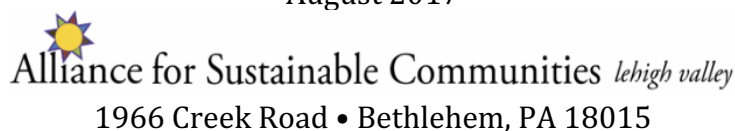


Building Community:  
Respect, Understanding and Collaboration  
between Police and Citizens

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## Executive Summary

Recently, the tension between communities and law enforcement officers has been highlighted in mainstream media, political campaigns, and everyday conversations. Although the root issues of police brutality, unaccountability, and lack of extensive cultural training has existed for years, they have been especially brought to light with the use of smart phones and social media. We acknowledge that the issues regarding police forces and communities are complex and therefore can't be tackled all at once. However, this report attempts to address and propose reforms to either establish or strengthen relations between these two groups. Although there are many books and resources out there on how to build healthy relationships between police officers and their communities, we tried to make our report more local by not only conducting extensive research on preexisting literature, but also by interviewing important, local community officials.

It is important to note that this report is one of two parts. Although often deemed as separate structures, law enforcement and the criminal justice system are inextricably connected. Although this report focuses on the issues and potential resolutions concerning police officers, the second report investigates the problems that plague the current prison system and ways to improve it. Despite what may be popular belief, the majority of inmates in prison are not locked up forever; in contrary, the majority of them return to our communities. Since the punitive approach to fighting crime has clearly been failing, we decided to look into more restorative and successful methods of transforming lives.

All part of the same community, each of us can make a difference in promoting the stability, prosperity, and security of our communities. In this report, we've included ways that residents in other places have become active citizens in their neighborhoods and organizations that may help readers take action. We believe that we each have a role to play in our local neighborhoods; as Lafayette College Professor Ben Cohen has noted, everyone is part of a bigger system that cannot work in separate parts, but requires that we all work together.

In order to access the second report, please click or type in this link: [\[insert link\]](#)  
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## Introduction

Before going in depth about law enforcement issues, I think it's important to take a look at how the role of police officers have been defined and interpreted. The Pennsylvania statute §8951-§8954 defines the jurisdiction of municipal police as having "the power and authority to enforce the laws of this Commonwealth" against "any offense which the officer views or otherwise has probable cause to believe was committed within his jurisdiction," as well as to take "action on the part of the police in order to preserve, protect or defend persons or property or to otherwise maintain the peace and dignity of this Commonwealth." Despite being called to take care of their communities, police officers' actions may at times make people feel as though the sole duty of a cop is to fight crime.

It has often been debated whether or not police should have their power and jurisdiction expanded or limited. After the September 11 attacks, many Americans felt that they had become extremely vulnerable in their everyday lives and demanded that police have their authority strengthened. In fact, police began relying more on aggressive strategies such as stop-and-frisk. On the other hand, after the start of the Trump administration and their promises to "intensify and expand an already vicious [law enforcement] system," individuals have begun to push for police-free communities as well.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to these two perspectives, the discourse on the extent of police powers has been demonstrated through the various opinions written by Supreme Court Justices throughout the years. These judges have addressed both the fallibility and good-natured intentions of police officers. In the Supreme Court case of *Weeks v. United States*, 232 U.S. 383 (1914), the majority ruled that "the efforts of the courts and their officials to bring the guilty to punishment, praiseworthy as they are, are not to be aided by the sacrifice of those great principles established by years of endeavor and suffering which have resulted in their embodiment in the fundamental law of the land." In other words, the liberties of Americans can't be invaded solely on the argument for security.

On the other hand, in *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 US 1 (1968), the judges demonstrated the need and obligation for law enforcement officers to protect themselves and other possible victims of violence in such situations. Therefore although the Constitution includes an exclusionary principle that's supposed to protect citizens from unreasonable searches and seizures, this case's court opinion argued that with quickly dangerously unfolding situations, stopping and frisking is a reasonable response that police can use.<sup>2</sup> This case thus gave police more power to stop and frisk, as long as they could prove afterwards that they had enough reasonable suspicion.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court has more recently awarded police officers the flexibility of making mistakes by calling these mistakes a good faith exception. In other words, they will excuse the mishaps of police on the belief that police officers had a well-intentioned motive to fulfill their duties. In *Heien v. North Carolina*, 134 S.Ct. 1872 (2014), an otherwise illegal-traffic stop, on the fault of the police officers, was deemed to be valid because it was deemed a reasonable but mistaken interpretation of the law. This therefore gave police leeway to unlawfully enforce rules in the name of protection.

## Issue

### Hiring Practices

Some police departments have been known for rejecting applicants because of inadequate aggression levels. For instance, someone may be turned down because they're considered to be too docile; however, as Donald Grady II, a retired police chief with over 30 years in uniform has pointed out, this isn't a good practice. He's stated, "Why are we hiring people to do policing because of their level of aggression? We're screening in people that don't ... have some socialization beyond an adolescent socialization..."<sup>3</sup> The level of aggression of an applicant should not be prioritized because highly aggressive officers are likely to escalate situations and it does not directly correlate to an officer's ability to perform his responsibilities well. Although some police departments offer training on how to communicate and deescalate situations, as mentioned by the Easton police, many officers in reality work aggressively, "in ways that are inconsistent with trust-building," that are continuously inconsistent with "commitment to compliance, cooperation, and engagement."<sup>4</sup> Another reason why aggression isn't the greatest quality of a police officer is because a significant part of a police's efforts and time involves dealing with problems between people that aren't crime-related at all. Police are often called in to settle disputes between members of families, between neighbors, between strangers and friends.<sup>5</sup> This would require officers to be able to facilitate disagreements and help others' communicate their issues in healthy and understandable ways rather than settle differences physically. Therefore, we believe that police departments should focus more on hiring merited candidates who are committed to the mission and values of a department than on level of aggression.

## Reform

### Hiring Modifications

Like its communities, police departments should reflect diversity in its officers. As recommended by the Police Task Force, "law enforcement agencies should strive to create a workforce that contains a broad range of diversity including race, gender, language, life experience, and cultural background." In 2013, only 27 percent of local police officers were racial or ethnic minorities, and 12% of local police officers were Black.<sup>6</sup> By diversifying police forces, relations with the community will be positively changed. For example, "surveys about individuals' experiences with street and traffic stops consistently show that when stops involved residents and officers of the same race, the individuals were more likely to believe the reason for the stop was legitimate."<sup>7</sup> This is not to say that other community-trust building practices are no longer necessary with the diversification of police departments.

## Issue

### Police Training

We believe that the cops, who tend to quickly resort to violent strategies, do so largely because of how they've been trained. Most officers are not monstrous, governmental machines whose priority is to criminalize and arrest everyone that crosses their paths. Oftentimes, police academy trainings make the safety of an officer as the top priority, leading many officers to believe that their goal at the end of every day, above all else, is to make it home. Therefore officers often use their guns even before a threat is fully in effect because they've been taught that hesitation can end in their death.<sup>8</sup> With this type of mindset, not only may police feel constantly vulnerable and unsafe but also the safety and security of the community is neglected.

Although some police officers certainly find themselves in dangerous situations, most normally do not face high-risk circumstances. Over the last ten years, an average of 57,000 officers were assaulted every year (though only about 25 percent of those assaults result in any physical injuries).<sup>9</sup> Although this figure may seem large, and is certainly significant, it is extremely small when looking at how many annual interactions police officers have with individuals. "Police officers interact with civilians about 63 million times every year."<sup>10</sup> With this data, it means that one in one thousand interactions result in assault for police and only one interaction in less than one million is likely to prove fatal.<sup>11</sup> By studying this data, it is reasonable to conclude that the hand to gun response, a knee jerk reaction for some police, is unnecessary and inappropriate in almost every circumstance.

The amount of time that individuals are required to complete in order to become certified as police officers is also a large issue. In a 2016 Town Hall discussion titled, "Black Lives Also Matter," Bethlehem Police Chief Mark DiLuzio noted that a recruit only goes through 600 hours at a police academy compared to the 1,500 hours it takes to become a cosmetologist.<sup>12</sup> In a meeting, City of Easton Lieutenant Robert Weber, who is in charge of the Neighborhood Policing Program and Training, explained what the process is like to become an Easton cop. First, he said that basic training is up to 20 weeks at the academy and then once that person finishes their training, they will then have 40 hours of policy training, 40 hours of defensive tactic training, and then 40 hours of firearms training with the Easton Police Department. Finally this individual will go through a 12-week training where they'll split half of it shadowing a more experienced officer and then spending the latter doing the same thing with another one. From start to finish, this process of becoming an officer and being completely trained takes about 12 months. One may wonder what type of training and classes are taught at the academy, as well as what the content for courses are; however, these aren't published or available to the public. We believe that residents are entitled to know what type of training goes on since the way police officers are taught directly impacts how they interact with citizens. This is one of many things that police keep invisible, maintaining their departments as closed systems to any outsiders.

### Lack of Proper Training

We expect officers to be educated and knowledgeable on how to approach individuals suffering from mental illness. Unlike some professions, those in law

enforcement can't predict what types of people they'll run into each and everyday. Therefore it is necessary that they understand how to individualize their interactions, especially for a person who is going through a mental health crisis. Those who are mentally ill not only are more likely to run into police but also are more likely to be killed by officers. A study by the Treatment Advocacy Center found that those with severe psychiatric disease are 16 times more likely than the average person to die in an encounter with officers; in fact, in 2015 the *Washington Post* found that, "one in four people killed by police that year were having a mental or emotional crisis."<sup>13</sup> Without appropriate and up to date training on how to relate and speak to diverse types of people (mentally, physically, or culturally), tragic incidents such as these can and will continue to occur.

One of the greatest issues plaguing police forces is the use of unnecessary, brutal force. Unfortunately, many police officers engage in excessive force for various reasons. For instance, some may assume that they are entitled to use force if their authority is threatened or if they are treated with disrespect. Certainly citizens should obey lawful police commands and instructions; however, an objection to unjust demands does not call for violence from authorities. As Lt. Weber has stated, cops should use their words and try communicating with others before engaging in any physical way. Officers like Lt. Weber and Sgt. Daniel Bonham, also an Easton police officer, have recounted how they've practiced communicating first and only using aggressive tones if absolutely needed. By doing so, they've expressed that the individuals that they interact with feel like they're truly being listened to and can respond better.

## **Reform**

### **Education and Training**

We believe that trainings would be extremely effective if they change how police officers see themselves. As suggested by the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, police should be taught to be protectors and guardians of citizens, who help build public trust and legitimacy. The way a police officer identifies themselves shapes and influences the way they behave and work.<sup>14</sup> The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission has been trying to change the mindset of officers from "warriors" to "guardians of democracy," who serve and protect instead of to conquer and control.<sup>15</sup> And this is not to say that this new reform came without criticism; in actuality, the Commission has been accused of promoting a "hug-a-thug" mentality.<sup>16</sup> However the way this Commission sees it, when you add equipment to an officer's belt, they will be prone to using it.<sup>17</sup> Therefore we think trainings should focus on the role of officers in their community and de-escalation and socialization trainings, rather than on weapons and simply fighting crime.

In a world full of diverse people, wouldn't it make sense to emphasize cultural diversity awareness training? Since officers use more force when they perceive someone to be a greater threat, unconscious biases often lead officers to react more violently towards black men than towards others in the same situations.<sup>18</sup> Such training would surely help to make significant differences in "reducing individual incidents of cultural miscommunication, misunderstanding, and mistreatment."<sup>19</sup> Research shows that individuals who are made aware of their implicit biases are generally motivated to engage in objective, neutral, and unbiased behaviors.<sup>20</sup> However, it is equally important to

acknowledge that this will only change some of the surface level problems. Even if these trainings help reduce racism among police officers, it does not change the social and power inequalities that many people of color endure.<sup>21</sup> In other words, diversity training is a must but does not change the entire social landscape for the everyday lives of most Americans.

In 1829, Sir Robert Peel became the Home Secretary of Britain and was in charge of setting up a police force that did not reflect people's fears of an overly controlling and militarized force.<sup>22</sup> Therefore with the passing of the Metropolitan Police Act that created London's law enforcement, Peel established nine principles for policing communities (See Appendix A).<sup>23</sup> It's evident that these principles emphasize working with the public and communities in order to prevent crime rather than simply responding to it. For instance Principle 7 states:

Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.<sup>24</sup>

We think that it would be beneficial for every police officer to be familiar with these principles for its emphasis on cooperation with the community rather than on crime and altercation. As police historian Charles Reith stated in 1956, these principles build a philosophy of policing that is "unique in history and throughout the world because it derived not from fear but almost exclusively from public co-operation with the police, induced by them designedly by behaviour which secures and maintains for them the approval, respect and affection of the public."<sup>25</sup>

## Issue

### Police Immunity

Police departments oftentimes feel as though investigations are more harmful to their image than actual corrupt practices. Therefore some police will justify their unlawful actions by emphasizing the immense danger that their jobs require. Another line of reasoning that some police officers like to use against investigations is that people should expect that there's bound to be some "bad apples" or corrupt and power-abusive officers like any other part of society.<sup>26</sup> However, this is no excuse for immoral behavior and actions for anyone. If police are corrupt, it is like "having the fox guarding the henhouse."<sup>27</sup> Although it is true that like any other sector of society, there will be corrupt officers, they are not above the law.<sup>28</sup> We expect to have the actions of the police reflect the values of the community and incorporate fair and justice procedures.

However, our society unfortunately continues to grant police immunity despite blatant evidence of police abuse. For instance, Sacramento police officers Randy Lozoya and John Tennis were involved in the murder of a mentally ill man.<sup>29</sup> These two men in uniform attempted to run over Mann in their squad car twice but unable to kill him, fired their guns 18 times.<sup>30</sup> Footage taken from their dash-cam from the patrol car captured some of their conversations leading up to their unspeakable actions with Lozoya saying, "f\*\*k this guy," and "I'm gonna hit him," to which Tennis responded: "Okay. Go for it."<sup>31</sup> Despite all of this evidence, the officers were only placed on modified duty rather than being indicted, fired, suspended, or even placed on leave.<sup>32</sup> Regrettably, the Sacramento



Police Department is not the only body granting police immunity. In fact, the Supreme Court played an important role in establishing police immunity in cases involving police shootings. In the case of *Tennessee v. Garner*, the Supreme Court set the standard that police could shoot a criminal if they claimed that it was in their "defense of life."<sup>33</sup> By using the five words "I feared for my life," police are often acquitted, as seen in the cases of Philando Castile, Sylville Smith, Walter Scott, and Terence Crutcher.<sup>34</sup>

## Reform

### Police Accountability

We must push for police use of weaponry to require a significant amount of explanation and documentation. Research has shown that for police departments that use a policy that requires the reporting of every time an officer draws their weapon and aims it, that there has been a notable decrease in police shootings.<sup>35</sup> By taking proactive steps such as these, before there's a fatal incident, officers are forced to really think and explain about whether or not their use of their weapons was necessary or appropriate, perhaps resulting in a deterrent effect later on. An officer who continuously and unnecessarily draws their weapon and reports it may attract the attention of supervisors in reviewing that officer's performances and lead to additional training.

Understandably, police may dislike citizens for questioning and challenging their actions and decisions. However, they should not feel insulted or as though their authority was undermined; rather, it should be considered as an "act of highest patriotism and loyalty to American ideals."<sup>36</sup> Dr. Brian N. Williams, a professor at the University of Georgia's School of Public and International Affairs, argues that the role of 'committed critic' should be created in police agencies.<sup>37</sup> This role would give citizens the opportunity to give constructive criticism to continuously improve community police relations.<sup>38</sup> Improving relations should not be a one-time project but should be a consistent priority. It would be an interesting initiative to try and develop a team of blue-ribbon "truth-tellers" who would "accompany the police on raids, observe conduct inside the police station... scrutinize field conduct in all parts of the community, and report to the people."<sup>39</sup> Whether or not this type of development were to be approved and enforced, the larger picture demonstrates the need for outside integrity since many people do not feel as though officers and departments are honest about the way they handle internal and external affairs.

Complaints from citizens should be recorded and taken very seriously. In general, it is only a small number of officers who are responsible for the majority share of excessive force.<sup>40</sup> Supervisors should be aware of consistent misconduct and intervene when they identify such officers demonstrating habitual behavior that's problematic.<sup>41</sup> If behavior does not improve, departments should consider revoking a police officer's license, even without being found guilty of a crime, because failure to hold officers accountable can lead officers to simply go to another police department where that officer will most likely continue in the same behavior.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to review by citizens, peers within police departments should be encouraged, and required, to call others out on misconduct. Peers are able to observe behaviors that are often unseen by supervisors and should be involved in peer ratings and

reviews.<sup>43</sup> They should have a formal duty to intervene if they see another officer engaging in misconduct by stepping in and stopping it.<sup>44</sup>

Investigations of police brutality, abuse, or corruption are not objective if they remain as internal affairs. Oftentimes, local police departments investigate shootings by their own officers or have local prosecutors involved, who also have tight social bonds to the police officer in question.<sup>45</sup> With a relationship already established, investigations are not neutral or absent of interest. Prosecutors should follow the example of Baton Rouge prosecutor, Hillar C. Moore III. Moore III had worked with the officers' parents, the cop who killed Alton Sterling, for years.<sup>46</sup> Thus understanding the inevitable impact these relationships would have on his work, Moore III recused himself from the investigation for this reason.<sup>47</sup> So instead of using influenced police departments and prosecutors, state officials should investigate police shootings with a special prosecutor or through the state attorney general.<sup>48</sup>

## Issue

### Community Relations & Responsibility

We believe that keeping a community safe is not only the responsibility of the police; rather, it requires the collaboration and teamwork of citizens. In order to effectively do so, individuals and their law enforcement officials need open, consistent, and honest communication. Lacking a strong relationship between the police and the public, the safety of officers and civilians will remain in jeopardy. Without trust in police, citizens may choose not to cooperate with law enforcement, which can lead to an increase in violence and criminal activities. On the other hand, police distrust of the public can lead to more cases of officer misconduct and excessive use of force, in addition to "zero tolerance" policies towards citizens.

The lack of trust between people and the police is especially true for people of color. Actually, people of color often will not want to call the police, as many other Americans may feel comfortable doing, because police has targeted them in routinely violent and lethal ways. A report on data from the Illinois Department of Transportation, by the American Civil Liberties Union, found that "African American and Latino drivers are nearly twice as likely as white drivers to be asked during a routine traffic stop for "consent" to have their car searched; yet, white motorists are 49% more likely than African American motorists to have contraband discovered during a consent search by law enforcement, and 56% more likely when compared to Latinos."<sup>49</sup> Therefore minorities will often feel unsafe in any encounter with the police. Some individuals of color don't even feel like they can walk around their neighborhoods or drive without being aggressively harassed by the police; even if they aren't arrested, any encounter involving physical or verbal aggression will have a deeply lasting and negative effect.<sup>50</sup>

Establishing community relations requires communication. Communication is difficult if there are no sorts of structures in place that allow community members to give critical feedback and then see their needs being addressed. Many towns and cities in the United States have mechanisms for individuals to submit complaints. However, in most of these places, the police departments are structured to be entirely in charge of dealing with complaints and criticisms from residents.<sup>51</sup> Without the involvement of civilians, issues have been found to usually persist and remain neglected.

## Reform

### Community Building

Oftentimes police departments do not publish their training curriculums, plans in work, and documents. However, by establishing a culture of transparency with the public, police will be able to earn and foster trust with citizens.<sup>52</sup> Therefore police administrations should regularly post on their website, have online resources up to date, as well as present accurate data. With data on stops, summonses, arrests, and reported crime, individuals may be able to see whether or not police are standing by their word, for instance, if they claim that their diversity training is effective. Even if these numbers do not paint police departments in the most positive light, honesty and transparency are important components to addressing those issues and creating confidence in law enforcement. Without data on why police are stopping certain people and whether specific police officers are disproportionately stopping minorities, then it's extremely difficult to take targeted remedial action.<sup>53</sup> Additionally, police can have community complaints on their websites and how and when those concerns have been dealt with. In order to have these difficult conversations about issues that the community may feel its facing, departments should create an environment that welcomes criticism.<sup>54</sup> For instance, a police department should create an "open, accessible, and free of inhibitors" process for submitting a citizen's complaint.<sup>55</sup>

Similarly, we encourage law enforcement agencies to keep track of the level of trust communities have in their police forces, just as they do for fluctuations in crime levels.<sup>56</sup> These are all proactive actions that departments can take to establish trust. And if a critical incident occurs, we suggest that police agencies try and release as much information as quickly as possible, with the disclaimer that not all of it may be accurate.<sup>57</sup> This will help the community feel that information was not purposely hidden from them and recognize that it may not all be accurate.<sup>58</sup> It would also be helpful for police to make clear what they are and are not able to share due to legal restrictions, such as union contracts or privacy laws.<sup>59</sup> Technology should also be utilized to highlight the successes of police officials, not just their failures. Media and social media should publicize honest and positive stories of daily police work, including ways in which the police are working directly with the community to solve community problems.<sup>60</sup>

Citizens should also become directly and intimately involved with the policing of their neighborhoods and police operations. It makes sense that citizens should participate in and have a say in making decisions and policy changes made by law enforcement that would impact their lives. It would benefit everyone if an advisory board represented all types of people, including former offenders, to accurately reflect all of the needs and experiences of a community.<sup>61</sup> Police officials should feel as though they are not the only forces at play maintaining a peaceful and safe community, that others like local government officials, police leaders, and community members are all involved in that large and complicated task as well.<sup>62</sup> For instance, the town and police of Tulsa in Oklahoma are making strides in working together as a cohesive unit for the benefit of their community. This town has created a Community Response Team (CRT) to deal with mental health crises, rather than simply sending police officers as it has in the past.<sup>63</sup> This team will include "a mental health professional, a police officer and a firefighter or paramedic all working together."<sup>64</sup> Individuals feel as though this is a much healthier way to respond to

crisis situations because people are getting the help that they need rather than going being arrested for something they can't control. Tulsa Police Department Mental Health Coordinator Captain Shellie Seibert stated that it's beneficial to have a community response team because "they're seeing a care team basically show up now our function is still serve as security and safety for the team so in that roll were the same but we do, work together with a therapist and with a paramedic to meet the whole persons needs."<sup>65</sup> It would be incredible to be able to send such community response teams to other situations as well, such as to individuals under the influence or in high-risk situations, who may be better at deescalating situations and providing immediate relief resources.

In order to build bridges, it is important to reflect on past and present experiences. Police should acknowledge the history of oppression endured by racial minorities and others who have "faced injustice at the hands of the police" because history oftentimes plays a real part in how people feel about the police.<sup>66</sup> Additionally, more recent history should be analyzed and understood since some members of the community may feel cold towards the police because of laws that perpetuate racial disparities, such as those that create much greater consequences for crack versus power cocaine.<sup>67</sup>

Police should be visible and active in their communities outside of the context and environment of crime fighting. In order to build relationships, personal interactions must occur. Programs and initiatives to foster mutual trust include: adult and youth police academies, sports teams or "Police Athletic Leagues", ride-alongs with officers, police involvement in local school activities and police participation in (or police-led) community events.<sup>68</sup> For instance, Hawthorne Police Department of California applied for a "Goals and Dreams" grant from the National Hockey League Players Association and raised funds after they noticed that local kids couldn't play ice hockey because of its immense expenses.<sup>69</sup> Out of this effort came an eight-week "Hawthorne Force" Ice Hockey program where police officers volunteered to teach the kids how to play, with 20 donated sets of equipment.<sup>70</sup> Adult and youth police academies are specifically for citizens, and may also be called "community police academies," that allow citizens to become educated about the workings within a police department.<sup>71</sup>

By finding or creating opportunities to meet and hangout with community members outside of an enforcement situation, community members and police officers are able to see one another as people, which often lead to cooperation and the reduction of bias for both parties. In one department, a program was designed to reward police who had meaningful community interactions rather than those who made the most arrests. The Los Angeles Police Department began the Community Safety Partnership Police Program began in 2011 and rewarded officers who were planting gardens, chaperoning kids to class, ensuring access to preschool, and organizing sports teams.<sup>72</sup> In return, at least in part of the program, a handful of murders that occurred in the major housing projects were all solved with the assistance of the community.<sup>73</sup> Working with young children and youths also makes an incredible and early impact. Some of the children that police interact with may have only seen police as they wrestled and handcuffed their parents and thus positive meetings and hang outs allows kids not to be afraid of officers.<sup>74</sup>

## Vision for Change

Of all of the possible areas of reform, I think that the way in which the community participates in its own policing will have the greatest impact. Although there are certainly advocates for extreme solutions for current relations between communities and their police, such as police militarization, I do not agree with such extreme views. The current law enforcement system has not been successful in creating community ties or securing safety; therefore it would be a costly mistake to expand police powers. One of the reasons why American policing has become inappropriately militarized is through federal programs arming local and state police officers with weapons of war.<sup>75</sup> Not only has the use of hyperaggressive tools proven unsuccessful at lowering crime rates, but also they have escalated generally lower-risk circumstances. Contrary to popular belief, only 7% of SWAT raids are “for hostage, barricade, or active shooter scenarios.” Militarized law enforcement forces, such as SWAT teams, generally do not engage in high-risk situations. Rather, they are used mostly to investigate individuals who are suspected, not convicted, of committing nonviolent crimes. In addition, by giving local police officers military equipment that is typically reserved to be used against enemies, by default the public becomes the enemy of the police.<sup>76</sup> Additionally, sight of such weaponry may elicit a response from citizens as a defensive mechanism, where they have a fight or flight response. The gear and dress of law enforcement, though unanimated objects, speak volumes to the public. When Sir Robert Peel developed the London Metropolitan Police force around 1829, he made a point to have police and military dress differently so that police would not be associated with the military.<sup>77</sup> Rather than focusing on the use of force like the military, Peel wanted to emphasize that the police were focused on preventing crime, cooperation from the public, and minimal use of force. Therefore police militarization does not create a safer neighborhood but results in tragedies in lives, escalates the chances of unnecessary violence, destroys private property, and violates citizens’ freedoms.

Another extreme proposed solution has been the abolition of police. Although this may seem like an infeasible plan, this is not entirely the case. Although law enforcers in some type of form have certainly existed for centuries, the modern police we have now only began with the rise of modern property relations about 200 years ago.<sup>78</sup> I do not agree with the complete erasure of all police forces, but believe that they should be reduced in size and power and work intimately with members of the community. Surprisingly, police do not even spend most of their time fighting crime. Rather, “police sociologists report that only about 10% of the average police officer's time is devoted to criminal matters of any kind.”<sup>79</sup> Most of their time is spent dealing with “infractions of various administrative codes and regulations: all those rules about how and where one can eat, drink, smoke, sell, sit, walk, and drive.” Therefore David Graeber, an anthropology professor at the London School of Economics, calls police officers just bureaucrats with weapons. Rather than fight crime, they bring physical force into otherwise civic ordinances and violent-free life. Therefore instead of a future that has completely militarized police or one entirely without them, I believe that community policing models and restorative justice practices should be implemented because they would prevent crimes, create strong bonds between diverse groups, and get rid of the unnecessary use of physical force.

I propose that citizens and their police go back to community policing. Community policing, as defined by the U.S. Department of Justice’s Community Oriented Policing

Services, 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>80</sup> Community policing allows community members to express their ideas of how their community can become a safer place and be active in actually creating that safety. For instance, the Police Chief Scott Nadeau and his department of Columbia Heights, Minnesota have been internationally recognized for their community policing, after crime hit a 25-year low.<sup>81</sup> All officers in Nadeau’s department are required to “perform at least 10 hours of community policing activities every year, though he said most devote closer to 40 hours to the work.”<sup>82</sup> Officers are encouraged to choose activities that they’re comfortable with that include: “conducting CPR trainings, answering questions at classes for recent immigrants, serving food at a church’s community dinner or holding “Coffee with a Cop” open hours, where residents are free to speak their minds with officers.”<sup>83</sup> By interacting with one another, citizens and officers can both communicate their needs, working together to promote stability rather than relying on one group of individuals to fulfill an entire community’s job.

I believe that the manifestation of community policing is demonstrated through restorative justice. The Centre for Justice and Reconciliation defines restorative justice as “a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior” that involves the participation of all stakeholders in a cooperative process that can lead to transformation of people, relationships and communities.<sup>84</sup> As Laura Mirsky, International Institute for Restorative Practices’ Advancement & Relations Manager, believes, the goal of restorative justice is to show offenders that actions have personal consequences and hopefully to send the offender back into society with a different perspective and as a better citizen. Without restorative justice, Mirsky points out that the conflict is taken away from the community and given to the state. Rather with restorative justice, everyone who’s been affected by it can gather and do something together to solve it as a unified group. For instance, restorative justice was able to change the lives of six young boys who were between the ages of 10 and 13 years old.<sup>85</sup> On a dare, these boys broke into a giant chemical processing plant but were caught. Rather than simply being put into the criminal justice system, these boys each had the chance to “face the consequences of their choices, to discuss the ways they would do things differently in the future, and to share anything from their home or personal lives that might have influenced their decision to break into the plant that night.”<sup>86</sup> As a facilitator, Longmont Community Justice Partnership met with the boys, representatives from the boys’ families and those from the chemical plant to create contracts for restitution.<sup>87</sup> This restitution took form as one hundred hours of sweat equity in the same plant the group broke into, plus alcohol awareness classes and an agreement to write a story about what they’d learned for the local newspaper.<sup>88</sup> Unlike traditional punishments and consequences, restorative justice requires offenders to take personal responsibility and accountability for their actions.

Another example includes the Bethlehem Police Family Group Conferencing Project, started in 1995, which aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a police-based intervention program for juvenile offenders using Family Group Conferencing (FGCs).<sup>89</sup> Family Group Conferencing (or “community conferencing”) is described as “an innovative police approach that actively involves members of local communities to provide integrative solutions to moderately serious juvenile crime.”<sup>90</sup> The eighteen officers in this program

created the name "Operation P.R.O.J.E.C.T." (Program for Redirection of Offending Juveniles through Empathy building and Conferencing Techniques) and a mission statement to describe that this operation was an "alternative justice program for juvenile offenders and their victims. They provided a forum for victims to express feeling and take part in the repair of harm as well as a place for offenders to own and evaluate their behavior and how it affects other people."<sup>91</sup> Although there isn't any available information on the results and conclusion of this two-year study, it would be beneficial to implement such programming across police departments. Not only are victims provided with an avenue for reconciliation and healing but also the community becomes involved in helping reeducate offenders in their place in a community.

## Limitations

Unfortunately, this report is extremely limited in scope when considering how complicated relations between police and communities are, as well as each party's needs are. The greatest restrictive factor was the limited time allotted to tackle these subjects. As a summer intern, I was only able to work within the timeframe of three months to collect research, conduct interviews, and compile a report. As my internship supervisor Peter Crownfield accurately noted, work on the issues and alternatives on law enforcement and its connection to communities could be done for years, including work to last one's doctorate degree. As importantly, time did not allow my team and I to meet with all of the community officials there were to meet due to scheduling conflicts or unresponsiveness. The section below will discuss important areas of interest that we highly recommend others take on or encourage investigating, such as the inescapable role of race and ethnicity in law enforcement routines. However, we hope that the information presented in this report helps raise awareness, lead readers to challenge their preconceived notions, and begin to advocate for changes in their communities.

## Future Research

Since there wasn't enough time to cover all of the intricacies of law enforcement, or as in depth as we'd have liked, there are some specific subjects I'd suggest others to investigate. First, I'd encourage there to be analysis on trauma informed policing and interactions. As Bethlehem Area School District Director of Student Services and Minority Affairs, Vivian Robeldo-Shorey believes, behavior has a beginning and an end to it- that there's a reason for specific negative behaviors. For instance, let's say that a juvenile is not complying with an officer's demands. Perhaps they are resisting or responding abnormally because of something has triggered a reminder of their past traumatic experience. As psychiatrist Dr. Lyndra Bills has stated, sometimes individuals who have been traumatized will relive these moments because of certain triggers or the feeling of unsafety. Additionally Dr. Frida Rundell, a professor at the International Institute for Restorative Practices, has explained that traumatic experiences actually create chemical imbalances in the brain. In other words, the amygdala, the area of the brain that registers fear and survival, becomes hyperactive after trauma. Therefore, people with traumatic experiences cannot help but to act differently or "inappropriately" in high-pressure situations and environments. Therefore although it may be difficult not to take an individual's actions personally, "it might be something in the person's physiology, anatomy, or brain structure that they can't help."<sup>92</sup>

In addition to looking into trauma-informed policing, mental health awareness in police training would be a great area for research. As Northampton County's Department of Corrections' Reentry Coordinator Laura Savenelli has mentioned, the city of Bethlehem's police have been vanguards in this area. All of the police officers have been trained in crisis-intervention training, learning how to respond to a mental health crisis. I personally believe that it is crucial for police officers to understand how to interact and treat all different types of people because in their line of work, they cannot possibly know who they'll be meeting or speaking to. In comparison, there should be research done on disabilities. A young woman at the IIRP conference mentioned an eye-opening story about intervening on behalf of a deaf woman. A deaf individual, who had been driving, was pulled over by an officer. The deaf individual was flustered and overwhelmed while the police officer became increasingly frustrated since he did not realize that the woman could not understand what he was saying. In order to deescalate situation and clear up the misunderstanding, the young woman from the IIRP conference signed to the deaf woman to confirm that she could not speak and then told the officer that the driver could not hear. It is examples and real experiences such as these that remind us that it is harmful to assume things about others. Therefore I encourage others to look into disability awareness trainings as well.

Furthermore, we hope to see research and data collected on the effectiveness and impact of using body cameras. As former New Orleans police chief Ronal Serpas has stated, "when you have multiple officers with cameras, you suddenly start seeing this panoramic view. You get to see so many more things, and that's how you can better diagnose what might be a training deficiency, or a disciplinary deficiency, or [conclude] there was nothing that the officers could have done differently."<sup>93</sup> It is important to note that body camera usage is not as easy of a fix as it seems. There are a plethora of questions that come with its usage such as "When should cameras be filming? Who stores the film, for how long? Who should have access to footage?"<sup>94</sup>

## Helpful Resources

Here are some resources to become more knowledgeable about the issues and reforms mentioned in this report, as well as organizations that readers can become involved.

### Further Reading

#### [The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services](#)

Description: The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources.

*Link:* <https://cops.usdoj.gov/>



### **Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing**

Description: In light of recent events that have exposed rifts in the relationships between local police and the communities they protect and serve, on December 18, 2014, President Barack Obama signed an executive order establishing the Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing. The President charged the task force with identifying best practices and offering recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust.

*Link:* [https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce\\_finalreport.pdf](https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf)

### **The National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice**

Description: The National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice is a project to improve relationships and increase trust between communities and the criminal justice system and advance the public and scholarly understandings of the issues contributing to those relationships. The National Initiative's work involves trust-building interventions with police departments and communities based on three pillars of enhancing procedural justice, reducing the impact of implicit bias, and fostering reconciliation.

*Link:* <https://trustandjustice.org/>

### **National Policy Summit on Community Police Relations**

Description: In response to events in Ferguson, New York City and Cleveland in 2014, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) held a National Policy Summit on Community-Police Relations to open dialogue regarding ways to build and sustain trusting community-police relationships. The summit brought together law enforcement leaders, representative from NAACP, ACLU, Leadership Conference on Civil rights, Lawyers Committee on Civil Rights, as well as various representatives of local civil rights and community groups, to discuss the current state of community-police relations and how to advance a culture of trust and inclusion, and improve relations.

The resulting summit report is a road map and a call to action for law enforcement, communities, and stakeholders, providing ways to improve, strengthen, and rebuild communication and transparency within the community. The report defines three overarching conceptual elements of strong community-police relations: communication, partnership, and trust

*Link:* <http://www.theiacp.org/CommunityPoliceRelations>

### **Recommendations for Reform: Restoring Trust between the Chicago Police and the Communities They Serve by the Police Accountability Task Force**

Description: Facing the challenge to create a partnership between the police and the community that is premised upon respect and the recognition that their collective fates are very much intertwined.

*Link:* [https://chicagopatf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/PATF\\_Final\\_Report\\_Executive\\_Summary\\_4\\_13\\_16-1.pdf](https://chicagopatf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/PATF_Final_Report_Executive_Summary_4_13_16-1.pdf)

## **Activist Organizations**

### **Alliance for Police Accountability**

Description: “The APA is a grassroots organization dedicated to criminal justice reform, specializing in bettering community and police relations through advocacy, education, and policy. We partner regionally and nationally on various social justice issues, including campaigns focused on protocol for interacting/responding to the police, racism, political engagement, and violence.”

*Link:* <http://apapgh.org/>

### **International Institute for Restorative Practices**

Description: “We are dedicated to the study of restoring relationships, social discipline, emotional well-being and civic participation through participatory learning and decision making...With roots in restorative justice, a way of looking at criminal justice that emphasizes repairing the harm done to people and relationships, restorative practices has the broader goal of proactively developing community, managing conflict, building relationships and increasing social capital.”

*Link:* <http://www.iirp.edu/>

### **American Civil Liberties Union**

Description: “CLRP combats police corruption on a case-by-case basis. Recently, we fought for victims of a large-scale police conspiracy in Camden, New Jersey, in which officers planted drugs on innocent residents. We also advocate for transparency and accountability in law enforcement’s use of civil asset forfeiture laws and funds. By ensuring the law is enforced legitimately and through honest means, we seek to strengthen the relationship between law enforcement agencies and their communities, helping citizens remain safe and free.”

*Link:* <https://www.aclu.org/>

### **Civil Rights Coalition On Police Reform**

Description: The Lawyers’ Committee convenes the Civil Rights Coalition on Police Reform which includes 37 national civil and human rights organizations that meet weekly to develop policy and legal strategies to address police brutality. The Coalition primarily seeks to reform outdated, biased, and inappropriate policing tactics, while ensuring necessary accountability and creating better, more sustainable relationships between the community and police. It also seeks to enhance and coordinate our joint efforts to promote multifaceted police reform.

*Link:* <https://lawyerscommittee.org/project/public-policy/civil-rights-coalition-on-police-reform/>

### **Advancement Project**

Description: Locally, we provide direct, hands-on support for organized communities in their struggles for racial and social justice, providing legal and communications resources for on-the-ground efforts, while assisting in building their own capacity and power in their communities. Nationally, we actively broaden and extend the practice of community-centered racial justice lawyering through training, networking, creation of tools and resources, media outreach and public education.

*Link:* <http://www.advancementproject.org/content/home>

### **Amnesty International**

Description: We work to protect people wherever justice, freedom, truth, and dignity are denied. Amnesty International is a global movement of millions of people demanding human rights for all people – no matter who they are or where they are. We are the world’s largest grassroots human rights organization. One of their issues and campaigns include: Deadly Force & Police Accountability. Amnesty International works with other local, state, and national organizations to document how police use of lethal force threatens human rights and to pass laws that bring standards and accountability.

*Link:* <https://www.amnestyusa.org/issues/deadly-force-police-accountability/>

### **National Action Network**

Description: National Action Network is one of the leading civil rights organizations in the Nation with chapters throughout the entire United States. Founded in 1991 by Reverend Al Sharpton, NAN works within the spirit and tradition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to promote a modern civil rights agenda that includes the fight for one standard of justice, decency and equal opportunities for all people regardless of race, religion, nationality or gender.

*Link:* <http://nationalactionnetwork.net/>

### **National Bar Association**

Description: The National Bar Association is committed to combating injustices through efforts to support and promote legislative and executive action to achieve real and substantive criminal justice reform. This includes supporting expanded open record requests, body cameras worn by police, record expungement and sealing, and dismantling the mechanisms of the mass incarceration of African-Americans.

*Link:* <https://nationalbar.org/>

### **National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)**

Description: to ensure equity in the administration of justice in the provision of public service to all communities, and to serve as the conscience of law enforcement by being committed to justice by action.

*Link:* <http://noblenational.org>

### **International Association of Chiefs of Police**

Description: IACP is dedicated to advancing the law enforcement profession through advocacy, outreach, education and programs. Project Initiatives include: Intelligence-led Community Policing, Community Prosecution, and Community Partnerships which is described as a unique approach to community policing that extends community partnerships to include prosecutorial and community service organizations along with law enforcement. This new model connects the criminal justice system and the community through seamless communication and partnerships. Others include Tribal Community Policing, and Protecting Citizens' Civil Rights (PCCR).

*Link:* <http://www.theiacp.org/>

### **Cop Block**

Description: Cop Block is a decentralized organization made up of a diverse group of individuals united by their shared belief that, "Badges Don't Grant Extra Rights." CopBlockers are committed to highlighting the double standards often granted to those with badges. By documenting police actions with a camera – whether they are illegal, immoral, or just a waste of time and resources – we can work together to show people that "Badges Don't Grant Extra Rights" and promote ways to not only film the police, but to get such content in front of as many eyes as possible.

*Link:* <https://www.copblock.org/>

### **Campaign Zero**

Unofficial description: an ongoing campaign that outlines ten specific proposals to combat police brutality in exchange for police reform. These ten proposals include: end broken windows policing, community oversight, limit use of force, independently investigate & prosecute, community representation, body cams/ film the police, training, end for-profit policing, demilitarization, and fair police union contracts.

*Link:* <https://www.joincampaignzero.org/>

### **Do Not Shoot**

Description: Don't Shoot is a community site where you can find recent videos of outrageous police misconducts, really valuable ones but underrepresented by mass media. We provide you with first-hand stories and diverse videos. Our mission is to improve the situation in the US and the lives of its citizens, to do our best to help end inhumane and biased acts. We are here to empower you, give you a voice and help you get justice with all our might.

*Link:* <http://donotshoot.us/>

### **The National Police Accountability Project**

Description: The National Police Accountability Project (NPAP) is a nonprofit public interest organization dedicated to protecting the human and civil rights of individuals in their encounters with law enforcement. One of the central missions of NPAP is to promote the accountability of law enforcement officers and their employers for violations of the Constitution or laws of the United States.

*Link:* <https://www.nlg-npap.org/>

### **Communities United Against Police Brutality**

Description: Communities United Against Police Brutality is a Twin-Cities based organization that was created to deal with police brutality on an ongoing basis. We work on the day-to-day abuses as well as taking on the more extreme cases. Our overriding goal is to create a climate of resistance to abuse of authority by police organizations and to empower local people with a structure that can take on police brutality and actually bring it to an end. We provide support for survivors of police brutality and families of victims so they can reclaim their dignity and join the struggle to end police brutality.

*Link:* <http://www.cuapb.org/>

### **National Association Against Police Brutality**

Description: to EDUCATE citizens concerning their rights when encountering the police, to EMPOWER communities to eliminate police brutality through changing the law and creating better policies for policing, and to increase ACCOUNTABILITY by collaborating with citizens, victims, advocates and civil rights attorneys to remove officers and elected officials who show insufficient regard for the true ideals of our system of justice.

*Link:* <http://naapb.org/>

### **Defending Rights & Dissent**

Description: We seek to hold government accountable to We the People and create a nation where police and intelligence agencies cannot be used as tools of repression or to silence dissent. Our work will ensure government accountability and transparency, end profiling based on personal characteristics (such as race, religion, ideology or gender) by law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and will protect our private information and activities from unwarranted government spying.

*Link:* <https://rightsanddissent.org/>

### **People’s Justice: for Community Control and Police Accountability**

Description: Peoples’ Justices for Community Control and Police Accountability (Peoples’ Justice) is a New York City coalition of grassroots organizations working in Black, Latino/a and Asian communities. It’s member organizations are CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities, the Justice Committee and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement. Their proactive approach includes conducting Know Your Rights trainings and outreach throughout the city, using public art and design projects for community education and empowerment, organizing neighborhood-based Cop Watch teams, and expanding New York’s “culture of Cop Watch” as a means of building community power and decreasing police misconduct and violence.

*Link:* <http://peoplesjustice.org/>

### **Coalition Against Police Crimes and Repression**

Description: Our mission, then and now, is to 1) end police crimes and abuse; 2) end the criminalization of a generation; and 3) to expose the prison industrial complex. Toward those goals, we have supported victims, survivors and their families through protest, direct action and advocacy. Through the years we have fought for justice for Garland Carter, Julius Thurman, Jerome Johnson, Arthur Dobbins, and others. With the goal of achieving community control, greater transparency and better police accountability, we have long pushed for an effective Civilian Oversight Board; our bill for civilian oversight passed the Board of Aldermen in 2007 but was vetoed by Mayor Slay.

*Link:* <http://capcr-stl.org/>

## **Conclusion**

Even with all of this research, interviews with community officials, and Presidential executive orders to investigate how to improve community and police relations, we still have a long road ahead of us. However, we have completed the first step in creating change in a system and that is becoming aware of an issue. Now that readers are aware of deficiencies in law enforcement, and the criminal justice system, we hope that readers will become active citizens in helping shape their communities.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A

#### Sir Robert Peel's Nine Principles of Policing

PRINCIPLE 1 "The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder."

PRINCIPLE 2 "The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions."

PRINCIPLE 3 "Police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of the public."

PRINCIPLE 4 "The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes proportionately to the necessity of the use of physical force."

PRINCIPLE 5 "Police seek and preserve public favor not by catering to the public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law."

PRINCIPLE 6 "Police use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient."

PRINCIPLE 7 "Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."

PRINCIPLE 8 "Police should always direct their action strictly towards their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary."

PRINCIPLE 9 "The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it."