

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT



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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Los Angeles Police Department to express our support of Strategies For Youth (SFY) and the Advancement Project. It is a promising practice that the LAPD has tested to improve police/youth interactions and provide officers with training which is not provided in the Academy.

In California, officers are mandated to attend three hours of Academy training on juvenile justice issues. This is insufficient. We find the teen age group to be among the most difficult, requiring the greatest level of skill for interactions to avoid escalation. But few departments take a systematic approach to addressing youth issues until there is a problem or a crisis at which it's too late. In cities with a long history of racial conflict, strong police-youth connections are all the more important.

In addition to training officers, SFY's approach connects officers with community based organizations that serve the youth. This makes officers realize there are alternatives to arrest and there are places in even most challenged communities that are safe havens for youth. When community leaders and police offer talk sense *together* with some of our city's most vulnerable youth, the outcomes for public safety improve dramatically.

In conclusion, the Los Angeles Police Department look forward to working with SFY and the Advancement Project on replicating this training in districts with the most challenging police-youth relations and believe it will help us move the ball forward in Los Angeles.

Very truly yours,

CHARLIE BECK
Chief of Police

ROBERT F. GREEN, Deputy Chief
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