To Be or Not To Be? SROs in Schools

Background

In the late 1950's, the first School Resource Officer (SRO) program was started in Flint, Michigan. An SRO is a career law enforcement officer with sworn authority who is deployed by an employing police department or agency in a community-oriented policing assignment to work in collaboration with one or more schools. Its overall goal is to improve the relationship between the local police and youth. Officers were placed in schools on a full-time basis to serve as teachers and counselors. Due to its success, the program in Flint, Michigan became a model for school resource officer programs across the country.

In 1973, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals recommended all law enforcement agencies provide at least one presentation to every grade level in their jurisdiction annually to understand the law enforcement officer's role in society and their school. They suggested that every agency with over 400 employees assign a full-time officer to each junior and senior high school to teach classes, counsel students, be a resource and enforce the law.   In 1991, the first national conference for school resource officers was held and The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), an organization dedicated to making schools and children safer by providing the highest quality training to school-based law enforcement officers, was established. [1] They are the "world's leader in school-based policing for school-based law enforcement officers, school administrators, and school security and/or safety professionals who work as partners to protect schools and their students, faculty, and staff members".

In the late 1990s, the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program provided funding for the hiring of SROs. SRO programs became more widespread and the 1% of schools in the 1970s, grew to almost 50% of all schools in 2017 – 2018 having an officer present at least one day a week. In schools with more than 1,000 students, the presence of SROs increased to almost 80%.

Zero-tolerance school disciplinary policies in the late 1980's "spurred SRO programs" in "response to a perceived threat that school-based crime was on the rise. These fears centered particularly on violence and drug use, which data show was not actually increasing." The national War on Drugs expanded to a focus on "failing schools" and punitive disciplinary consequences. [2]

The Role of a School Resource Officers

"There are two common types of school-based law enforcement strategies employed in the United States. The most com-

mon is to have a school resource officer (SRO), which involves the school or district establishing a relationship with the local police or sheriff's department to have one or more officers devote their time to maintaining a presence on school property. The other common approach, particularly for large urban districts is to establish its own police department that is independent of the municipal police agency." [3]

The U.S. Department of Justice COPS Office defines an SRO as "a career law enforce¬ment officer assigned in a community policing capacity to a local educational agency." The role of an SRO is not as a security guard hired to work in a school. [4] SROs work in collaboration with schools and community-based organizations to provide a positive and visible law enforce-ment presence on school campuses. They are selected, specially trained, and assigned to protect and serve the education environment. COPS suggest four primary roles:

- Law Enforcement. SROs address crime and disorder in and around school campuses. SROs strive to employ non-pu-nitive techniques when interacting with students, using citation and arrest only as a last resort under narrow circum-stances.

- Informal Counselor. SROs build relationships with stu¬dents and act as liaisons to community services for youth and families.

- Educator. SROs teach students about crime prevention and safety, drug awareness, conflict resolution, and other topics related to law enforcement and the legal system.

Emergency Manager. SROs develop and implement emergency preparedness policies, including comprehen¬sive school safety plans, and coordinate with first respond¬ers in an emergency. SROs are integral members of a school threat assess-ment team. [5]

NASRO developed the triad concept of school-based policing which divides SRO responsibilities into three areas: Educator, Informal counselor, and Law enforcement officer. [6] SROs can collaborate in developing strategies "to resolve problems affecting our youth with the objective of protecting every child so they can reach their full potential". Mo Canady, Executive Director, NASRO states, "You've got to understand that 2,000 teens are going to behave like 2,000 teens [and]…you can't' just arrest your way out of that." [7] "It's really impossible for the program to be successful if the school district and law enforce-ment agency are not on the same sheet of music," he said. "It doesn't mean they have to agree on everything but there's got to be foundational agreements for how it's going to work." He

said the number one goal of an SRO program is effectively connecting to youth through relationships. The officer 'has to be a well-balanced officer." [8]

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) aspire to the philosophy that their first responsibility to their students is to foster an effective learning environment that is safe and welcoming. Many Principals also believe that SROs can not only ensure the physical safety of a school building and all inside, but also can "be an important resource to welcome, counsel and mentor students". [9] An effective SRO can include serving as a teacher of law-related topics such as bullying, gang violence, driving safety, underage drinking, and can be one more resource and person on whom youth can rely upon. [10]

Others suggest these as important to creating a rich environment for learning:

1. Comprehensive School Safety Assessments
2. School Climate
3. Campus, Building, and Classroom Security
4. Anonymous Reporting Systems
5. Coordination with First Responders
6. Behavior Threat Assessment and Management
7. School-Based Law Enforcement
8. Mental Health Resources
9. Drills
10. Social Media Monitoring [11]

Regardless of the organizing structure, there are several truths that create an effective program.   Here are several perspectives from those in the field.

SRO Sgt. D.J. Schoeff describes his role: "Understanding what kids are experiencing in today's world, and what life is like for them, can help us help them emotionally and educationally in terms of making sure they can be successful" [12]

"It's important that we see them as an employee of a school district," Katie Eklund, assistant professor of school psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. "It's important for them to think that SROs are here as a resource." [13]

Stacy Collis, a trainer with NASRO "It's community policing at its best. You're working in a small community. Most schools of a certain size are like a small city. You experience the same problems as a small city would and the SRO is there." Collis' SROs work with the community around the schools such as businesses and churches to build relationships. [14]
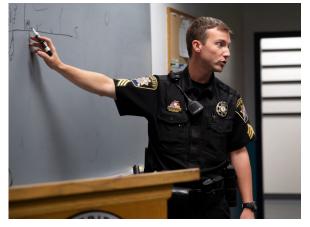
> *"It's easy from a law enforcement aspect, to give them a ticket and walk away… but we want to figure out why they are doing this and what's going on in their life",* said SRO Sgt. D.J. Schoeff.

Baltimore's Chief Hamm notes, "One of the most important things that SROs need to do is to build trust with students. [15]

SRO Training

One of the commonly agreed-upon traits for a successful SRO program is the need for specialized training. "We require officers who work with dogs to receive canine graining. We require officers who work with horses to receive equestrian training. Yet officers who work with children (in Illinois) receive no specialized training on how to interact with the student population", said Michelle Mbekeani-Wiley, an attorney for the non-profit Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law. (Wiley drafted Illinois Senator Lightford's bill to require SROs to undergo training to interact with the student population.) [16]

The U.S. Department of Justice COPS Office suggests training topics and areas of focus that may include:

- Policing the schools in today's ambiguous, uncertain, political, and polarized world: Programs, practices, personalities, politics, and more…

- What does research tell us about school safety programs and strategic crisis leadership?

- What does research tell us about School Resource Officer (SRO) effectiveness and SRO programs?

- Are there commonalities when SROs are in the headlines for questionable actions in schools?

- Models and best practices for school-based policing

- How building administrators and SRO/Police/Security can form meaningful working relationships

- Is your SRO the right officer for the school environment?

- Hiring, training, supervising, evaluating, and terminating your school-based police officer

- Who's in charge? Preventing and navigating power struggles and head-butting between principals and school officers

- The critical role of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements

- From one officer to another: Guidance to police officers on the simple truths of how school policing is different

- Training your school administrators, teachers, and support staff on the school-based policing best practices

- Evaluation of the officer's job description and roles

- From prevention to preparedness: Balancing the roles SROs play in schools

- The school-to-prison pipeline and student arrests: What is it, who are the players and how can you shut down the pipeline?

- Tough conversations about race, cultures, bias, and more

- Distinguishing school disciplinary matters handled by principals from criminal matters handled by the SRO

- Building and district school administrators' needs, expectations, and boundaries for school police officers

- Analyzing school discipline and arrest data

- Understanding youth psychology, age, and developmental issues, emotional and behavioral disorders

- Psychological impact of arrests on children and the long-term impact of their removal from school

- Special needs children and the school officer

- FERPA and other privacy matters

- Alternatives to suspension, expulsion, and arrest

- Use of force by school-based police officers

- Hot topics from Tasers and pepper spray to officer body cameras, school safety litigation, and more

- When school-based policing programs go astray…and how to keep them, or get them back, on course

- Support systems for officers and administrators: Professional networking and training

- Communicating safety: How to promote the positive aspects of your school police/SRO program and how to manage crisis communications when incidents, issues, emotions, and videos go viral [17]

As with any curriculum, or any program in the school environment, periodic evaluation is critical to success.

Memorandum of Understanding

Equally important as training is developing a Memoran¬dum of Understanding (MOU) that clearly documents the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the individuals and partners involved including SROs, school officials, law enforcement, education departments, students, and parents is essential. It should also indicate that SROs will not be responsible for or involved in routine student discipline. [18] "The MOU should also make it clear that school discipline situations that are the responsibility of school administrators and not the SRO." [19] MOUs should be "clear and concise" in defining the role of the "SRO to include those of law enforcement officer, teacher, informal adviser, and confidant." [20]

An MOU, also referred to as an Interagency Agreement or Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), can be used to build mutual respect and trust between partners while delineating specific roles and responsibilities of the partnering agencies. The MOU should include examples of the activities that the SRO will engage in, such as:

Improving School Safety
© Ridofranz / iStock

- Handling requests for calls for service in and around schools

- Conducting comprehensive safety and security assessments

- Developing emergency management and incident response systems based on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the four phases of emergency management: mitigation/prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery

- Developing and implementing safety plans or strategies

- Integrating appropriate security equipment/ technology solutions, including incorporating crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) as appropriate to enhance school safety

- Responding to unauthorized persons on school property

- Serving as liaisons between the school and other police agencies, investigative units, or juvenile justice authorities when necessary and consistent with applicable civil rights laws and privacy laws

- Serving as a member of a multidisciplinary school team to refer students to professional services within both the school (guidance counselors or social workers) and the community (youth and family service organizations)
- Building relationships with juvenile justice counselors to help connect youth with needed services
- Developing and expanding crime prevention efforts for students
- Developing and expanding community justice initiatives for students. [21]

MOUs should also include a section that addresses the type of and the extent to which information will be shared between the law enforcement agency and school or school district partners. [22] The Fam¬ily Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) supports such information sharing to maximize coordinated response and positive outcomes. [23] An MOU should also include a section on supervision responsibility and chain of command for the SRO, and include training requirements and performance monitoring. The MOU should be reviewed and updated as needed on an annual basis.

Best Practices

To develop a successful SRO program, a comprehensive needs assessment is a great place to start. This can serve "numerous purposes, including identifying strengths and weaknesses of your school or district and helping prioritize areas of concern. Needs assessments can be specifically targeted around an area of interest for your school (e.g., perceived safety among students, discipline data, reading fluency among specified grades) or be more broad and exploratory." [24] This begins a dialogue of ongoing communication and collaboration with school leadership by identifying how SROs can help meet their needs, goals, and priorities. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) recom-mends these steps in completing a needs assessment:

1. Identifying and Engaging the Appropriate Stakehold-ers
2. Identifying Relevant Data Sources (Ideally From Multiple Perspectives and Stakeholders, Including Students, Educators, and Families) – needs assess-ment tools, school climate assessment
3. Resource Mapping [25]

Engaging in resource mapping is important to understand available resources and how they're utilized through the school or district. NASP provides some elements to be included in resource mapping:

- Develop a process for regular examination of school initiatives to improve student outcomes
- Effectively engage parents and families in school improvement and school safety efforts
- Implementation of Integrated Multitiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
- Access to School-Based Mental Health Supports
- Integration of School Safety and Crisis Preparedness Efforts
- Balance of Physical and Psychological Safety
- Use of Effective Discipline Practices [26]

They further suggest that an evidenced-based framework with the following components will promote a positive school cli-mate, reinforce positive and prosocial behaviors, promote school safety that keeps students in the classroom and out of the juvenile justice system, and address and reduce disproportionality in exclusionary discipline practices to "create a supportive and equitable culture in which all students feel valued, engaged, and safe".

- Teach, model, practice, and reinforce positive behaviors;
- Are clear and are applied consistently and equitably for all students;

- Employ culturally responsive practices;

- Safeguard the well-being of all students and staff;

- Keep students in school and out of the juvenile justice system;

- Incorporate family involvement;

- Embed principles of positive behavioral interventions and supports, social and emotional development, and restorative justice interventions (i.e., creating a culture of community, engaging all parties affected by a transgression/harm to engage in respectful dialogue, and resolving conflict by collaboratively deciding how to make things right and restore relationships);

- Teach alternatives to violence and aggression; and

- Focus on establishing a positive school climate. [27]

Finding the right fit for officers is key. "It's not for everybody, Said Mo Canday, National Association of School Resource Officers Executive Director. "It's kind of a collision of philosophies, bringing law enforcement and education together, but if done the right way can be a difference-maker." He sees four main areas for an effective program:

- Administrative standards, including an outline of the definition and purpose of an SRO

- The careful selection of law enforcement officers for SRO positions

- Specialized SRO Training, including adolescent mental health, threat assessment, and active shooter response

- Interagency collaboration between school districts and law enforcement agencies. [28]

He adds that "effective SRO programs should be an ongoing collaboration between the school, the law enforcement agency, and properly selected officers who receive comprehensive training tailored for the school setting. 'It's almost like a three-legged stool. If you remove one of these legs, the program is bound to fail.'" SROs versed in social-emotional capacities are found to have a positive effect on schools. SRO Sgt. D.J. Schoeff recounted "The biggest thing,' the student told him, 'is I'm really sorry I disappointed you." [29]

Another approach that can be used effectively is restorative practices. "Research shows that restorative justice practices in schools are more effective than traditionally punitive responses to issues like bullying or fighting and result in the reduction of serious incidents. Additionally, restorative justice practices mitigate the racial and other minority disparities that result from traditional school discipline practices. Schools that implement restorative justice practices drastically reduce the use of harmful exclusionary practices like suspension and expulsion. The reduction in punitive practice tends to create more positive relationships between students and teachers and a better school environment overall." [30]

"Restorative justice techniques are compatible with SRO programs that incorporate the triad approach to campus safety [by carrying out the roles of mentor, educator, and law enforcement officer]." "Restorative conferencing with police officers can reduce recidivism and play a key role in restorative justice models." Restorative work is a collaborative approach to problem-solving, and SROs working with school administration, mental health, juvenile justice, and others, to hold students accountable, can make a significant difference.

Keith Hickman, Executive Director of Collective Impact at the IIRP, in referring RP to "accountability and community membership" says "SROs are part of the community that tries to help youth develop the skills they need to succeed, so it is only

natural that SROs are part of the RP process." [31] RP can be used in each community based on its complexity, however, the major tenants of RP, trust and relationship building, are consistent themes that help SROs interact with youth in positive ways. Restorative practices can be an approach that can help make SROs more accepted in the school community. As SROs help implement RP, they can "support youth as they restore relations with those they offended, and also strengthen relations between law enforcement and the school and community." [32]

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is a framework for helping youth understand their emotions, the emotions of others, how to better relate to others, how to manage their feelings and behaviors, and how to engage in responsible decision-making. SEL should be infused and integrated throughout the school community and school routines through explicit instruction and modeling by staff as well as integrated with the curriculum. [33] In addition, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports are a proactive approach to teaching behavioral expectations and preventing unwanted behaviors. Typically, these supports are delivered in tiers where all students receive preventions, at-risk students receive more targeted interventions, and those with more intensive needs may be assessed and provided individualized support. [34]

Recommendations from the field

As earlier stated, SRO programs have been around for decades and more is known about what makes a program effective, where there has been success, and the recommendations of those with experience in implementing a program.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) have outlined recommendations to be presented to federal and state policymakers:

- Assist districts and schools by increasing funding for the recruiting, hiring, and training of SROs, recognizing that they are an integral component of a safe school environment.

- Enact policies requiring all law enforcement officials who work in schools to undergo extensive training that adequately equips them to work in a school setting and specifically with children, adolescents, and those with special needs.

- Adequately fund and support evidence-based, proven SRO training programs and ensure that all current and aspiring SROs have access to them. Training for SROs should be an ongoing process, with ample opportunities for professional development and continued learning.

- Remove barriers between education and local health service agencies and encourage local communities to focus on schools as the hub for delivery of mental and other health and social services.

- Do not enact policies that would allow administrators, teachers, or anyone other than specially trained SROs to carry firearms in school.

- Give states and local communities the ability to combine federal and state funding from separate agencies to address mental health and school safety issues at the local level.

Their recommendations for district leaders include:

- Develop responsive systems to support school safety

- Identify a uniform code of conduct

- Ensure SROs are professionally trained to work in a school setting and with children with special needs

- Implement minimum training requirements for RSOs

- Ensure principals are directly involved in the interview, hiring, and ongoing professional evaluations process for RSROs

- Maintain ongoing development for all staff including SROs

- Work with school leaders and their SROs to establish curricula for grades K-12 that address violence prevention and bullying, including electronic aggression
- Regularly administer a school-wide culture survey of students, parents, and school personnel including SROs [35]

In 2012, the Dignity in Schools Campaign released A Model Code on Education and Dignity, which presents a human rights approach to school-based policing, recommended that SRO programs include these ideals:

- Connecting with advocacy organizations under the Dignity in Schools Campaign umbrella or other groups focused on school discipline.
- Establishing a working group to amplify your concerns around school-based policing.
- Gauging perceptions of school safety held by students, staff, and community members.
- Sharing research on why school-based police should not engage in routine discipline.
- Advocating for the creation (or revision) of a memorandum of understanding that clearly defines the school-police relationship.
- Advocating for the school administration to collect and publish data annually on school-based policing.
- Invite SROs to staff meetings, especially when discussing topics related to student behavior and school climate.
- Adopting positive, evidence-based approaches to school discipline, such as restorative justice and school-wide positive-behavioral interventions and supports.
- Actively improving school climate and work toward building (or sustaining) a trauma-sensitive school.
- Leveraging the knowledge of counselors and support staff when determining how to address minor misconduct. [36]

Remaining Questions

There is currently very little evaluative research on the effects of having a police presence in schools. Many completed studies are descriptive rather than evaluative and do not report on outcomes, and often focus on just the presence or absence of school-based law enforcement on campus, not on any other factors that might influence the impact of school-based law enforcement, such as how offi¬cers are selected, what roles they have in the school, their training, and the support they receive from the school and police administration.

Fortunately, to strengthen the exist¬ing evidence base, the U.S. National Institute of Justice's Comprehensive School Safety Initiative funded dozens of additional rigorous studies of school safety beginning in 2015. Several of these stud¬ies are looking specifically at the impacts of school-based law enforcement. For example, WestEd is working in partner¬ship with Texas State University and the Texas School Safety Center to conduct an experimental study of the effects of a new frame¬work for SROs on student percep¬tions of safety at 26 middle schools and high schools in central Texas (McKenna & Martinez-Prather, 2017). This study's use of random assign¬ment will make it an important addi¬tion to this body of research. This study was concluded in December 2020 and has not yet been published. Ideally, future studies will continue to improve the quality of available evidence on the effectiveness of school-based law enforcement and could be valuable in informing the decisions of schools, districts, and policymakers. [37]

Conclusion

Few scientists have conducted empirical research, however, many believe that the absence of such research does not prove that SROs haven't been successful on school campuses. A database of the national police foun-

dation's averted school violence project is full of case studies that describe SRO interventions. While scientific research is valuable, policymakers and the communities they represent would be "unwise to ignore abundant anecdotal evidence of the value of carefully selected, specifically trained and properly equipped school resource officers in responding to and averting school violence while building positive relationships with students of all backgrounds". [38]

The following are some examples of SRO work at its best:

- SROs Innovative way to connect with students leads to book and hope, September 14, 2021

- RSO uncovers exploitation of student after school social media threat, august 19, 2021

- New York school resource officer initiates sextortion investigation, September 16, 2021

- SRO Success story: "See something, say something" helps disrupt school shooting plans, May 3, 2021

- Alabama SROs reputation leads to gun confiscation

- National police group looking for innovative teaching about safe driving behavior, January, 18, 2021

- NASRO school resource officer course receives national certification, January 26, 2021

- Lincoln NE study shows SROs in schools lead to a decrease in arrests, July 26, 2021

- Maryland police officer named national school resource officer of the year, August 5, 2020

- Maryland SRO creating videos to maintain student relationships, April 2020

- Albuquerque police officer named national school resource officer of the year, July 12, 2021

- Maui Police Department SROs find a new way to connect with students, July 8, 2021

- Tennessee SRO publishes children's book, June 3, 2021

- SRO apprehends armed man in a school parking lot, September 9, 2021

- Teamwork between SRO and administrator leads to safe recovery of abducted student, August 12, 2021 [39]

School districts and law enforcement agencies that may not be able to sustain assigned SROs in the K-12 setting can still collaborate to increase student safety and reduce crime. Officers can be involved in schools as visiting instructors, coaches, or mentors for programs such as Youth Cadets. Officers can be integral part¬ners of threat assessment and emergency management teams. Officers can also provide support and crime prevention for specific events such as after-school sports. Security staff can support safety initiatives but do not replace law enforcement. Ongoing communication between officers and youth, through either an SRO program or school-based policing, leads to improved trust and mutual respect, which results in a safer school and improved outcomes for students. [40]

What practices will put SROs in the best position to truly help students and schools? Deputy Chris Burke, a highly trained SRO in Durango, Colorado, says, "With me being in uniform, I try to make myself approachable, if a student's going to have a problem, to feel safe and to come up and approach me about that." Burke recognizes that his relationships with students may be influenced by negative experiences with law enforcement outside of school, so relationship building is crucial. He

connects with students over lunch, helps coordinate Teaching Tolerance's Mix It Up at Lunch Day, reads to students, and counsels them on legal issues only if he receives permission from parents or guardians.

In Clayton County, Georgia, the chief judge of the juvenile court, Steven C. Teske, initiated a county-wide process in 2003 to end zero-tolerance disciplinary practices in schools. Teske facilitated a cooperative agreement in the form of two memoranda of understandings (MOUs)—between schools, law enforcement, and other stakeholders to limit school-based suspensions and arrests for "misdemeanor type delinquent acts," including disorderly conduct. According to Teske, by the 2011–12 school year, the number of students referred to the juvenile court for school offenses dropped by 83 percent.

The Denver Public Schools and the Denver Police Department signed an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) in February 2013 that redefines the role of SROs in public schools. District leaders working with Padres y Jóvenes Unidos, a community organization committed to ending the school-to-prison pipeline, established mandates including that "SROs differentiate between disciplinary matters and criminal issues; that SROs be versed in the school district's discipline policy, which emphasizes restorative approaches; that administrators and other educators handle disciplinary matters without involving SROs (unless necessary); and that SROs receive training in school-specific topics such as child and adolescent development and psychology, best practices for improving school climate and how to create safe spaces for LGBT youth". [41]

New Mexico proposal would mandate SROs be equipped with "tools to be a positive role model for youth including mentoring and informal counseling techniques. Nebraska SRO requirement stresses cultural fluency and problem-solving. [42]

According to a 2020 article from UCONN's Center for Education Policy Analysis (CEPA), there has not been a public review of MOUs in Connecticut since 2013. Currently, there is no requirement that the MOUs be publicly accessible on school district websites or another centralized location. "This means that key stakeholders such as students and families lack easy access to information regarding their rights in relation to interacting with police in schools." [43] Before any decisions are made on an SRO program, the NASP recommendation for a comprehensive needs assessment may be an important component and place to start.

Footnotes

1. http://www.fayar.net/sro/sroprogram.html

2. FALSE SENSE OF security, Police make schools safer—right?, BY MAYA LINDBERG, 2015, https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/general/False%20Sense%20of%20Security%20-%20TT50.pdf

3. REL WEST, Regional educational laboratory at WestEd, Comprehensive center network, Research in brief: school-based law enforcement

4. National Association of School Resource Officers, To Protect and Educate: The school resource officer and the prevention of violence in schools, 2021

5. US COPS, December 2019, SROs and School-based Policing

6. National association of secondary school principals, Position Statement: School resource officers and law enforcement in schools, march 2020

7. K-12Dive, March 28, 2019, School resource officers need SEL training, experts say – but their preparation 'lacks consistency'

8. Government Technology, School resource officer: a collision of Philosophies makes it unique, august 3, 2018

9. National association of secondary school principals, Position Statement: School resource officers and law enforcement in schools, march 2020

10. RHW 2015 – 2016 School survey on crime and safety conducted by the US Department of Education reports that 22 percent of schools had full-time SRO while 21% had an SRO who worked at the school part-time. In addition, 68% of high schools had an SRO present at least once during the week compared to 59% of middle-level schools and 30% of elementary schools.

11. US COPS Office School Safety working group, August 2020, Ten Essential actions to improve school safety, quick reference guide

12. K-12Dive, March 28, 2019, School resource officers need SEL training, experts say – but their preparation 'lacks consistency'

13. Ibid

14. Williamsport Sun-Gazette, School resource officers are "community policing at its best"

15. NASRO, how school-based law enforcement can engage in restorative practices June 28, 2021

16. NBC Chicago, New Bill aims to mandate more training for school cops, April 9, 2018

17. Schoolsecurity.org, Policing the Schools: Strategies for effective principal – police

18. US COPS, December 2019, SROs and School-based Policing

19. RHW 2015 – 2016 School survey on crime and safety conducted by the US Department of Education reports that 22 percent of schools had full-time SRO while 21% had an SRO who worked at the school part-time. In addition, 68% of high schools had an SRO present at least once during the week compared to 59% of middle-level schools and 30% of elementary schools

20. Ibid

21. US COPS, 2017, Memorandum of Understanding Fact Sheet

22. Ibid

23. US COPS, December 2019, SROs and School-based Policing

24. National Association of School Psychologists, Assessing school-level and district-level needs

25. Ibid

26. National Association of School Psychologists, 2017, Policy recommendations for implementing the framework for safe an successful schools

27. National Association of School Psychologists, (2020) Framework for effective school discipline

28. Government Technology, School resource officer: a collision of Philosophies makes it unique, august 3, 2018

29. K-12Dive, March 28, 2019, School resource officers need SEL training, experts say – but their preparation 'lacks consistency'

30. ACLU Washington, What are evidence based alternatives to suspension and expulsion?

31. NASRO, how school-based law enforcement can engage in restorative practices June 28, 2021

32. Ibid

33. National Association of School Psychologists, (2020) Framework for effective school discipline

34. Ibid

35. National association of secondary school principals, Position Statement: School resource officers and law enforcement in schools, march 2020

36. A Model Code on Education and Dignity: Presenting a Human Rights Framework for Schools, August 2012, The Dignity in Schools Campaign

37. WestEd Justice and Prevention research center, what do we know about the effects of school-based law enforcement on school safety?

38. The Herald-Times, Guest column: significant body of evidence demonstrates school resource officer value, June 6, 2021

39. Success Stories

40. US COPS, December 2019, SROs and School-based Policing

41. FALSE SENSE OF security, Police make schools safer—right?, BY MAYA LINDBERG, 2015 https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/general/False%20Sense%20of%20Security%20-%20TT50.pdf

42. K-12Dive, March 28, 2019, School resource officers need SEL training, experts say – but their preparation 'lacks consistency'

43. https://education.uconn.edu/2020/10/27/the-prevalence-and-the-price-of-police-in-schools/#

Resources

- ABCNews.go, March 29, 2018, Armed Security officers in schools increasing: Report

- ACLU Washington, School resource officers: when the cure is worse than the disease

- CT GA Office of legislative research, March 18, 2014, Research Report, 2014-R-0103, Memoranda of understanding and school resource officers

- Center for Children's Law and Policy presentation to JJPOC workgroup

- Chicago Lawyers' committee for civil rights, what the research shows: the impact of school resource officers

- National Association of School Psychologists, 2017, assessing the safety of the school environment using the framework for safe and successful schools

- National Association of School Resource Officers, School Security officer 24 hour training course outline and objectives

- National Association of School Resource Officers, Basic 40-hour SRO Course outline and objectives

- National Center for Education Statistics, Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2019 (NCES 2020-063/NCJ 254485). U.S. Department of Education, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC. Wang, K., Chen, Y., Zhang, J., and Oudekerk, B.A. (2020).

- National Center for Education Statistics, Hussar, B., Zhang, J., Hein, S., Wang, K., Roberts, A., Cui, J., Smith, M., Bullock Mann, F., Barmer, A., and Dilig, R. (2020). The Condition of Education 2020 (NCES 2020-144). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: Retrieved [date] from https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2020144.

- "Policing and Middle School: An Evaluation of a Statewide School Resource Officer Policy," Middle Grades Review: Vol. 4 : Iss. 2 , Article 7, Available at: https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/mgreview/vol4/iss2/7 Anderson, Kenneth Alonzo (2018)

- Regional Education Laboratory at WesEd,

- School Resource Officer Program, city of New Haven

- The School Discipline Consensus Report

- US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, Fact Sheet: FY2020 COPS Hiring Program School Resource Officer Mandatory training

- US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, Fact Sheet: School resource officers and school-based policing, December 2019

- US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, Fact Sheet:

- US COPS office school safety working group

- WBALTV, April 6, 2018, Recruiting school resource officers not an easy task

- VPR.org/vpr-news/2019-02-11, for some districts, school resource officers are hard to come by

- https://reports.ecs.org/comparisons/k-12-school-safety-04

- Policing Connecticut's Hallways: The Prevalence and Impact of School Resource Officers in Connecticut, CT Voices, Policy Report, April 2019

- https://statepolicies.nasbe.org/health/categories/social-emotional-climate/school-resource-officer-training/connecticut In CT, General Statutes of Connecticut Sec. 17a-22bb. Implementation plan for meeting mental emotional and behavioral needs of children mandates (c) Local law enforcement agencies and local and regional boards of education that employ or engage school resource officers shall, provided federal funds are available, train school resource officers in nationally recognized best practices to prevent students with mental health issues from being victimized or disproportionately referred to the juvenile justice system as a result of their mental health issues.

- https://education.uconn.edu/2020/10/27/the-prevalence-and-the-price-of-police-in-schools/# As of 2017, SROs and local police officers were mandated to receive 14 hours on "the handling of juvenile matters."[xlii] However, the only specifics for SRO training listed in state law related to education and policing indicates that "such training shall include drug detection and gang identification."[xliii]

- NASP, NASRO, NASSP, School social work association of America, American school counselor association, NAESP, Assessing the Safety of the School Environment, Using the Framework for Safe and Successful Schools

- Dailyitem.com, February 9, 2019, school officers in valley tripled since parkland FL tragedy

- WFYI, Here's why police at your school may lack specialized training

- WUSA9, May 21, 2018, Push to standardize school resource officer training in Maryland

The Tow Youth Justice Institute strives to be a valued content expert and resource in the field of Youth Justice. Our Issue Briefs are a deep dive into topics that effect our youth and are not opinion pieces on the subject.