enable officers to better do their jobs.

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33. "Executive Summary," *Final Report of the President's Task Force*, 3 (see note 2).

APPENDIX B. THE ADVANCING 21ST CENTURY POLICING INITIATIVE AND ITS 15 MODEL SITES

The Task Force on 21st Century Policing's goal of transforming the thinking and organizational approach of US law enforcement is intended to be applicable to every size and type of law enforcement agency. Given the local design of the US law enforcement model, it is critical that local agencies adapt the implementation of the task force recommendations to fit their individual needs and capacities. Agencies ready to implement the task force recommendations will need to develop strategies to achieve such change.

In May 2016, the US Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), in partnership with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and CNA (a nonprofit research and analysis organization), launched the Advancing 21st Century Policing Initiative, which provides evaluations and technical support to the following 15 state and local law enforcement agencies that already have made strides in implementing the task force recommendations:

1. Albany (New York) Police Department

2. Arlington (Texas) Police Department

3. Atlanta (Georgia) Police Department

4. Camden (New Jersey) Police Department

5. Columbia (South Carolina) Police Department

6. Doral (Florida) Police Department

7. Gun Lake Tribal Public Safety Department, Michigan

8. Hennepin County (Minnesota) Sheriff's Office

9. Indio (California) Police Department

10. Kewaunee County (Wisconsin) Sheriff's Department

11. Louisville (Kentucky) Police Department

12. Lowell (Massachusetts) Police Department

13. San Antonio (Texas) Police Department

14. South Dakota Highway Patrol

15. Tucson (Arizona) Police Department

These agencies vary widely in size, type, and location. Their diversity ensures that the information stemming from the initiative is useful to the greatest number of agencies throughout the United States.

Armed with lessons and information learned from these sites, the IACP and the COPS Office has created a series of companion guides to the final task force report. This series, Practices in Modern Policing, focuses on common and emergent themes from the report and highlights programs from the 15 sites. In each case, it is important to note that post-implementation studies will be needed to measure the impact of these new policies and programs.

ABOUT THE IACP

The **International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)** is the world's largest and most influential professional association for police leaders. With more than 30,000 members in 150 countries, the IACP is a recognized leader in global policing. Since 1893, the association has been speaking out on behalf of law enforcement and advancing leadership and professionalism in policing worldwide.

The IACP is known for its commitment to shaping the future of the police profession. Through timely research, programming, and unparalleled training opportunities, the IACP is preparing current and emerging police leaders—and the agencies and communities they serve—to succeed in addressing the most pressing issues, threats, and challenges of the day.

The IACP is a not-for-profit 501c(3) organization headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia. The IACP is the publisher of *The Police Chief* magazine, the leading periodical for law enforcement executives, and host of the IACP annual conference, the largest police educational and technology exposition in the world. IACP membership is open to law enforcement professionals of all ranks, as well as nonsworn leaders across the criminal justice system. Learn more about the IACP at www.theIACP.org.

More than 65 police officers from the Arlington (Texas) Police Department participate in Coach 5-0, a program that enables officers to mentor student athletes while participating in their practices, workouts, and games.

In 2016, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, in partnership with the IACP and CNA, launched the Advancing 21st Century Policing Initiative. This program provides evaluations and technical support to 15 law enforcement agencies. Because these agencies are diverse in size, location, and other characteristics, their insights and lessons learned can be useful to various other agencies across the nation. Reports on their efforts in the program are published as part of the Practices in Modern Policing series. These reports offer guidance to the field for advancing practices and policies in specific aspects of community policing.

This publication is focused on police relations with community youth and describes promising strategies for engaging with youth and gaining their trust through sports, education, and other programs as well as through personal interactions.