



New York State Regional Leadership  
Summit on School-Justice Partnerships

## **POLICING THE TEEN BRAIN IN SCHOOL**



### **Paradigm Changes**

**Recognition:**

- Same old/same old won't work now
- May not have worked previously.
- Pay now, pay later.



*“Good news, I hear the paradigm is shifting.”*

## First Responders

Asked to respond to domestic social policy failures including:

- Dial a daddy
- Truancy
- Mental health issues
- Drugs/alcohol
- Fear of youth
- Racial



## Social & Domestic Policy Failures

Poverty/Unemployment  
Fragile Families/Fatherlessness  
Vulnerable Communities



Police

## First Responders for Discipline



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## Policing Youth in 2013

- Must respond to every call; acting as
  - “Daddy Disciplinarian”
- Fewer alternatives, options for referrals
- More challenge to traditional assertion of authority
  - Greater need to assert authority
- Increasing Status Offenders

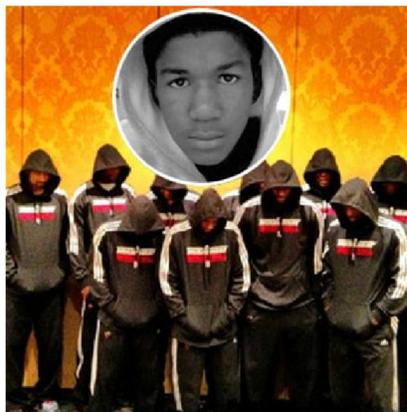
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## Youths' Perception of Police/System

- Violent
- Unfair
- Likely to be unfair to youth of color

### Responses:

- Not sure how to interact
- Best defense is an offense...



## Legal Landscape



*Roper v. Simmons* ('05)

*Graham v. Florida* ('10)

*Miller v. Alabama* ('12)

*JDB v. N. Carolina* ('11)

## ***Roper v. Simmons (2005)***

1. “A lack of maturity and an underdeveloped sense of responsibility are found in youth more often than in adults...often result in impetuous and ill-considered actions and decisions...that “adolescents are overrepresented statistically in virtually every category of reckless behavior.”

## ***Roper v. Simmons, cont'd.***

2. Youth “are more vulnerable or susceptible to negative influences and outside pressures, including peer pressure...”
3. “...Character of a juvenile is not as well formed as that of an adult. The personality traits of juveniles are more transitory, less fixed.

**Therefore:**

“The susceptibility of juveniles to immature and irresponsible behavior means ‘their irresponsible conduct is not as morally reprehensible as that of an adult.’” Cannot be sentenced to death.

## ***JDB v. North Carolina, 2011***

“[O]fficers and judges need no imaginative powers, knowledge of developmental psychology, training in cognitive science, or expertise in social and cultural anthropology to account for a child’s age. They simply need the common sense to know that a 7-year-old is not a 13-year-old and neither is an adult.”

## **Policy Pressures Today**

- **US Department of Justice**
  - Reduced use of incarceration
  - Trauma Informed Approaches
  - End use of “scared straight”
- **JJDPAct**
  - Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)
  - Police Role



## Policy pressures...

- **Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative**
  - Change approach to policing
- **Cross Over Youth**
  - From abused to abusive
- **Legislation**
  - End transfer to adult court
  - Reduce school arrests



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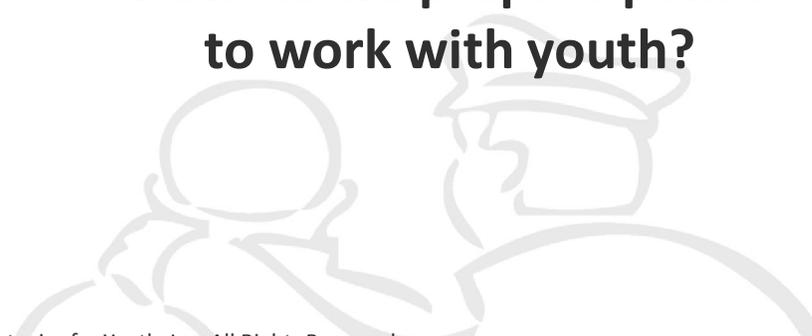
## Public Expectations of Police



- Too harsh/too harsh
- Seek involvement/exclusion
- Increased understanding of mental health/special needs
- Take my child, please!

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## How do we prepare police to work with youth?



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## In-Service Police Training

### IACP 2011 Juvenile Justice Training Needs Survey of Chiefs:

- No training after academy,
- No requirement for in-service training,
- No in-service training in juvenile justice for 5 years or > due to lack of funding.



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## Academy Recruit Training

### SFY Study of Police Officer Standards & Training (POST) Curriculum 2013:

- Average duration is 6 hours,
- 90 to 95% of curricula is legal; not always updated,
- Most state provide no training on youths' developmental and mental health issues.

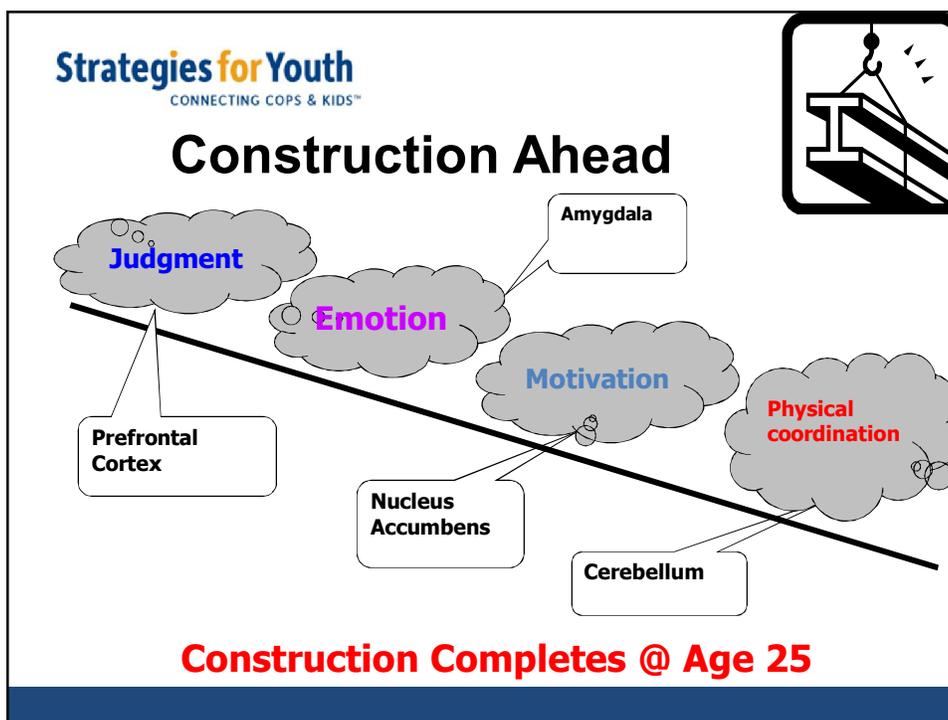
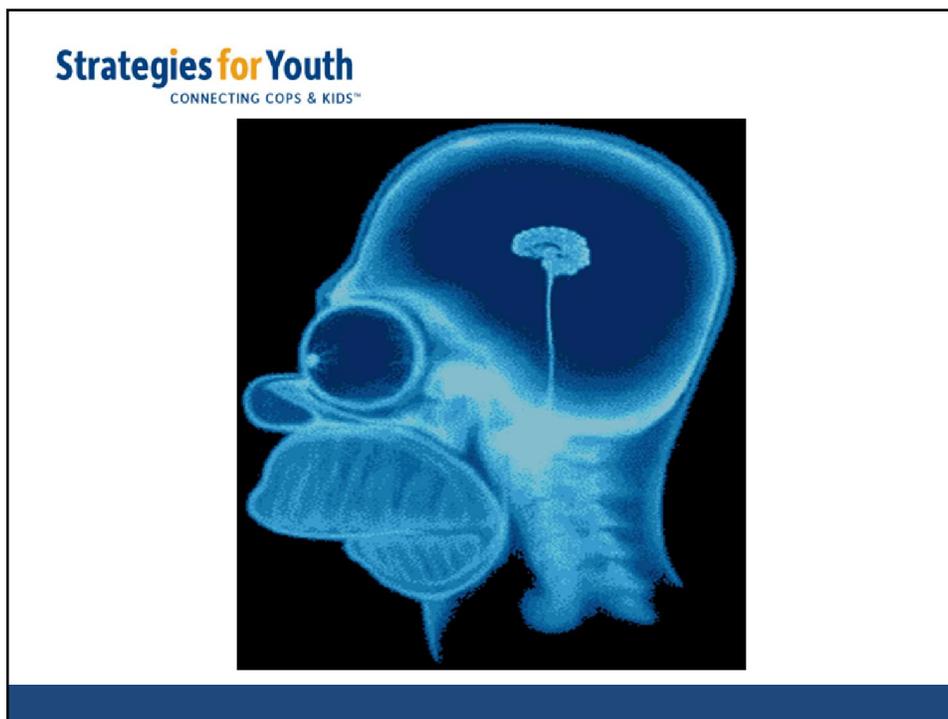


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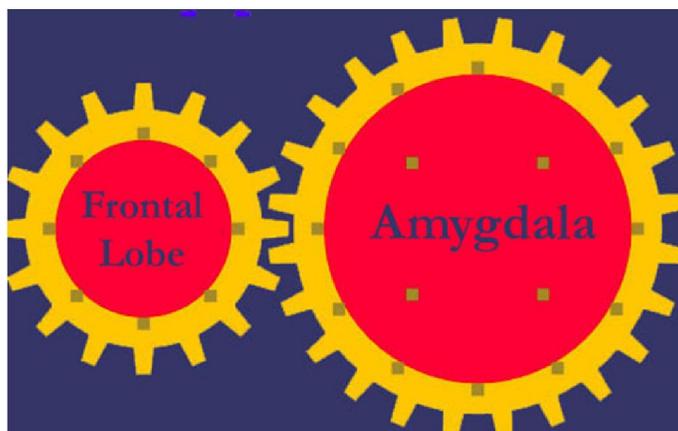
## The Youth You See...



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## Teens' Enlarged Amygdala: No Braking Device



## Developmental Competence



Juvenile developmental characteristics such as **impulsivity, self centeredness, and resistance to authority** Increase the chances that police-juvenile encounters will involve **conflict, disrespect, and confrontational behavior.**

## Developmental Competence

Can't assume:

- Intentional/purposeful  
*mens rea*
- Clear on consequences
- Controlled



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## Developmental Competence

- **Universal** stages of development
- **Adults & institutions working with children & youth must:**
- Understand
- Apply the Knowledge
- **Adjust Responses**



## Key Considerations for Effective School-Police Partnerships:

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## 5 Keys to Good Safety Teams in Schools

1. Clarity of Purpose
2. Team Approach & Role Definition
3. Training—Together
4. Data Collection
5. Oversight

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## 1. CLARITY of PURPOSE

- **What expectations do we have of what youth need to behave well?**
- **What's our ADD Bandwidth?**
  - Socializing
  - Clarity of expectations
  - Reinforcement
- **What's our theory of students' poor classroom behavior?**
- **What's our theory of improving student behavior?**
- **How do we fetter our discretion/our inner demons?**
  - Zero tolerance?
  - Graduated Sanctions?

## 2. TEAM APPROACH

- **Principal leadership role of team**
  - Voice in selection of SRO and deployment
  - SRO deployment issues must be analyzed and evaluated
- **Role definition**
  - Role adherence/flexibility
  - Avoid delegation of “the heavy” role solely to police
  - Recognition of who plays which roles best
  - Frequent, regular check-ins as a team
- **SRO Role**
  - Deployment!
  - Capitalize on SRO's access to information on students' involvement in law enforcement-related systems A&N/DV.

## 2(A). Team Responses

- **Team Commitments/Agreements:**
  - Use agreed-upon approach
  - Structure and roles should trump personalities
  - Promote predictability in adult responses
  - Constant evaluation of efforts
  - Commitment to tweak/change

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## What Makes a Team Fail/Succeed?

### FAIL

- Inattention to results.
- Avoidance of accountability.
- Lack of commitment.
- Fear of conflict.
- Absence of trust.

### SUCCEED

- Team members trust one another.
- Engage in unfiltered conflict about ideas.
- Commit to decisions and plans of action.
- Hold one another accountable for delivering plans.
- Focus on achievement of collective results.

Source: Dysfunctions of a Team by Patrick Lencioni

## 3(A) TRAINING for ADULTS

### TOPICS:

- Child & Adolescent Development
- Impacts of Chronic Exposure to Trauma
- Demographics Factors Affecting Home/Nbhd Lives of Children/Youth
- Cultural Factors Influencing Youth Behaviors/Survival Tactics
- Juvenile Law for Law Enforcement in Schools
  - Understand limited responses of juvenile courts
  - Value of restorative justice approaches
- Implicit Bias
- ADR-mediation training to Teach Youth Skills for De-Escalating Disputes
- Understanding How Youth Perceive Assertion of Authority

### How to Train & Who Gets Trained:

- As a team (including teachers, janitors, lunch ladies, nurses, school psychologistst/guidance counselors)
- Scenario based
- Interactive
- Group Discussions/Peer to Peer
- Annually (shorter)

## 3(B) TRAINING for STUDENTS

### Teach Code of Conduct:

- Interactive method
- Make assumptions clear
- Model ways students should address anticipated disputes
- Provide alternatives and adults to speak to

### *Juvenile Justice Jeopardy*



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## 4. DATA COLLECTION

- **Focus on *HOW ADULTS are responding to youth*;**
  - Count suspensions/expulsions, & referrals by teachers & administrators to SROs by:
    - Age/Race/Gender of Youth
    - Kind of dispute/issue
    - Resulting action
  - Parental involvement
- **Avoid anecdotes except to illustrate a trend**
- **Analyze data routinely by different team members**
  - Require “juncture” analysis
  - Assign team members to figure out solutions for adult responses

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## 5. OVERSIGHT

**WHO:** Internal: Safety Team Members  
External: Central Oversight Agencies

**HOW:** Statistical Data on Adult Decisions  
Climate Survey of Students/Teachers

**WHAT:** Use of exclusion tactics  
Sense of safety/predictability/fairness

**WHEN:** Statistical Data: Monthly/Annually

## Making the Case



## Costs

- Pressure to reduce use of detention and incarceration
- Fewer law enforcement resources
  - Officers out of service
  - Court costs/OT



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## Risk Management

- Media coverage
- Legal Challenges & Costs:
  - Legal fees
  - Department legitimacy
  - Community relations
  - Morale



## Legitimacy of Law Enforcement



- Positive Socialization of youth to relations with authority
- Hold your fire!
- Don't dilute police authority

## Key Considerations For Moving Forward

**Stress Reduction Kit**

**Bang  
Head  
Here**

- Directions:
1. Place kit on FIRM surface.
  2. Follow directions in circle of kit.
  3. Repeat step 2 as necessary, or until unconscious.
  4. If unconscious, cease stress reduction activity.