A New Direction: La Crosse Juvenile Justice Arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency Task Force (A Case Study)

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ABSTRACT

In 2008, the Carey Group released a report indicating that La Crosse County had a juvenile arrest rate higher than not only three like sized counties, but the entire state of Wisconsin (Kruse and Foegen 2014). In hopes to change the statistics, the Juvenile Justice Arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency (JJADMC) Task Force has collaborated to discuss different methods to help the at-risk youth in the city of La Crosse avoid contact with the juvenile system. This task force is a collaboration of key stakeholders including the Juvenile Justice Supervisor, the Health and Human Services Supervisor, school administrators, school resource officers, and youth program implementers. In this case study, semi-structured qualitative interviews are used to assess the effectiveness of the JJADMC Task Force as it redefines juvenile justice for the city of La Crosse, and implements a new System of Care. Interviews with the La Crosse School District School Resource Officers (SROs) and the key stakeholders of the task force will help to gain an understanding of specific stakeholders' views of obstacles and changes created. La Crosse arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) data is also discussed. After compiling major themes and trends within the interviews, the effectiveness of the task force will be discussed in comparison to prior literature on challenges faced by school resource officers, interagency collaboration, and diversionary programs. The success of this task force will be beneficial for the community of La Crosse and others in understanding the most effective ways to address juvenile delinquency and disproportionate minority contact.

INTRODUCTION

As research continues on the topic of juvenile delinquency, new theoretical frameworks on effectively handling juvenile justice have been proposed. Local jurisdictions are responding to the changing times, resulting in new alternative programming for youth. The stigmatization of a criminal record is one to be avoided, and youth incarceration therefore is counter-productive. Once entered into the system, juveniles obtain a label affecting future avenues of life. Restivo and Lanier (2015) have found that "official intervention with the criminal justice system leads to an increased delinquent self-identity, decreased pro-social expectations, and an increased association with delinquent peers, which then lead(s) to an increased likelihood of engaging in subsequent delinquency" (116). Once a juvenile is entered into the system, there is a positive effect on "subsequent involvement of crime and delinquency" (Restivo and Lanier 2015: 132). To perpetuate the cycle, local jurisdictions are beginning to examine evidence-based programming and interdepartmental collaboration to create diversionary programs for youth. While the overall arrest rate nationally is on the decline, efforts to eliminate predictors of delinquency and disproportionate minority contact are the focus of local juvenile justice systems. Juvenile justice systems must begin to counterbalance the necessity of individual responsibility of action while simultaneously advancing youth for productive and beneficial lives.

The purpose of this research is to focus on the creation of a new juvenile justice system in La Crosse, Wisconsin. First, national trends are discussed in relation to La Crosse, Wisconsin. Juvenile justice reform is then addressed in regards to interagency collaboration, evidence based practices, and the link between law enforcement and schools. The effectiveness of this reform stems from the creation of the La Crosse Juvenile Justice Arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-agency Task Force [(JJADMC) Task Force] and its ability to generate new directions for youth. Prior literature regarding school policies and school resource officers, interagency collaboration, and diversionary programs will be assessed in their connection to the JJADMC Task Force mission. Lastly, through the use of interviews and challenges identified by literature, the success of the Juvenile Justice Arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency Task Force will be determined.

NATIONAL TRENDS IN JUVENILE DELINQUENCY & PREDICTORS

Nationally, juvenile justice techniques are focused more on how to predict delinquency to eliminate its starting point, instead of using consequences. Sickmund and Puzzanchera (2014) state that the quality of services and positive experiences within the system will reduce "subsequent arrests" (72). Youth therefore, benefit more when services match individual needs and community based programming that follow evidence based practices. However, it is important to understand the population of youth that may engage in delinquency and the types of offenses and offenders committing these acts.

Predictors of Delinquency

Predictors of juvenile delinquency are key in understanding youth transgression. The predictors of delinquency include, but are not limited to: family factors, neighborhood/community demographics, opportunities, poverty, and the quality of interaction between systems such as education and juvenile justice. McCoy and Bowen (2014) describe different factors of at risk youth that hinders future aspirations. Family factors such as structure, involvement and expectations can make or break youth. However, nationally, the amount of children living in a single parent home has doubled since the 1960's (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014). Sickmund and Puzzanchera have found that when youth grow up in homes containing both parents, they are less likely to report delinquent behavior such as "running away, sexual activity, major theft, assault and arrest" (10).

An often focused predictor of delinquency is poverty. The "exposure to poverty at an early age and limited resources increases the risk of offending" (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014: 7). Also, "ones socioeconomic status at the age of 6-11 is a strong predictor of severe and violent delinquency at ages 15-25" (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014: 7). Nationally, the threshold of extreme poverty, fifty percent less than the poverty line, accounts for 45% of juveniles (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014). When adding in the racial component, 10% of the white juvenile population were in poverty compared to the 27% of black youth, with the disproportionality continuing into extreme poverty resulting in 4% white and 13% black in 2010 (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014).

In terms of community and structural factors, certain predictors are external to the individual. Conditions in a juvenile's environment can lead to blocked opportunities that increase the chances of juvenile delinquency (Restivo and Lanier 2015). A neighborhood's overall socioeconomic status can hinder future aspirations (McCoy and Bowen 2014). For example, local public school funding is affected by property tax, which resembles the economic and social class of a neighborhood. When this is low, students are subjected to limited resources. Other factors include unemployment levels, criminal activity, safety, and availability of drugs (McCoy and Bowen 2014). Lastly, McCoy and Bowen (2014) describe the quality of interaction between systems for example: educational, law enforcement and juvenile justice and how predictors of delinquency encompass all avenues of youth lives. The fluidity of interaction between systems is important, for example when youth are reentering the educational system after exiting the juvenile justice system, a transition clear of obstacles is vital as well as beneficial.

Offenses Committed by Youth

The most common offenses committed by youth are property damage, drug use, underage alcohol and tobacco use, and violent crimes such as aggravated assault, sexual assault, and robbery (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014). The most common time in which these crimes take place is during the after school period, 3pm-7pm and during non-school days. With regards to substance abuse, alcohol seems to be the most prevalent, but tobacco is the substance that youth use the most on a daily basis (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014). When looking into the type of youth committing crimes, race is an indicator of ones likelihood of arrest which can create a disproportionate contact of minorities and law enforcement.as well as gender. However, data shows an unprecedented increase in female delinquency (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014).

DISPROPORTIONATE MINORITY CONTACT (DMC)

Disproportionate minority contact (DMC) within the juvenile justice system is defined as the disparity in contact between black youth compared to white youth. DMC occurs at all stages in the juvenile justice process, and is not just contained to one area (Nicholson-Crotty et al. 2009). Sickmund and Puzzanchera (2014) agree that DMC occurs at nine key points in the juvenile justice contact: arrest, referral, diversion detention, case petitioning, delinquency findings/adjudication, probation, confinement in a secure correctional facility, and a judicial waiver to adult criminal court (175). With regards to where DMC begins, Rocque and Paternoster (2011) identified that the trajectory of blacks in society and how the difference between whites and blacks resulted in a disproportionate contact. This trajectory accounts for "racial differences in socioeconomic background, family life of black children, lack of cultural capital, existence of opposition subculture and identify among black youth wherein academic success is dismissed and ridiculed as 'too-white'" (Rocque and Paternoster 2011: 635). In sum, Rocque and Paternoster (2011) points to a "pygmalion problem" where "white expectations of blacks are internalized ending to a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy;" being viewed as "trouble makers" (636).

To explain why there is a large proportion of minority youth being contacted, educational systems and a population demographic are discussed in literature. Minority students are less likely to fall into the middle class measuring rod system in education and culture. Stereotypes therefore become stigmatized and internalized in the system. Schools that have a higher proportion of African American students also have been found to have a significantly higher level of disciplined students (Rocque and Paternoster 2011). The students disciplined fall into ethnic/racial minority categories and are targeted more for arrests/referrals than their majority counterparts (Rocque and Paternoster 2011). Monahan and Torres also state that "research also shows that students of color are disproportionality subjected to school punishments…and that research shows youth of color, generally are more likely than whites to draw suspicion of police officers and be subjected to police intervention" (35). Additionally, Herz, Ryan, and Bichik (2010) found that African Americans and male offenders usually receive tougher sentences compared to their counter parts. However, African American youth are less likely to be involved and less committed to schools resulting in lower academic ambitions (Rocque and Paternoster 2011). But, identifying whether or not this is a result of DMC or a cause of it, is unknown. One theoretical idea to explain DMC is a result of population characteristics. Rocque and Paternoster (2011) focuses on a population threshold: "white authorities disproportionately focus on minorities when the percentage of minorities in an area increases, but at a certain point, as the minority population reaches a certain threshold, punitive responses decline as minorities begin to victimize each other" (663). This inverse relationship creates conversation as to why certain groups are more likely to be focused given a specific population level while the opposite is true if the level increases to a certain point.

Overall, aside from the unknown beginnings of DMC, it is occurring. In 2010, only 16% of the juvenile population was black, but yet it constituted for 33% of delinquency caseloads (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014: 157). Although white youth hold the highest number of caseloads, they are less likely to be detained (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014: 163). In order to reduce the disparity, jurisdictions must address and acknowledge the contributing factors of DMC identified in the empirical literature, such as the likelihood of referrals and limited access to resources. Simultaneously combating delinquency to form "comprehensive and multipronged strategies with programs and system change efforts" (Sickmund and Puzzanchera 2014: 175).

JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM: LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

Local jurisdictions have different strategies of coping with predictors of delinquency. How systems use their data and the national trends will shape their outcomes for children and future juvenile justice statistics. The most important questions when dealing with juvenile offending is: how to impose punishment for delinquent behavior, yet preserve the well-being of youth? What components must be addressed, what actions must be taken, how severe of consequences, and how to allow kids to keep being kids? Nationally, the trend of juvenile offenses is decreasing, but some local jurisdictions have seen an increase in juvenile arrests. What is occurring in these jurisdictions and what are the steps being pushed to effectively deter youth from the system when possible?

Carey Group Recommendations & La Crosse Juvenile Arrest Data

For this specific research, the local jurisdiction of La Crosse, Wisconsin is the central focus. Located in the southwest portion of Wisconsin, the juvenile population of La Crosse ages 12-17 (those who are able to be referred into the system) was 2,717 youth in 2014 (U.S. Census Bureau)[1]. Breaking down into racial makeup of 2014, 120 of the youth were black, 201 were Asian, and 2,144 were white. Beginning in 2008, La Crosse was questioned on its high juvenile arrest data and called upon the Carey Group to review its system[2].

In the same year, the Carey Group concluded that La Crosse County had the highest juvenile arrest rate in the state of Wisconsin as well as an extremely high disproportionate minority contact (DMC) rate (Kruse and Foegen 2014). The Carey Group is a "national consulting firm that provides training and technical assistance for justice and correctional professionals and community groups" (Carey Group 2016). The group evaluated the La Crosse County Juvenile Justice System to identify if La Crosse County had a "continuum of services" for juvenile youth and the degree to which these services fit with evidence based

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[1] Population figures for the 12 to 17 age range were calculated using percentages from the American Community Survey of the U.S. Census—total population of juveniles in La Crosse was given in numbers, the rest (age breakdown and race) were given in percentages. The total population of 12 to 17 year olds is an accurate reflection. The race (White, Black, Asian) is calculated by taking the percentage of the total population of these races and multiplying this proportion into the total population for 12 to 17 year olds. Therefore, these numbers are estimates assuming that there are no vast deviations of percentage of race by age group.

[2] An arrest for juveniles is defined as an actual arrest or a municipal citation. Therefore, an arrest is different from a charge which is independent from arrests/citations and the number of individuals.

practices (Kruse and Foegen 2014:8). The Carey Group provided recommendations including but not limited to: creating an inter-agency task force, redefining what constitutes as an arrest, the use of law enforcement as an option for school discipline, and clearly defining the roles of school resource officers (SRO's) in public schools (Kruse and Foegen 2014).

The taskforce was created and data continued to be collected through years 2012-2014 as part of the assessment of juvenile delinquency and DMC in La Crosse. In 2014, the latest year for which data is available, the juvenile population of La Crosse for ages 12-17 (the age accepted into the referral system) was 2, 717 youth, which is an increase since 2013 (Bakken and Kruse 2016). Out of these youth, 120 were Black, 201 were Asian and 2,144 were white. The age in which most youth begin developing a criminal record is during the peak ages of 13 and 14, the transition of middle school and the beginning of high school. The overall La Crosse population trends have shown that the population for black youth has been decreasing over the past few years. In terms of arrests, the overall arrest rate is decreasing, but the arrest rate for black youth is increasing (Bakken and Kruse 2016). This suggests a continuing and increasing trend of disproportionate minority contact (DMC). When assessing the DMC rate of black youth, (comparison of white as the control group) for every one white youth arrested, the black youth arrested is 3.23 in 2012, and increases to 7.34 in 2014[3]. This means for every one white youth arrested, 7.34 black youth were arrested. In terms of an Asian DMC, the ratio is significantly lower for 2014, at a ratio of 0.47. The arrest rate per 1,000 in has been increasing since 2012. In 2012, the arrest rate per 1,000 was 1, 434.07, which has increased to 2,391.67 in 2014 (Bakken and Kruse 2016). This means that for every 1,000 youth, the number of arrests signifies that on average, every black youth arrested at least once, and in 2014, at least twice[4].

In the city of La Crosse, there are five schools that provide data on juvenile arrest rates. Two are high schools and three are middle schools. School Resource Officers are located at each of the five schools and are placed permanently at the sites and do not switch schools unless for situations of subbing or teaching different subjects.

The JJADMC taskforce identified six offenses they deemed "focus acts," or offenses that would be the focus of diversionary measures. These acts include: disorderly conduct, misdemeanor battery, criminal damage to property, theft, truancy 2nd offense, and possession of tobacco. Disorderly conduct, while fluctuating with tobacco, is among the highest arrest rate for the focus acts and it is also the highest arrest across the difference races. Tobacco is a focus act that occurs mostly at the two high schools. In 2014, 27.7% of focus acts occurred at the five schools, which is a decrease from 37.3% 2013 (Bakken and Kruse 2016).

Overall, the top charges for youth in La Crosse are possession of tobacco, disorderly conduct, and truancy. Disorderly conduct topped the charts in 2013 and 2014, but has always been part of the top three. In regards to white students, 21.5% received a disorderly conduct charge and 26.8% of blacks in 2014 (Bakken and Kruse 2016). A large proportion of arrests have taken place at the two high school.

In comparison to national juvenile data, La Crosse has a significantly higher arrest rate. The disproportionate minority contact ratio is comparable to the national ratio, but large in regards to the population of La Crosse. Compared to like sized counties, La Crosse has a higher juvenile arrest rate and DMC ratio. Nationally, tobacco and alcohol use are top charges for

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[3] Disproportionate Minority Contact ratios are calculated by comparing arrest rates for the Black population to the White population. Arrest rates are calculated from the number of arrests by the total population for each group (racial category). DMC ratios are calculated by Black Arrest Rate divided by the White Arrest Rate or Asian Arrest Rate divided by the White Arrest Rate.

[4] The following table was part of the presentation by Bakken and Kruse (2016).

Arrest Rate, per 1,000 for city of La Crosse				
	2012 Original	**2012 Updated**	**2013 Updated**	**2014 Updated**
Total	----	512.34	441.04	385.72
White	17.2	443.64	372.73	326.03
Black	131.5	1,434.07	1,705.88	2,391.67
Asian	36.5	732.51	591.39	154.23

Source: La Crosse Police Department and U.S. Census Population Data. Rates are calculated using the formula: actual number of arrests divided by the number of arrests possible and multiplied by some factor of 10, here it is multiplied by 1,000

juveniles but only tobacco is consistent with La Crosse. Disorderly conduct also tops the charts for La Crosse and national data. Given these rates and comparisons to the national data, the Task Force focused on efforts to decrease the DMC rate and create a clear distinction between typical adolescent behavior and criminal adult behavior.

Creation of the "La Crosse Juvenile Justice Arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency Task Force"

After the Carey Group visited in 2008, La Crosse followed its recommendations and created the JJADMC Inter-Agency Task Force. The JJADMC Task Force is comprised of different stakeholders in the community such as educators, criminal justice experts, youth program directors, clergy, community members and more. The first task force meeting was held in January of 2015 with a locally funded initiative to address the necessity of arrests as to how they influence juveniles in the future. The main goal of the task force is to create diversionary programs to better serve the juveniles in La Crosse. Their first method of implementation is community and evidence-based programing with an emphasis on school districts because this is where youth spend a majority of their time and development. The effectiveness of the task force will depend on its ability to include the proper collaboration of inter-agency stakeholders, such as defining the roles of school resource officers, and overcoming challenges of effective based programing for diversionary programs, and infrastructure.

The research question of interest therefore is as follows: how effective will the JJADMC Task Force be in properly identifying ways to decrease the harm imposed on juveniles such as arrest and referrals, while simultaneously determining if the new programs implemented are aligned with research on proper program criteria, stakeholder involvement, and necessary buy in? To answer this question, a review of literature on school resource officers, diversionary programs, and interagency collaboration will be examined, followed by a qualitative case study of the JJADMC Task Force itself. To conclude, the new directions created by the Task Force will be explained, followed by the future aspirations of the System of Care.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

School Resource Officers

The role of School Resource Officers (SRO's) began during the implementation of strict punitive school policies in the 1980's and 1990's. Policies such as Zero Tolerance (ZT) were created to decrease disruption, violence, and misbehavior in students. This policy increased reliance on the punitive process, expanded the list of what constitutes as criminal behavior and was put in place to confront "drugs and violence" (Price 2009: 545). However, Reynolds et al. (2008) and Leone et al. (2003) confirm that there is no evidence to support that violence increased in the 1990s or that these policies caused an increase in positive behavior. Although statistical data provided there was a "rapid drop in crime and in drug use….the perception of the public was that these rates were increasing…fueling the continued expansion of Zero Tolerance Polices" (Price 2009: 548). Teachers and administrators largely lost discretion after the implementation of ZT, forcing more serious, criminalized infractions on "typical adolescent behavior" that is "developmental and neurological" of adolescences (Jones 2013: 741).

This reliance on creating infractions and consequences created the phenomena of the school to prison pipeline. This pipeline is described as a continuum that "marginalizes student's cultural differences, teacher administration bias, deficit thinking, races, disability, academic failure, and poverty" (Cole and Cohen 2013: 14). This conceptual ideal resulted in the placement of police offers in schools. Literature expresses disconnect between the implementation of SRO's within schools, stating that there are benefits but significant concerns with their placement. However, SRO's continue to be placed within school districts.

An SRO's main responsibility is to be an officer of law within schools, but yet promote school safety and provide useful programs to generate a conductive educational atmosphere. In 2013, 30% of public schools had SRO's, estimating roughly 20,000 total officers that were supported by federal funding (Childress 2016). Factors that predict whether SRO's will be placed in schools is the school size, percentage of children on free and reduced lunch, and school location, skewing placement to urban areas (Price 2009). Although Anfara and Theriot (2011) and Childress (2016) state positive impacts of SROs, research has shown that once SROs were introduced in schools, more arrests for minor infraction and disorderly conduct were given (Anfara and Theriot 2011). Overall, the mitigating problem of SROs is identifying whether SROs are employees of school districts or police officers (Price 2009).

An SRO's duty within a school district expands from law enforcements ability such as patrolling, all the way to engagement within youth development. SROs are in charge of patrolling buildings, investigating, and minimizing disruptions (Anfara and Theriot 2011). Educating students on crime, violence as well as promoting school safety and anti-bullying are added tasks. Aside from these responsibilities, SROs are seen as counselors that can increase school connectedness while simultaneously addressing and understanding adolescent development. In order for SROs to be successful, they must have open communication lines, open forums for people to ask questions, share data, and prove that arrest is the least desired outcome for youth (Anfara and Theriot 2011).

SRO's generate positive avenues in decreasing juvenile delinquency, but there is one agreeable issue in the research. SRO's "come with an admirable goal-to help maintain a safe, and secure learning environment. However, in reality they merely help grease the wheels of the criminal justice system woven when it comes to the expense of a child" (Price 2009: 569). SRO's are placed in schools with high enrollment and are more likely to be in urban areas, where minority demographics are typically higher. However, those living in urban environments and who have previously experienced crime may hold a more negative view on police (Anfara and Theriot 2011). This creates a concern that SRO presence in schools results in a higher DMC and the school to prison pipeline (Childress 2016). There is also a question to whether or not SRO involvement in schools has created further DMC in the juvenile justice system. Monahan and Torres (2010) state that "perhaps the most important future direction is to pursue a better understanding of whether the presence of police in schools disproportionately affects racial/ethnic minority youth or lower-income youth" (35). Once SRO's were placed in schools there have been challenges. Although students have stated they feel safe with an officer and their interaction with SRO's is more positive than with other officers, there has been an increase in the juvenile arrest rate (Anfara and Theriot 201; Monahan and Torres 2010). A typical problem is that transgressive behaviors that could be handled by teachers/administrators are now handled by law enforcement. A challenge of SRO's is determining if an arrest is needed, and if it could be handled elsewhere (Childress 2016). Students in schools with SRO's are three times more likely to be arrested, and five times more likely to be charged with disorderly conduct (Childress 2016). This early intervention into the juvenile justice generates the labeling process as explained in predictors of delinquency.

Other issues surrounding SRO's are the lack of standardized national training. Currently, only 12 states mandate coursework to become an SRO (Childress 2016). To address the challenges of SRO's, Price (2009) states a "bright-line" rule that should be established (570). This rule would provide clarity, stating that SRO's are police officers at all times, and therefore follow standards police protocol (Price 2009: 567). This would produce "clarity in stakeholders, students, administration, police and parents" in understanding roles (Price 2009: 570). It is not a question that schools are extensions of the community and therefore any major change in policy or system, the SRO should be considered stakeholders (Anfara and Theriot 2011).

Diversionary Programs (Evidence Based Practices)

There is a general agreement that preventing juvenile delinquency saves not only youth, but also money. However, before jurisdictions identify programs that could be successful, they must first start by assessing any "gaps in service and quality of existing programs" (Greenwood 2008: 201). The creation of diversionary programs stems from the use of evidence based practices. Evidence-based practices (EBP) are data driven and used to show what has worked and what does not. For EBP to be successful, there must be buy-in and support from stakeholders (Phillippi, Cocozza and DePrato 2013).

However, there are challenges to EBP. Greenwood (2008) identifies six challenges: slow progress resulting in a lack of accountability, measuring outcomes past mere standards, lacking of funding, lack of training, standardization issues, and resistance of staff. Phillippi et al. (2013) concluded that, "implementing and sustaining evidenced based practices requires buy in and support especially with decision making authority over funding" (445). In terms of diversionary programs, there are problems as well. Diversionary programs will be unsuccessful if they punish or scare youth, or like EBP, if they lack consistency and standardization (Greenwood 2008). Greenwood (2008) states that with diversionary programs, it is hard to seek immediate impacts because full benefits of programs aren't seen until a program has been implemented for an extended period of time. There are also problems of inconsistency and design flaws. Phillippi et al. (2013) concludes that to maintain a community and stakeholders throughout diversionary programs, there must be "outreach efforts," "ongoing channels of communication," and a routine for reporting data (445).

Once implemented, these EBP and diversionary programs must be assessed. To determine if programs are effective in reaching their ultimate goal, Greenwood (2008) and Phillippi et al. (2013) have identified standards and lessons to be learned. Greenwood (2008) states that the gold standards for evaluation in social science is to address the results of an experimental group compared to a control group in depth, during and after the experiment using a quasi-experimental design. However, these methods are expensive for local jurisdictions.

One effective program analysis is cost-benefit. Cost-benefit compares the "efficiency of programs that produce similar results, allowing policy makers to achieve the largest crime prevention effect with a given level of funding" (Greenwood 2008: 188). Not only should a program reduce crime, but the relative costs associated as well. Another effective program analysis is a meta-analysis that tests for timing. This analysis allows jurisdictions to see if the program can achieve the same result after replication (Greenwood 2008: 189). Some programs show a significant effect while the participants are on the program, but once they leave, there is no effect, resulting in actual failure. A meta-analysis therefore helps with this disparity.

Phillippi et al. (2013) explains five important lessons earned during program development. The first is that it requires a comprehensive strategy. The strategy will be lightly and detailed. Next, maintaining community, and stakeholder supports and outreach. Third, developing programs using not only national expertise but also local experts who have a home field advantage. Fourth, relying on data and resources. And lastly, it is important to begin on a local level before pushing for state wide adoption.

Inter-Agency Community Collaboration

Little research has been done on the effectiveness of inter-agency collaboration effectiveness. This collaboration generates connection across agencies to develop better understanding of each other. A major cause of failure for new systems and organizations is communication conflicts (Spergel 1973). This reliance of inter-agency collaboration attempts to eliminate this challenge. However, there are still challenges within inter-agency collaboration. One is the challenge of hierarchy. It is easier to get reform change at a CEO level within agencies, but once heading to the front lines, it becomes harder to facilitate change and generate buy in (Greenwood 2008). Is also difficult to get institutional change and training (Greenwood 2008).

Community-based programs that use collaboration have recently attempted to overlap delinquent and non-delinquent behavior to blend this behavior to prevent its beginning occurrence. There are two general approaches. The first is a service approach such as street police counseling and agency specific services (Spergel 1973). The second is an institutional change approach housed within policies and practice. One of the most important factors in community based intervention is the reliance on family intervention rather than just the individual offender (Greenwood 2008). Programs that help provide parenting training, structure, guidance and supervision on how to deal without effectively are more useful (Greenwood 2008). An example of community based programing is the Communities That Care (CTC) framework as described by Arthur, Hawkins, Brown, Briney, Oesterle, and Abbott (2010). This framework involves community stakeholders. These stakeholders use science based prevention, as well as provide structure. CTC has a process of data collection and it prioritizes important aspects to change. These factors are all important in determining the effectiveness of community based intervention.

LA CROSSE JUVENILE JUSTICE ARREST AND DISPROPORTINATE MINOIRTY CONTACT INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE: A CASE STUDY

Purpose

The Juvenile Justice Arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter agency Task Force [(JJADMC) Task Force] was curious to know if their path of decreasing juvenile delinquency and disproportionate minority contact would be successful. The key stakeholders wished to understand the perspective of others at the stakeholder table, as well as how previous research has addressed new programs and the use of collaboration.

Based on what previous research has found in the use of SRO's as well as diversionary programs, the following case study will assess the effectiveness of the Juvenile Justice Arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency Task Force. The primary research question of focus will be: how effective will the JJADMC Task Force be in properly identifying ways to decrease the harm imposed on juveniles such as arrest and referrals, while simultaneously asking if the new programs implemented are aligned with research on proper diversionary program criteria, stakeholder involvement, and necessary collaboration. The effectiveness of the task force will depend on its ability to include the proper collaboration of inter-agency stakeholders, such as defining the roles of school resource officers, and overcoming challenges of effective based programing for diversionary programs, and infrastructure.

Methodology

To determine the effectiveness of the task force, qualitative research seemed to be the best fit to generate useful perceptions. Qualitative research allows for interpersonal communication between individuals to gain a better understanding. Because the stakeholders wished to know if the task force possessed the proper buy-in, interviews gain an inside perspective. Although this research uses quantitative data, the research question focuses on the use of qualitative interviews and themes between them.

First, a research grant was obtained through the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse to acquire a stipend, voice recorder, and presentation funding during the Fall of 2015. Before beginning qualitative interviews, ethical approval through the university Institutional Review Board (IRB) was provided to ensure confidentiality and safety of participants. No identifying information will be shared except for a distinction between School Resource Officers and other stakeholders in the Task Force. This separation provides a key insight into the different perceptions from these two key stakeholders as the task force proposes new changes, while the SRO's implement. The next step was to determine the proper stakeholders to interview and to gain the best sample of involvement throughout the task force. A purposive sampling method used was (Loftland, et al. 2006). Purposive sampling allows for the researcher to "discover a range or diversity of a phenomenon of interest" (Loftland et al. 2006: 91).

In total, five interviews were completed and each took one to two hours to complete in the location of the interviewee's choosing. Each participant was given an informed consent (see supporting documents) to ensure their rights as a participant. This form included information about the research, its use, respondent confidentiality, and the ability to deny any question or end the interview at any time without punishment. Each interviewee signed an informed consent and was provided a signed copy by the

researcher. Every interview was recorded with permission of the interviewee and kept on a voice recorder. This recording was then uploaded to a secure computer with access to only the researcher and faculty advisor, transcribed, then erased. The interviews followed a semi-structured format, using previously determined guiding questions as well as using active listening to ask follow-up questions (see supporting documents).

After the interviews, each was individually transcribed. After transcription, each interview was stripped of any identifying information. The interviews were coded as such: KS1 (Key Stakeholder 1), KS2 (Key Stakeholder 2), KS3 (Key Stakeholder 3), SRO1 (School Resource Officer 1), and SRO2 (School Resource Officer 2). However, SRO1 was not fully transcribed due to a low volume in the interviewee's voice on recorder. Some parts of this interview were unable to be heard, but notes were taken after this interview that were typed to ensure patterns and trends. The other four interviews were then coded to find themes and general patterns. These themes were compiled to determine if the theme was found to be personal, or a continuing trend or thought among other interviewees. Next, an overall finding was generated, allowing a discussion on overall effectiveness of the task force.

Hypothesis

With regards to literature discussed on youth delinquency, school resource officers, diversionary programs, and inter-agency collaboration, the success of the task force will stem from their ability to combat the challenges stated in literature. The JJADMC Task Force effectiveness in obtaining their goal of creating better opportunities for youth will depend upon outreach, buy-in, infrastructure (consistency, standardization and funding), and communication. However it will take years of implementation to compare the data collected to previous arrest and DMC rates in La Crosse to understand its true effectiveness.

Qualitative Findings

The following seven themes were found within the qualitative interviews. Each theme relates to the changes proposed by the task force in terms of where key stakeholders agree as well as disagree on specific topics. These themes are important in order to understand the broader implications of the JJADMC Task Force as these findings are key insights from individuals at the forefront of decision making as well as juvenile behavior. Social media relates to the obstacles faced by adolescents as issues external to the education system are able to break through school walls. The theme of disorderly conduct allows for insight as to when this charge should and should not be given. Specifically for SRO's, while a decrease in arrests is the ultimate goal, a concern of a shift in numbers that ignores the underlying problems is a concern. Key stakeholders and SRO's alike, all shed essential perspectives on adolescent development and how the juvenile justice process may be punishing adolescent behavior. Disproportionate minority contact and the perception of when and why it is occurring within the system was a critical theme in addressing perspectives of stakeholders. Infrastructure such as funding, sustainability, and consistency generated questions as to how the proposed task force changes will be effective in future implementation. Lastly, the theme of how times have changed resulted in interesting conversation as to how different the juvenile justice system, such as what was tolerated and what was not, as changed over the years. With an understanding of each individual theme, the effectiveness of the task force can be evaluated based on a comparison to prior literature.

Social Media

A theme consistent among the SRO's is the youth reliance on social media. These SRO's and KS3 stated that social media causes problems that individuals then bring into the schools. When comments are made on media websites, adolescents use the next day in the schools to bring outside problems into the school setting. Social media is hard to monitor because there is no control once the youth leave school grounds. During the school day, SRO2 stated that classrooms have cubbies for individuals to place their phones in to avoid the temptation, but phones can be used in other locations on school campus, such as study hall if allowed, lunch, and passing time. Social media also causes conflict with parents and the inability for parents to monitor what their children do on their social media sites. Socioeconomic status also played a role into social media because of the youth whom can afford, and how this transcribed into problems within schools, such as theft.

Key statements made in the interviews tended to show out of all the outside factors that affect youth, social media should be on the list. One interview stated that social media is the "biggest outside factor" (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). The interviewees addressed how times have changed, and when they were younger, they could get away from school and the problems there because you had "time off," but now kids have to deal with it "24/7" (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). Schools therefore resemble the area of temptation because "it's the first time they see each other, and they're you know, they're super mad, you know pissed off" which leads to fights, drama and more (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). Social media has also forced kids to become more connected to their phones than to empathy, and because of this, they just don't really have the chance to let things go and be kids.

Disorderly Conduct

Out of all the focus acts identified by the Task Force, disorderly conduct was brought up most frequent and discussed as a main motivator for the new system. Disorderly conduct is a delinquent act that is defined as if something "tends to create a disturbance," is delinquent (KS3). All interviewees described disorderly conduct as a catch all, because the discretion for creating a disturbance is left up to the individual in charge. This phrase seemed to be a motivating change. If kids are constantly being transgressive, fighting, throwing chairs, or saying F-off or F-you to a teacher, what are the factors causing this? KS2 stated that when giving a disorderly conduct ticket, you "might not even skim the surface" of what is occurring with kids (KS2, Personal Communication, April 4, 2016). There instead must be an assessment to be more effective in understanding the underlying problems. By instilling a new system that allows disorderly conduct to not be a catch all ticket, it provides more "doorways and more places to offer kids" resources "instead of just sending" them into the system (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). Disorderly conduct is also left up to great discretion by SRO's as to when the charge is given, and when it is not. SRO1 and SRO2 state that they would not give a disorderly conduct ticket at the first occurrence (depending on the severity of course) because they understand that there are other mitigation factors. Maybe there are AODA (Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse) issues, anger management, self-control, or other behavioral issues or issues external to the individuals that might cause an outburst. As KS1 stated, if there is only "one intervention" to charges such as disorderly conduct "you're going to miss" kids that need other avenues of intervention that that have "different needs" (KS1, Personal Communication, February 26, 2016).

Numbers Shift

When determining if the juvenile arrest rate is indeed decreasing, the interviewees stated that the numbers actually had to be decreasing, not just a decrease in referrals to make the numbers look better. A large concern was placed on how the SRO's would arrest those that needed to be arrested and give referrals, and if the Task Force was looking for a change in numbers, the SRO's didn't want to have to manipulate the data by simply arresting less individuals. SRO2 stated that it's not about "not charging anybody" because "that's not the way we do business" (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). An SRO's job is to refer individuals that need the services and have committed a delinquent act. Therefore, when following their job, they will arrest.

However, the SRO's were first to point out that they didn't necessarily want to arrest individuals. They wanted to arrest just so they could give the individuals help. SRO2 stated, "I don't want to charge this kid with disorderly conduct, but I want to give him some help" (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). This mind set resembles to concept that SRO's understand adolescent behavior and wish to not criminalize it, but to get the help needed, referral is the only option. However, referral produces potential problems for adolescents' such as a criminal record and label, but as these SRO's have stated, referral is the only option to provide an avenue of help.

SRO's also mentioned the difficulty in addressing to the Task Force their concerns and why they felt the numbers were where they are. Some children must be placed in handcuffs for the safety of themselves and others. Individuals that don't agree with the high numbers of juveniles arrested or placing children in hand cuffs, as SRO2 stated, "they don't get it, they're not in the schools, they're not dealing with them, and they see the back end… (Not) the front end where kids are going off, throwing chairs in the classroom and you know won't listen to anything" (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). This struggle for control leads to frustration. However, SRO's have developed a defense mechanism to move past this misunderstanding with numbers; they are not in control of anything after they have completed their job because they've done all they could do.

Overall however, stakeholders agreed that there cannot simply be a numbers manipulation. To actually ensure that the new programs developed are actually working and are effective, "staying true to what we (the task force) hoped to be targeting" is key (KS2, Personal Communication, April 4, 2016). There needs to be a way to make sure that there is a shift in the right way. In sum, all the interviews agree that at the end, an outcome is not just shifting the data, but actually changing the data beneficially and effectively.

Adolescent Development & Parental Involvement

Juvenile justice is impossible without a focus on youth and development. Adolescent development is occurring during the lives of youth in middle school and in high school and there must be an understanding of how to be sensible to this. KS1 identified that programs and professionals must be sensible to adolescents. Adults and program makers must understand that "adolescents are prone to errors, prone to emotional outbursts and if it wasn't so uncommon, adolescents would probably be like a mental illness, you know?!" (KS1, Personal Communication, February 26, 2016). When adolescents make decisions, they are not always thinking about the future consequences, and therefore, if this is proven, programs and statues should plan for this. There

needs to be a clear view that adolescents are kids and not adults. A problem with the overall juvenile system is that its policies are looking at youth as if they are "fully developed and they are not" (KS1, Personal Communication, February 26, 2016).

A key aspect of adolescent development is the inclusion of Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) as focused on by KS1. PBIS is a structure that allows for a behavioral framework to provide kids with what is expected of them and what behavior is unacceptable. PBIS is shifting a as result of this Task Force to focus more on cultural implementation. During this cultural shift, not only is it recognizing that youth come from different backgrounds, but that "kids continue to develop skills over time and just because they look like they are developed…it doesn't necessarily mean they know the expectations, or the basics, and it certainly doesn't mean their social emotional development has progressed in a typical way" (KS1, Personal Communication, February 26, 2016). This brings the attention that every kid is at a different point in their developmental cycle. How then can you make PBIS work for all kids, and not just the white, middle class students? If programs and juvenile justice can avoid criminalizing typical adolescent behavior, that is neurological in nature, it is a way to help adjust youth behavior "without destroying them…or making them suspicious of authority" (KS1, Personal Communication, February 26, 2016). Many interviewees stated that if something is neurological in nature, why don't programs plan for it? KS1 stated they were not surprised by some of the things kids do and although the behavior may not be okay, "it is not uncommon" and it "is typical of the adolescent." This process would be then to generate sensibility. Professionals who have an obligation to youth. As KS2 believes, "we are the professionals, we are the ones who need to be handling situations and then understanding we have a responsibility to kids" (KS2, Personal Communication, April 4, 2016).

From an SRO perspective, SRO's see children as they progress from middle school to high school. During their beginning years, which matches research stating that many youth begin to transgress the law at ages 13 and 14, youth struggle. But down the road, they change and mature, but some kids do not. The role of an SRO provides a chance to be a guiding role model. During interviews, the researcher stated that it seemed as though the SRO's also had a hidden job title, a life coach The SRO responded with a nod, a smile, and a yes. Their job allows them to take a step back, to get to know youth and to become integral parts of the educational system where youth spend the majority of their time and development. The following is an excerpt from an interview with an SRO after asked if they felt like a life coach:

> SRO2: Sometimes, yeah! And that's where, you know that's where the SRO, I don't think everybody can do this job. You gotta be able to, you know be willing to work with kids and take a step back from the, what people call the cop mentality, you know the you're not going to tell me what to do, you know a kids being smart ass you know, not just calling them out on it. You know, you have to be able to you know let stuff roll off your back and not take everything so serious because, it's it is a process where you're working with that, where out on the street, you have to handle that situation and stop that situation if its escalating, to where here, you know like kids will go off or whatever and I'll just try to get them to calm down…, you know, I know you need two or three minutes to blow off a little steam, sit there and not say anything and then and then I'll get more out of you, but you know the, the officers on the street don't have that luxury.

When dealing with youth, it is all about letting them have a voice with their own decision making process. Youth wish to be provided options and the ability to make their own decision, but as SRO's believe, it is the adult's responsibility to provide the correct choices to choose from. Once youth are given a choice, it is in their hands to make the best decision.

SRO1 and SRO2 had similar views on parental involvement as well. SRO1 stated that in some instances, they dealt with parents more than children. Whether it was to talk to the parent about their child's actions or to deal with parents on a separate manner that resulted in an arrest or police call for the parents. SRO2 stated that youth today wish to involve their parents in disciplinary actions which was surprising to them because in their youth, calling home to Mom was the worst thing possible. However, the issue is that some parents believe their child "can do no wrong" and they attempt to get their kids out of trouble (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). But the SRO2 warned that "you're [parents] not helping them [kids] in life if you're fixing all their mistakes or trying to get them out of stuff" (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). This is where parental training may be necessary. Parents must be trained, from the SRO's view, that they are in charge of children and can't always be their friend. Parents must provide youth the tools they need so they are ready to go out into the real world eventually.

Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)

Disproportionate minority contact not surprisingly, was a hot topic and an uncomfortable topic to discuss. The mood within the rooms became serious and many in interviews reflected on data presented at stakeholder Task Force meetings. There was not a disagreement that there is DMC, but the reason as to why it is what it is, has created what seemed to be, tension.

From the stakeholder perspective, DMC was the reason the task force was created in the first place. In the past, they explained, feedback suggested that the community was upset with "white people trying to solve problems without our (minority)

input" (KS1, Personal Communication, February 26, 2016). Therefore, a large suggestion was to gain this input. The concept of institutional racism was also discussed, that perhaps it is embedded in the system. Key stakeholders position is to continue to monitor where the DMC rate is and if a more cultural implementation of things such as PBIS and the new system can decrease the rate. There was no talk of the place of origination for DMC. School resource officers' role in DMC was not discussed by stakeholders, positively or negatively.

SRO's had different side to add the issue of DMC. The SRO's in a sense felt that the DMC rate was representative of their actions, causing them to believe that there was a blame solely on their system and not on other entities involved. SRO2 offered a long discussion into their discretion of why they arrest. Also, their response added to the theme of what type of youth are arrested and if skin color plays a role in their arrest:

> SRO2: you know, this all came about [the task force] because of uhm, and a disproportionate amount of minority of kids were being referred verses white kids. And when we started up this task force, uhm, I didn't really know if I could be on the task force because it was all about, oh you're only arresting black kids, you're only arresting minority kids and stuff like that and it's like no! I only arrest, kids that break the law I don't care if they are black, white, purple or whatever, but they were only looking at, that we were only picking on the minorities. Well if you're not here every day and don't see where the minority, and this is my personal opinion, is that the minorities don't have that support system.

After reading this excerpt, this SRO seemed to be stating that their arrest of minorities should not be the only thing looked at when showing data on screen, but instead looking at how the individuals were brought up in a specific environment, because that is the largest predictor if they are going to be arrested or break the law, not their skin color. This SRO's statement explained their difficultly in explaining this to the Task Force because of the different perceptions of where the DMC is coming from and how to effectively deal with juvenile justice reform. Their suggestion is to try to get those in the Task Force more training.

Another concept associated with DMC was the view of black culture and the different factors that could explain the youth actions of La Crosse:

> Researcher: What would be your, biggest, I guess…push to be the most effective, if you were the decision maker, this should happen, what would it be that you think needs to be done in La Crosse?..
> SRO2: Uhm…(using hands to cover mouth as thinks) just to get the, the word out that, okay…you know that everybody just needs to treat everybody, like human. Just not…you know, not worrying about, oh you're only doing this because I'm black, oh you're only doing this because you know, I'm Indian or whatever, No! If everybody stops put everybody in classes, okay, you don't want to be labeled African American, or you don't want to be labeled Ho-chunk or, but, then don't try to benefit from you know what I'm saying? Is don't use it when it's convenient for you. Okay, and if you do something wrong, you did something wrong because you did something wrong. Not because you're black or, I'm not dealing with you because you're black, I'm dealing with you because you did something wrong. To where, everybody can, that would be my biggest push it's that everybody just treat people as equal and just, you know. If you did something wrong, their dealing with you because you did something wrong or you did something good. You know? It's not, when the police deal with you, it's not anything to do with your skin, skin color. And I think once everybody just stops classifying everybody or putting themselves in a class, I think, you know things will, that's the only way things are going to get better….And I think if we could change the way people view themselves or think they're viewed, then they can grow to their big, their potential. Where instead of, well nope this is my destiny, this is where I'm going to be. You know, some of the kids here it's like, one of them is like, where do you see yourself in five years? I'll be dead…and "I'm like what do you mean you'll be dead, well I don't think I'll make it to 21, I'll probably get shot or killed or something. And I'm like you're not in Chicago, you're in the city of La Crosse, I said, you don't have to worry about looking over your shoulder about who's coming after ya... You know, so it's, that's, those are the types of barriers and just the thinking and if I could do anything with the task force, it's just to get more training to change that thinking of… you know, don't do something about where you came from or you know, where you are, you can always change your situation if you decide to. And that's the biggest thing, is if they decide to not worry about that and just worry about what's in front of them, you know school, and do the most that they can, even though they came from the worst situation, they can still do whatever they would like, and whatever they want to.

This SRO, from what is inferred from this statement, is that an individual's background states more about if they will be arrested which consequentially leads to a DMC because of socialization. The idea that referral is the only way to get adolescents help and services, caused the Task Force to rethink its trajectory for youth. SRO's did not believe that they were arresting a high

number of minority youth because when shown statistics, they felt it was comparing apples to oranges. But once it was realized that the data was comparing "apples to apples," the thinking that "maybe yeah there is a problem, but what's the reason for the problem or how can we change it, change it so then you know, then I think that's where the meetings (task force meetings)…have shifted. To where I can understand what they're thinking but I also understand where I'm coming from and okay, being willing to work to try to come up with a solution" (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). A general understanding of why the numbers are where they are at and how to effectively decrease the number of juveniles referred, without forcing SRO's to simply arrest less minority kids is the major theme of data.

Overall, DMC was a difficult issue to theorize because of the different thoughts and perceptions. It created uncomfortable but reflective moments for the interviewees but some were more vocal about their opinions than others.

Times are Changing

One theme that was only directly stated a few times in interviews, but was inferred, was the concept of how times have dramatically changed. The system is not how it once was and this has caused many stakeholders to ask, how would these behaviors been disciplined when they were younger? There has been what SRO2 has stated, "a shift in mentality" for what's facing out such as factors contributing to delinquency and adolescent development as well as what is viewed as criminal (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). When determining sentencing KS1 brought up examples from their past of students doing things that would have resulted in referrals had it of happened today. SRO2 and KS1 addressed that these referrals could destroy youth's lives and their achievements in the future and it is not worth it.

Infrastructure

When compiling patterns in the interviews, three common themes: sustainability, funding and consistency were addressed. However, these three themes fall under the concept of infrastructure. This is also helped to create a parallel to prior literature during the overall effectiveness discussion.

Consistency

The concept of consistency was found in each interviews, but to different levels of necessity. Most interviewees stated that it was in a sense, implied throughout discussion of the new programs. But, SRO1 stated that the main concern for the creation of the new programs was the matter of consistency. When asked what type of consistency, SRO1 stated that there must be consistency between the different schools (middle and high school) as well as in the individual cases. There cannot be a time when one thing is done, but at a different time it is either ignored, or done differently causing the program to be too hard to keep standardized and consistent.

Sustainability

A main concern in creating programs for the Task Force was making them sustainable. Sustainable in the sense of a consistent understanding and training, but also people proof. To create this sustainably, there was an agreement of a necessary yearly review to look into the data to see if there was improvement. Another point to add into sustainability is if there is proper buy in and supports. Are the correct stakeholders at the table? The general consensus across interviews was yes. SRO2 believed the table held very diverse inputs with those involved and that these individuals were necessary leaders to generate change. Another question is do these individuals have the proper buy in and interest and then answer again, was yes. These individuals as KS2 states, have always gotten along and express "great comradery within our system" (KS2, Personal Communication, April 4, 2016). With buy in, there can be a shift in thought.

But in order for a new system to be successful, KS1 focused on the matter of being people proof:

KS1: So as you bring on a new SRO, one of our fidelity or one of our sustainability practices, is how do you skill them up, around the administration of the SOC, system of care [New System], if we bring in a new principal, how do we orient them to just, just so you don't have a change in leadership, so everyone buys into it, now, what we wouldn't want is a new principal to come into town and say that's not how I do things, that this has to be how we do things, and this is how we orient you and bring you up to speed on how we do it. So those practices becomes sustainability and they are just, not people dependent.

KS2 adds to this by stating, it all depends on what continued commitment looks like, Also, commitment of other districts that may affect funding outlooks. This is where the idea of funding was brought into discussion.

Funding

Although KS2 stated that the Task Force has positioned itself well to receive funding, there is still a concern existing among other interviewees. KS1 outlines this concern:

> KS1: one of the things that really made it challenging is, uhm, in implementation science, uhm, the first question you ask is, is, is this work worthy of our time, effort and energy? And clearly we have a yes across the board. Second one is, do you have the infrastructure to support it? And that question wasn't asked until we were too knees deep in this work, and so as we begin building this system, uhm, while we had some grant money to fund certain, some things, we're, we're really not financially solvent yet, I guess with it…you know we didn't really, that question was never asked before we jumped into, in and within implementation science, if you have a, if you have a good idea that's implemented poorly, because you don't have the infrastructure, uhm, you're worse off right? Because then people start saying yeah, JJBP, we did that it does not work. And so I think if we can do it over again, we would have more serious conversation about this, if this is worth our time effort and energy, uhm what's going to support it. And that would make this process easier right now, (yeah), I feel like…ah…a little bit where (RN) and I are at right now is we're uhm, we have…..uhm. We have ah, the structure for, the flow chart, the word processes, and the, those certain things. And it's all hinged around the development of this uh system of care model with the system of care coordinator, but we don't have, currently have the pot of money to hire that person…And so, it's kind of like everything looks good on paper right? (nodding), and we're really trying to go back and uh……kind of resell the concept and why we need to invest in this idea. And, and from an implementation science, that conversation should have probably happened a year ago (reflective laughing), …(laughing continues), and you know to be honest, if you've got to that point and you have people said, yes this work is worth our time effort and energy, uh but there's no money to do anything with it right now. That's really where it would've ended, and, uh and maybe, maybe it should have. I mean if we don't end up with the infrastructure to run this, we will spend a lot of time and effort and energy community collaboration, we drew on a lot of expertise, people have put a lot of time and effort into this and if what we say at the end of the day is, that we don't have the resources to support it, uh, you know the next innovation we want to install people are going to be like, ahhhh, not quite so sure about that.

In summary, KS1 introduces the idea that no matter how much buy-in you have, without the infrastructure, there's nothing. However, as time progressed after this interview took place, more funding streams were open. This thought process was also linked to other individual concerns that time was an issue and would always be an issue. The time to see results but the time it takes to actually gather a program worth implementing. In order to receive grants and funding, there has to be proof that the program works. In order for the program to work, there must be buy in and effort with the right people at the table.

Discussion

After compiling these seven themes within the qualitative interviews, the overall goal of the Task Force, which will also allow for success is the development and adoption of understanding. There must be understanding culturally and organizationally, but also an understanding of youth and the understanding that individuals are resistant to change.

In regards to cultural understanding, a big push is that these changes are not just technical, but instead are from all different angles. In the past, this cultural piece was missing, but now it is necessary to not repeat the same mistakes. KS2 stated that "you can't just sign an MOU and start seeing referrals, like this is a philosophy shift… this is a cultural shift" and you can't "expand if you don't have that foundation" (KS2, Personal Communication, April 4, 2016). Understanding organizationally stems from understanding the different positions that are at the table. Each stakeholder holds a viable interest and position that should be heard and understood. KS2 address that "sometimes it's inevitable to point fingers you know? And rather than accept pieces that we have contributed to and things that may need change, sometimes it's easier to point fingers at people who aren't in the same room, but you put everyone in the same room and now we work together as a cohesive system" (KS2, Personal Communication, April 4, 2016).

To understand youth, it starts with an understanding of where the system may have wronged children. It is the ability in a sense to be "vulnerable to where we've failed kids and where gaps are" to try to generate a better system" (KS1, Personal Communication, February 26, 2016). The individuals of the task Force are the professionals and they need to be the ones to help kids. The SRO view also stated that kids need a voice in their decisions because when you give kids options and you listen to them, "you're going to get more mileage" (SRO2, Personal Communication, March 22, 2016). Another aspect with youth is to understand that their actions are neurological in nature, and therefore programming should be in tune with this. With regards to understanding resistance, the Task Force must understand where resistance will occur but understand that it is okay and normal.

KS2: This is best practice in juvenile justice and this is what you should be striving for. And of course that comes with resistance you know, were made up of a lot of senior staff who have been doing this for over 20 years and that's a tough thing to get…but I think they understand.

Creation of the System of Care

After conducting interviews, the new program created by the JJADMC Task Force is the "System of Care" (SOC). This SOC creates new doors for juveniles to get services without being entered into the juvenile system. After learning information and gaining recommendations from other juvenile justice systems such as the Carey Group, the mindset of not needing to "arrest kids to get those help" was inevitable (KS2, Personal Communication, April 4, 2016). This SOC is going to be a brand new system, co-owned by partners which allows for a great building foundation (KS2, Personal Communication, April 4, 2016). When juveniles used to be referred to get help, this then caused the marking of a criminal record. Instead, the JJADMC Inter-Agency Task Force identified a new type of diversionary program, diverting youth from the system entirely. The concept of the SOC is to divert youth to an administrative coordinator. This administrative coordinator however currently is not hired. The Task Force is in need of a very special candidate to start up this new System of Care as well as funding.

This administrative coordinator must be a strong coordinator that is the jack of all trades. This person must wear many hats as KS2 described, and they must have a lot of specialization. This individual must be able to "asses kids and work with families," meaning it would be best for them to have a social work background or sociology and mental health, and a type of background that makes them comfortable in engaging with families. This individual also must be able to look for grant opportunities and be fiscally responsible and knowledgeable. This knowledge must also stem into data collection and analysis. Another necessity is that this person must be a "special kind of person… that understands and either has been or has a comprehension of our system" (KS2, Personal Communication, April 4, 2016). It must be someone who wants to take on the role and who will gain more buy in and support through outreach for others to expand the system.

CONCLUSION

How do these findings then compare to the previous literature discussed about school resource officers, effective programming, and inter-agency collaboration? Has the Task Force effectively found ways to combat challenges addressed in the research? The concluding statement is yes.

With regards to challenges faced by SRO's, such as the inability to separate the line between what constitutes as involvement of law enforcement and what can be disciplined by the school officials, this new System of Care provides SRO's a totally new avenue. There is not even a need to arrest kids because instead they can be sent to the coordinator. This coordinator can then place youth in specific services. It is the coordinators job to assess the child and check in to make sure that directions have been followed, and if not, then the youth would be referred back to the juvenile system. This System of Care in itself, provides SRO's with a new ability to change their number of referrals to the system without simply avoiding arresting children to lessen their numbers. Hence, there is not a manipulation of data.

When looking into adolescent development, this Task Force has addressed and returned in a sense, to the idea that some behavior is typical of an adolescent. For example, Anfara and Theriot (2011) states that during middle school, the transition from young adult hood to the structured high school causes stress. There is a "decline in student functioning, motivation and attitudes towards school" (Anfara and Theriot 2011: 58). While in these transitional phases, youth hit puberty and therefore are more stressed have more classes, have higher expectations, more academic pressure, and socially their lives have changed (Anfara and Theriot 2011). Therefore, it is not surprising that their behaviors increase in more negative ways. This System of Care has allowed greater discretion for those youth who need the most help during their transitional years. Instead of criminalizing these behaviors, the Task Force is able to keep the focus acts defined, but generate more discretion into what acts are actually brought straight to the juvenile system.

Inter-agency collaboration and reform challenges as defined by the literature begins with a lack of consistency as well as a resistance of change. Greenwood (2008) states that at the top of the hierarchy in systems, it is easy to generate change. These top hierarchy individuals would be seen as the task force members. Greenwood (2008) however states that resistance to change is increased as the system goes down the line of workers and institutional changes are harder to achieve. However, the Task Force states that those at the frontline work, although they may be resistant, are open to the new changes and want to see the effect the changes will have. Greenwood (2008) also identifies that a challenge is a lack of training, but the Task Force has identified many different training opportunities such as understanding, DMC, and more that will be implemented in Fall of 2016.

Six challenges that face evidence based programs such as diversionary programs as Greenwood (2008) stated include slow progress, inability to measure outcomes, lack of funding, lack of training, lack of standardization, and resistance. However, the Task Force has addressed all of these factors. The Task Force knew that this process would be a long process. Starting in 2008 when the Carey Group visited La Crosse, the juvenile justice department began to pick up the pace. Even though it was a slow

process, the Task Force seemed to believe that it would mean that no corners would be cut and this new program would be the best possible program. Resistance was previously explained, but to add to this concept is that the task force members believed they had the correct people at the table to facilitate change. The outcomes of this new System of Care, although they may take years to see a large new trend, will have annual reviews in place. There is an annual review of the data but also every year those in charge of the different systems must recommit to an MOU, a Memoranda of Understanding. This MOU states that the focus acts are, and how these acts are defined objectively so that way individuals can be objective in decision making, thus there can be a created expectation across the board for how to handle certain cases in order for those to be held accountable. The stakeholders must agree to this MOU annually to ensure that the goal is still in place; to decrease the harm imposed on youth in juvenile justice. This also allows for there to be standardization. With standardization comes the ability for the new system to be sustainable; people proof. As stated in the research findings, a main goal of the Task Force was to create a system that would be people proof and continue on no matter who filled the seats of key actors. The outcomes will be able to measure not just if there is a decrease in the juvenile justice arrest rate for La Crosse, but if there is a change in disproportionate minority contact, if there is a positive shift in community perception, and if there is greater interagency collaboration. There also is training generated as a result of this Task Force to provide better understanding about the shift of philosophies within the system such as DMC and the cultural implementation. This task force has created open outreach communication lines with organizations, provides the ability to open a new door for juveniles.

Based on these findings, the Juvenile Justice and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency Task Force, will be successful in implementing its goal; creating a juvenile justice reform system that allows for juveniles to be held accountable for their actions without imposing harm. For future implementation, the JJADMC Task Force wishes to build up the System of Care to include more partners. The ultimate goal would for it to become its own entity, and for there to be more workers creating more services for kids. However, it all depends on how well the coordinator position showcases that this new process works. With checks and balances, an MOU and training, it is possible to see the new opportunities for youth transcend into a decrease in juvenile arrest numbers for the city of La Crosse. The entire Task Force seems to be hopeful that the community will be impacted positively and that this System of Care will extend beyond the La Crosse School District and into other areas. Other communities will be able to model this system and modify as needed, just as the JJADMC Task Force did with the Carey Group recommendations in 2008. There is no need to start from phase one, and this Task Force hopes to be a leader in changing juvenile justice for future generations. It is time to start taking a new turn in juvenile justice, and finding a new set of directions in a road map full of paths to get from point A, criminalized adolescence to point B, juvenile justice.

LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

Limitations of this research include the small sample size of interviewees from the Juvenile Justice Arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency Task Force. Future research should include more interviews with other members of the task force and continued evaluation of the work being done on the taskforce. Additionally, work should be done to evaluate the successes of other areas on addressing problems of juvenile delinquency and high arrest rates due to criminalizing juvenile behavior. Further limitations of this specific research stem from this research occurring at the beginning stage of implementation. The actual effectiveness of the Task Force will not be seen until the System of Care has been in place for years and reviewed annually.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX

Informed Consent

Protocol Title: La Crosse Juvenile Justice Arrest and Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency (JJADMC) Task Force: A Case Study

Principle Investigator: Kelsie Bolstad[5]

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Emergency Contact: Kelsie Bolstad

Purpose and Procedure

- o The purpose of this research is to assess the effectiveness of the La Crosse JJADMC Task Force in properly identifying ways to decrease juvenile arrests and referrals while addressing the current programs effectiveness in helping youth avoid the system.
- o My participation will involve one interview that will last one to two hours. Interviews will take place at the location of my personal office, participant's office, or another location of participant's choosing.
- o During interviews, the interviewer will ask questions relating to their involvement in the JJADMC Task Force, thoughts on juvenile delinquency, and thoughts on how to better the juvenile justice system.

- **Potential Risks**
  - o Foreseen risks include topics such as disclosing personal feelings about the JJADMC Task Force creating discomfort, however responses are confidential.

- **Rights & Confidentiality**
  - o Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to deny questions and withdraw from any questions or the study at any time without consequence.
  - o The results of this study may be published in undergraduate literature and/or presented at professional meetings and undergraduate research conferences.
  - o All information will be kept confidential through pseudonyms to eliminate any identifiable information. Data will also only be available to the principle investigator and faculty advisors.

Questions regarding study procedures may be directed to Kelsie Bolstad (920-850-9102), the principle investigator, or the study advisor Dr. Lisa Kruse, Department of Sociology, UW-L (608-785-6767 or lkruse@uwlax.edu) and Dr. Nicholas Bakken, Department of Sociology, UW-L (608-785-8665 or nbakken@uwlax.edu). Questions regarding the protection of human subjects may be addressed to the UW-La Crosse Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (608-785-8124 or irb@uwlax.edu).

Participant_____ Date _____

Researcher _____ Date_____

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[5] Investigator email, address, and phone number were erased from this document to ensure confidentiality. To request this information, please contact the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, or the advisors listed.

Interview Guide

Overall Questions for Stakeholders:

- *I'd Like to begin with you telling me a bit about yourself.*
    - *What does a typical day look like for you*
    - *What sorts of things do you like to do?*
- What agency are you associated with? How does your department fit in with the task force?
- What has been your role in the taskforce?
- Who or what agencies do you feel should be at the task force table?
- What types of change is your agency advocating for?
- What do you see as the positive aspects of the task force?
- What progress has the taskforce made towards its goals?
- What, if any, concerns do you have about the direction of the taskforce?
- What goals or proposed changes do you see as difficult or impossible to accomplish?
- What goals or changes are missing from the discussion?
- Do you perceive an issue in the La Crosse Community? If so, what do you think are the underlying factors?
- Many in the county have been talking about their concerns of high rates of arrests for juveniles in the county. What do you think about this?
- What sorts of things impact the well-being of juveniles in the county of La Crosse?
- What is the best way to approach juvenile delinquency?
- Is there anything else you'd like to add or anything that I didn't ask that you think is important?

Thank you for participating and helping with my research project!

School Resource Officer Specific Questions:

- I'd Like to begin with you telling me a bit about yourself
    - What does a typical day look like?

General Questions about Job of Being SRO:

- Describe for me what a typical day is like for you in your role as an SRO.
- What would you say are your overall responsibilities in the school?
- What sort of duties do you perform in the school?
- What do you like most about your job as an SRO?
- What do you like least about your job as an SRO?
- How do you determine whether an individual is engaging in a delinquent act?
- In your experience, what sorts of approaches have worked best in dealing with juvenile delinquency?
-

Questions Related to Juvenile Delinquency and High Arrest Rate

- Many in the county have been talking about their concerns of high rates of arrests for juveniles in the county. What do you think about this?
- What do you believe is the reason for high arrest rates for Juveniles in La Crosse?
- What sorts of things impact the well-being of juveniles in the county of La Crosse?

Questions Related to Task Force Work

- What are your thoughts on the proposed changes from the taskforce?
    - What elements of the proposed changes do you agree with and why?
      What elements of the proposed changes do you disagree with and why?\

- There have been many discussions on the juvenile justice taskforce about concerns over the use of disorderly conduct charges. What is important for individuals to know about disorderly conduct and how it is used?
  - Prompts:
    - What do you think should constitute as a disorderly conduct charge?
    - Are there any times where you have concerns about the application of disorderly conduct? Why or why not?
- How effective do you believe your department will be in imposing these policies?
- What should the taskforce know to help tailor proposed changes to be most effective?
- Is there anything else you'd like to add or anything that I didn't ask you that you think is important?

Thank you for participating and helping with my research project!