

Valparaíso University

ValpoScholar

Graduate Academic Symposium

Graduate School

Spring 3-26-2021

Keeping the Peace: An Exploration with Police Administrators and Personnel

Emily Sandlin

Valparaíso University, emily.sandlin@valpo.edu

Palak Nigam

Valparaíso University, palak.nigam@valpo.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.valpo.edu/gas>

Recommended Citation

Sandlin, Emily and Nigam, Palak, "Keeping the Peace: An Exploration with Police Administrators and Personnel" (2021). *Graduate Academic Symposium*. 83.

<https://scholar.valpo.edu/gas/83>

This Oral Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at ValpoScholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Academic Symposium by an authorized administrator of ValpoScholar. For more information, please contact a ValpoScholar staff member at scholar@valpo.edu.

Abstract

Police officers currently face a significant challenge of establishing a trusting, calm relationship with the public. Recent history shows that cries for help from both sides-have been loud and clear but lack a direct path toward a solution. Many movements have been formed in favor of various racial groups and retaliation on law enforcement has been on the rise. Identifying problematic areas within law enforcement and finding a more comprehensive solution is the driving factor of this research. This is a conceptually forecasted research project as there is no data supporting the conflagration of the ideas presented, but there has been research with outcomes that are referenced. The state of Indiana-has identified these issues to be serious and alarming and has begun moving forward in creating a more effective criminal justice system. Unanimously approved, House Bill 1006 is the solution Indiana's legislature has brought forth. This bill will review mandatory de-escalation training for all law enforcement, requires all officers to wear body cameras, and gives the law enforcement training board the ability to decertify officers who commit misconduct (Mendoza, 2021). Currently, there are not specific de-escalation training principles or strategies. Some references for de-escalation guidance are the Task Force of 21st Century Policing, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and Mindful Policing training among others. The Task Force of 21st Century Policing strives to find a balance between an authoritative yet trustworthy relationship between law enforcement and community members. It was created to build trust, legitimacy, policy, oversight, encourage technology, practice community policing, reduce crime, train and educate officers, and bring awareness to officer's wellness and safety (President's Task Force, 2015). The International Association of Chiefs of Police aims to provide readers with solid research regarding de-escalation training, the methods used, and how effective those methods are. The

goal of de-escalation is to create an advantageous position for officers allows them to make clearer, better informed decisions when responding to situations that are effective. When conducted in this manner it increases the safety of both the officer and the public and gives the officer ways to respond to the encounter without use of lethal weapons (De-escalation, 2021). The research was observed through pre-training and post-training surveys. In the statistical data collected after training, officer priorities during citizen interactions improved (4.10 pre vs. 4.23 post) significantly, officer's attitudes towards use of force was significantly different (2.38 pre vs. 2.00 post), attitudes during interactions with persons in crisis was significantly different (3.96 pre vs. 4.18 post), and officer confidence was significantly different (44.08 pre vs. 47.26 post), to name a few. The post-training surveys show the importance and benefit of having de-escalation training. Mindful Policing focuses on the importance of helping officers navigate their mental health and to manage the effects of the job on their lives. One study of almost 2,800 officers in Buffalo, New York found their average life expectancy was 22 years shorter than their civilian counterparts (Barry, 2017). Researchers have also linked law enforcement careers to high rates of various mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and suicide not to mention the overall health issues that can develop from high levels of stress such as heart disease, obesity, and high blood pressure among other things. Creating an early identification system within a department will allow officers to recognize signs and symptoms of a mental health crisis (De-escalation, 2021).

In conclusion, de-escalation training is not only beneficial to the community members but also the officers because it increases their safety. It will build the trust with the community and allows them to feel more informed from the transparency the department shows. Lastly, policing is one of the most stressful jobs one can have, so de-stigmatizing mental health services will increase the likelihood of officers getting help when they need it.

References:

- De-escalation: guidelines for how to begin evaluating your agency's de-escalation practices. (2021). In *International Association of Chiefs of Police*.
<https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Research%20Center/Combined%20v2.pdf>
- Yeoman Barry, (June 14, 2017). Mindful Policing: The Future of Force. *Mindful communication & such, PBC*. [Mindful Policing: The Future of Force – Mindful](#)
- President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, (2015). "Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing." *Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington D.C.*
http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/TaskForce_FinalReport.pdf

"I have neither given or received, nor have I tolerated others use of unauthorized aids."