

Top 10 Strategies for Effectively Engaging Law Enforcement and Juvenile Justice Partners

Project Director Panelists: Johna Platero, Page, AZ; Randy Evetts, Pueblo, CO.

TASs: Facilitated by Ivy Jones Turner and John Rosiak

Workshop description: What are the Top 10 ways to engage law enforcement and juvenile justice partners in safe schools work? This workshop will present leading strategies through a panel of Project Directors chosen because of successes in engaging LE and JJ. Panelists will demystify the disciplines of LE and JJ, and help PDs overcome possible reluctance to fully engage with partners they may feel less comfortable with. Session will include a variety of LE and JJ experiences from AZ, and CO.

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[Below are the top 10 strategies presented at the PD Consortium, August 3, 2010, along with illustrations of those strategies from the panelists, participants, and facilitators.]

10. Develop an MOU. Effective strategies mentioned included: Generate the MOU or sign an MOU of another partner. Build on smaller MOUs. Build on trust. [May be called MOAs, which may technically mean something different by local definition).

9. Work out information sharing among partners; gather data to ask the right questions. Strategies included: Identify how topics of different partners are similar and overlap. Link how information between systems helps others. Gather the data to ask the right questions—at both individual and aggregate levels. [Information is helpful to assist an individual youth involved in multiple systems, as well as, on the aggregate level, instructive in developing or refining policies or protocols.]

8. Embrace prevention and early intervention. Strategies included: Use communicate advocates as a bridge between student and families, and services. Use data to make the case for prevention. Use language and research that makes sense to LE and JJ, such as cradle to prison research. Use prevention oriented justice strategies like restorative justice practices. [Invite JJ partners from sites to the National Center's teleconference on October 6, 2010 at 2pm eastern, 1-866-673-9168.]

7. Communicate roles and expectations for how each system works. Strategies included: Communicate roles and expectations of how each system works. Include an overview of each system in CMT meetings. Communicate expectations of each system by clearly stating the stages/tiers involved in each system's response to a problem.

6. Co-locate services/assign on-site staff (e.g. SRO/school-based JPO). Strategies included: Provide space for LE and JJ in schools. Link cross-referrals. Look at holding truancy court in a school or school administration building to make it less threatening to families. [Don't forget the benefits of rotating where meetings are held.]

5. Cross train staff. Strategies included: Invite LE and JJ partners to trainings of evidence-based programs like the Olweus Bullying Prevention program. Include partners from various systems in crisis intervention and crisis management training.

4. Focus on systems integration to help young people. Strategies included: First talk about prevention in all systems. Strategically use common or shared space to promote communication and facilitate access. For example, SROs or Juvenile Probation Officers could be located with or near the mental health provider in the schools (being careful to pay attention to confidentiality issues).

3. Hire and train the right people for the job on the ground. Strategies included: Involve school personnel in interviewing SROs.

2. Develop relationships across disciplines (professional and personal). Strategies included: Learn and use language that means something to each discipline. For example, instead of “prevention” you might want to use the term “proactive” with some law enforcement, as they may be more comfortable with that language due to their own training. Promote cultural and linguistic competence. Reach out across disciplines to engage other people, both personally and professionally. Try to understand the concerns and hopes of others and seek a common ground. Honestly address conflicts.

1. Get the right leader to the table. Strategies included: Make connections with the leaders, recognizing that they are at the top and throughout an organization. Clarify when you need someone, and what their role and commitment would be.