



Police Cadet Programs and 21st Century Policing

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The zero tolerance crime control policy was built on the fundamental principle of the Broken Windows Theory, which suggests that untended behavior leads to the breakdown of community controls. The concept is to fix problems when they are small, so they do not accumulate. By focusing on lesser crimes, officers send a message that all criminal behaviors will not be tolerated. But the effects of this policy have come at a heavy cost to community-police relations, with segments of communities expressing feelings of unjust treatment as a result of the socioeconomic status of their neighborhood.¹

Many attribute this policy to the growing complaints of discourtesy, excessive force, and police brutality. In the aftermath of incidents surrounding these allegations, such as the Michael Brown and Eric Garner

cases in 2014, President Barack Obama signed an executive order on December 18, 2014, creating the Task Force on 21st Century Policing. This task force was established to strengthen community policing and to build trust among law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve.²

A significant lesson in leadership that can be learned as a result of these recent incidents and a focal topic that should be assessed by this task force and law enforcement agencies across the United States is how important it is for police organizations to make a proactive effort to hire a workforce that has ties to the population it serves. Members of a community have a vested interest and tend to have a better understanding of their community's cultural and environmental dynamics.

In 2008, Bethany Rubin Henderson founded City Hall Fellows. The program was created out of her conviction that getting cities' own best and brightest to return home and tackle social problems locally was the best way to tackle the most pressing challenges. Her theory of change: smart leverage—one talented, passionate, well-trained individual working in the right place inside government can change an agency and that many working together can change a city.³

Law enforcement agencies can achieve this goal by finding representatives from the community to serve among their ranks in a properly structured police cadet program. I created a proposed Police Cadet Leadership Initiative based on my experiences while serving in the Baltimore City





Police Cadet Program in 2005–2006. This proposed initiative was constructed on a model practiced by the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C., with enhancements to better prepare the next generation of 21st century law enforcement leaders. Within the Metropolitan D.C. program, cadets have the opportunity to work in an administrative capacity while going to school full-time so they may obtain the required academic credits (60) to enter into the police academy.⁴

City Hall Fellows has trained 75 urban changemakers (selected from 1,700 applicants) since 2008 through their mission of “[e]ngaging diverse, talented young people in the work of cities. Empower them to be effective local change agents. Support their evolution from community-oriented student to local citizen leader.”⁵ These individuals have helped to transform how three cities (San Francisco, California; Houston, Texas; and Baton Rouge, Louisiana) operate. Building the Police Cadet Leadership Initiative on these same ideologies can help to produce local changemakers in the law enforcement profession that will be able to make a sustainable difference in the communities they serve through the skills they learn from this collaborative engagement.

The Police Cadet Leadership Initiative

The Police Cadet Leadership Initiative is a program that provides young adults with the opportunity to start their careers, receive the necessary college credits required to acquire an associate’s degree, obtain on-the-job training, and learn during a three-year apprenticeship program. By investing in young people who have a vested interest in the community, the cities that adopt this or similar programs have the opportunity to change lives by helping to produce civic-minded community members who will work to build sustainable communities.

Relationships & Recruiting

As a result of zero-tolerance policing, many communities harbor antagonistic attitudes toward law enforcement. This “us-against-them” mentality serves as a major catalyst to the strained relationships that prevent the two parties from building rapport and creating a positive working relationship.⁶ Building viable partnerships with key stakeholders within these young people’s sphere of influence is a step toward repairing these relationships. The intended audience for this program is high school juniors and seniors who are student-athletes or who participate in Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) programs.

These segments of students were chosen for the following reasons. First, the relationships that the coaches and military

instructors of these programs have with these kids make them a valuable asset and an encouraging influence to help potential cadets explore the benefits and options associated with a law enforcement career, while overcoming the negative images sometimes associated with the profession. Next, ask any police recruiter what one of the biggest barriers is to applicants during the police application process, and they’ll tell you it is the physical agility test. Young people who are accustomed to participating in physically demanding programs are more likely to achieve success in the process. Finally, they are familiar with the rigors associated with having to maintain high-performance levels serving as students while participating in extra-curricular activities that will be vital as a working student.

Service-Learning Requirement

Built on the tenets of education, community service, and public safety, the Police Cadet Leadership Initiative will manifest how a highly trained police department is central to a pluralistic, democratic society. Cadets would serve as full-time employees of the agency that hires them. The structure of the program requires cadets to spend half of their time operating in an interagency work capacity and another portion of their time as an on-campus student. Additionally, cadets will be required to perform five hours of community service per semester. These community service activities will vary each semester and can be completed by volunteering at a homeless shelter, children’s hospital, nursing home, domestic violence shelter, local high school sports program, or local cultural event.

Through this collaboration, cadets will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the internal operations of the police department by serving in an administrative role in various divisions of the organization. The educational portion allows cadets to complete course work that leads to an associate’s degree at a local community college. The structured environment of the college experience further exposes them to persons from all segments of the community. These interactions will foster conversations, understanding, and the ability to approach policing from a sociological perspective, thus realizing that there are other ways to solve community problems than by making arrests. The community service experience is intended to further orient participants to the service profession by being able to empathize with people from different backgrounds and to gain a level of sensitivity to those cultural diversities. ♦

Notes:

¹K. Babe Howell, “Broken Lives from Broken Windows: The Hidden Costs of Aggressive Order-Maintenance Policing,” *NYU Review of Law & Social Change*, 30 (2009): 271–329, http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/criminal_justice/Howell_BrokenLivesfromBrokenWindows.authcheckdam.pdf (accessed August 5, 2015).

²The White House, *Executive Order Establishment of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing* (December 18, 2014), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/12/18/executive-order-establishment-presidents-task-force-21st-century-policing> (accessed August 5, 2015).

³City Hall Fellows, “Our Story,” <http://www.cityhallfellows.org/about/our-story> (accessed August 5, 2015).

⁴Metropolitan Police Department, *Start Your Career in Law Enforcement with the MPD Cadet Training Program*, http://mpdc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mpdc/publication/attachments/Cadet%20Recruiting%20Brochure_030813.pdf (accessed August 5, 2015).

⁵City Hall Fellows, “Our Mission,” <http://www.cityhallfellows.org/about/our-mission-vision> (accessed August 5, 2015).

⁶Brendan McDermid, “Low-level Arrests Surged under Bloomberg’s ‘Zero Tolerance’ Policy,” Reuters, September 6, 2013, <http://rt.com/usa/nypd-zero-tolerance-arrest-bloomberg-486> (accessed August 5, 2015).

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

Communities that don’t have police cadet programs may still have opportunities for engaging young adults in law enforcement. Some programs that agencies use to involve youth include the following:

- Teen Court
- Police Athletic League (PAL)
- Citizens’ Police Academy for Youth
- Ride-alongs
- Volunteering
- Mentoring

Learn more at http://discoverpolicing.org/find_your_career/?fa=opp_young_adults.



Proposed Collaborative Policing Education and Outreach for Middle and High School Students

By **Robert Allen**, Lieutenant (Ret.), New York Police Department, New York

As a retired NYPD lieutenant, I'm fully aware of and concerned about the current climate regarding police-community relations throughout the United States. As a possible way to work through this situation and advance positive police-community relations and interactions, I've developed a Collaborative Policing Education and Outreach Program for middle and high school students. What follows is an outline of the program. I feel the program will aid and repair police-community relations by reaching out to all youth and

young adults, through a uniformed police officer, in a positive educational forum. Of course, the program will need to be tailored to the specific needs of each jurisdiction implementing it.

Most police commanders have an informal rapport or outreach with the schools within their command. This program is a formal education initiative. Although the program advances police-community relations and collaborative policing within a particular jurisdiction, it can be easily replicated and implemented throughout the United States for grades six, eight, ten, and twelve. This program could easily be a model for the entire United States. The program could have international viability depending on the needs of the jurisdiction and the police related topics to be addressed.

A key component of the program is that it works in conjunction with existing police department training and in-service training. All members of a particular police department will then be aware of what that department teaches and advocates to youth in the program. This element of the program will be especially useful in many police-citizen interactions, especially those involving teenagers and young adults.

Police officers who are trained in the program's curriculum and specific syllabus for each grade level would conduct the outreach and education. They should be assigned to the local police command the school is located in, which would aid in recognition and positive community-police relations outside of the school and classroom. Having the police department conduct this outreach and education is key to the police outreach needed in all communities. An active uniformed police officer gives the program legitimacy and is a major component to creating positive police-community relations.

Some benefits of such a program follow:

- The outreach and education can be conducted in a classroom at each school, encouraging a familiar positive learning environment and positive police interaction.

- The outreach and education would last for about an hour or longer each week, conducted over a six-week period. Thus, the total program would take about six to seven and a half hours. This sustained education program assists in the recognition of positive police-community relations for youths and young adults.
- The education can be incorporated in each grade level's mandatory curriculum via the education department within that jurisdiction. Depending on the grade level and the agreement made with the location's education department, this program can be part of the Government, Social Studies, or Civics curriculum.
- An outline of the education program and topics discussed for each grade should be included in all police officer training and in-service training throughout the police department in that jurisdiction, so all officers are aware of what each child or young adult learns from this program.
- This outreach and education program can bolster recruitment in the police department by introducing children and young adults to some of the opportunities open to them within law enforcement. Additionally, current police department programs in a particular jurisdiction that may exist—such as the Explorers, the cadet corp, any internship program, police athletic league, summer youth police academy, and auxiliary police program—can be discussed and explained during the course.

The formalized outreach and education program can include the following lessons or topics in the syllabus and be specifically designed for a particular jurisdiction and each grade presented:

- The social contract in a democracy; role of police in society; and function of police in the United States, in general, and of that specific police department in particular, as well as a brief history of that department



- How to identify a police officer in that jurisdiction (uniform, shield, and shield number, etc.)
- The training a recruit must go through to become a police officer within that jurisdiction
- The command structure of that police department and the makeup and structure of a typical police command within that jurisdiction or department
- What to expect when walking into a police facility within that jurisdiction
- An introduction to the police department's website and police command's website and what information can be accessed through these sites
- The municipality's and police department's policy on undocumented immigrants
- The laws governing powers of arrest in that particular jurisdiction, including who can make an arrest
- What are some of the other possible police-civilian interactions in that jurisdiction
- What the police can stop a person for and what the law allows the police to do when they stop an

individual—also what a person can expect when they are stopped by the police, and what the police expect when they stop a person in that jurisdiction

- The types of complaints that can be made (civilian complaint review board, internal affairs, etc.) if one believes the police are not doing their job correctly or they feel the police did something wrong, unacceptable, or illegal—and where and how to file a complaint against the police
- How to contact the police to get help, report an incident or crime, provide or get information regarding crimes, and so forth
- How to contact other city and government agencies in that jurisdiction
- The law enforcement and related opportunities available to youth and young adults locally and throughout the United States

As well as advancing positive police-community relations, the program will inform all youth and young adults of the job of the police; what the police can and cannot do under the law; and how to

respond and file a complaint if they feel the police did something wrong or acted inappropriately. The program can also act as a recruitment tool for each department and provide information on other department programs that may exist for youth (e.g., the cadet corps and Explorers).

I believe this program would work well in large cities, small municipalities, and rural jurisdictions. The program can work with the assistance, and within the framework, of the local education department's curriculum for the grades noted. Politicians and administrators of each location should find this program appealing because it combines two major agencies—law enforcement and education—to help educate our children, improve community relations, and provide a better quality of life for residents. An added benefit of this program is the positive information the participants in the program will bring home and impart to family members. This aspect is especially useful in immigrant and more insular communities. ❖



Forging New Trajectories: Police Innovation Improves Outcomes for Young People

By **Ian Frame**, Detective Senior Sergeant, and **Stephen Pyne**, Inspector, Queensland Police Service, Australia

Project Booyah commenced in December 2011 as a local partnership between the Coomera District Child Protection and Investigation Unit (Queensland Police Service), and Nerang Child Safety Service (Department of Communities).¹ The impetus for the project was police concerns regarding the increasing frequency and seriousness of offenses committed by young people residing in youth care facilities within the Coomera District. These offenses included violent assaults (particularly upon caregivers), property crimes, and young people absconding from care facilities. Further analysis of police and child safety data confirmed that young people in care were often participants in offending, anti-social behavior, and drug use within the Coomera District.

Project Booyah initially started as a community-based initiative to reduce drug and alcohol abuse and related anti-social criminal behaviors by young people in care. It has increasingly developed into an early intervention program targeting criminogenic behaviors and attitudes of at-risk young people. This has been achieved through program curriculum targeting a selection of known risk factors for adolescent offending, along with increasing protective factors that enable young people to desist from offending—in particular, re-engagement with education and employment.

Over the past 12 months, Project Booyah has expanded. The program is currently offered to multiple sites across the state of Queensland. Multi-site program delivery presents a number of challenges including monitoring of program integrity, provision of general management oversight, and management of multiple stakeholders.

Project Booyah

Project Booyah has developed into a workable and cost-effective response to youthful offenders; this local idea evolved into a major project attracting widespread attention and gaining approval for a two-year trial. Still led by the originating detective, Project Booyah establishes youth anti-social behavior as a shared local concern and coordinates government and non-government agencies, as well as families, communities,

and businesses, to cooperatively address the individual, social, and structural factors influencing young people. Project Booyah incorporates adventure-based learning; social and skills development; community and familial interventions; mentoring; youth support; and educational and vocational scholarships. The project supports young people and their families by altering structural disadvantage and promoting re-engagement with school, family, and community. Police designed the model around interdependent phases, with each successive element building on the previous component, promoting the relevance of the elements and their sustainability. Police assume the central role and, through effective implementation, have developed a workable model for replication by delivering tangible benefits for young people, communities, and the criminal justice system.

The QPS, in partnership with the Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association (PCYC), coordinates each 20-week program and relies on partnerships with public and private sector organizations to achieve and sustain real change in young peoples' lives. PCYC facilities serve as the project's central hub and facilitate mentoring by specialist police and support staff and involvement in PCYC activities. As the central hub, PCYC reinforces community connection, police legitimacy, and project linkages. The project acknowledges that a complex interplay of individual, structural, and social factors contribute to a young person's life trajectory. This project galvanizes agencies and businesses to cooperatively assist young people in addressing adverse influences to prevent, reduce, and cease previous participation in anti-social behavior; escalation into criminal offending; disengagement from school; and involvement in self-harm or substance misuse.

Project Model

Participants attend a structured three-day outdoor educational camp with a strong emphasis on identifying and initially addressing behavioral influences. The camps operate in a therapeutic model and offer individualized attention. Cohort size is capped at 10 and preferably involves

young people of similar ages (14–16 years) to assist with tailoring components to suit individual and collective needs as well as maturity levels.

The 18-week social and skill development phase is designed to develop consequential thinking and acknowledging the importance that the four dimensions of core self-evaluation—neuroticism, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and locus of control—have an affecting, meaningful, and sustainable change.

During this stage, participants attend local, adult educational facilities and participate in vocational programs providing them with an employability skill set.

Young people also participate in life-skills training and seminars delivered by professionals targeting a range of issues including mental, physical, and sexual health and substance misuse. These supplementary sessions enhance preparedness for employment and develop positive social skills, promoting self-worth and resilience. A qualified educator delivers a functional literacy and numeracy program aligned with the national curriculum, while qualified youth health nurses refer individuals to linked social services and health practitioners in response to needs.

While graduation represents completion of the formalized project, in the third phase, graduates remain "linked," receiving introductions to local businesses and industries. The youth-support approach enables ongoing mentoring as well as additional training and employment placements for individuals through mutual negotiation.

A critical characteristic of the program is the formal mentoring framework that the young people engage in with a police officer. The formal mentoring framework provides a positive environment to re-engage and realign relationships and promote healthy role modeling.

Evaluation

Griffith University completed a formal independent evaluation of Project Booyah (cohorts 1–4). This evaluation concluded that Project Booyah has delivered tangible

benefits for young people and their families and informed future implementation. Participants

- were more likely to be regularly attending school and to attain paid employment;
- attributed positive changes in their self-esteem to Project Booyah;
- received reported improvement in their relationship quality from their caregivers;
- were found to have reductions in alcohol, tobacco, and “other drugs” consumption;
- possessed self-reported lower levels of association with anti-social peers; and

- reported mentoring from police officers had a positive effect.

Evaluation results reveal the model is transportable. For example, graduates of Far North Queensland, which is geographically distant and characterized by different socio-demographic factors, had the following improved educational outcomes:

- 88 percent reduction in threatening behaviors
- 71 percent reduction in truancy
- 64 percent reduction in bullying and harassment
- 57 percent reduction in non-compliance with school routine
- 50 percent reduction in reportable incidents at their educational facility

- 48 percent reduction in disruptive class behaviors
- 11 percent reduction in days suspended from school

Project Booyah has assisted the QPS to build and sustain strategic partnerships within government and across the community, which is delivering tangible benefits in both a social and economic platform. ❖

Note:

¹As a consequence of changes to the structure of government and the distribution of government functions in 2012, child safety is now within the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.

Mentoring Youth: A Positive Interaction between Youth and Law Enforcement Officers

Youth Development programs like YMCA Youth Links Mentoring are directly impacted by police-youth interaction; many of our young clients live in communities that wrestle with trusting their local police department. As one study cited, “Police are critical gatekeepers between youth and the juvenile justice system, yet a great proportion of interactions between police and youth can be categorized as negative.”¹

We are lucky to have several youth mentors involved in policing, juvenile justice advocacy and social work who recognize the importance of encouraging more positive understanding and interaction between police and youth. We want our young clients to feel more comfortable with their experiences with the police; we also want to encourage our police to connect with youth on a non-law enforcement level so that they can better understand each other personally and contextually.

My name is Steve, and I am Danny’s mentor through the YMCA Youth Links mentorship program. I have been a mentor for only a few months and a police officer for a year and a half. A few months ago, our district commander came into roll call and told us about the mentorship opportunities available in the community. He encouraged us to attend a YMCA information session. As a junior officer, I am often disheartened to see people not much younger than me deeply entrenched in negative subcultures and self-harming activities. Despite our efforts, many of the young people we come across at work are not receptive to outreach or advice from a

uniformed officer. Therefore, I was excited to form a positive bond with a youth from my community outside of work.

From our first meeting, I have been impressed by Danny’s keen intellect and endless amounts of energy. We try to meet for a few hours a week and talk about life or go out and play a sport. The mentorship program also provides us with opportunities to participate in organized events or attend sports games and movies. Talking with Danny gives me a more complete perspective of the community, as well as a deeper positive connection within the community that I police. Based on my positive experiences, my beat partner has also voiced interest in participating in the mentorship program. I continue to encourage my coworkers to become involved in this initiative, as it augments our positive footprint in the community and deepens our personal connections within it.

My name is Danny. I’m 15 and live in Maryland. My hobbies include hanging out with my mentor and playing baseball, basketball, and soccer. My favorite hobby is to read books. I specifically enjoy fiction, drama, sci fi, and action. Until this year I wasn’t a very social person, and I would usually just sit quietly and read my books. Because of this solitude, one day, a person who cares about me asked me about considering getting a mentor so I could talk and hang out with someone outside of school social circles. I had known about the YMCA Youth Links mentorship program for

a while, but I was never up to trying it out. After months of encouragement, I figured it couldn’t hurt to try. The worst that could happen is that I don’t like my mentor (which is not the case), and I quit the program. One of the things that I like about the program is that they took my personal interests and hobbies and paired me up with someone who has similar interests as me, so we can have long and entertaining conversations. Another thing that I like about the program is that I can hang out with someone who is mature and is respectful of boundaries. If I could change anything, I would ask the police department to let 15-year-olds do ride-alongs. ❖

Note:

¹Samantha A. Goodrich, Stephen A. Anderson, and Valerie LaMotte, “Evaluation of a Program Designed to Promote Positive Police and Youth Interactions,” *Journal of Juvenile Justice* 3, no. 2 (Spring 2014), <http://www.journalofjuvjustice.org/JOJJ0302/article04.htm> (accessed July 29, 2015).

YMCA Youth & Family Services pairs youth in Montgomery County with positive role models that can help them cope with and overcome family stress, academic and psychological barriers. If you’re interested in volunteering as a mentor in your hometown, please visit www.ymca.net/volunteer.