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Spring 2020

### Public's Perception of Law Enforcement in Schools

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**Public's Perception of Law Enforcement in Schools**

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CRM8900G

**Abstract**

Law Enforcement is inserted into schools all over the United States to ensure the school's safety. Law Enforcement and community relationships are most important in developing trust between law enforcement and schools, including staff, students, and families. Once trust is established, law enforcement in schools is utilized by providing their services to better the school's community. This research aims to get an insight into how people currently feel about law enforcement and what people would want from law enforcement in schools. Which raises the question, what does the public think about law enforcement in schools? The sample includes people above the age of 18 years old from various states in the United States, primarily Massachusetts. Results, policy implications, and directions for future research will be discussed.

**Keywords:** School, law enforcement, public perceptions, police, mentorship, educate

## **Public's Perception of Law Enforcement in Schools**

### **Introduction**

The way law enforcement interacts with the public influences the public's view of police officers. With advances in technology, a police officer's encounter with a civilian can be captured and viewed by many in less than a minute. It can take one witness with a cellphone to capture interactions and post it on any social media platform for the public to see, which can create a positive or negative perception of law enforcement. There have been many negative connotations of police officers over the years, whether it is a patrol officer or a school officer. The United States has taken action to create a positive perception of law enforcement.

The section of "Building Trust and Legitimacy" on President Barack Obama's Task Force on the 21st Century Policing (2015) focuses on building relationships between law enforcement and communities. The action items aimed at law enforcement agencies to build positive opportunities in school environments and the community. This includes creating alternative strategies that involve youth in decision making, reform policies and procedures, and development of new behavior skills. It also includes developing proactive positive collaborations between law enforcement and students (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). The opportunity to enhance law enforcement relationships with students are the positions of School Police Officers or School Resource Officers (SROs).

### **Literature Review**

#### **School Police Officers/ School Resource Officers**

Since the 1950s, police officers have been surveilling schools. There has been training specifically for school-based law enforcement with the first SRO program in Flint, Michigan, in

1953 (Bolger, Kremser, & Walker, 2018). The initial purpose of SROs was to community police school environments and improve relationships between law enforcement and youth. SROs are sworn law enforcement officers that collaborate with schools. The duties of an SRO include providing security for school communities, mentoring, and educating students. SROs address student behavior problems that could lead to delinquent activity. In addition, SROs have arresting authority and are allowed to carry weapons (Bolger et al., 2018). However, there are jurisdictions that prohibit SROs from carrying firearms, such as Boston, Massachusetts, which do not allow SROs or Boston School Police Officers to carry firearms.

The National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) was founded in 1991; it is the largest provider of SRO training globally. The mission of NASRO is to promote a safer school environment for students and faculty by providing the highest quality of training to school-based law enforcement officers. NASRO trains officers to use a triad concept to represent their three main roles: educator, informal counselor or mentor, and law enforcement officer. Training police officers to educate, mentor, and protect the school environment allows law enforcement officers to develop positive relationships and interactions with children at an early stage of their lives (Canady, James, & Nease 2012).

There has been an increase in concern about violence and security in schools. Due to this concern, there has been greater implementation of police officers in schools. For example, the presence of SROs increased from 9,446 in 1997 to 14,337 in 2003 (Petteruti, 2011, p 6). This was in response to the Columbine Highschool incident in Littleton, Colorado, that occurred in 1999, where two students killed thirteen people and injured twenty-one people (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019). There is a concern that school police officers' more oppressive

presence may lead to more juvenile arrests and formal processing by the juvenile and criminal justice system (Bolger et al., 2018). Bolger et al. (2018) found that officers who received formal SRO training were more likely to prefer suspension or referral to the juvenile justice system. In contrast, more highly educated and experienced officers tended to favor diversion approaches. This may relate to the fact that those who receive training will choose to enforce the law instead of weighing other possible approaches or solutions. Those who have more experience will use techniques that work best for individual incidents due to their exposure.

### **Positive impact on students**

The presence of SROs can create positive relationships with students providing them with the support and necessary tools to encourage them on the right path. Fine, Padilla and Tapp (2019) found when law enforcement officers empower youth to make a difference in their community, that relationship improves youth's perception of law enforcement and allows youth to be proactive members in their community. Law enforcement has a positive role in school settings, by not only maintaining safety, but by preventing and intervening in delinquent incidents, and counseling youth (Bolger et al., 2018). It is vital that youth have positive interactions and perceptions of law enforcement. Having an SRO is a great way to introduce a positive encounter between youth and law enforcement. Children's perception and interaction with law enforcement will likely influence how youth will perceive police officers going into adulthood. Therefore, it is crucial that children have a positive perception of law enforcement at an early stage of their lives (Fine et al., 2019).

Programs within the school have been created to build positive perspectives on law enforcement for children. Fine et al. (2019) explored youth's perspectives on law enforcement in

a school setting. The study used the Team Kids Challenge (TKC) to collect their data. TKC is a school-based organization that empowers youth by collaborating with law enforcement to complete community service through positive youth development. Positive youth development concentrates on building adult and youth relationships through collaboration and utilizing youth's strengths. The results demonstrated that the youth who took part in TKC reported significantly more positive perceptions of law enforcement after their participation.

In addition to positive relationships between students and SROs, officers familiarize themselves with students, allowing officers to use their discretion when an incident occurs. Wald and Thureau (2010) conducted a study in Massachusetts, which consisted of interviews with school police chiefs and school resource officers in 16 school districts. According to the SROs, arrest rates are lower when they are present at the school since they have familiarity with the students. The SROs can respond to the incident with their discretion instead of relying on school administrators' interpretations and being pressured to remove the student from the school (Wald & Thureau, 2010). Theriot (2009) found that having an SRO present decreased arrests for serious offenses, such as weapons charges and assault; however, the number of disorderly conduct arrests increased. Theriot's (2009) study supports and refutes the claims made by the SROs in Wald and Thureau's study (2010). As we see, an SRO's presence may have positive effects on students and the school environment, as well as a decrease in arrests for serious offenses. However, it may have negative effects, including an increase in disorderly conduct arrests.

### **Negative impact on students**

There has been an increase in the number of referrals and arrests to juvenile courts made by schools, with there being an increase of SROs present within the same decade (Counts,

Randall, Ryan, & Katsiyannis, 2018). It has been argued that having police in school environments may increase students' suspension or expulsion rates from school and increase involvement in the criminal or juvenile justice system (Petteruti, 2011). This concept is called "school to prison pipeline," which is when schools create policies and approaches that seem to be a one-way path for students, which will eventually lead them to enter the juvenile or criminal justice system. According to previous research, schools with SROs have more arrests for minor offenses. Between 2004 and 2005, Florida had 26,990 school-related referrals to the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. Seventy-six percent of the referrals were due to misdemeanors, such as trespassing, disorderly conduct, or assault and battery (Petteruti, 2011).

An SROs response and approach to students can impact how officers influence students' responses. When SROs engage negatively and aggressively with students, it provokes students to respond with similar behaviors towards the officer. The student's response can most likely get them into more trouble than the initial reason the SRO was called in to handle the situation. Therefore, the presence of SROs creates a fearful and uncomfortable environment for students, especially for students in special education, with a history of mental health, behavior disorders, and experienced trauma because they are disproportionately arrested (Counts et al.,2018). Students who struggle behaviorally or emotionally most likely respond more drastically, which makes those students prone to harsh punishments than a student who does not have those struggles. The majority of the youth involved in the juvenile justice system have at least one, but usually more than one of the following: mental health disorder, learning disability, behavior disorder, or experienced trauma. These deficits are more common within detention facilities than the general youth population (Mallet, 2014).

Law enforcement has been a part of the school environment for decades. Law enforcement has implemented new roles in the community to restore trust among the public. To address public distrust in the police, President Obama created a task force to build that trust between the public and law enforcement. The Task Force on the 21st Century Policing (2015) targets law enforcement and community engagement, including schools. The task force development of collaboration between law enforcement and schools will affect how students, families, and staff perceive law enforcement. Law enforcement has been a part of the school community, and there has been research on the impact school law enforcement has on students, but it is unclear on how the public feel about the presence of law enforcement in schools.

### **The Present Study**

This present study examines the public's perspectives and various experiences with law enforcement in schools. Through an online survey, the study explores how the public perceives law enforcement's role and their contribution(s) to schools. The findings of the study may provide an understanding of the public's expectations of law enforcement in schools and can provide law enforcement with information that may be used for training and policies. The overall goal is to gain information that may bridge the gap between school law enforcement and the public.

### **Methodology**

#### **Data**

In this study, a self-administered online-based survey was used to collect qualitative and quantitative data—the cross-sectional survey contained between 20-35 open and closed-ended questions. The total number of questions varies based on participant's experiences (e.g., prior

experience as a student in a school with law enforcement). All participants responded to questions that pertained to their understanding of law enforcement roles and their purpose in schools, and their personal experiences with school law enforcement. To grasp participants' perceptions of law enforcement in schools, the majority of the survey is open-ended questions, where subjects can elaborate on their answers and provide detailed explanations.

### **Sampling**

The sample for this survey comprised members of the general public. The sample did not include anyone under the age of 18 years old. The study has a combined strategy of non-probability convenience sample and snowball sample. A convenience sample is a method used where the sample is of possible participants that are easy to reach for the researcher. This method was used by posting a participation announcement on various social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn and by sending participant recruitment emails to undergraduate and graduate criminology students. Through social media, the study's participation announcement was shared by people; therefore, having a virtual snowball effect. A snowball sample is when participants attempt to recruit among their acquaintances. Unfortunately, there are disadvantages of convenience and snowball sampling. The results are biased due to voluntary participation in the survey. In addition, the study is unable to generalize the results to the population as a whole due to the form of selection being the researcher's resources.

Even though a convenience and snowball sample cannot be used to compare to the general population, the generalizability through social media announcements and virtual shares allows the study to reach populations of various backgrounds including occupation, experiences,

and age. The researcher announced participation on multiple social media platforms to a convenient sample, and within that sample the participation announcement was continuously being shared with other possible samples.

### **Measures**

This study focuses on describing the public's perception of law enforcement in schools. Perspectives of law enforcement vary among the public based on their individual experiences and characteristics. The public's perception of law enforcement in schools is measured by asking participants direct questions that revolve around the purpose, roles, and expectations of law enforcement. For example, questions that will help researchers understand the participants' perspectives are, "What is the purpose of law enforcement in schools?" "What should law enforcement do in schools?" Participants were also provided with a scenario in which they are asked to provide their input as if they were a high school student.

The study examines experiences participants have with law enforcement in schools through personal individual experience. Participants were asked if they had law enforcement when they attended elementary, middle, or high school. If they did attend a school where law enforcement was present then they answered an additional set of questions. Therefore, to measure experience, the survey asks participants to provide their personal experiences and recollections of law enforcement during their time in school. Participants were asked about the roles the law enforcement officers had. In addition, participants were asked to describe the relationship and interactions they had with law enforcement. Individual characteristics that were taken into consideration that may influence the perception of law enforcement in schools are age, level of education completed, occupation, history working in a school system, current student

status, race, ethnicity, and the current residing state. It is important to measure individual characteristics to identify how they vary in law enforcement perceptions.

Conducting a survey instead of an interview allows for a larger and diverse sample. A self-administered survey allows the participants to take their time in responding and not feel pressured to answer a specific way if the researcher were present. An online survey makes data collection more organized.

### **Analysis Plan**

The platform used to distribute the survey used in the study was Qualtrics. Qualtrics allows exporting the raw data into Excel. To organize the raw data, the researcher had to delete the blank surveys that were recorded. The blank surveys were automatically recorded because individuals would consent to take the survey, but then did not answer any survey questions, resulting in blank responses.<sup>1</sup>

This research involved both quantitative and qualitative data. Once the data were in the comprehensible form, the researcher color-coded the questions to distinguish which represented qualitative analysis, qualitative perception of law enforcement, quantitative analysis, and quantitative perception of law enforcement. Examples of quantitative analysis questions are the sample descriptives, age, and occupations. The questions categorized as the perception of law enforcement are the questions that allow the participants' to provide their impressions and understandings.

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<sup>1</sup> The study initially also wanted to examine how parents perceived law enforcement in their child's school. The purpose was to see if parental status or having a child in school changed how subjects generally felt about law enforcement in schools. However, there were not enough participants who reported having school-age children, and these data could not be used. The survey instrument included in Appendix A includes all original survey questions.

To organize and understand the qualitative data, the research conducted both open coding and selective coding. First, the researcher read each response and captured the keywords and themes that were represented through open coding. Second, the researcher reread the responses using selective coding, where the researcher identified the most common themes from the first stage and organized the responses into fewer categories. For example, the themes that appeared for the question "what is the purpose of law enforcement in schools" were safety, protection, enforce the law, role model, maintain order, intimidate students, school to prison pipeline, and terrorize students. To create fewer and more organized categories, common themes were put together, such as safety and protection, maintaining order and enforcing the law, and intimidating and terrorizing students. Some questions required an extra step than others because the researcher had to separate the responses into yes or no categories. Once the responses were in the suitable category, the researcher applied the same approach that was used with the other questions. Once all responses were separated into categories, the researcher considered how common each response was and reported differences between responses.

#### *Sample descriptive statistics*

Determining the sample descriptive statistics required quantitative analyses. Because of the sampling strategy described above, the study's sample is not generalizable to the entire U.S. population. Table 1 contains the sample descriptive statistics. The sample of the study involved participants between the age of 18 to 62. The average age of the data is 24.84, and the standard deviation of the age is 9.33. The majority of the participants identified as white (62.12%), 15.15% of the participants were Hispanic/Latino, 12.12% preferred not to respond, and 4.55% identified as black. Approximately forty-four percent (43.94%) of the participants reported

having completed some college. About sixty-eight percent (68.18%) of the participants are current students. Due to the requirement that all participants be above the age of 18, most, if not all, students in this sample are college students. Roughly, fifty-two percent (51.52%) of the participants reside in Massachusetts. Unfortunately, about twenty-six percent (25.76%) of the participants did not respond to their current residing state. There were participants from 11 out of the 50 states; California, Connecticut, Florida, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Texas. A significant number of participants, 81.82%, reported having no history working in the school system, but over 40% were students themselves. A considerable number of participants, 83.33%, reported having a law enforcement officer present at some point during their time as a student.

**Table 1. Sample Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean (S.D) or Percentage of the Sample with a Characteristic
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	
White	62.12%
Black	4.55%
Hispanic/Latino	15.15%
Asian	1.52%
Middle Eastern	1.52%
Prefer not to respond	12.12%
<i>Occupation</i>	
Engineering	4.55%
Hospitality	3.03%
Hospital and Health Industry	6.06%
Law Enforcement	6.06%
Non-Profit	1.52%
Social Work/Therapist	6.06%
Student	40.91%
Works with Children	6.06%
Other	10.61%
No Response	15.15%

<i>Level of Education</i>	
High School	16.67%
Some College	43.94%
Associate's Degree	7.59%
Bachelor's Degree	19.70%
Graduate Degree	10.61%
<i>Current Student Status</i>	
Yes	68.18%
No	30.30%
<i>History of Work in School System</i>	
Yes	16.67%
No	81.82%
<i>Experienced Law Enforcement as a Student</i>	
Yes	83.33%
No	16.67%

### Results

The majority of the participants support having law enforcement in schools. Those participants say the purpose of law enforcement in schools is to provide an immediate response, safety and protection, security, maintain order, and enforce rules, which are considered traditional police roles. In addition to the responses mentioned, most of the participants expressed that law enforcement should be a positive resource and role model for students by building relationships and trust. Also, various participants mentioned that law enforcement should be vigilant of students to spot child negligence and bullying. Approximately eighty-five percent (84.85%) of participants said they would support hiring a law enforcement officer if they were a high school student. Those participants expressed they would feel safer, and law enforcement would be another resource for students to utilize. Not everyone agreed that there should be law enforcement in schools.

Participants were asked whether law enforcement should perform three specific tasks in schools: education, and enforcing the law. Interestingly, although most reported that law enforcement should have traditional police roles in schools when asked directly about law enforcement providing mentorship, 92.42% supported this. Participants' responses were a mixture of personal mentorship and professional/career mentorship. The simplicity of law enforcement officers being a resource students can go to when they need it. Many participants expressed that law enforcement should be a role model and build positive relationships with students as a form of personal mentorship. Participants suggested that law enforcement can provide professional mentorship through internships, cadet programs, and formal clubs/programs.

When asked about law enforcement providing education, 77.27% supported the police in schools having this function. Those who supported law enforcement providing education gave a wide range of responses as to how this should occur. Some participants suggested that law enforcement officers could be classroom guest speakers to share their experiences. Other participants did not limit their answers to classroom settings, suggesting that law enforcement officers could provide various workshops on self-defense, emergency readiness, law, drug and alcohol, and gang resistance. Some participants that did not support law enforcement in providing education stated that teachers should do the teaching and that the roles of law enforcement are to protect not to teach. When asked about police in schools enforcing the law, 95.45% supported this. Participants expressed it is law enforcement's job to enforce the school rules and outside laws. Participants believe law enforcement should uphold the law, use

discretion when addressing an issue, and have the best interests of students. According to participants, enforcing the law includes search, seizures, and apprehending the threat.

*Concerns surrounding law enforcement in schools*

Participants expressed their concerns surrounding law enforcement in schools. Three participants said the purpose of law enforcement in schools is to strengthen the school to prison pipeline, intimidate students, and terrorize students of color. Approximately nine percent (9.09%) did not support law enforcement in schools. Participants reported concerns about officers discriminating against students because of race. In addition, participants expressed concern about students feeling anxious with law enforcement presence and the school atmosphere changing to feel like a prison. As a participant stated, law enforcement in schools supports institutional and systemic oppression. It was suggested that schools should invest in a social-emotional program instead of hiring law enforcement. Approximately five percent (4.55%) of the participants believed that it depended on the school's location and size to determine whether they would want to hire law enforcement.

Approximately six percent (6.06%) of participants said law enforcement should not provide mentorship to students. Only one participant explained their response, saying; law enforcement does not have the training to mentor students. The eighteen percent (18.18%) of participants that did not support law enforcement providing education did not explain their response. Two participants do not agree that law enforcement should enforce regulations because of the fear students have towards law enforcement, where the school community may be the only safe place for students. Participants suggest that schools should have their own discipline plan.

Participants believe the roles of law enforcement should be consistent across the different educational levels. However, participants said the police tactics and approach should vary depending on the school level. Participants expressed that the students' needs vary depending on their grades. The older the students get, the more involved and active law enforcement should be. Two participants noted that the need for law enforcement at different levels of schooling depended on school location. A specific participant argued that law enforcement should be present in elementary schools in urban areas, but not in middle or high schools due to tense community relations. That participant argued there is a disconnect between law enforcement and urban youth, and believe suburban schools do not have that disconnect.

*Personal experiences with law enforcement in schools*

Among the survey participants, experience with law enforcement as a student was common. The last row of Table 1 includes the proportion of participants that reported having law enforcement present at their school when they were students. It is important to note that not everyone had law enforcement at the same education level. Of those who had experience with law enforcement as a student, 47.27% reported that law enforcement provided students with mentorship. Participants expressed that students were comfortable with law enforcement at their schools and were a positive resource available to students as an informal mentor. The officers checked in daily with students and were present to offer any advice. Other participants said there were internship opportunities with law enforcement at their schools. However, a sizable portion of participants, 38.18%, reported law enforcement did not provide mentorship to students, indicating that mentorship was not a universal function of law enforcement for these students.

Almost eleven percent (10.91%) of the participants said they were unsure if mentorship was provided to students.

Roughly forty-seven percent (47.27%) of participants reported that law enforcement did not provide education to students at their school. Approximately thirty-eight percent (38.18%) of participants reported that law enforcement provided education to students. According to the participants, the type of education offered included safety procedures, self-defense, mental health, substance use, and gang violence. Participants also said officers were guest speakers in classes. Participants that were unsure if law enforcement provided education to students was 9.09%.

The vast majority of respondents, 76.36%, said law enforcement enforced the law by responding to incidents that involved the violation of laws, such as assaults, illegal drugs and substances, and vandalism. They apprehended students when necessary and managed in-school suspensions, and gave student adequate punishments. According to 18.18% of participants, law enforcement did not enforce the laws at their schools.

Regardless of the role that law enforcement took in the students' schools, the overall relationship with participants and law enforcement at their schools was favorable, with 75.93% reporting positive relationships with law enforcement in their schools. Participants that responded "positive" described their relationship with law enforcement being an available and trusted resource. The officers were friendly, respectful, and helpful. Approximately twenty-two percent (22.22%) of participants responded, "no relationship" did not have personal or severe interactions with law enforcement.

### **Discussion**

A substantial amount of people in the present sample agreed with having law enforcement in schools, even though there were some disagreements. Overwhelmingly, people expressed interest in law enforcement providing mentorship to students. Most of the participants expressed that law enforcement should be a positive resource and role model for students. This is supported by previous research that children exposed to law enforcement in schools at a young age aim to create positive student and police relationships. Mentorship comes in various forms which was demonstrated by participants' responses, from the simplicity of being available and providing advice to students, to having professional mentor programs. Participants want law enforcement to have an active role in the school community instead of limiting their tasks to enforcing the law. Law enforcement should provide many sources for students to better their personal and academic growth.

The participants that disagree with having law enforcement in schools had similar concerns mentioned in the literature review, such as the presence of law enforcement can create a fearful and uncomfortable environment for students. Another concern regarding the school-to-prison pipeline, which was also mentioned by participants. There is a significantly smaller number of people that disagree with having law enforcement in schools due to the negative relations between police and urban communities. There have been recent events that occurred involving police officers and minorities. However, these recent events were after participants took part in this survey, which can ultimately lead to a change in their responses. Therefore, there is a chance that there can be a shift in public perception of having law enforcement in schools.

*Policy implications*

According to the findings, a recommendation for schools is to hire law enforcement officers to provide safety and build positive relationships with the school community. Aside from enforcing the law, participants have expressed that providing a form of mentorship is an essential task for school law enforcement officers. For that reason, law enforcement should have additional training that schools can utilize to implement a trust system where officers can counsel students. Since there is a limited number of officers per school, it will be challenging to have a program where the officers are assigned to students. Therefore, having the officers trained to provide informal and formal assistance would enhance student and police relations. To increase the relationship between students and law enforcement, officers should have an active role with the school community by participating in classroom discussions and extra-curricular activities.

*Study limitations*

A limitation of this study is that the sample is not generalizable to the U.S. public. It is not a representation of the entire public or even a subset of the public. Also, the form of sampling strategies being convenient and snowball makes it difficult to replicate the same sample. Another limitation of this study is how the purposely broad questions made it difficult to categorize the participants' responses, due to their interpretation of the questions. Additionally, this study did not request the participants to specify their gender. Future research should assess gender differences in perspectives of law enforcement in schools.

There is a general limitation of qualitative data analysis, where the researcher is required to interpret the data. To prevent any further form of potential research bias, the researcher did not

allow personal opinions to influence the facts of the findings. This study does not represent the opinions of the researcher to maintain an objective process.

*Directions for future research*

A recommendation for future research should do this study with a larger sample and a wider variety of locations. The hope is that with a larger, more diverse sample, the findings could generalize to the entire U.S. general public.

The questions and measures used in this study were purposely broad. If a researcher is interested in examining the specific law enforcement tasks mentioned (mentorship, education, and enforcing the law), future research can create more specific questions that would provide a more in-depth response in these areas. The participants' responses provide an understanding of their interpretation, which future research can focus on the current interpretations of the participants and examine that further. Another suggestion for future research can be to do two studies comparing the perceptions of samples from suburban and urban areas.

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**Appendix A  
Survey Instrument**

*Skip To: End of Survey If 315 Turnpike Street, North Andover, MA 01845 |  
www.merrimack.edu Consent to Participate in Rese... = No I do not consent*

**What is the purpose of Law Enforcement in schools?**

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**Should the role of Law Enforcement in schools differ for elementary, middle, and high school? Please explain.**

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**Imagine you are a high school student in a school that is considering hiring local Law Enforcement. Would you support the school's decision to have police officers present in your school? Why or why not?**

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**What should Law Enforcement officers do in schools?**

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**Should Law Enforcement officer(s) provide mentorship to students? If so, how?**

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**Should Law Enforcement officer(s) provide education to students? If so, how?**

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**Should Law Enforcement officer(s) enforce the law? If so, how?**

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**When you were a student did you have a Law Enforcement officer present in your school at any of the following levels (check all that apply):**

- None
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School

**Do you currently have a child in school? If yes, what grade level(s) is your child or children currently in? (Check all that apply):**

- I do NOT currently have a child in school
- Pre-Elementary School (Pre-K, Kindergarten)
- Elementary School (Grades 1-5)
- Middle School (Grade 6-8)
- High School (Grade 9-12)
- College

---

*Display This Question:*

*If When you were a student did you have a Law Enforcement officer present in your school at any of t... != None*

***For the next set of questions, please refer back to your experiences with Law Enforcement in elementary, middle, and/or high school***

*Display This Question:*

*If When you were a student did you have a Law Enforcement officer present in your school at any of t... != None*

**What did Law Enforcement officers do at your school?**

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*Display This Question:*

*If When you were a student did you have a Law Enforcement officer present in your school at any of t... != None*

**Did the Law Enforcement officer(s) provide mentorship to students? If so, how?**

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*Display This Question:*

*If When you were a student did you have a Law Enforcement officer present in your school at any of t... != None*

**Did the Law Enforcement officer(s) enforce the law? If so, how?**

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*Display This Question:*

*If When you were a student did you have a Law Enforcement officer present in your school at any of t... != None*

**Did the Law Enforcement officer(s) provide education to students? If so, how?**

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*Display This Question:*

*If When you were a student did you have a Law Enforcement officer present in your school at any of t... != None*

**Please describe your relationship with Law Enforcement at your school, including any interactions you have had with Law Enforcement officers.**

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*Display This Question:*

*If When you were a student did you have a Law Enforcement officer present in your school at any of t... != None*

**How would you describe your overall relationship with the Law Enforcement officer(s) at your school?**

- No relationship
  - Positive
  - Negative
- 

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you currently have a child in school? If yes, what grade level(s) is your child or children c... != I do NOT currently have a child in school*

**Do any of your children attend a school where there is a full or part time Law Enforcement officer?**

- Yes
  - No
  - Unsure
- 

*Display This Question:*

*If Do any of your children attend a school where there is a full or part time Law Enforcement officer? = Yes*

**How well do you know the Law Enforcement officer(s) at your child's or children's school(s)?**

- Very well
  - Moderately well
  - Not well at all
- 

*Display This Question:*

*If Do any of your children attend a school where there is a full or part time Law Enforcement officer? = Yes*

**In what capacity have you interacted with the Law Enforcement at your child(s)' schools?**

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*Display This Question:*

*If Do any of your children attend a school where there is a full or part time Law Enforcement officer? = Yes*

**Do the Law Enforcement officer(s) provide mentorship to students? If so, how? (If not sure, enter “not sure”)**

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*Display This Question:*

*If Do any of your children attend a school where there is a full or part time Law Enforcement officer? = Yes*

**Do the Law Enforcement officer(s) provide education to students? If so, how? (If not sure, enter “not sure”)**

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*Display This Question:*

*If Do any of your children attend a school where there is a full or part time Law Enforcement officer? = Yes*

**Do the Law Enforcement officer(s) enforce the law? If so, how? (If not sure, enter “not sure”)**

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**How old are you?**

**What is the highest level of education you have completed?**

- Some High School
- High School
- Some College
- Associates Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Graduate Degree

**What is your occupation?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Have you ever worked in a school system?**

- No
- If yes, in what capacity? \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you currently a student?**

- Yes
- No

*Display This Question:*

*If Are you currently a student? = Yes*

**If yes, what is your level of education?**

- High School Student
- College Freshmen
- College Sophomore
- College Junior
- College Senior
- Graduate Student

**Please indicate your race: \_\_\_\_\_ (check box for prefer not to respond)**

- Race: \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to respond

**Please indicate our ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_ (check box for prefer not to respond)**

- Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to respond

**In which state do you currently reside?**

▼ Alabama ... I do not reside in the United States

**On a scale of 1-5, how confident are you in the police's ability to control crime in your community (1= no confidence, 5=very confident)?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

**On a scale of 1-5, how much do you trust the police to enforce the law fairly in your community (1= no trust, 5= complete trust)?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5