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*Institute of Politics Policy Program  
Criminal Justice Fall Policy Team*

**Community-Police Relations:  
Fostering Better Outcomes Between the Community and  
Police, and Evaluating Alternatives to Police**

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HARVARD Kennedy School  
**INSTITUTE OF POLITICS**



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Harvard Institute of Politics Policy Program  
Harvard University  
Fall 2023

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## 1. Executive Summary

Given the ever-changing dynamic of community-police relations in the United States, it is imperative to analyze and understand effective systems to prevent and address crime. After the 2020 racial reckoning, there was a clear push to consider forms of community policing as an alternative to conventional policing which has resulted in numerous fatalities that garnered attention from the whole world.

We first trace the history of community-police relations from the Civil Rights Era to the present. With a continuously evolving relationship between police and community members, there is a clear concern with current levels of confidence in our law enforcement system. We call into focus that the quality of community-police relations has been on the decline with various incidents of racially-motivated police brutality such as the murder of George Floyd or Rodney King. Furthermore, we analyze police training practices across the country, honing in on the matter of a lack of formal education attainment for most officers. We discuss the concept of the danger imperative and its relevance to training, and we maintain that it is critical to implement robust education programs and requirements focused on reduction and de-escalation strategies to decrease law enforcement-related injury and fatality given challenges regarding racial profiling, excessive use of force, and a lack of trust. With this discussion of the state of community-police relations, we also highlight the particular negative impact of policing on marginalized communities, specifically immigrants and other communities of color.

Recognizing a recent conversation on the efficacy of community policy, we then go on to describe forms of community policing and the impact of certain approaches. We detail the Co-Responder Model aimed at integrating health services with police response. We find that co-responder models tend to be better at de-escalation, however, there is an ongoing concern regarding the potential for communities of color to lose trust in social work once it's overlaid with policing. For this analysis, we look to Boulder, CO's Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) co-responder model as well as Eugene, OR's Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets (CAHOOTS) program. We further discuss legislative and advocacy efforts regarding policing, with an eye to lack of funding. New York City's Stop and Frisk policy offers important insight into the pitfalls of certain policing strategies, and the Boston Ten Point Coalition provides an important framework for successful localized community policing.

The final section of our report discusses the impact of the 2020 racial reckoning on the state of community policing. Our research highlights legislative reforms at the local level, specifically looking at attempted reforms in Minneapolis, MI, Louisville, KY, and San Francisco, CA. These case studies highlight the steps taken by local governments and police departments toward improving accountability, transparency, and community trust through a range of reforms aimed at curtailing excessive force, eliminating biased policing, and promoting de-escalation techniques.

Ultimately, our report points to an effective path forward to improve community policing relations and improve the efficacy of policing as it relates to reducing excessive force and violence. Given the inconsistent training that often lacks depth, centralized standards for police

training with an emphasis on de-escalation offer an area of significant improvement for law enforcement. Further, improving the cohesion of social workers and police officers through effective co-responder models will contribute to policing that is less violence-oriented. Our findings underscore the need for community partnerships with policing and a robust relationship between community members and police.

## **2. Policy Recommendations**

### **2.1 Implement centralized standards for police training, with an emphasis on more time spent on de-escalation**

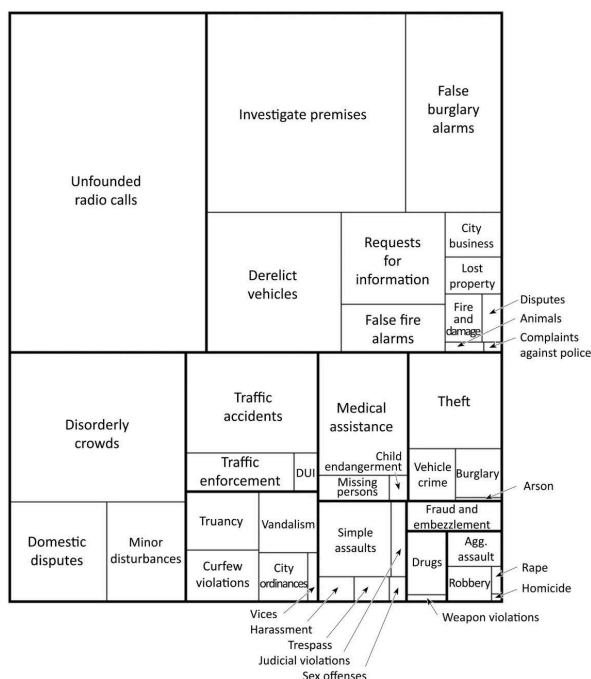
The major factors that result in distrust in the police seem to be racial profiling and other forms of racism within departments, and violence from police officers which is very frequently an extension of racist tendencies. Raising requirements for police officers' educational attainment would have clear impacts on de-escalation and reducing the violence that officers commit, and on their overall competency on the job.

The first recommendation is to reform the amount of training time spent on de-escalation, substance abuse, homelessness, and mental illness. This could be done in two different ways: the first is increasing the overall amount of time spent in training for officers or time spent on different types of use of force could be diverted. On average a study of 644 different local police academies in 2016 found that out of 840 hours of training, 168 were spent on firearms, self-defense, and use of force while only 10 were spent on mental illness and 9 on conflict management. Homelessness and substance abuse didn't make it into the data set because of how infrequently they were addressed.<sup>1</sup> This training breakdown is a direct opposite of how police officers actually spend their time. A study of what types of calls officers respond to is

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<sup>1</sup>Roge Karma, "What We Train Our Police to Do — and What They Actually Do," Vox, July 31, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/2020/7/31/21334190/what-police-do-defund-abolish-police-reform-training>.

represented in this graphic based on data from Philadelphia in 2015.<sup>2</sup>



Police are trained and marketed as if their jobs are primarily fighting violent crime which is simply not the case. Reconstructing police training to prepare them for the situations they will actually face is a clear way to ensure police respond appropriately, without using force. In analyzing circumstances in which officers have killed people in traffic stops or other situations, there are many places throughout the interactions where a policy shift away from violence and militarization would have resulted in a life being saved.<sup>3</sup> Preventing police violence is a major part of increasing trust in police, and implicit bias training could be incorporated into new academy curriculums to address police racial biases.

## **2.2 Delegate existing police roles to professionals in other fields and co-responder models**

The second recommendation is to increase focus and resources on alternatives to having police respond to the wide variety of calls they receive. This is similar to expanding training but accomplishes the same goal from a different angle. Police are required to respond to a variety of circumstances where they are not the people most prepared to handle them. There are medical professionals and social workers trained to help people experiencing mental health crises and substance abuse problems. Departments can work with these other social services to either institute co-responder models or divert calls to another hotline and dispatch these professionals without law enforcement. The CAHOOTS program in Eugene, Oregon provides a successful example of a program that has a medical professional and a crisis caseworker respond to specific calls instead of police officers. There are also a variety of studies that show the benefits of

<sup>2</sup>Karma, "What We Train Our Police to Do — and What They Actually Do."

<sup>3</sup>Karma, "What We Train Our Police to Do — and What They Actually Do."

co-responder models, and the support they have from the officers who have participated in them. This program reduces the violence or potential for violence that is harmfully brought into situations unnecessarily. It is also supported by a majority of the population, as a 2020 poll found that 68% of people supported a “new agency of first responders.”<sup>4</sup>

### **2.3 Enhance the implementation of co-responder models**

One of the largest barriers to enacting co-responder models is funding.<sup>5</sup> Co-responder models often rely on grant funding and so once the grant runs out, the programs struggle and often are no longer sustainable.<sup>6</sup> This can be counteracted by receiving more grant funding, or by gaining more stable sources of funding from municipal budgets which likely requires community support and educational campaigns with hard data that supports the program’s success.<sup>7</sup>

Another obstacle to the implementation of co-responder models is that they can exacerbate the already under-resourced and overburdened healthcare system and poor access to mental health treatment. There is no mechanism for any follow-up between the responders and the patients. Therefore, the responders have no idea what happened to the patient after they left them.<sup>8</sup> If they referred them to mental health resources they don’t know if the patient went, they don’t know if a patient went through with the entire of their treatment, or if that treatment continued outside of a facility, demonstrating the harmful lack of communication and accountability between co-responders and mental healthcare providers.<sup>9</sup> Outpatient care is critical for mental health support and these programs do nothing to support patients in that way.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, it is also crucial to increase funding for social services and facilities to promote greater access to treatment so that when co-responders intervene in situations, they have places people can be referred to that have the capacity to respond and have stable lines of communication and the ability for follow-up.

### **2.4 Inter-agency collaboration with community leaders**

Inter-agency collaboration with community leaders was successful in reducing violent crime in the Boston Miracle case study, where gun violence incidents in Boston decreased by 79%.<sup>11</sup> Having trusted, credible members of the community working closely with police and courts to reduce arrests and provide more specialized resources to kids at risk helped to provide an umbrella of legitimacy for police to form connections in the community, while also holding police accountable for unacceptable and harmful behavior or policies.

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<sup>4</sup>Karma, “What We Train Our Police to Do — and What They Actually Do.”

<sup>5</sup>Kevin Amell, “The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs,” Julota, August 9, 2021, <https://www.julota.com/news/the-pros-cons-of-a-co-responder-program/>.

<sup>6</sup>Amell, “The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs.”

<sup>7</sup>Amell, “The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs.”

<sup>8</sup>Amell, “The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs.”

<sup>9</sup>Amell, “The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs.”

<sup>10</sup>Amell, “The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs.”

<sup>11</sup>“Tenpoint,” BMA Tenpoint, 2021, <https://www.bmatenpoint.org/tenpoint>.



### 3. History of Community-Police Relations

From the Civil Rights Era to the present, U.S. police-community relations have evolved. The Civil Rights Era exposed racial disparities and police brutality, leading to key legislation like the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The emergence of community policing aimed to build trust, but the War on Drugs strained relations in the 1980s. In recent years, renewed community-oriented strategies and accountability measures have sought to rebuild trust. Yet, ongoing concerns about police brutality and racial bias underline the complexity of this relationship, warranting continuous reform efforts.

The history of police-community relations in the United States, from the Civil Rights Era to the present day, reflects a complex and evolving dynamic. The Civil Rights Era, marked by pervasive racial segregation and discrimination, exposed critical fault lines in the relationship between law enforcement agencies and minority communities, particularly African Americans. This period stands as a testament to the enduring struggle for civil rights and equality in the United States. The Montgomery Bus Boycott,<sup>12</sup> initiated by Rosa Parks' refusal to yield her bus seat, and the Birmingham Campaign,<sup>13</sup> led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., serve as emblematic milestones in this tumultuous chapter of American history. These events resonated across the nation, garnering widespread attention to the pervasive issues of police brutality and social injustice that minority communities, especially African Americans, had long endured. The sight of peaceful demonstrators facing violence and repression at the hands of law enforcement officers in Birmingham and elsewhere not only spotlighted the urgent need for reform but also underscored the profound impact of these events on shaping the trajectory of police-community relations in the decades that followed.

This era culminated in the passage of pivotal legislation, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964<sup>14</sup> and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. These historic acts aimed to dismantle deeply ingrained systems of institutionalized discrimination while fundamentally reshaping policing practices. The subsequent emergence of community policing in the 1970s marked a notable shift in law enforcement philosophy. It emphasized collaborative partnerships, proactive problem-solving, and sustained community engagement as the cornerstones for rebuilding trust and enhancing public safety. These acts recognized that meaningful change necessitated departing from adversarial methods and fostering cooperative bonds between law enforcement agencies and the communities they served.

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<sup>12</sup>David J. Garrow, "The Origins of the Montgomery Bus Boycott," *Southern Changes*, 7 (1985): 21–27, <https://www.davidgarrow.com/File/DJG%201985%20SChangesJAGRMontgBBText.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup>James Munro, "Origins of the Movement and the Development of Protest: The Birmingham Campaign, 1963," CUNY Academic Works, February 2014, [https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1146&context=gc\\_etds](https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1146&context=gc_etds).

<sup>14</sup>"Civil Rights Act (1964)," National Archives, February 8, 2022, <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/civil-rights-act>.

However, the landscape of police-community relations took a tumultuous turn during the War on Drugs<sup>15</sup> in the 1980s and 1990s. This period was characterized by the adoption of aggressive policing tactics, including the widespread deployment of SWAT<sup>16</sup> (Special Weapons and Tactics) teams and the implementation of “stop and frisk” policies. These approaches, while ostensibly aimed at combating drug-related crime, had profound consequences, exacerbating tensions in many communities, particularly those of color. The War on Drugs intensified the perception of law enforcement as an occupying force, sowing distrust and breeding resentment. This starkly contrasted with the earlier Community Policing Movement<sup>17</sup> of the 1970s and 1980s, which had emphasized the philosophy of collaboration between law enforcement and communities. This shift aimed to build trust, engage residents in problem-solving, and reduce crime by addressing its root causes. The transition from community-oriented strategies to militarized approaches in subsequent years underscores the complexity of the historical trajectory of police-community relations in the United States.

From the 1990s to the present day, there has been a resurgence of community policing efforts, with many law enforcement agencies adopting community-oriented strategies. Initiatives such as community policing, problem-solving, and community engagement programs have been implemented to rebuild trust and foster positive interactions between police and the communities they serve. Simultaneously, the 2000s to the present have been marked by high-profile cases of police brutality, frequently involving the use of lethal force against unarmed individuals, leading to widespread protests and calls for greater accountability (Daunte Wright, George Floyd, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Laquan McDonald, Tamir Rice...).<sup>18</sup> The Black Lives Matter movement,<sup>19</sup> founded in 2013, has played a pivotal role in advocating for police reform and bringing issues of racial bias and violence to the forefront of national discussions. Responding to public outcry, efforts at the federal, state, and local levels have been initiated to reform policing practices, with demands for increased transparency, de-escalation training, and the reevaluation of use-of-force policies.

The debate over defunding the police versus investing in community resources continues to shape discussions on police-community relations. At present, police departments are increasingly committed to building trust with communities through programs like community policing, community advisory boards, and outreach efforts. Technology and social media have also emerged as tools for holding law enforcement accountable and documenting interactions between police and the public.

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<sup>15</sup>*Unequal under Law*, press.uchicago.edu, n.d., <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/U/bo5510544.html>.

<sup>16</sup>“Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Concepts and Issues Paper,” IACP National Law Enforcement Policy Center, 2011, <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/all/s/SWATPaper.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup>“Understanding Community Policing a Framework for Action,” Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2019, <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles/commp.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup>“High-Profile Killings by Police,” Police Brutality Center, December 6, 2023, <https://policebrutalitycenter.org/police-brutality/high-profile-killings/>.

<sup>19</sup>“Black Lives Matter,” Black Lives Matter, n.d., <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>.

Police officers, as the most visible and accessible representatives of the criminal justice system, are essential partners with citizens in the effort to reduce crime. Effective police-community relations underpin this partnership, drawing insights from various disciplines. This review on the History of Police-Community Relations (Civil Rights Era to Present) aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of police-community relations, considering key aspects such as the foundational principles of police-community relations, the dynamics of public and community relations, and the evolving role of police in society.

### **3.1 Scope of the Problem**

The issue of ailing community-police relations is certainly not new; it spans a wide scope, with various factors involving race, political ideology, gender, etc. Many Americans' eyes were opened to this issue after the killing of George Floyd in 2020. Empirical data reveals that while this trend is not entirely new, the level of poor community-police relations is at a seemingly all-time high.

As of 2020, 28% of American adults expressed a great deal of confidence in the police, while 48% expressed a fair amount of confidence.<sup>20</sup> Among those percentages, 32% of White adults expressed a great deal of confidence, followed by 18% of Hispanic adults, 16% of Asian adults, and finally 10% of Black adults.<sup>21</sup> Further breaking down this study, party affiliation also greatly demonstrated varying opinions on the police, with 42% of Republicans (and right-leaning independents) expressing a great deal of confidence in the police, met by only 13% of Democrats (and left-leaning independents).<sup>22</sup> When expounded upon, the data reveals that being unfairly stopped by the police factored into the overall trust of police. Topping the chart, 45% of Black adults (64% of Black men) reportedly have been unfairly stopped, while only 19% of Hispanic adults, 16% of Asian adults, and 9% of White adults report the same.<sup>23</sup>

While the issue of community-police relations was brought to center stage in 2020, data reveals that trust in the police has continued to decline in the years following.<sup>24</sup> While the 2020 date suggests 48% of Americans have reasonable trust in the police, a 2023 poll depicts a 3% decline in trust in just three years, as 45% of American adults now express the same trust.<sup>25</sup>

Post-George Floyd research on community-police relations is the most readily available and media popularized, and portrays America as a country with a minority expressing great trust in the police; historical research on the same issues paints a slightly different picture. By and large, Americans seem to follow some cyclical trend in their perception of the police. In 1991, after the brutal beating of Rodney King, polling revealed a sharp decline in police trust.<sup>26</sup> After

<sup>20</sup>Shannon Greenwood, "Trust in America: Do Americans Trust the Police?" Pew Research Center, March 29, 2022, <https://www.pewresearch.org/2022/01/05/trust-in-america-do-americans-trust-the-police/>.

<sup>21</sup>Greenwood, "Trust in America: Do Americans Trust the Police?"

<sup>22</sup>Greenwood, "Trust in America: Do Americans Trust the Police?"

<sup>23</sup>Greenwood, "Trust in America: Do Americans Trust the Police?"

<sup>24</sup> Greenwood, "Trust in America: Do Americans Trust the Police?"

<sup>25</sup>Jeffrey M. Jones, "Confidence in U.S. Institutions down; Average at New Low," Gallup, May 31, 2023, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/394283/confidence-institutions-down-average-new-low.aspx>.

<sup>26</sup>Jones, "Confidence in U.S. Institutions down; Average at New Low."

the King incident, some 51% of American adults expressed a reasonable level of trust in the police- a historic low until 2020.<sup>27</sup> Bearing this decline in mind, only five years later (1996), public trust in the police had risen to 60%, a nine-point increase in just five years. Ten years after the Rodney King incident, in 2001, community trust in police saw a record high at 65%.<sup>28</sup> This was following the terrorist attacks on September 11th. In the three decades between Rodney King and George Floyd, community trust in police hovered at around 50%, never topping 65% or going below 50% (until 2020).<sup>29</sup>

Public opinion of police is not only represented in simple polling; it is also revealed through examination of the individual actions of citizens. In 2020 (after the killing of George Floyd), some 40% of violent crimes (excluding fatal crimes) were reported by victims to the police.<sup>30</sup> One year later, however, in 2021, some 46% of similar crimes were reported.<sup>31</sup> While this information seemingly violates the trend of decreasing trust after police brutality incidents in the national spotlight, an examination of data before the Floyd killing reveals that the same cyclical pattern was observed from 1991-2001. Data from 2019 suggests that around 45% of non-fatal violent crimes were reported by victims to police.<sup>32</sup> With data dating from one year before George Floyd, the year of the killing, and one year after, the cyclical trend of public trust emerges. The rate of reporting fell nearly 8% in the year of Floyd's murder.<sup>33</sup> Digressing from this strict trend, though, there is a unique anomaly in the year 2021 when public trust in the police decreased,<sup>34</sup> but rates of reporting increased. Several factors (majorly timing) could have affected or skewed these results, but we mustn't allow that one year to detract from the much more prevalent trend superimposed on this issue by a plethora of corroborating data.

The suggestion that lack of representation among police officers leads to poorer community relations and perceptions of officers and forces is not unfounded. As of the most recent data, 60% of police officers are white, while only around 18% are Hispanic, and only about 13% are Black.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the inequality of representation is not only present in the racial breakdown of police forces across America, but disparities exist across gender lines as well. US police forces exhibit the following breakdown: 83.2% male and only 16.8% female,<sup>36</sup> while the

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<sup>27</sup>Jones, "Confidence in U.S. Institutions down; Average at New Low."

<sup>28</sup>Jones, "Confidence in U.S. Institutions down; Average at New Low."

<sup>29</sup>"The Public's Confidence in the Police Might Be Better than You Think," Dolan Consulting Group, July 17, 2018, <https://www.dolanconsultinggroup.com/news/the-publics-confidence-in-the-police-might-be-better-than-you-think/>.

<sup>30</sup>"The Public's Confidence in the Police Might Be Better than You Think."

<sup>31</sup>"Criminal Victimization, 2021," Bureau of Justice Statistics, September 2022, <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/criminal-victimization-2021>.

<sup>32</sup>Rachel E. Morgan and Jennifer L. Truman, "Criminal Victimization, 2019," Bureau of Justice Statistics, September 2020, <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/criminal-victimization-2019>.

<sup>33</sup>"Criminal Victimization, 2021," Bureau of Justice Statistics, September 2022, <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/criminal-victimization-2021>.

<sup>34</sup>"Criminal Victimization, 2021."

<sup>35</sup>"Police Officer Demographics and Statistics [2023]: Number Of Police Officers In The US," July 21, 2023, <https://www.zippia.com/police-officer-jobs/demographics/>.

<sup>36</sup>"Police Officer Demographics and Statistics [2023]: Number Of Police Officers In The US."

United States is composed of 50.4% females and 49.6% males.<sup>37</sup> This trend is reflected in the nation's largest police force. As of 2023, the New York Police Department (composed of 55,000 employees) reports that 80% of its officers are males (the majority of whom are white), and only 20% are females.<sup>38</sup> This trend continues in smaller police forces, such as the San Francisco Police Department—which contains only around 2,000 officers.<sup>39</sup> The SFPD reports the following officer statistics: 86% males and 14% females.<sup>40</sup>

When analyzing the aforementioned data spanning from 1990 to 2023, the following conclusions can be drawn: Americans' perceptions of the police have worsened and remain at an all-time low; Americans' trust in the police to fulfill their duty and act in the best interest of *all* citizens has declined and remains at an all-time low; there is a probable correlation between the lack of trust and confidence in America's police departments and various acts of seemingly-racially motivated police brutality (King, Floyd); there is a probable correlation between the lack of trust and confidence in America's police department and the lack of equal representation of races and genders in police departments nationwide. The ultimate conclusion drawn from this research points to a simple probability: Americans have always wavered in their support and trust of the police, but current levels reflect not a wavering, but an all-time low, and it seems the minority that expresses a great deal of trust in the police is only shrinking. It appears that unless some mechanics of the current US police institution change, public distrust of the police will not only be a trend, it will be the norm.

### **3.2 Police Officer Training and the Danger Imperative**

Requirements for becoming a police officer vary among states and precincts, but across America, these factors in police prerequisites remain standard. All police officers must be citizens of the United States, except in very few cases in which permanent residents are allowed to join the force.<sup>41</sup> Police officers must undergo a formal training program in the police academy.<sup>42</sup> Further standard requirements include the following: the applicant must be at least 18 years of age, but usually 21 in most districts, and possess a valid driver's license and a high school diploma.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, before being hired, applicants to police forces must pass a written test that covers matters of law, force, hypotheticals, and logic, as well as a physical aptitude test that determines how physically capable someone is of performing their duties as an officer.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>37</sup>“U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: United States,” United States Census Bureau QuickFacts, 2022, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/LFE046221>.

<sup>38</sup>“U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: United States.”

<sup>39</sup>“SFPD Signs 30 by 30 Pledge to Advance Women in Policing 23-029,” San Francisco Police Department, March 8, 2023, <https://www.sanfranciscopolice.org/news/sfpd-signs-30-30-pledge-advance-women-policing-23-029#:~:text=Currently%2C%20women%20make%20up%20only,of%20the%20leadership%20are%20women.>

<sup>40</sup>“SFPD Signs 30 by 30 Pledge to Advance Women in Policing 23-029.”

<sup>41</sup>“How to Become a Police Officer: A Cop's Guide,” Police1, n.d., <https://www.police1.com/police-jobs-and-careers/articles/how-to-become-a-police-officer-a-cops-guide-ovvez8ZfXt47oQ5/>.

<sup>42</sup>“How to Become a Police Officer: A Cop's Guide.”

<sup>43</sup>“How to Become a Police Officer: A Cop's Guide.”

<sup>44</sup>“How to Become a Police Officer: A Cop's Guide.”

An important aspect of police work and training is the idea that police officers are informally and formally socialized into the danger imperative—“a cultural frame that emphasizes violence and the need for officer safety” and perpetuates the idea that policing is inherently dangerous work despite trends showing that policing has become safer over time.<sup>45</sup> Formally, this is reflected in police academy training, where the majority of hours are dedicated to defense strategies and how to operate a weapon, while “war stories” about the dangers of the job from senior officers and broader cultural depictions of dangerous police work informally support this narrative.<sup>46</sup> The phenomenon of the danger imperative has extensive consequences for officer behavior and the legitimacy of police departments, as these attitudes have been shown to result in aggressive, “warrior approaches” to policing that are linked to increases in behaviors ranging from simply being rude when interacting with a member of the community to the use of excessive and illegal force that reinforces discrimination and inequities in the criminal justice system.<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, one of the most discussed matters involving the training of police officers is their lack of formal education. Police officers are *not* required to obtain a college degree, certificate, or any other credential. That being said, many officers do earn some form of college degree. A reported 56% of American police officers hold an associate degree or certificate.<sup>48</sup> On top of that, a mere 9% of officers hold a bachelor’s degree.<sup>49</sup> 35% of the police force holds no higher education than a high school diploma, while less than 1% have an education above a bachelor’s degree.<sup>50</sup> Higher education for police is not only a politically-discussed issue but also a matter of concern within police structures themselves. In most police departments, having a college degree places an officer higher on the list to be promoted.<sup>51</sup>

The model of policing in the United States is largely local, meaning that regulations vary widely by jurisdiction. This makes it nearly impossible to analyze the effectiveness of policing practices at the national level. Local police academy training for entry-level positions in law enforcement varies widely between states and districts. Most programs in the United States last for 10–20 weeks, a much shorter period of instruction than what is standard for similarly high-stakes jobs.<sup>52</sup> Given that more than 600 people are killed and more than 250,000 are injured by law enforcement officers in the United States every year, it is essential to increase the amount of education and training officers receive.<sup>53</sup> Such training should maintain a specific focus on

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<sup>45</sup>Michael Sierra-Arevalo, “American Policing and the Danger Imperative,” *Law & Society Review* 55, no. 1 (2021): 70–103.

<sup>46</sup>Sierra-Arevalo, “American Policing and the Danger Imperative,” 70-103.

<sup>47</sup>Sierra-Arevalo, “American Policing and the Danger Imperative,” 70-103.

<sup>48</sup>“What Education Do Police Officers Have?,” *Career Explorer*, May 11, 2023, <https://www.careerexplorer.com/careers/police-officer/education/>.

<sup>49</sup>“What Education Do Police Officers Have?”

<sup>50</sup>“What Education Do Police Officers Have?”

<sup>51</sup>“The Importance of a College Degree for Police Officers,” *PoliceOfficer.org*, October 21, 2022,

<https://policeofficer.org/importance-college-degree-police/#:~:text=Police%20Department%20Promotional%20Policies,prior%20to%20receiving%20a%20promotion>.

<sup>52</sup>“Re-Envisioning Police Training in the U.S. Rejecting the Status Quo,” *American University School of Public Affairs*, n.d.,

<https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Re-Envisioning%20Police%20Training%20in%20the%20U.S.%20Rejecting%20the%20Status%20Quo%2C%20Speeding%20the%20Pace%20of%20Progress%20Towards%20a%20True%2021st%20Century%20Model.pdf>.

<sup>53</sup>“U.S. Data on Police Shootings and Violence,” *University of Illinois Chicago Law Enforcement Epidemiology Project*, n.d., <https://policeepi.uic.edu/u-s-data-on-police-shootings-and-violence/>.

harm reduction and de-escalation strategies to decrease law enforcement-related injury and fatality.

As is the case with entry-level policing jobs, training requirements for supervising and leadership positions in law enforcement vary widely by locality.<sup>54</sup> To establish the most effective law-enforcement system for the United States, a higher degree of centralization is essential. Such will ensure that those interacting with law enforcement across the nation receive the same degree of forethought and respect. This may be accomplished through the introduction of a policy that sets a minimum amount of required training for officers that is more extensive than the current norm (which is 10-20 weeks).<sup>55</sup> Given that funding for police departments is grant-based, requiring officers from every department to go through a centralized annual training program to receive funding may be the most effective way to introduce such fundamental shifts.<sup>56</sup>

According to a peer-reviewed study conducted by Scott M. Smith and Michael G. Aamodt in 1997, there is a notable positive correlation between education level and the overall competency of police officers.<sup>57</sup> Further, a 2014 study posited that it is much less likely that an officer with a college degree will resort to using force immediately upon entering the scene. Rather, such individuals are more likely to communicate with a potential offender.<sup>58</sup> The aforementioned studies demonstrate the need for a requirement for some level of higher education among law enforcement officers. As with training requirements, a shift in education requirements of police officers would be most effective if pursued at the national level to ensure equity across states.

### **3.3 Impact on Marginalized Communities**

In the ever-evolving landscape of immigration, the plight of undocumented immigrants remains a pressing concern that intersects with broader issues of marginalized communities and their interactions with law enforcement. Undocumented immigrants, often living in the shadows of society, navigate a complex web of challenges in their pursuit of a better life in a new land. These challenges extend beyond immigration policy and deeply affect their everyday lives, including through their interactions with local law enforcement agencies. Understanding these dynamics is crucial to addressing the complex, often contentious relationship between undocumented immigrants and the police.

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<sup>54</sup>“Re-Envisioning Police Training in the U.S. Rejecting the Status Quo,” American University School of Public Affairs, n.d., <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Re-Envisioning%20Police%20Training%20in%20the%20U.S.%20Rejecting%20the%20Status%20Quo%2C%20Speeding%20the%20Pace%20of%20Progress%20Towards%20a%20True%2021st%20Century%20Model.pdf>.

<sup>55</sup>“Re-Envisioning Police Training in the U.S. Rejecting the Status Quo.”

<sup>56</sup>“Federal Grant Programs,” National Police Funding Database, n.d., <https://policefundingdatabase.org/explore-the-database/federal-grant-programs/>.

<sup>57</sup>“Relationship Between Education, Experience, and Police Performance,” U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, September 2022, <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/relationship-between-education-experience-and-police-performance>.

<sup>58</sup>Rick Michelson, “Why Cops Should Pursue Higher Education,” Police1, March 8, 2016, <https://www.police1.com/police-jobs-and-careers/articles/why-cops-should-pursue-higher-education-zF6yJRfkQM4y56yK/>.

Immigration policies have played a significant role in shaping the interactions between undocumented immigrants, marginalized communities, and the police. For example, the deportation policies implemented in recent decades have contributed to the heightened fear within immigrant communities. The era of “Secure Communities”<sup>59</sup> and programs like 287(g)<sup>60</sup> allowed local law enforcement agencies to cooperate with federal immigration authorities, further eroding trust. In contrast, more recent “sanctuary city” policies<sup>61</sup> and efforts to limit cooperation between local police and immigration authorities have sought to rebuild trust and encourage reporting of crimes. Secure Communities was a program initiated by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in 2008. It aimed to enhance cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities. Under this program, fingerprints of individuals booked into local jails were checked against immigration databases to identify and potentially deport undocumented immigrants. Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act allows the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to enter into agreements with state and local law enforcement agencies, permitting designated officers to perform immigration enforcement functions. This program authorizes local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration laws within their jurisdictions. Sanctuary cities are municipalities that limit their cooperation with federal immigration enforcement efforts. Policies in these cities vary, but generally, they discourage local law enforcement from inquiring about individuals’ immigration status and may restrict the transfer of undocumented immigrants to federal custody.

In recent years, immigration enforcement has become a sensitive political issue at the local, state, and federal levels. State legislation supporting stricter immigration enforcement and highly publicized news stories of deportations, travel bans, and family separations have caused many immigrants to live in fear and to view law enforcement agencies at all levels warily.<sup>62</sup> This heated political environment has led to strained relationships between local police agencies and the immigrant communities they serve.

Relationships of trust between community members and the police are critical to public safety because crime victims and witnesses are more likely to call the police and assist in investigations if they trust law enforcement. Community trust in the police is also important because it helps to ensure that perpetrators are identified, arrested, and prosecuted while immigrant communities are not exploited or targeted for victimization.

Living in the shadows has far-reaching consequences for undocumented immigrants and the communities in which they reside. Beyond the immediate fear of law enforcement, the lack of legal status often results in exploitation in the workplace, substandard living conditions, and

<sup>59</sup>“Secure Communities,” ice.gov, n.d.,

<https://www.ice.gov/secure-communities#:~:text=Secure%20Communities%20is%20designed%20to>.

<sup>60</sup>“Delegation of Immigration Authority Section 287(G) Immigration and Nationality Act,” ice.gov, n.d.,

[https://www.ice.gov/identify-and-arrest/287g#:~:text=287\(g\)%20Program%20Models&text=The%20Warrant%20Service%20Officer%20program](https://www.ice.gov/identify-and-arrest/287g#:~:text=287(g)%20Program%20Models&text=The%20Warrant%20Service%20Officer%20program).

<sup>61</sup>“Sanctuary Policies: An Overview,” American Immigration Council, December 2020,

[https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/sanctuary\\_policies\\_an\\_overview.pdf](https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/sanctuary_policies_an_overview.pdf).

<sup>62</sup>“Building Trust with Immigrant Communities Best Practices for Law Enforcement Agencies in Smaller Cities and Towns,” Law Enforcement Immigration Task Force and Police Executive Research Forum, n.d.,

<https://www.policeforum.org/assets/BuildingTrustImmigrantCommunities.pdf>.



limited access to healthcare and education. These conditions not only affect the well-being of undocumented immigrants and their families but can also perpetuate cycles of poverty and vulnerability within marginalized communities.

Undocumented immigrants, who often come to the United States in search of better economic opportunities and escape from difficult circumstances in their home countries, constitute a vulnerable and marginalized population. Most first- and second-generation immigrants say their families came to the U.S. for economic opportunities (53%) and freedom (29%). Nearly half (46%) say their families came fleeing persecution of some kind, including political (20%), religious (12%), or general violence (17%).<sup>63</sup> These individuals face a myriad of challenges, including limited access to essential services, employment exploitation, and, significantly, fear of engaging with law enforcement due to potential consequences related to their immigration status. Their marginalized status raises questions about the broader impact on public safety and community cohesion.

One of the central issues related to undocumented immigrants' interactions with law enforcement in America is the underreporting of crimes. Fear of deportation and distrust of the police often deter members of this community from seeking help or reporting crimes when they are victimized. Law enforcement agencies also encounter several obstacles when attempting to establish relationships with immigrants: language barriers, cultural differences, and, in some cases, mistrust of law enforcement agencies because of immigrants' experiences with corrupt or brutal police agencies in their countries of origin. Bridging cultural differences can be a challenge for immigrants and police as they require time, personnel, and resources.

One method<sup>64</sup> for building communication and awareness of these cultural issues is to reach out to established community leaders in immigrant communities. If police chiefs and officers can form a good relationship with a community leader, the leader can vouch for the good faith of the police department. Specifically, they can introduce the police chief and officers to others in the community and help to identify issues that should be addressed. Collaborating with cultural institutions, religious entities, small business proprietors within immigrant communities, advocacy groups supporting immigrants and refugees, and various community organizations establishes vital links for law enforcement with community members. These affiliations foster trust and facilitate the exchange of information between the two parties. Moreover, engaging with community leaders affords the police valuable insights into the distinct cultural nuances and customs within each community.

This overview highlights the intricate relationship between undocumented immigrants, marginalized communities, and police reporting in America. It underscores the urgent need for a comprehensive, empathetic, and community-oriented approach to address the challenges faced

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<sup>63</sup>“Poll: 72% of Americans Say Immigrants Come to the United States for Jobs and to Improve Their Lives,” Cato.org, 2021,

<https://www.cato.org/blog/poll-72-americans-say-immigrants-come-us-jobs-improve-their-lives-53-say-ability-immigrate#:~:text=Most%20first%E2%80%90%20and%20second%E2%80%90%E2%80%8B>.

<sup>64</sup>“Building Trust with Immigrant Communities Best Practices for Law Enforcement Agencies in Smaller Cities and Towns,” Law Enforcement Immigration Task Force and Police Executive Research Forum, n.d., <https://www.policeforum.org/assets/BuildingTrustImmigrantCommunities.pdf>.

by undocumented immigrants. Such an approach can help build trust between law enforcement agencies and marginalized communities, promote public safety, and contribute to a more inclusive society that respects the dignity and rights of all residents, regardless of their immigration status.

#### **4. Community Policing**

According to the United States Department of Justice, community policing is a “philosophy that promotes organizational strategies which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.”<sup>65</sup> It has three main components: community partnerships, organizational transformation, and problem-solving. Essentially, this means that there is an alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems that support police partnerships with other entities, individuals, or organizations, to implement effective solutions to problems and increase trust in police.<sup>66</sup>

While the origin of community policing theory is mostly unknown and there is an increasing number of differing opinions on its deployment, civil rights and liberty groups, along with many in the academic community, have called on its usage as part of widely accepted progressive police reforms.<sup>67</sup> A commitment to improving in-person interaction, they believe, will both improve community trust in police and reduce the number of police abuses that occur nationwide.<sup>68</sup>

These partnerships can be made with other government agencies, community groups and members, nonprofits and service providers, private businesses, or the media. Community policing incentivizes the increase in efficiency and effectiveness through implementing modern management practices.<sup>69</sup> It promotes changes in organizational structures to institutionalize its adoption. Community policing makes changes in areas like climate and culture, leadership, labor relations, decision-making, strategic planning, policies, organizational evaluations, and transparency in law enforcement departments.<sup>70</sup>

Community policing has several positive impacts in the community it is established. It builds trust in the community in the police, making the officers seem like allies rather than

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<sup>65</sup> Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. “Community Policing Defined,” n.d. <https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/RIC/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf>

<sup>66</sup> U.S. DOJ. “Community Policing Defined,” n.d.

<sup>67</sup> Gary Cordner, “Chapter 7: Community Policing,” *The Oxford Handbook of Police and Policing*, last modified 2014, <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=zrooAwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA148&dq=community+policing+effectiveness&ots=sXh7zB7H3s&sig=Dk8LMXHpYx0Kozyrslq7Ytv4gsU#v=onepage&q=community%20policing%20effectiveness&f=false>.

<sup>68</sup> Gary Cordner, “Chapter 7: Community Policing,” 2014

<sup>69</sup> Gary Cordner, “Chapter 7: Community Policing,” 2014

<sup>70</sup> Gary Cordner, “Chapter 7: Community Policing,” 2014

enemies to be avoided or tricked.<sup>71</sup> This means that children also incorporate these values and learn to trust the police, which can be of extreme importance for Black people, who are often told to fear the police and distance themselves from them.<sup>72</sup> Another consequence is that it reduces crime rates and promotes accountability in policing since people become more willing to talk about crimes they witnessed.<sup>73</sup> This effect was demonstrated in Camden, New Jersey, where the police department was able to clear 96% of homicide cases after implementing a community policing initiative.<sup>74</sup>

More specifically, community policing can help provide a platform to connect, bridging gaps of misunderstanding between these minority communities and the police, given the history of police abuses and racial discrimination in this country. Much of the intertwining of race and police can be seen in the 1950s, 1960s, 1990s, and most recently within the last decade. Mainly in these decades, racial profiling grew to be one of the force's most controversial "professional, political, and legal issues." Racial profiling, as defined by the American Civil Liberties Union, is the targeting of individuals "for suspicion of crime based on the individual's race, ethnicity, religion or national origin."<sup>75</sup> Community policing has proven to be at least a theoretically logical option for police looking to undo the optics of being an occupying (and uninvited) force in neighborhoods.

Even if one method of community policing, foot patrols, is not the most effective at preventing crime, they still make the public feel safer. This is closely tied to the Broken Windows Theory, developed by William and Kelling in 1982. In this context, it "postulates that when police pay attention to minor crime and incivilities, neighborhood residents ... are reassured about the safety of their neighborhood."<sup>76</sup>

But it is important that the "Friendly Officer" effect that foot patrols and other methods of community policing have had in building trust among police in communities lead to actual solutions to crime. Studies have generally presented inconclusive evidence on this matter. However, according to a September 2022 meta-analysis, community policing has different rates of reduction depending on the crime. "The current meta-analysis found no evidence suggesting that CP had an impact on reducing disorders, drug sales, or property crimes. However, the

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<sup>71</sup> Ekici, Niyazi, Huseyin Akdogan, Robert Kelly, and Sebahattin Gultekin. "A Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Community Policing on Crime Reduction." *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being* 7, no. 3 (September 15, 2022): 111–21. <https://doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.244>.

<sup>72</sup> AP News. "Distrust of Police: Black Parents, Children Have 'the Talk,'" January 28, 2023. <https://apnews.com/article/memphis-detroit-law-enforcement-94d651117990d6b5850dbb4e902020ab>.

<sup>73</sup> Gary Cordner, "Chapter 7: Community Policing," 2014

<sup>74</sup> Gary Cordner, "Chapter 7: Community Policing," 2014

<sup>75</sup> American Civil Liberties Union. "Racial Profiling: Definition | American Civil Liberties Union," 2023. <https://www.aclu.org/documents/racial-profiling-definition>.

<sup>76</sup> Gary Cordner, "Chapter 7: Community Policing," 2014

current study found evidence that CP had an impact on reducing crimes such as burglary, fear of crime, guns and drugs, Part 1 crimes, and robbery."<sup>7778</sup>

These findings are key insights into how policymakers might view the implementation of community policing in their neighborhoods. Despite the ambiguous origins and definitions (at least those proposed by politicians and policymakers) of community policing, the positive impact it has had in reducing disorders, drug sales, and property crimes cannot be understated.

#### **4.1 Co-Responder Models**

Generally speaking, under co-response, a medical professional with a specialty in mental health will work alongside any law enforcement agent responding to a call regarding homelessness and/or mental health issues. Under an optimal co-response model, the mental health professional would join the officer in the vehicle traveling to the scene so that the two may discuss their approach to the given situation.<sup>79</sup> Further, while the cited source does not explicitly mention co-response in instances of drug use, the presence of medical professionals with a specialty in mental health in cases involving drugs would be optimal. Such would potentially allow for more constructive communication between the affected parties and the officer(s).

The presence of a medical professional in emergency situations related to mental health may provide a more direct connection for affected individuals to receive psychiatric help. Further, one of the primary benefits that the co-response model may provide for affected parties is potential alternatives to punitive measures through the legal system.<sup>80</sup> Under the co-response model, alternative solutions to punitive retribution may be provided in instances of mental health-related issues. Such may allow an individual to heal from their mental health struggle in a more constructive manner without the interference of the legal system.

The first co-response model was established in 1991 by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department in an effort to prevent police from using force against those struggling with mental illness.<sup>81</sup> Dubbed the MET (Mental Evaluation Team), the new association sought to prevent further harm from being done when officers responded to calls involving mental health concerns.<sup>82</sup> Two years later, the Los Angeles Police Department established a similar system, called SMART, or the Systemwide Mental Assessment Response Team.<sup>83</sup> In recent years, MET

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<sup>77</sup> Journalcswb.ca. "A Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Community Policing on Crime Reduction | Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being," 2023.

[https://www.journalcswb.ca/index.php/cswb/article/view/244/736#content/figure\\_reference\\_2](https://www.journalcswb.ca/index.php/cswb/article/view/244/736#content/figure_reference_2).

<sup>78</sup> FBI. "Offense Definitions," 2019.

<https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/topic-pages/offense-definitions>.

<sup>79</sup> FBI: Law Enforcement Bulletin. "Co-Response Models in Policing." Accessed October 8, 2023.

<https://leb.fbi.gov/articles/featured-articles/co-response-models-in-policing>.

<sup>80</sup> "Review of Co-Responder Team Evaluations.Pdf." Accessed October 8, 2023.

<https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/IDD/Review%20of%20Co-Responder%20Team%20Evaluations.pdf>.

<sup>81</sup> "Co-Response Models in Policing."

<sup>82</sup> "Co-Response Models in Policing."

<sup>83</sup> "Co-Response Models in Policing."

has expanded to provide mental health response teams specifically tailored to veterans (VMET).<sup>84</sup>

The LASD MET pairs a deputy and a certified mental health professional. Together, the two agents respond to cases involving mental illness, focusing on the use of de-escalation tactics.<sup>85</sup> While the MET program provides a wonderful foundation for the co-responder model, if expanded, there are multiple areas for potential improvement. Some affected individuals may benefit from the presence of a medical professional who specializes in drug addiction. If such a system were implemented, responses in cases that involve individuals suffering from drug addiction could be addressed with more specialized care, preventing physical altercations between police and affected parties.

The SMART unit essentially applies the MET model to the Los Angeles Police Department. The process of call response under SMART involves the dispatch of law enforcement officers to the location of the individual of concern. Once on the scene, the officer will then handcuff the affected individual and assess the circumstances that led to the call.<sup>86</sup> Such includes a mental health investigation and an inquiry about the potential presence of weapons on the premises.<sup>87</sup> If necessary, SMART officers (mental health professionals) are called and dispatched. The remainder of the investigation will be conducted confidentially.<sup>88</sup>

The different effects from different co-responder systems throughout the US and the world can offer insights as to the practicality and reasons for or against the use of co-responder systems. One of the main goals of corresponding systems is to reduce the number of people held by police through mental health legislation.<sup>89</sup> The general pattern among different co-responder systems shows that this goal is accomplished. In the UK four studies found that co-responder models in different areas decreased the use of S136, a law in Wales and England allowing police to detain potentially mentally ill people,<sup>90</sup> though two found an increase.<sup>91</sup> Two studies also found that the arrest rates recorded as “mental health related” decreased from 13.3% to 1.4% from police-only responses to co-responder models.<sup>92</sup> The same was true in Boston where a mere .8% of co-responder responses resulted in arrest.<sup>93</sup> In Leicester, not only was detention decreased

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<sup>84</sup> “Co-Response Models in Policing.”

<sup>85</sup> “MET | Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.” Accessed October 8, 2023. <https://lasd.org/transparency/met/>.

<sup>86</sup> Davenport, Captain Darnell. “LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT,” n.d. [https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dmh/1017968\\_MentalHealthConference-Final.pdf](https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/dmh/1017968_MentalHealthConference-Final.pdf)

<sup>87</sup> Davenport.

<sup>88</sup> Davenport.

<sup>89</sup> Andrew Lancaster, “Evidence for Joint Police and Mental Health Responses for People in Mental Health Crisis,” *Mental Health Practice* (2014+) 19, no. 10 (July 2016): 20, <https://doi.org/10.7748/mhp.2016.e1067>.

<sup>90</sup> Stephen Puntis et al., “A Systematic Review of Co-Responder Models of Police Mental Health ‘Street’ Triage,” *BMC Psychiatry* 18 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-018-1836-2>, 6.

<sup>91</sup> Puntis et al., “A Systematic Review of Co-Responder Models of Police Mental Health ‘Street’ Triage,” 7. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-018-1836-2>.

<sup>92</sup> Puntis et al., “A Systematic Review”

<sup>93</sup> “Police Response to People with Mental Illnesses in a Major U.S. City: The B...: EBSCOhost,” accessed October 8, 2023,

<https://web-s-ebSCOhost-com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=0&sid=290df38c-1950-462a-a1b6-60385430d948%40redis,1100>.

by 29% when mentally ill people were detained, but the length of their detention was less when mental health professionals were involved.<sup>94</sup> However, in an Allen Consulting Group study, they found that 37% of responses resulted in police using the local mental health legislation,<sup>95</sup> though it offers no information on data in other situations without co-responder models.

For admission to hospitals or mental health facilities, the effects of co-responder models are more varied. Data from DeKalb Georgia's model shows people assessed by mental health professionals on scene were less likely to be admitted to hospitals than during typical police practice, but this came from a small sample size.<sup>96</sup> Three studies found a similar reduction in the number of people admitted to psychiatric hospitals, and one found an overall hospital admission reduction.<sup>97</sup> Another found that co-responder models resulted in more people taken to the hospital, but more of them with the patient going voluntarily.<sup>98</sup>

A clearer dataset is the reaction from different people who utilized co-responder services. Multiple studies showed that participants stated having previous traumatic experiences with the police and that their mental illness had been criminalized, and co-responder models were better at de-escalation, not as threatening, and less stigmatizing.<sup>99</sup> One suggestion to improve co-responder models was using plainclothes officers and unmarked cars to reduce stress and embarrassment,<sup>100</sup> which matches officers' perceptions that these measures can reduce the increased violence and intensity of situations when they arrive.<sup>101</sup>

Police officers have similar success stories from these programs. The DeKalb study indicated that 75% of police officers were “very satisfied” with the program and the relationship with mental health professionals.<sup>102</sup> The Allen Consulting Group trial found that many of the police officers wanted to expand the trial of the corresponder model.<sup>103</sup> Interestingly, the largest criticism was the lack of availability of the mental health support staff due to hours or budget across multiple studies.<sup>104</sup> Another potential benefit of co-responder systems is cost-effectiveness. The DeKalb study found that their average cost per case decreased by 23% under this model.<sup>105</sup> Additionally, given the cost of hospitalizations and arrests potential reductions in those areas could mean overall cost reductions.<sup>106</sup> One study did find a small cost increase but only by 1%.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Lancaster, “Evidence for Joint Police and Mental Health Responses”

<sup>95</sup> Lancaster, “Evidence for Joint Police and Mental Health Responses”

<sup>96</sup> Lancaster, “Evidence for Joint Police and Mental Health Responses”

<sup>97</sup> Puntis et al., “A Systematic Review”

<sup>98</sup> Puntis et al., “A Systematic Review”

<sup>99</sup> Puntis et al., “A Systematic Review”

<sup>100</sup> Puntis et al., “A Systematic Review”

<sup>101</sup> Lancaster, “Evidence for Joint Police and Mental Health Responses”

<sup>102</sup> Lancaster, “Evidence for Joint Police and Mental Health Responses”

<sup>103</sup> Lancaster, “Evidence for Joint Police and Mental Health Responses”

<sup>104</sup> Puntis et al., “A Systematic Review”

<sup>105</sup> Lancaster, “Evidence for Joint Police and Mental Health Responses”

<sup>106</sup> Lancaster, “Evidence for Joint Police and Mental Health Responses”

<sup>107</sup> Puntis et al., “A Systematic Review”

One major counter argument to the use of co-responder policies comes from Social Workers who are not in full support of these models.<sup>108</sup> Social workers have a variety of concerns about social workers entering a relationship with law enforcement. A major one is the fear that it would erode the trust between BIPOC communities and social workers even further,<sup>109</sup> and that they would be better served to focus on partnering with the community rather than acting as law enforcement.<sup>110</sup> They also point to many instances in which social workers didn't reduce the force used by police officers, or were ignored by law enforcement in other ways.<sup>111</sup> This is not all social workers as others recommend getting involved with law enforcement either by joining police departments, using responder models, or simply being another responder to 911 calls.<sup>112</sup> The issue of whether or not to use co-responder models is complicated and the arguments both from data and hypothesizing about what might happen have pros and cons for both sides. However, the statistical data tends to lean towards the success of these programs. Whether they may still have problems with racial discrimination, or risk injury of social workers, or further alienate social workers from communities hasn't been documented and so given all of its positive effects it seems reasonable to conclude that they are a safe and productive path towards more effective policing.

#### **4.1.1 Boulder, CO CIRT Co-Responder Model**

Boulder, CO's Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) is a co-responder model developed in 2019 that partners police officers of Boulder's police department with licensed behavioral health technicians with expertise in housing and human resources.<sup>113</sup> Officers and technicians are both employed by the Boulder Police Department. In the several years since the founding of CIRT, they have boasted that they have provided care for people aged 9 to 94. The usual hours of operation for Monday through Friday are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., with reduced weekend hours of 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Whereas police departments and other public sector services might operate all the time, the limited hours of the CIRT might raise problems. Many people may be in need of mental health resources after 10 or 8 p.m., which can cause a significant backlog for traditional police or medical response.

CIRT is necessary in cases of mental health issues or substance use disorders, jointly referred to as behavioral health issues. The process of calling in the CIRT is made clear for bystanders: their job is not to determine outright whether a person is experiencing behavioral health issues. CIRT should mostly be used only in cases where police help is necessary. If they

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<sup>108</sup> Celia Goble, "Social Workers to the Rescue?: An Urgent Call for Emergency Response Reform Symposium: The Impacts of Financial Crisis on Urban Environments: Past, Present, and Future: Notes," *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 48, no. 4 (2021 2020): [i]-1066, 1037.

<sup>109</sup> Goble, "Social Workers to the Rescue?," 1041.

<sup>110</sup> Goble, "Social Workers to the Rescue?," 1043.

<sup>111</sup> Goble, "Social Workers to the Rescue?," 1038.

<sup>112</sup> Goble, "Social Workers to the Rescue?," 1043.

<sup>113</sup> "Crisis Intervention Response Team," bouldercolorado.gov, Crisis Intervention Response Team [if different from Title of Website], October 31, 2023, <https://bouldercolorado.gov/services/crisis-intervention-response-team>.

believe a person is experiencing an issue with behavioral health, they may call for CIRT while on the line with the police department. Unless the called-on party has a warrant for their arrest, the CIRT will prioritize de-escalation and not make any arrests. It is also important to note that the CIRT in no way replaces other behavioral help resources that either a victim or bystander can receive.

After six months of operation, the city released the first CIRT report. It detailed that CIRT responded to a total of 523 calls from 309 unique clients.<sup>114</sup> From these calls, the city determined that the current hours of operations were “well matched” to the trends in demand for the community; however, little was said about the impact a change in hours would have on the number and effectiveness of calls through CIRT. Additionally, only two calls resulted in the use of force and just six in arrest. Around 33% of calls were about a person experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing their home.<sup>115</sup> As the city continues to improve the CIRT program, they are looking to apply for federal funding that will provide for independent analysis.

According to the Boulder County DA’s Office, CIRT and other co-responder models in the area are running on a 5-year grant from the Office of Behavioral Health.<sup>116</sup> In May 2023, the City of Boulder allocated additional funding for co-response programs that saw \$555,000 of the \$2.5 million allocated to the City of Boulder’s Housing and Human Services department go to this program and another focusing on community response and engagement, known as CARE.<sup>117</sup> This was in addition to other funds allocated to the Housing and Human Services department for FY22.<sup>118</sup> CARE, or the Community Assistance Response and Engagement Program, is a new initiative geared towards non-violent situations that do not require police assistance. Because it is only a pilot, few if any resources detail its effectiveness or the structure of the program itself, and the posted FAQ only makes mention of the CIRT.<sup>119</sup> This additional funding provides for improved training for both officers and behavioral health technicians, increased “staff resiliency [in response to the] ... high degree of secondary trauma exposure,” and a renovation of CIRT and CARE workspaces.<sup>120</sup> Concurrently, homeless shelters and other housing programs in the city are working to increase their capacity and ability to meet the increased demand for their services.

#### **4.1.2 Eugene, OR CAHOOTS Alternative Response Model**

<sup>114</sup> “Co-Response and Restorative Justice Introductions.” Accessed November 14, 2023.

<https://www.bch.org/documents/lectures/BCH-PILLAR-CoResponse-and-RJ-9-30-2021.pdf>.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid

<sup>116</sup> Bouldercolorado.gov. “City Awarded over \$2.5M to Support Housing and Human Services Projects | City of Boulder,” May 22, 2023.

[https://bouldercolorado.gov/news/city-awarded-over-25m-support-housing-and-human-services-projects#:~:text=%24555%2C000%20to%20increase%20capacity%20for,and%20Engagement%20\(CARE\)%20team..](https://bouldercolorado.gov/news/city-awarded-over-25m-support-housing-and-human-services-projects#:~:text=%24555%2C000%20to%20increase%20capacity%20for,and%20Engagement%20(CARE)%20team..)

<sup>117</sup> “City Awarded over \$2.5M” May, 2023.

<sup>118</sup> Swearingen, Deborah. “Boulder Receives Federal Grants for Homelessness, Behavioral Health Projects.” Yahoo.com. Yahoo, January 25, 2022.

<https://www.yahoo.com/now/boulder-receives-federal-grants-homelessness-050100017.html>.

<sup>119</sup> “Concerning Behavioral Health Situations and Incidents -FAQs.” Accessed November 16, 2023.

<https://bouldercolorado.gov/media/2860/download?inline>.

<sup>120</sup> Bouldercolorado.gov. “City Awarded over \$2.5M



Eugene, Oregon employs a non-traditional method of policing. Their unique approach includes a program called CAHOOTS. CAHOOTS stands for Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets and has existed for over three decades in Eugene.<sup>121</sup> This paper looks into the program and its intricacies, the public reaction to the program, and possible pros and cons of adopting this method.

CAHOOTS is a program in which social workers are dispatched to deal with complaints about social affairs. They work alongside police officers and work towards de-escalating matters that have a strong social component.<sup>122</sup> The program, as previously stated, has existed for over 30 years in Eugene, Oregon. CAHOOTS uses non-violent methods to deal with those struggling with some sort of social issue—whether that be addiction, homelessness, etc.<sup>123</sup> CAHOOTS also performs emergency crisis counseling and offers mental health services. CAHOOTS teams are dispatched to calls and are composed of two individuals: one medical professional and one crisis care worker.<sup>124</sup> The workers can respond to all sorts of calls, but most seem to be focused on mental health and addiction, though they also perform wellness checks.<sup>125</sup> CAHOOTS teams are unarmed and not members of law enforcement.<sup>126</sup>

Two years of data exist on CAHOOTS reporting numbers. In 2014, around 9,600 calls were responded to by CAHOOTS, while in 2021, that number rose to almost 16,500.<sup>127</sup> According to the Eugene Police Department, CAHOOTS diverts up to 8% of all calls to the department.<sup>128</sup> CAHOOTS not only diverts calls away from the police department, but it also saves the department and local government money.<sup>129</sup> Data from 2014 to 2017 provides background for this. In 2017 (the year with the highest reported savings from implementing CAHOOTS in this timeframe), the Eugene Police Department’s budget was \$51.3 million; the CAHOOTS program saved the department an estimated \$12 million.<sup>130</sup> The financial burden that a program like CAHOOTS diverts away from local police departments is also diverted from taxpayers in the areas where the programs are implemented.

The CAHOOTS program is not without its pitfalls. While in 2019, only 311 calls out of 24,000 reported to CAHOOTS required police backup, the program is finding itself overburdened and underfunded.<sup>131</sup> Calls have only increased to the CAHOOTS dedicated line, and while the public perception of the program has been largely positive over the last 31 years,

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<sup>121</sup> “CAHOOTS | Eugene, OR Website,” n.d., <https://www.eugene-or.gov/4508/CAHOOTS>.

<sup>122</sup> “CAHOOTS,”

<sup>123</sup> “CAHOOTS,”

<sup>124</sup> Gretchen Currie, “What Is CAHOOTS? - White Bird Clinic,” White Bird Clinic, November 8, 2020, <https://whitebirdclinic.org/what-is-cahoots/>.

<sup>125</sup> Gretchen Currie, “What Is CAHOOTS?”

<sup>126</sup> Gretchen Currie, “What Is CAHOOTS?”

<sup>127</sup> “CAHOOTS,”

<sup>128</sup> “CAHOOTS,”

<sup>129</sup> Gretchen Currie, “What Is CAHOOTS?”

<sup>130</sup> Gretchen Currie, “What Is CAHOOTS?”

<sup>131</sup> “CASE STUDY: CAHOOTS,” Vera Institute of Justice, November 12, 2020, <https://www.vera.org/behavioral-health-crisis-alternatives/cahoots>.

the program's future remains frustratingly uncertain for residents of Eugene, as burdens placed on the organization, lack of funding, and the fallout of the pandemic all pose major threats to CAHOOTS.<sup>132</sup>

Programs like CAHOOTS are not common in the United States. While there is scarce data that gives precise numbers on the number of departments that implement similar programs, there is conclusive evidence that most are still traditional. The pros of adopting a program like CAHOOTS are the financial benefits for taxpayers and departments and the non-violent response's tendencies to resolve social affairs in a way that prevents police involvement and potential violence. There are cons within the program in Eugene itself. A lack of funding and resources, as well as exorbitant amounts of calls for the program's teams lead to overburdening and inefficiency. It seems that including a program like CAHOOTS would be beneficial overall to police departments and the cities in which they operate, but they must be properly maintained, funded, and staffed.

#### **4.2 Legislative and Advocacy Efforts**

The arguments against co-responder models in policing tend to come in the form of structural barriers to enacting them, as well as some flaws that co-responder models alone cannot address, specifically the deficiencies in the existing mental healthcare system that co-responder models alone cannot address

One of the largest barriers to enacting these models is funding,<sup>133</sup> which is true both in theory and in practice. A study by the University of Cincinnati on co-responder systems found that limited funding was the largest barrier to implementing the co-responder model to an effective level.<sup>134</sup> It resulted in a variety of consequences including reduced hours of operation, limited staffing, and limited resources.<sup>135</sup> Co-responder models often rely on grant funding and so once the grant runs out, the programs struggle and often are no longer sustainable.<sup>136</sup> This can be counteracted by receiving more grant funding, or by gaining funding from the budget in order to fund the program which likely requires community support and hard data that supports the program's success, neither of which are easy.<sup>137</sup>

Another major barrier to implementing co-responder models is the communication required for doing so, both with other agencies and with the community. Indianapolis' experience with its pilot co-responder program exemplified this, but other studies also highlighted it as an issue. Communication between other government agencies struggled specifically because of the stigma surrounding the job that was to be done by the co-responder

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<sup>132</sup> "CASE STUDY: CAHOOTS," Vera Institute of Justice

<sup>133</sup> Kevin Amell, "The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs," Julota, August 9, 2021, <https://www.julota.com/news/the-pros-cons-of-a-co-responder-program/>.

<sup>134</sup> "Assessing the Impact of Co-Responder Team Programs: A Review of Research," March 2021, <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/IDD/Review%20of%20Co-Responder%20Team%20Evaluations.pdf>

<sup>135</sup> "Assessing the Impact of Co-Responder Team Programs"

<sup>136</sup> Amell, "The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs." August 2021

<sup>137</sup> Amell, "The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs." August 2021

models.<sup>138</sup> Other police officers, as well as firefighters and other first responders, would make comments surrounding the legitimacy of the work of the co-responder models such as how they're "jokes now; we aren't the real police".<sup>139</sup> The stigma against people who participate in co-responder models could potentially reduce the number of officers willing to participate in the program. Additionally, successfully marketing the program to the community is an issue in attempting co-responder models.<sup>140</sup> In Indianapolis, co-responder officers were asked who they were and were also mistaken for other programs in the area, failing to be recognized for what they were. In fact, other first responders wouldn't recognize the members of the co-responder program, and hospitals and healthcare centers also would sometimes not know who they were.<sup>141</sup>

Other communication problems exist within co-responder models such as a difficult line between how much direction responders should be given. Officials want to give responders the ability to use their discretion in handling situations, as well as to avoid having rules in place that prevent people from deciding to act at all for fear of breaking the rules. Despite that, members of teams reported having issues with the lack of direction, which led to confusion for them.<sup>142</sup>

These problems within existing co-responder models provide reasons for other governments to avoid enacting similar programs at the very least until these issues are addressed. Some of these issues also provide good reasons for governments to avoid co-responder models separate from the struggles of already existing programs. The fact that funding does not exist for co-responder programs is the first of these types of problems. The second is that co-responder models leave individuals stranded after they do their job.<sup>143</sup> There is no mechanism for any follow-up between the responders and the patients. Therefore, the responders have no idea what happened to the patient after they left them. If they referred them to mental health resources they don't know if the patient went, they don't know if a patient went through with the entire process of their treatment, or if that treatment continued outside of a facility, demonstrating the harmful lack of communication and accountability between co-responders and mental healthcare providers. Outpatient care is critical for mental health support and these programs do nothing to support patients in that way.<sup>144</sup> The final major reason to avoid co-responder models is that the existing mental healthcare system is not prepared for it. When co-responder officers respond and take someone to a mental health facility, there frequently is no space in the facility, and even if there is, there is a good chance that they won't accept the insurance that the patient has.<sup>145</sup> Despite all the efforts that these responders make, it does not guarantee that individuals will get the treatment that they need.<sup>146</sup> An Indianapolis officer commenting on this issue said that "The

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<sup>138</sup> Katie Bailey et al., "Barriers and Facilitators to Implementing an Urban Co-Responding Police-Mental Health Team," *Health & Justice* 6, no. 1 (November 22, 2018): 21, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40352-018-0079-0>.

<sup>139</sup> Bailey et al., "Barriers and Facilitators"

<sup>140</sup> "Assessing the Impact of Co-Responder Team Programs"

<sup>141</sup> Bailey et al., "Barriers and Facilitators"

<sup>142</sup> Bailey et al., "Barriers and Facilitators"

<sup>143</sup> Amell, "The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs." August 2021

<sup>144</sup> Amell, "The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs." August 2021

<sup>145</sup> Amell, "The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs." August 2021

<sup>146</sup> Bailey et al., "Barriers and Facilitators"

city was under the impression that there are places to take people; there are not”.<sup>147</sup> This unfortunate truth led participants to consider that the more appropriate next step is to expand mental health treatment options rather than implement these co-responder models.<sup>148</sup> At the very least it is clear that the country needs to focus on expanding mental health treatment in order to make it more accessible for co-responder models to be more effective.<sup>149</sup> These reasons all show that co-responder models may not be the most effective or even the most feasible way to address the issue of mental health in the US. Existing co-responder models have issues that would prevent new places from creating new co-responder programs, and there are overarching systemic reasons in the healthcare system and with co-responder models themselves that will make it difficult for these programs to succeed.

Those in favor of co-responder models argue their effectiveness, outlined in five key points: the effectiveness of enhancing crisis de-escalation, increasing connection to services for people, reducing arrests and time spent by officers on calls, reducing ER visits, and promoting cost-effectiveness. The general findings are as such: First, the limited evidence available suggests co-responder-monitored calls for service see reductions in incidents of force and resulting injury. Second, if people are referred to mental health resources, they are likely to take them. Third, the limited evidence available suggests a lower rate of arrest, police detention, and time spent on calls with co-responder models. Fourth, with an emphasis on de-escalation, mixed research can show lower ER referrals and any resulting hospitalization. Fifth, there is a possible cost reduction associated with co-responder models as opposed to usual police vehicle patrols.

Despite so few studies giving any conclusive evidence as to whether co-responder models are effective in the aforementioned areas, several case studies can give practical evidence to the cost-efficiency of co-responder models in the long run. In Douglas County, Colorado, for instance, a 2020 report showed that the introduction of four standard co-response teams freed 688 law enforcement units, 179 fire/EMS workers, and 73 fire/EMS vehicles back onto the streets and ready for other calls. Because of this freeing up of resources, more than \$4.9 million was saved between 2017 and 2019.<sup>150</sup> Moreover in Gainesville, Florida, the first co-responder model they implemented in 2018 saw 635 calls, saving the city \$240,000 through diversions of people to mental health resources as opposed to jail or police detention.<sup>151</sup> One review of co-responding programs from 1989 through 2005 found substantive evidence of cost decreases through reduced hospitalizations and reduced wait times and admissions of patients.<sup>152</sup> For instance, a 23% reduction was found in the cost of co-response on average than through use of

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<sup>147</sup> Bailey et al., “Barriers and Facilitators”

<sup>148</sup> Bailey et al., “Barriers and Facilitators”

<sup>149</sup> Amell, “The Pros & Cons of Co-Responder Programs.” August 2021

<sup>150</sup> Amell, Kevin. “Five Examples of Successful Co-Responder Programs - Julota.” Julota, June 4, 2022. <https://www.julota.com/news/five-examples-of-successful-co-responder-programs/>.

<sup>151</sup> Amell, “Five Examples” June, 2022.

<sup>152</sup> Shapiro, Gilla K, Andrée M Cusi, Maritt Kirst, Patricia O’Campo, Arash Nakhost, and Vicky Stergiopoulos. “Co-Responding Police-Mental Health Programs: A Review.” *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research* 42, no. 5 (September 20, 2014): 606–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-014-0594-9>.

traditional police patrols. Additionally, police calls cost \$300, while co-response ones were \$190.<sup>153</sup>

#### **4.2.1 Case Study: NYC Stop and Frisk**

Stop and frisk was a policy in New York City that allowed for police officers to stop and “frisk,” meaning search, based on “reasonable suspicion.”<sup>154</sup> In 2013, it was found by federal Judge Shira Sheindlin that the policy was unconstitutional, as it violated the Fourth Amendment's protections from unreasonable searches and seizures, while also violating the Fourteenth Amendment because of the prevalence of racial profiling.<sup>155</sup> The racial profiling and blatant racism found throughout stop and frisk played a large role in the public resistance to the policy. Between 2004 and 2012, while stop-and-frisk was in place, 80% of the stops made were of Black and Latino people.<sup>156</sup> These stops were also significantly less successful than stops made on white people, resulting in twice the likelihood that a stop of a white person would find a weapon and three times the chance of finding contraband.<sup>157</sup> Unfortunately, these patterns have continued even after the ruling finding stop and frisk unconstitutional.

In 2023, New York’s Neighborhood Safety Teams (NSTs) were accused of making unlawful and racially biased stops that are reminiscent of stop and frisk.<sup>158</sup> These teams had been abolished amidst the protests of 2020 but were brought back when Mayor Eric Adams took office. The Mayor’s office maintains that the officers have been trained to not violate citizens' rights and that the program is effective in reducing shootings, as, throughout 2022, shootings fell by double digits and have continued declining in 2023.<sup>159</sup> However, an analysis of a random sample of stops by NSTs in 10 precincts showed that 97% of stops were of Blacks and Hispanics, where only 75% had reasonable suspicion, and only two-thirds had legal basis. Additionally, out of 230 car stops, only 4 found either weapons or contraband.<sup>160</sup> These findings of racial bias are supported by another study, *A Closer Look At Stop and Frisk in NYC* by the NYCU, that has analyzed stops from 2003- 2022. They found that in that time, 90% of people stopped were people of color, and that young people were particularly impacted.<sup>161</sup> This data raises the question of what should be done with policies that are effective despite obvious other flaws and

<sup>153</sup> Shapiro et al. “Co-Responding Police-Mental,” September 20, 2014

<sup>154</sup> “NYPD’s Infamous Stop-and-Frisk Policy Found Unconstitutional,” The Leadership Conference Education Fund, accessed October 25, 2023,

<https://civilrights.org/edfund/resource/nypds-infamous-stop-and-frisk-policy-found-unconstitutional/>.

<sup>155</sup> “Stop and Frisk Found Unconstitutional,” *American Civil Liberties Union* (blog), accessed October 25, 2023, <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/stop-and-frisk-found-unconstitutional>.

<sup>156</sup> “NYPD’s Infamous Stop-and-Frisk Policy Found Unconstitutional.” October, 2023

<sup>157</sup> “NYPD’s Infamous Stop-and-Frisk Policy Found Unconstitutional.” October, 2023

<sup>158</sup> Aaron Katersky and Teddy Grant, “NYPD Safety Team Making High Number of Unlawful Stops, Mostly People of Color: Report,” ABC News, accessed October 26, 2023,

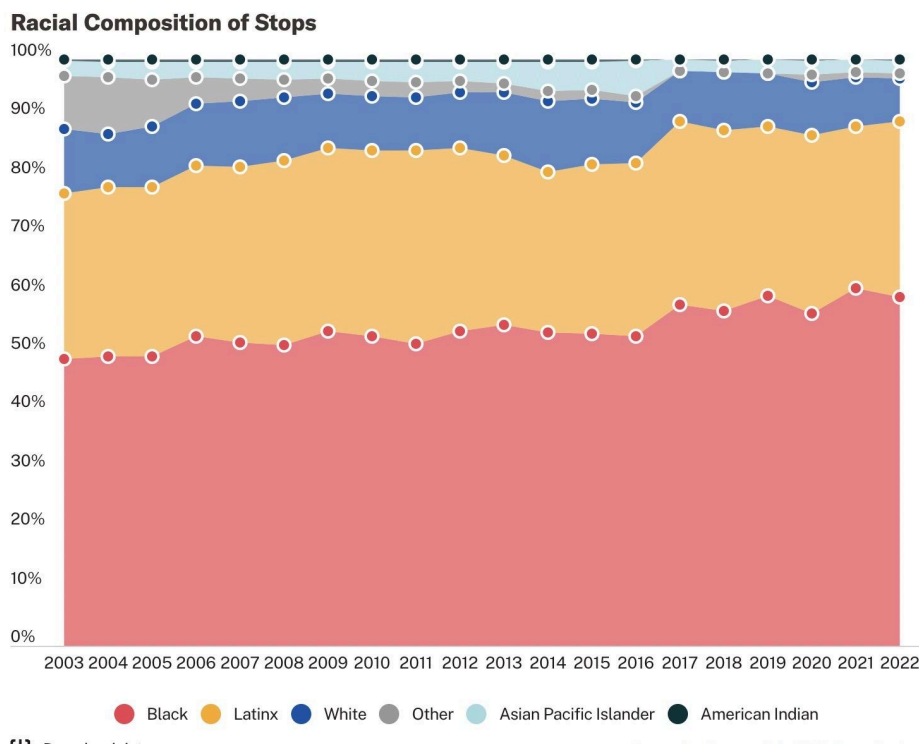
<https://abcnews.go.com/US/nypd-safety-team-making-high-number-unlawful-stops/story?id=99850699>.

<sup>159</sup> Katersky and Grant, “NYPD Safety Team Making High Number of Unlawful Stops” October, 2023

<sup>160</sup> Katersky and Grant, “NYPD Safety Team Making High Number of Unlawful Stops” October, 2023

<sup>161</sup> “A Closer Look at Stop-and-Frisk in NYC | New York Civil Liberties Union | ACLU of New York,” December 12, 2022, <https://www.nyclu.org/en/closer-look-stop-and-frisk-nyc>.

how much error can be accepted from law enforcement to deter crime, specifically with NSTs and not stop and frisk.



Some argue that these statistics are not the abomination they appear to be. They make the argument that stop and frisk was used in areas that had the highest rates of violent crime, which is supported by data showing areas with the highest murder rates, and highest rates of stop and frisk, and that those areas just so happen to be areas with high minority populations.<sup>162</sup> In those areas, lower thresholds of suspicious activity are used for searches because of the high crime rates, which does put an undue burden on those not engaged in criminal activity but there is an explanation other than racial bias for the high number of stops of minorities.<sup>163</sup> However, a study that lays out these claims does in the end still find racial bias in stop and frisk in the NYPD, though maybe not as large as people are led to believe.<sup>164</sup> Interestingly, based on their research and analysis of what cops found in successful stops, they propose a way to “fix” stop and frisk by reducing the number of innocent people stopped, without sacrificing the number of successful stops made.<sup>165</sup>

The Stop and Frisk policy implemented in New York City underscores the complex relationship between the police and the public, with direct implications for trust in law

<sup>162</sup> Sharad Goel, Justin M. Rao, and Ravi Shroff, “Precinct or Prejudice? Understanding Racial Disparities in New York City’s Stop-and-Frisk Policy,” *The Annals of Applied Statistics* 10, no. 1 (March 2016): 365–94, <https://doi.org/10.1214/15-AOAS897>, 377.

<sup>163</sup> Goel, Rao, and Shroff, “Precinct or Prejudice?”, 366-377.

<sup>164</sup> Goel, Rao, and Shroff, “Precinct or Prejudice?”, 380.

<sup>165</sup> Goel, Rao, and Shroff, “Precinct or Prejudice?”, 388.

enforcement. The policy, which allowed officers to stop and search individuals they deemed suspicious, faced extensive criticism for disproportionately targeting Black and Hispanic communities. This controversial practice led to a significant erosion of trust in the police, as it was perceived as a form of racial profiling and an infringement on civil liberties. The Coming of Age with Stop and Frisk: Experiences, Self-Perceptions, and Public Safety Implications study found that 44 percent of young people surveyed indicated that they had been stopped repeatedly—9 times or more, and 20 percent said they had been stopped just once.<sup>166</sup> 71 percent of young people surveyed reported being frisked at least once, and 64 percent said they had been searched. 45 percent reported encountering an officer who threatened them, and 46 percent said force had been used against them at least once. One out of four said they were involved in a stop in which the officer displayed his or her weapon.<sup>167</sup> The Stop and Frisk policy in NYC highlights the need for law enforcement agencies to carefully consider the impact of their policies on various communities and the importance of transparency, community engagement, and accountability in rebuilding trust, not only in New York City but also in police departments across the United States. It further emphasizes the critical role of the justice system and public opinion in shaping policing practices and policies that can either erode or enhance public trust.

Trust in the police in the United States has been a subject of extensive research and discussion, particularly in the context of the country's unique socio-political landscape. Several key factors influence the level of trust Americans place in their law enforcement agencies. Racial and ethnic disparities are a significant aspect of this discussion. High-profile incidents of police misconduct and excessive use of force, often disproportionately affecting minority communities, have further eroded trust in law enforcement.<sup>168</sup>

Socioeconomic status also plays a role, as individuals from lower-income backgrounds may have different experiences and perceptions of police interactions compared to those from more affluent backgrounds.<sup>169</sup> The perceived legitimacy of police actions, community policing initiatives, and the transparency of law enforcement agencies in the United States are critical factors influencing public trust.

Additionally, the media's role in shaping public perceptions of the police cannot be understated. The news and social media platforms play a crucial role in disseminating information about law enforcement activities, and how these stories are portrayed can significantly impact trust in the police.<sup>170</sup> Researchers continue to examine these dynamics specific to the United States, seeking to provide insights that can inform reforms, policy changes,

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<sup>166</sup> “Coming of Age with Stop and Frisk: Experiences, Self-Perceptions, and Public Safety Implications,” Vera Institute of Justice, September 2013, <https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/stop-and-frisk-fact-sheet.pdf>.

<sup>167</sup> “Coming of Age with Stop and Frisk,” September 2013

<sup>168</sup> “Race, Trust and Police Legitimacy,” National Institute of Justice, January 9, 2013, <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/race-trust-and-police-legitimacy>.

<sup>169</sup> Lauren Bennett Cattaneo, “The Role of Socioeconomic Status in Interactions with Police among a National Sample of Women Experiencing Intimate Partner Violence,” *American journal of community psychology*, June 2010, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20232246/>.

<sup>170</sup> “Social & News Media’s Effects on Law Enforcement,” *Iris buzz*, May 15, 2023, <https://irisbuzz.cc/social-news-medias-effects-on-law-enforcement/>.

and community engagement efforts aimed at rebuilding and strengthening trust between law enforcement and the diverse communities they serve.

#### **4.2.2 Case Study: Boston Miracle and the Ten Point Coalition**

The Boston Ten-Point Coalition was founded in 1992.<sup>171</sup> Its foundation was largely in response to the introduction of Operation Ceasefire in Boston, a program initiated in an attempt to decrease instances of violent crime in the city.<sup>172</sup> Developed by the Youth Violence Strike Force (YVSF) of the Boston Police Department, the primary goal of Operation Ceasefire was to prevent gun violence. The program, launched in 1996, implemented more direct means of communication between gangs and law enforcement and showed promise as a means for decreasing instances of violent crime among young people in the area.<sup>173</sup>

Founders of the Ten-Point Coalition realized, however, that efforts to decrease crime in the greater Boston area would require the assistance of the entire community. Thus, Christian leaders and citizens from across the city mobilized in an effort to aid young people whom they referred to as “troubled youth” (a term defined as “youth that other agencies most frequently are unable to serve”). The belief that undergirded the foundation of Ten-Point was that most young people who enter into a life of crime have the capacity, with the right guidance, to become law-abiding citizens.<sup>174</sup>

##### The Plan

The Ten-Point Coalition provides ten tangible strategies for keeping youth away from criminality. They are as follows:

1. “Promote and campaign for a cultural shift to help reduce youth violence, both physically and verbally, within the black community by initiating conversations, introspection, and reflection on the thoughts and actions that hold us back as a people, individually and collectively.
2. Develop, as churches, a curriculum regarding black and Latino history with an emphasis on the struggles of women of color to help young people understand that the God of history has been and remains active in all our lives.
3. Acknowledge and respond to the impact of trauma as a physical and emotional reality on the lives of our young people and their families as a direct result of violence.
4. Build meaningful relationships with high-risk youth by recognizing their reality on their terms and in their spaces.

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<sup>171</sup> BMA TenPoint, “Tenpoint.” <https://www.bmatenpoint.org/tenpoint>.

<sup>172</sup> National Gang Center, “Boston Ten-Point Coalition.” <https://nationalgangcenter.ojp.gov/spt/Programs/43>.

<sup>173</sup> “Operation Ceasefire -- Boston, MA.” Accessed November 5, 2023. [https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh176/files/pubs/gun\\_violence/profile21.html](https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh176/files/pubs/gun_violence/profile21.html).

<sup>174</sup> National Gang Center, “Boston Ten-Point Coalition.”



5. Focus specifically on connecting and rebuilding the lives of youth who have been incarcerated and stigmatized by mainstream society.
6. Provide youth advocacy and one-on-one mentoring for high-risk youth.
7. Provide gang mediation and intervention for high-risk youth with the goal of establishing cease-fires and building the foundation for active peace.
8. Establish accountable, community-based economic development projects that are organic visions of revenue generation and that demystify the accumulation and power of money through financial literacy.
9. Build partnerships with the social/secular institutions of our city, with suburban and downtown communities of faith to help provide spiritual, human, and material support.
10. Provide ongoing training for individual churches along with a systematic program in leadership development to create, maintain, and sustain community mobilization.<sup>175</sup>

The above strategies are effective in that they allow established members of the faith community to connect with impacted “troubled youth” on an individual basis. Further, the ninth point encourages connection and collaboration between interested citizens across communities.

### Results

The multi-pronged crime-reduction effort that involved Operation Ceasefire and the Ten-Point coalition has proved to be largely successful in that it reduced net violent crime in the Boston area. As stated by one of the founders of the organization, Rev. Jeffrey Brown, there have been some roadblocks in ensuring that the entire community is engaged in crime-prevention efforts. However, there has been a definite reduction in the number of gun violence incidents in Boston since the introduction of the Coalition (such incidents have decreased by 79%).<sup>176</sup> Further, the organization and larger violence-reduction effort has expanded beyond the scope of the Christian community to become a city-wide effort.<sup>177</sup> The success of the Boston Ten-Point Coalition displays the need for a holistic approach to reducing violent crime in communities across the nation. Indeed, as was the case with Ten-Point, anti-violence efforts prove to be more effective when they serve to mobilize the whole community against the issue rather than relying solely on law enforcement officers.

## **5. 2020 Racial Reckoning: Legislative Reforms at City and State Levels**

### **5.1 Case Study: Minneapolis**

<sup>175</sup> National Gang Center, “Boston Ten-Point Coalition.”

<sup>176</sup> BMA TenPoint, “Tenpoint.”

<sup>177</sup> “Rev. Brown: TenPoint Coalition Refocused On Ending ‘Culture Of Violence.’” Accessed November 5, 2023. <https://www.wbur.org/news/2009/07/30/ten-point-coalition>.

A little over three years after the brutal police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, on July 13, Judge Karen Janisch of the Hennepin County District approved a police reform agreement. This agreement would create an independent commission with the goal of overseeing the Minneapolis Police Department and mandating policing reforms. Under the decree, police are no longer allowed to conduct consent searches on pedestrians or vehicles or searches due to the supposed smell of marijuana. In addition, officers are required to de-escalate and limit their use of tasers and chemical irritants. In the aftermath of the investigation instituted by the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, Minneapolis police will also now be subject to federal oversight under a consent decree.<sup>178</sup>

The Minneapolis legislature approved a number of reforms to the police force in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd. These reforms include a ban on the key-to-neck technique for subduing suspects, which is what the officer who killed George Floyd used before his death. In addition, training in paramilitary tactics is also prohibited on the grounds that it encourages the use of excessive force. Officers also now have a duty to interfere when a comrade seems to be using "excessive force." Another part of the reform is to establish more training on how to deal with civilians suffering from mental illness and autism.<sup>179</sup>

## **5.2 Case Study: Louisville**

After a two-year investigation into the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD), the Justice Department found that the LMPD uses excessive force, including unjustified neck restraints), conducts searches based on invalid warrants, unlawfully executes search warrants without knocking and announcing, conducts unlawful stop and searches during street enforcement activities, and unlawfully discriminates against Black people and those with disabilities.

In light of the investigation, the department provided a written report of its investigative findings along with remedial measures. Among the recommendations are a received use of force policy to place more emphasis on de-escalation techniques and require officers to consider less intrusive alternatives. Additional policies include requiring documentation of all stops, analyzing data from enforcement activity, requiring consistent activation and review of body-worn cameras, and improving civilian complaint investigations. Specifically, to improve oversight, the justice department recommends that to help build trust within the community, LMPD should

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<sup>178</sup> Rachel Nostrant, "Minneapolis police agree to court-enforced reforms 3 years after George Floyd protests," Reuters, last modified July 13, 2023, accessed November 7, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/minneapolis-police-agree-court-enforced-reforms-3-years-after-george-floyd-2023-07-17/>.

<sup>179</sup> Translated by ContentEngine LLC, "Minnesota Approves Police Reforms after Floyd's Death," *CE Noticias Financieras* (Miami), 2020, english edition, [Page #], <http://search.proquest.com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/wire-feeds/minnesota-approves-police-reforms-after-floyds/docview/2426135022/se-2?accountid=11311>.

cooperate with the Inspector General and Civilian Review and Accountability Board to promote robust and even-handed civilian oversight. The LMPD should also prioritize transparency in its internal affairs practices, such as reporting to the public regarding the nature of complaints received, misconduct findings made, and discipline imposed.<sup>180</sup>

### **5.3 Case Study: San Francisco**

In 2015 and 2016, the San Francisco Police Department faced severe criticism due to several high-profile officer-involved shootings. In response to this, the US Department of Justice's Office for Community Oriented Policing Services released a comprehensive report of the San Francisco Police Department. This report highlighted five areas for improvement in tandem with the ideals of President Obama's Task Force on 21st-Century policing. These five areas are: use of force reforms, bias reforms, community policing reforms, accountability reforms, and recruitment, hiring, and personnel reforms.

In 2020, Mayor London Breed announced a new police reform roadmap with four areas of improvement: to reduce public reliance of police responses to non-criminal street rises, to eliminate biased policing and strengthen accountability, to demilitarize departmental operations, and to promote economic justice through budget reallocations that aid traditionally marginalized communities.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Office of Public Affairs, "Justice Department Finds Civil Rights Violations by the Louisville Metro Police Department and Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government," *Office of Public Affairs*, last modified March 8, 2023, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-finds-civil-rights-violations-louisville-metro-police-department-and>.

<sup>181</sup> San Francisco Police Department, "A Role Model on Reform," San Francisco Police, <https://www.sanfranciscopolice.org/your-sfpd/police-reform#:~:text=The%20four%2Dpart%20police%20reform,De militarize%20departmental%20operations%3B%20and>.

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