Making the Case: Policing the TEEN BRAIN

Generating Sustained Collaborations

Cleveland, Ohio April 2014
National, non-profit policy and training organization dedicated to improving police/youth interactions and reducing disproportionate minority contact.
SFY Model

Developmental competence-informed approach to working with youth:
• Police training using interdisciplinary method
• Community Collaborations
• Youth training & Interactions
• Policy Review
• Identification of Emerging Best Practices
Making the Case

• Expectations of Police Today
• How Police are Trained Today
• Pressures for Paradigm Change
• Interventions:
  – Training Police
  – Training Youth
First Responders

Asked to respond to domestic social policy failures including:

- Dial a daddy
- Truancy
- Mental health issues
- Drugs/alcohol
- Fear of youth
- Racial
Social & Domestic Policy Failures

Poverty/Unemployment
Fragile Families/Fatherlessness
Vulnerable Communities

Police
First Responders for Discipline
Calls for Service in Cleveland

Calls in 2012: 208,000
Timing of Calls: 4-10 pm
Reasons: 80-90% calls NOT crime
Policing Youth in 2014

• 911 Obligations:
  – Respond to every call;
  – “Daddy Disciplinarian” role

• Fewer alternatives, options for referrals

• Increasing number of Status Offenders petitions
  – Decreasing amount of intervention

• Youth challenge traditional assertion of authority more
  – Provoke greater need to assert authority
Youths’ Perception of Police/System

- Violent
- Unfair
- Likely to be unfair to youth of color

Responses:
- Not sure how to interact
- Best defense is an offense…
American Culture

- Highest fatherlessness
- Most exposure to real/televised violence
- Culture promotes violent responses
- Least intervention
Public Expectations of Police

- Too harsh/too lenient
- Seek involvement/exclusion
- Increased understanding of mental health/special needs
- Take my child, please!
Paradigm Changes

--Same old/same old won’t work now
--May not have worked previously
--There must be a better way.

“Good news, I hear the paradigm is shifting.”
Sources of Pressure to Change the Paradigm

• Legal
• Policy
• Financial
• Scientific
Trends in Paradigm Shift

• Recognizing adult bias
• What science shows works with youth
• Incentives
• Connections
• Relationship Building
• No more punishment uber alles
Legal Paradigm Shifts

Roper v. Simmons (‘05)
Graham v. Florida (‘10)
Miller v. Alabama (‘12)

JDB v. N. Carolina (‘11)
Roper v. Simmons (2005)

1. “A lack of maturity and an underdeveloped sense of responsibility are found in youth more often than in adults...often result in impetuous and ill-considered actions and decisions”...that “adolescents are overrepresented statistically in virtually every category of reckless behavior.”
“[O]fficers and judges need no imaginative powers, knowledge of developmental psychology, training in cognitive science, or expertise in social and cultural anthropology to account for a child’s age. They simply need the common sense to know that a 7-year-old is not a 13-year-old and neither is an adult.”
Policy Paradigm Shifts

• **US Department of Justice**
  – Reduced use of incarceration
  – Trauma Informed Approaches
  – End use of “scared straight”

• **JJDPAct**
  – Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)
  – Police Role
Policy Pressures...

- **Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative**
  - Change approach to policing

- **State Law Changes**
  - End transfer to adult court
  - Reduce school arrests
This Just In…

January 9, 2014 from U.S. Department of Ed issues “guidance” on *Improving School Climate and Discipline*.

1. Prevention
2. Clear, Appropriate & Consistent Expectations & Consequences
3. Equity & Continuous Improvement
School Systems are expected to...

• **Reduce** school-based arrests, suspensions/expulsions

• **Train officers** and school personnel in developmentally appropriate approaches to positively engage with youth.

• **Developmentally appropriate** & proportional consequences for misbehavior

• **Unbiased** adult responses.
And If Schools Don’t…Expect

• To have your data collected!
• Enforcement actions by US Department of Justice

Source:
http://www.ed.gov/school-discipline/
Cost Paradigm Shifts

- Cost of Arrest
- Cost of Detention
- Cost of Incarceration
Implications for Policing Youth
Policing this age group is hard.
How do we prepare police to work with youth?
In-Service Police Training

IACP 2011 Juvenile Justice Training Needs Survey of Chiefs:

• No training after academy,
• No requirement for in-service training,
• No in-service training in juvenile justice for 5 years or > due to lack of funding.
Academy Recruit Training

SFY Study of Police Officer Standards & Training (POST) Curriculum 2013:

- Average duration is 6 hours,
- 90 to 95% of curricula is legal; not always updated,
- Most state provide no training on youths’ developmental and mental health issues.
### FINDING 4

**Topics Covered in Juvenile Justice Curriculum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>NUMBER OF STATES* COVERING THIS TOPIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Development &amp; Psychology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Mental Health Issues</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making &amp; Teen Group Dynamics**</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Law for Law Enforcement</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Issues Affecting Teens’ Conduct</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Influences on Teen Conduct &amp; Ramifications for Police</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asserting Authority Effectively / Best Practices for Policing Youth</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes Washington DC and all 50 states, except Minnesota, Montana and three states (Oklahoma, South Dakota, Washington) that did not respond with detailed information.

** Does not include state curricula focused on gangs.
OH Academy Training in JJ

- 6 hours on JJ
- 1.0% on JJ in academy
- 582 total
- All on juvenile law
- 0% on DMC
Teaching Trauma

Hyper-vigilance
- Aggression (fight)
- Defensiveness (flight)

Paralysis
- Shock (re-victimized)

Self-medication
- Controlling the threat
- Numbing the pain
- Forgetting/blanking
What Does Not Work?

• **Zero Tolerance**
  – Increases fear and violent response

• **Broad Brush**
  – Police: all kids are bad kids
  – Youth: No point in being innocent

• **Military Occupation**
  – Confirms adversarial position
  – No trust, no connection
What **Does** Work?

- **Awareness of youth differences**
  - In perception/processing/responses
- **Clarity of purpose**
  - Punishment?
  - Correction?
- **Expectations**
  - Acknowledge developmental/environmental experiences
- **Respect**
  - Explanations/No Shaming/Expecting Up
- **Proportionality**
  - Sledgehammers for canaries
- **Reading Behavior as Communication**
Preparing & Supporting Officers to Work Effectively with Youth
The Challenge:

Juvenile developmental characteristics such as impulsivity, self centeredness, and resistance to authority. Increase the chances that police-juvenile encounters will involve conflict, disrespect, and confrontational behavior.
Developmental Competence
Developmental Competence

Can’t assume:
• Intentional/purposeful \textit{mens rea}
• Understand consequences
• Self-regulation works
Remembering that the Youth You See…
Preparing & Supporting Youth to Interact with Peers & Police
Juvenile Justice Jeopardy

An interactive game that teaches youth how to navigate interactions with peer and police, and be aware of the short and long term consequences of arrest and court involvement.
Develop that Front Lobe

- A *brake* on teen action
- Promote accuracy
- Connect the dots
- Youth support each other
Educational Technique: Play

- Interactive
- Realistic/relevant
- Physical
- Concrete
- Participatory
Game Development

Game Development:

• Look at reasons for arrests/suspensions/expulsions

• Interview/Review Data
  – Judges
  – Prosecutors
  – Defenders
  – Police
  – Probation
Game Questions

- Use scenarios to illustrate typical situations,
- Rebut youths’ strongly held myths,
- Focus on behaviors, not assertion of rights,
- Describe what to do.
Results:

80% of youth who play JJJ report that
50-75% of the information is new to them
80% respond they will be more polite, not touch officers
50% respond they will think about who they hang out with
Stress Reduction Kit

Bang
Head
Here

Directions:
1. Place kit on FIRM surface.
2. Follow directions in circle of kit.
3. Repeat step 2 as necessary, or until unconscious.
4. If unconscious, cease stress reduction activity.
Lessons Learned

• Most youth involvement with police stems from social/family issues.
• Teens are not small adults.
• Informed approaches work best.
• “The solution is connections, connections, connection.”
  • Chief Paul MacMillan
    MBTA Transit Police