POLICE VIOLENCE AND MISUSE OF POWER

By
Monica Burke
Brooke Clavesilla
Greg D’Eloia
Michael Hinckley
4,861 – Unique reports of police misconduct tracked

613 - Number of sworn law enforcement officers involved (354 were agency leaders such as chiefs or sheriffs)

6,826 - Number of alleged victims involved

247 – Number of fatalities associated with tracked reports

Long Beach ranked 2nd in the nation in police shootings per capita, only second to Albuquerque, New Mexico (Packman, 2011)
Environmental, Socio-Cultural, & Political Factors: Barriers to addressing the Problem

- Institutionalized racism vs. class warfare
  - School to Jail Pipeline

- Lack of cohesive community response
  - Differences in perception of police violence
  - Role of media influence

- Lack of police accountability
  - The "thin blue line"
  - Insufficient follow-through with reform efforts

- Learned helplessness of oppressed populations
  - Profiling and harassment
  - Frequent incidents of police violence
  - Underreporting
Environmental, Socio-Cultural, & Political Factors: History and Context

- Escalation of police violence related to War on Drugs / Terror/ Social Control
  - crack cocaine epidemic => Operation Hammer, etc.
  - militarization of police forces
  - increasingly aggressive tactics
- Gentrification
  - “Neighborhood improvement” => Increased enforcement efforts
- Social action in response to police violence/oppression
  - Civil Rights movement
  - Riots: 1965 Watts, 1992 LA Riots, etc.
  - Music as Resistance
  - Grassroots efforts: Black Panthers, CopWatch
The goal of our intervention strategy is to provide youth in downtown Long Beach with knowledge and awareness of tactics for safely handling encounters with the police, legal and civil rights, and strategies and opportunities for advocacy.
Objectives

- **Process Objectives**
  - Four social work students will participate in a two-hour training at the Youth Justice Coalition in order to facilitate a 90-minute workshop at the Boys and Girls Club.
  - Trained social work students will provide a 90-minute workshop at the Boys and Girls Club

- **Outcome Objectives**
  - Workshop participants will demonstrate knowledge of tactics to safely handle police encounters and their legal rights and procedures as measured by individual scores on a post-test.
  - Workshop participants will attain knowledge of resources and opportunities for advocacy regarding personal rights during police encounters as measured by individual scores on a post-test.
  - Workshop participants will acquire a level of confidence pertaining to their ability to safely handle encounters with the police as measured by individual scores on a post-test.
Literature
- African American young men viewed by the police as being suspicious and more likely to experience police violence (Brunson & Miller, 2006).
- African American young women were viewed as suspects when with young men and stopped for curfew and truancy violations (Brunson & Miller, 2006).
- Mistrust in adults who hold positions of authority (Freudenberg et al., 2003)
- Higher rates of adverse encounters and low levels of trust among African and Latino Males (Freudenberg et al., 2003)

Community Assessment
- Youth are often harassed and profiled by the police
- Social location research – positive correlation between percentage of minorities and police violence (Dowler & Zawilski, 2007)
- Long Beach Population 2011
  - 46.1% Caucasian
  - 40.8% Hispanic or Latino origin
  - 13.5% African American
  - 12.9% Asian (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013)
Know Your Rights Workshop

- Facilitators
  - Group Members
  - Guest Speaker Aloni Bonilla
- Participants
  - 16 adolescents between the ages of 12-17
  - Youth were represented a diverse ethnic background
Intervention Strategy
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

LEGAL EDUCATION and SOCIAL JUSTICE workshop
Workshop Objectives

• Know the legal system and your rights
• Staying safe (starve the beast)
• How to fight back and seek justice
ARE YOU A TARGET?

- Frequent targets:
  - young, brown, wrong part of town

- Gentrification of downtown
  - “Neighborhood improvement” => Increased enforcement efforts in nearby areas

- Long Beach has one of the nation’s most violent police departments
  - 2010: Long Beach had the second highest rate of police shootings in the United States

- At-Risk: Youth near downtown Long Beach
Police Violence and Misuse of Power

- Police brutality
- Excessive force
- Harassment/illegal searches
- Racial/ethnic profiling
- Institutionalized racism
- Class warfare
- 13-year-old carrying a realistic-looking toy gun
- shot from behind as he turned around
- shot repeatedly while on the ground
- handcuffed his body as he bled to death
-Recent graduate of Cal State LA (Degree in Mathematics)
-Survivor of police abuse
-Advocate for victims of police violence

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcAcJUDzdZw
LEVELS OF INTRUSION

- LEVEL 1 – “RIGHT TO INQUIRE”
- LEVEL 2 – STOP AND FRISK
- LEVEL 3 – SEARCH
- LEVEL 4 – ARREST
The Justice System
- public defender vs. district attorney’s office
- Conflict case => alternate public defender
- Multiple defendants => Panel attorneys
- Private attorneys
Juvenile Justice System

- Established in 1899 to separate youth from the adult prison population

- Youth can still be tried as an adult
  - fitness hearings
    - judge decides which court the case goes to
  - direct file (Proposition 21)
    - allowed DA to charge children as young as 14 as an adult

- Limited rights for juvenile offenders
### Juvenile Court Vs. Adult Court

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Court</th>
<th>Juvenile Court</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arraigned with 48 hours</td>
<td>Arraigned with 72 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity for Bail</td>
<td>No Bail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bail can be denied</td>
<td>Can be remanded for public safety or for own protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May be ROR (released on own recognizance)</td>
<td>Cannot be ROR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only facts of the are crime presented</td>
<td>All of the juvenile’s records are considered, including status offenses (truancy, curfew)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to a trial by jury</td>
<td>Judge decides / is the jury</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gang Injunctions

- STEP Act of 1988
  - Street Terrorism and Enforcement Act
- Defines alleged gang members as terrorists
- Allows Gang Enhancements in court sentencing => more jail time
- Established CalGang Database
  - no notification if your on it
CalGang Database

- Can be on the list without committing a crime
- Most people added without being arrested or accused of a crime
- Photos taken without knowledge or permission
- Once entered, a person is considered an ‘active gang member’
- No way to appeal or be removed
Getting Involved

- Report Police Misconduct
  - The CPCC (Citizen Police Complaint Commission)

- Get to know the police in your neighborhood

- Advocacy and Activism
  - ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) Coalition
  - Youth Justice Coalition
  - Grassroots Organizing
**Fight Back: Film The Police!**

Filming on-duty police in public is legal.
(Use caution, be smart, do not interfere with police officers!)

Smartphone Apps
(with instant upload)

Livestream
Ustream
Bambuser
OpenWatch

CopRecorder
(Audio only)
Remember...

IF YOU'RE STOPPED BY THE POLICE

1. Stay calm. No matter how agitated or hostile the police act, don’t lose your temper. This will make the whole process go worse for you.

2. Don’t talk. Give your name, contact info and parent’s info if the police ask for it. If you have an ID, show it, but never say you were born outside the U.S. Besides that, don’t answer any questions.

3. Ask for a lawyer if the police keep asking you questions, tell you that you can’t leave or arrest you. Once you request a lawyer, it’s illegal for them to ask any more.

4. Be safe. Don’t reach into your pockets or backpack, or make sudden moves. You could get beat, pepper sprayed, or shot. If you’re in a car, out the window, freeze to a stop.

5. Say “no” search. The police can pat you down if they think you have something illegal. But, once they go inside your pockets, cell phone, car or backpack, that’s a search. Say, “I do not consent to this search.”

6. Gang Laws. Don’t ever claim you’re from a ‘hood, or give a nick-name.
Unexpected Barriers/Challenges

- **Group Challenges:**
  - Limited time
  - Meeting schedule/Availability

- **Community/Organizational:**
  - Cancelled events/meetings
  - Inability to reach key organizers

- **Implementation Challenges:**
  - Site planning limitations
  - Participant’s conflicts in schedule
10 Boys and Girls Club members completed post workshop surveys,
- Average age: 14.1 years, range: 12 to 17
- 70% African-American, 10% Hispanic/Latino, 20% Mixed Race

10 total questions on survey, all true/false

Five questions that test participant’s police encounter knowledge
- 82% average score on knowledge questions

Three questions for self-reported resource knowledge
- 96.6% average score of knowledge of community resources

Two questions for self-reported confidence
- 100% average score on confidence questions

90% average positive score on all surveys
Lessons Learned

- Maintain relationships with all networks throughout project

- Modify intervention according to age, race, and culture

- Project Improvements
  - Pre/post-test to measure increase/decrease in knowledge/confidence
  - Create workshop curriculum for sustainability
  - More active role in planning workshop within Boys and Girls Club