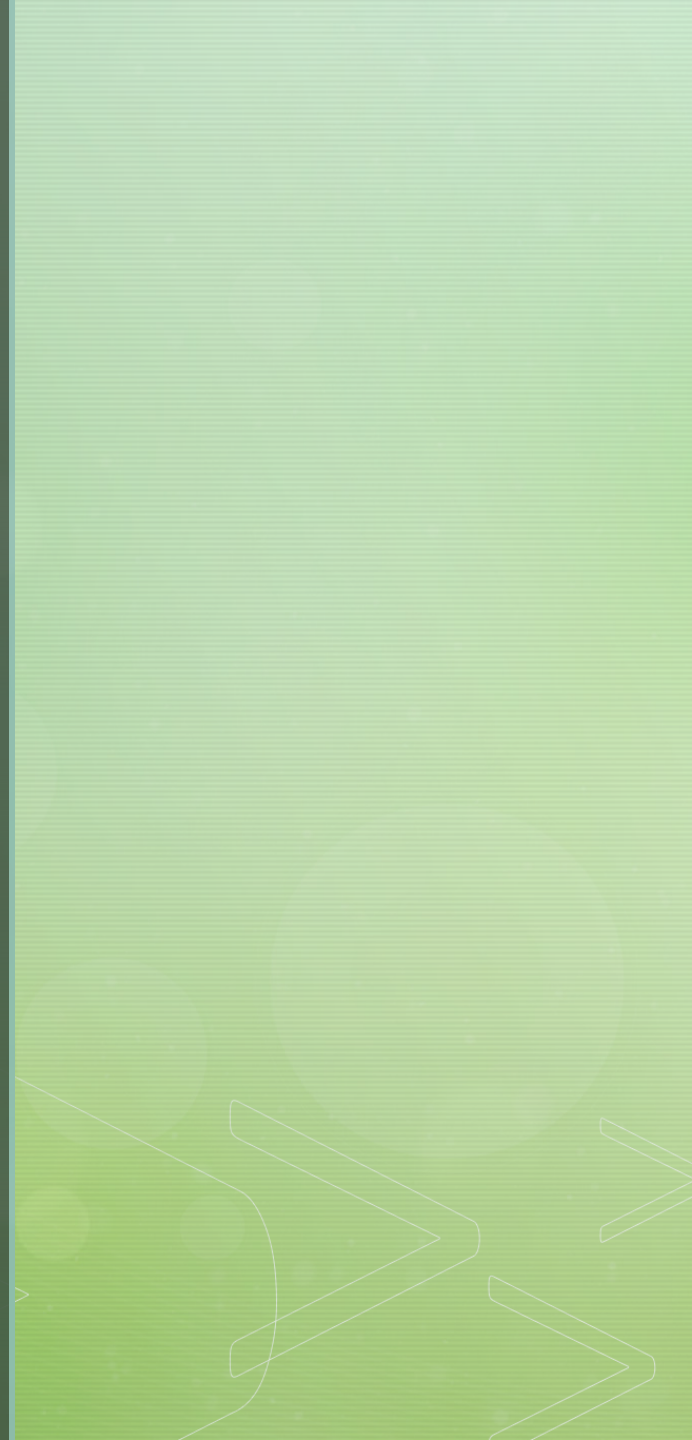


Improving Police Interactions with the Disability Community: Recommendations Overview

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Context: The What & Why

High-profile media stories tend to minimize or altogether ignore the presence of disabilities (behavioral, developmental, intellectual, physical) during injurious and/or fatal encounters between police and individuals

61.4 million Americans reported living with a disability/disabilities in the United States, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) analysis of 2016 Behavioral Risk Surveillance System data (data collected from sampling of state-based, noninstitutionalized individuals 18 and older)

1 in 4 American adults have a disability of some kind (25.7%), according to CDC analysis of 2016 data

Context: The What & Why

- Rate of violent victimization is higher (rape/sexual assault; robbery; aggravated assault) for individuals with multiple disabilities than those with single disabilities, according to a 2016 Bureau of Justice Statistics (part of U.S. Department of Justice) evaluation of 2010-2014 data
- No statistically significant difference in percentages of total violent crime report to police for victims with and without disabilities
- Individuals with disabilities who were victims of violent crime notified police (62.% vs. 60.7% for those without disabilities); other household member (5.6% vs. 10.5%); someone else (20.7% vs. 10.6%)
- 12.6% of persons with disabilities who were victims of violent crimes received assistance from nonpolice victim services vs. 8.2% of persons without disabilities



Context: The What & Why

30-50% of individuals who die during fatal encounters with police with are those who have disabilities, according to 2015 data from the Treatment Advocacy Center and a Ruderman Family Foundation white paper

These data express that Individuals with severe mental illness constitute 1 in 4 fatal encounters with police and 1 in 10 calls for police response (crisis calls)



Context: The What & Why

Rates of PTSD, depression are at 5 times higher the rate among police, firefighters, than that of the civilian population, according to 2018 Ruderman Family Foundation study

Police, firefighters are more likely to die by suicide than in line of duty, according to 2018 Ruderman Family Foundation study

Goals: The Why & How

Improving police interactions between individuals with disabilities entails several goals (order that follows does not indicate priority value):

1) Equipping police with more information about how to de-escalate crisis situations in which disabilities may be a) at root of the crisis; b) a dimension of the crisis; c) unrelated to the crisis initially but manifest throughout the interaction between police and the individual

This idea of equipping police with more information centers on focused, targeted education and training as well as practical informational tools/resources to use during crisis responses. For example, disability-focused courses at regular, consistent intervals for the duration of a police officer's tenure; meanwhile, practical tools may include things such as a voluntary registry system that police obtain authorization to access and utilize during crisis responses



Goals: The Why & How

2) Equipping the disability community with more information, support about mobilizing community resources to their benefit to a) pre-empt conditions that would otherwise necessitate interactions with police; b) improve the interactions they have when they do occur; c) over the long-term build relationships of trust and reciprocal communication

This idea of equipping the disability community with more information, support centers on availability of community and advocacy resources as well as practical tools. For example, such as United Way of Connecticut, the 211 line and affiliate website; The Arc Connecticut. Meanwhile, examples of practical tools would be voluntary registry systems and utilizing social worker posts as liaisons between police departments and individuals with disabilities



Goals: The Why & How

3) Equipping the disability community and police community with a personnel nexus to coordinate, foster conditions of trust: social workers, crisis intervention teams (CITs).

This idea, which combines the two preceding ideas, is premised on fostering reciprocal conditions of accessibility, communication, trust

Quick Facts Snapshot: Community, Pre-Police/Community-Police Collaboratory Resources

Community Resources (pre-emptive, pre-police intervention): According to data provided by United Way of Connecticut, 91% of adult crisis calls placed in 2020, the crisis diminished while 211 Contact Specialist was on the phone; 561 (0.15%) of callers ended up requiring a 911 response (active rescue or medical emergency response)

Social Workers (pre-emptive, pre-police intervention but also potentially in conjunction with or in place of, police response)

- Denver, Colorado: Denver Crisis Intervention Response Unit (PD + Mental Health Center of Denver; co-responder model)
- St. Petersburg, Florida: Community Assistance Liaison (division within PD; plainclothes, unarmed)
- Alexandria, Kentucky: two social workers on PD payroll; separate vehicle, plainclothes, equipped with police department-issued radio; function as second responders (after police clear scene) and follow-up care providers
- Eugene, Oregon: CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On the Streets)

- Quick Facts Snapshot: Community, Pre-Police/Community-Police Collaboratory Resources (continued)

In Connecticut, variety of longstanding social worker programs and/or new pilot programs in localities such as Hartford, Madison; New Haven in partnership with University of New Haven; New London; Willimantic in partnership with ECSU

Quick Facts Snapshot: Police Resources

Voluntary Registry System: a) leave implementation to localities based on evaluation of community needs*; b) standardize VRS form – should localities implement one, they will have a standard template to use; c) standardized VRS form permits consistent expectations of and for, the registrant/guardian of the registrant

*CT does not have a statewide VRS. Alaska, Montana, Oregon, Rhode Island are examples that have collected (through voluntary means) information about residents with disabilities on a statewide for emergency preparedness

Education & Training: a) expand disability-specific courses (education) and practical training (in-service); b) education and training at regular, consistent intervals throughout officer's tenure; c) studies indicate police officers report positive outcomes from Crisis Intervention Team or Critical Incident training (officers' perception about reduced use of force); d) next step is to evaluate whether other measures of success follow (greater diversion to community support programs/resources; fewer arrests; commitment to de-escalation; less violence; fewer fatalities; less recidivism [this last component pertains more to correctional setting])

Example/Template Social Worker/CIT/Police Website

CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets) in Oregon:

- <http://coeapps.eugene-or.gov/epddispatchlog>
- <https://www.eugene-or.gov/3439/Policies-and-Procedure>
- <https://www.eugene-or.gov/542/Crime-Statistics>
- <https://www.eugene-or.gov/539/Contacts-and-Services>
- <https://www.eugene-or.gov/664/Police-Commission>
- <https://www.eugene-or.gov/585/Volunteer-at-EPD>

Examples of Voluntary Registry System

- Tampa, FL: <https://www.tampa.gov/tpd-voluntary-special-needs-registration-form>
- Tilton, NH; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fC-J9hjQjTh5kue5qmeD9y2BnCumxg25/view>
- Portland, Oregon: <https://www.uslegalforms.com/jsfiller-desk18/?requestHash=fb4e86773102dd3293b08eab0c8b32eb17df0abf193f47ea31bee b0e62f3b4f5&ref=https://www.uslegalforms.com&projectId=751538927&loader=tips&et=as#ac5494d4c65a6391526b23ae2e8bfd19>
- Henrico, Virginia: <https://www.wric.com/news/local-news/henrico-county/henrico-police-creates-online-database-to-help-with-mental-health-emergencies/>
- Stratford, Connecticut: http://www.townofstratford.com/filestorage/39879/40366/40403/SNR_Form_Instructions_Dec_2009.pdf
- Westport, Connecticut: <https://www.westportct.gov/home/showdocument?id=23018>