

Improving community and law enforcement relations helps to effectively reduce crime and protect communities. It takes a collaborative effort to improve these relations. Among evidence-based efforts to improve relations, there was a common pattern with practices utilizing dialogues and face to face interactions and reported outcomes of community members having a greater willingness to work with police and higher levels of respect for both parties. Open discussion forums between the community and law enforcement can be a beneficial and valuable tool in strengthening these relationships. Future recommendations suggest that research on community-police dialogue recruit populations with disproportionately high levels of police contact.

1. National Law Enforcement Organizations Announce Unprecedented Joint Community Outreach Project Throughout the U.S.

<https://faithandblue.org/media-news/>

- National Faith & Blue Weekend (NFBW) is largest joint police-community outreach project involving multiple faith-based organizations
- The collaborative initiative builds bridges and breaks down biases through activities and outreach
- Law enforcement agencies and faith-based organizations are key community pillars
- Police leaders seek to unite with communities to establish a dialogue, collaborate, find resolution and reconciliation
- Neighborhoods will thrive by working together

2. Perez, N.M., Nguyen, T., and Vogel, B. (2020). Community-Police Dialogues: Evaluating the Effects on Adult, Youth, and Police Participants. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 0 (0).

- Dialogue opportunity became an avenue to facilitate positive interactions especially with teenage community members
- Dialogue consisted of small group discussion with participating in a community building circle and a meal, which allowed facilitation of face to face interactions
- These events allow citizens to participate with police to build community
- Limited funding allowed one agency to host six community-police dialogues (three with the adult community and three with the youth community)
 - Future recommendations suggest community-police dialogue research recruit populations that have less-favorable opinions towards police by targeting areas with disproportionate high levels of police contact (Perez et al., 2020).
- Community-Police dialogues could be a valuable and beneficial tool used to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the community
- The outcome for community members- reported a greater willingness to work with police to improve relationships, greater trust and respect towards police officers, and a great awareness of the challenges faced by police officers
- The outcome for police officers- reported higher levels of respect for and trust in the community and great feelings of respect from the community

3. Peyton, K., Sierra-Arevalo, M., & Rand, D.G. (2019). A field experiment on community policing and police legitimacy. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 116(40), 19894-19898.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6778229/?tool=pmcentrez&report=abstract>

- Randomized field experiment was conducted in New Haven, CT
 - Research question, “Do positive, nonenforcement interactions with uniformed patrol officers actually cause meaningful improvements in attitudes toward the police?”
 - Study focused on individual-level consequences of positive, nonenforcement contact between police and the public
 - Methods involved uniformed patrol officers making unannounced visits to randomly assigned homes across New Haven
 - Officers knocked on doors, initiated a formal greeting, and explained that they were making a community policing, nonenforcement visit
 - Officers engaged in a brief 10 minute conversation utilizing strategies from prior studies to encourage positive contact
 - Strategies included officers to immediately disarm any anxiety within 20 seconds of contact, communicate respect, emphasize that the visit was to improve shared community engagement, and encouraging residents to provide feedback
 - The interaction ended with officers giving their personalized business card and participants to complete a follow-up survey via email
 - Findings indicated that the intervention had a significant positive effect on overall attitudes toward the police with having a single instance of contact with a police officer can significantly improve public attitudes toward police
 - Immediate effect was strongest on perceptions of police performance and legitimacy, and an effect on increased self-reported willingness to cooperate with police, and willingness to comply with police directives
 - Study also suggested that police departments would benefit from an increased focus on strategies that promote positive police-community interactions
4. Brunson, R.K. (2015). Focused deterrence and improved police-community relations. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 14(3), 507-514.
- Research findings include key insights to Boston Operation Ceasefire, which provided community leaders, policymakers, and police on how to enhance police legitimacy and establish mutual benefits for police and community residents
 - Officers have the potential to improve legitimacy by performing their duties that reflect procedural justice principles of fairness and respectfulness

- It is essential that crime-reduction strategies not only are successful but also inspire citizen confidence
- Previous research from Sunshine and Tyler has shown that citizens that view police as legitimate are more willing to support law enforcement agencies crime fighting missions (2003).
- Important factors for strengthening police-community relations: observed fairness and program effectiveness

5. California Board of State and Community Corrections. (2019). *Strengthening law enforcement and community relations grant: 10 collaborative approaches to improving community-police relations.*

<http://www.bscc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Strengthening-Law-Enforcement-and-Community-Relations-Grant-End-of-Grant-Summary.pdf>

- The BSCC managed the new grant program, Strengthening Law Enforcement and Community Relations Grant
- Initiative funded collaborative law enforcement-community approaches to improve, strengthen, or establish positive meaningful relationships between law enforcement and their communities
- Core component of the Strengthening Grant was interspersing community engagement at every stage of the project
 - The initiative states factors to successfully strengthen law enforcement-community relations include strong support, communication, and collaboration between both parties
- Cost of initiatives included:
 - The 2015 State Budget Act which appropriated \$6,000,000, funding ten grants to urban and rural law enforcement agencies in California
 - Request for Proposals resulted in funding allocations between \$193,000 and \$850,000 for a two-year period
 - As a condition, each grantee was required to evaluate its program and complete a final evaluation report describing if the program met its goals
 - All applicants were required to provide a 20 percent match