



UTILIZING SOCIAL WORKERS IN A POLICE DEPARTMENT: CO-RESPONSE WITH CIT & MORE

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Michigan CIT Conference 2022

Learning Objectives



DESCRIBE THE HISTORY OF
POLICE SOCIAL WORK IN THE US
& PROVIDE EXAMPLES.

Alice Stebbins Wells



IDENTIFY WAYS TO INTEGRATE
SOCIAL WORKERS INTO YOUR
AGENCY.

Denver PD & the Mental Health Center of Denver
Photo credit: Steve Larson, Front Porch NE Denver



DESCRIBE HOW SOCIAL
WORKERS CAN PARTNER WITH
CIT-TRAINED OFFICERS.

Eureka PD & Humboldt County DHHS
Photo credit: DHHS

History of Police Social Work in the US

- Early 1900s – Women's Bureaus
 - Alice Stebbins Wells – First woman granted police power in Los Angeles
 - Chicago PD: hired policewomen with social work experience
 - "Protective and preventative social services for women and children" – Roberts (1976)
 - 1920 National Conference of Social Work – Mina Van Winkle, Director of the Women's Bureau of the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C.
 - "Police work is social work, and until it is included in social service we shall continue to pass delinquents from one agency to another, and then from reformatory to jail, workhouse, and prison."
 - Multi-disciplinary approach – "Each group is only too prone to see the question of delinquency from its own angle without reference to the problem as a whole, and certainly without reference to society."
- Misconceptions, Critiques & Obstacles
 - Media
 - Colleagues
 - Society



Reasons to include social workers in your agency –

- Establish relationships with community service providers
 - Collaboration
 - Referral & connection to resources
- Provide initial response and assessment to behavioral health crisis when safe to do
 - Petition or resources/referral
 - Needs assessments & safety planning
- Provide training to agency and community
 - Crisis intervention skills
 - Trauma-informed response
 - Mediation & conflict resolution
 - Coping & stress management
 - Cultural humility & competence
- Follow-up & Diversion
 - Engaging “familiar faces”
 - Advocacy & victim services
- CISM Teams & Peer Support
 - Supporting the folks in the police department & their families
 - “Everyone knows this job gets to you, says Sergeant Deborah Case. But you can’t act like it. “Our culture is such that we’re supposed to suck it up and not be impacted,” she says... “We deny ourselves the experience of being human,” says Case. “It’s going to leach out somewhere.”

RESPONSE – STABILIZATION - PREVENTION

Why Social Work?

- 80/20 Rule
- Service-related tasks:
 - Behavioral health crisis
 - Domestic disputes where no crime has occurred
 - People experiencing homelessness
 - Substance use disorder-related issues
 - Supporting survivors of violent crimes
 - Status offenses
 - Intervention with high utilizers



Patrol Division



Community Services Unit



Community Patrol Officers

Police Social Work Program

Community Service Officer



Police Social Work Supervisor
Police Social Workers



Ellery Sosebee, Chief

**Coming
Soon!**

Lansing Crisis Assessment Team (LCAT)

*Note – IACP One Mind Campaign

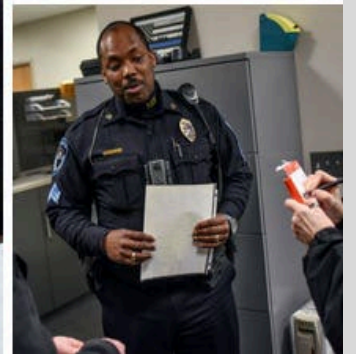
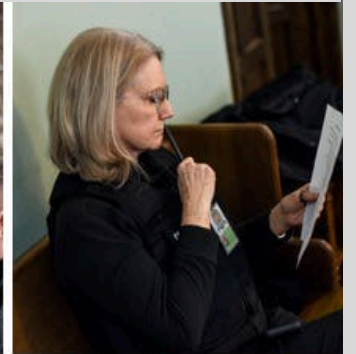
More Exemplary Programs

- Illinois – Association of Police Social Services (<https://policessocialservices.org>)
 - Started with MSW Interns & the Police-Social Service Project (late 1960s)
- North Carolina –
 - Chapel Hill PD Crisis Intervention Unit (since 1973)
- Texas –
 - Houston Police Department, Mental Health Division (since 2008)
- Connecticut -
 - Willimantic PD and Eastern Connecticut State University
- Social Work & Law Enforcement Networking Association (SWLENA)



Integrating Social Workers Into Your Agency

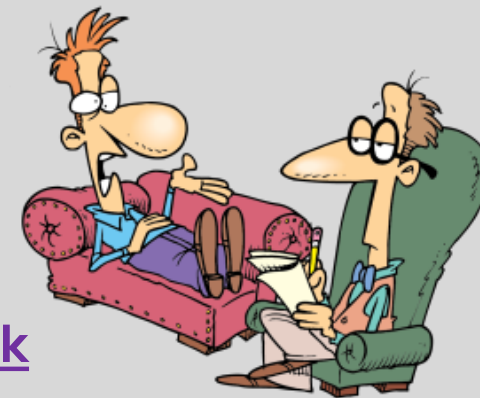
- Things to Consider:
 - Where will the SW be assigned?
 - Embedded or contracted?
 - Unit assignment? Supervision?
 - Report writing/Case management
 - Confidentiality & Mandatory Reporting
 - ROIs
 - Training & Equipment
 - Type of response
 - Referrals, on-scene?
 - Program evaluation & Data collection



Lansing Police Deploy Social Worker, Lansing State Journal



A Tale of Two Cultures



Law Enforcement

- Varied education requirements*
- 80/20 Rule
- “Justice is blind”
 - Crime prevention & enforcement
- Constitution & codified law, plus agency P&P
- Fair and impartial policing
 - Often a “one size fits all” approach

EDUCATION

TRAINING

PERSPECTIVE &
FUNCTION

LEGAL/ETHICAL
GUIDELINES

VALUE SYSTEMS

Social Work

- Generally, undergraduate or graduate degree
- Field education
- Holistic, person-centered, strengths-based views
 - Well-being, support & empowerment
- NASW Code of Ethics
- Client/Consumer as expert
 - Meet client where they are

***GOAL is the same – protect & serve the community!

Collaboration is the key to success!

Desired Outcomes:

*Increased connection to resources

*Reduced repeat encounters with LEOs

*Minimized Arrests

*Reduced use of force

PAIRING WITH CIT OFFICERS

- Co-Responder Models
 - Ex) LCAT
 - Ex) “iPad” Model with CMHA-CEI
 - Ex) Social Work interns (10 min audio link)
 - <https://www.ctpublic.org/news/state/2021-07-13/willimantic-pd-experiments-sending-college-social-work-interns-on-calls>
- Mobile Crisis Units
- Case Management Teams
- LEAD Programs



*Note – Crisis Stabilization Units, MI HB 5832
& Stepping Up Initiatives
& 988 Crisis Line

○ Questions?



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