

Strategies **for** Youth

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

An Idea Whose Time Has Come



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Dear Friends:

I am excited to share the many accomplishments of Strategies for Youth (SFY) in 2016. As the country's leading voice for fostering police/youth relationships, SFY provides a laser focused, powerful and highly effective set of programs that have proven to be successful where it counts the most—on the ground and in the streets. SFY's three-legged stool approach provides the comprehensive response necessary for success:

- **Teach youth** (in the schools, places of worship and community centers),
- **Train law enforcement officers** (who we recognize as having a difficult and all important job), and
- **Help parents, policy makers, and leaders understand the benefits** of this approach.

The impacts have been astonishing:

- Reductions in rates of arrests by patrol officers ranging from 20-30%.
- Declines in school based arrests by 50 to 80%.

Police chiefs and officers on the street have written glowing letters of praise regarding the tremendous benefits that have been achieved by the SFY training programs. Youth who play SFY's interactive game, *Juvenile Justice Jeopardy*, are astonished by what they learn and enthusiastic about sharing the information.

NOW IS WHERE YOU COME IN. You have a real chance to make a dramatically positive difference in people's lives. **With your support SFY can help more and more communities deal with one of the most vexing social problems facing this country.** Please give generously and I can assure you that it will be both greatly appreciated and put to very good use.

Very truly yours,



Stephen A. Landsman
Chair, Board of Directors



Strategies for Youth



Light Bulbs Going On

For our trainers, our partners, and our donors, 2016 was a year of “aha” moments. Over and over, in interviews and conversations, they revealed their experiences of how Strategies for Youth played a critical role in improving the interactions between youth and law enforcement. So many people from our diverse stakeholder group—youth, police, trainers, lawyers—use the term “like a light bulb going on” that we use it to be the theme of the 2016 annual report.

We couldn’t be more grateful that your funding and our efforts are taking root and yielding results. Media reports and statistics demonstrate the need to improve law enforcement practices for dealing with youth. But now law enforcement is also starting to recognize the benefit of adopting developmentally-appropriate, trauma-informed training, policies and practices.

As you read through the stories in our 2016 Annual Report, we urge you to consider how your support could help us create more of these success stories and to partner with us as we grow in the future.

Thank you for helping us change the world!

Lisa H. Thura
Executive Director

“Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come.”

Victor Hugo

Policing The Teen Brain Trainings

David Walker, SFY Training Director



In SFY's police trainings, we help officers gain an understanding of how a young person's perception and reaction to life events is different from an adult's because their brains are different! Officers come away from our training with a working knowledge of

how trauma and mental illness affect an adolescent's response to common law enforcement activities and best practices for working effectively with these youth.

In the *Policing the Teen Brain* training we introduce the impact of culture and demographics on teen and young adult views and attitudes to right and wrong, fair and unfair, legal and illegal. As we point out in our training, young people are asked to wear a variety of "masks" every day. They may need to come across as a parent when at home, a street-savvy force while taking the bus to school, and a compliant student once they walk in the doors of their school. Unfortunately, young people aren't wired to make these changes quickly or easily and often find themselves wearing the "wrong mask" when interacting with police—leading to misunderstandings and confrontation.

So, what do we tell officers? We begin by reminding them to not take the words and attitudes of young people personally—easier said than done, but still possible. We talk about simple ways to build mutual respect and then to use that respect to develop a relationship and build trust.

Every training finishes with introducing officers to youth-serving resources available to them in their communities and engaging in dynamic and fun role-playing with local youth that demonstrates and strengthens the material they've learned during the classroom presentations.

“SFY recognizes that police and youth want the same things—respect, trust, and a positive outcome. We help officers to better understand how to interact with youth in a culturally and developmentally competent way—resulting in positive and mutually beneficial interactions.”





Jim Golden, Training Consultant

Policing The Teen Brain training is about creating developmental competency in police officers. When you understand that it takes 25 years for a brain to fully develop, you come away with a much better understanding of how to interact with young people in more positive ways.

With the *Policing The Teen Brain in School* training, we give officers an opportunity to present to their colleagues best practices and how they do certain things in a school environment. This allows the officers to demonstrate their knowledge and skills around school safety and creating positive interactions with youth. I see that it makes a big impact on most of the officers who are trained. I can see the light bulb go on and it's very powerful to see that.



Sgt. Brigitte Dorr-Guiser, Cleveland Division of Police

Using credible psychologists to teach officers about brain science is so important. It helps officers understand the reasons behind some of the behaviors they see in kids and handle them in a different way. The officers understand and recognize now that some of these behaviors are not about disrespect and more a way of kids voicing themselves.

Introducing officers to youth-serving organizations is also very helpful. Often, the officers don't know that some of these groups exist. It opens the door for representatives from groups to connect with the police officers and invite the officers to visit their facilities.



Deputy Chief William Dean, Virginia Beach P.D.

I love the *Policing the Teen Brain* training because it challenges the way we in law enforcement think. It provides us with information we have not entertained before—about brain development and neurobiology in adolescents.

We have two populations, the recruits and the older officers. The training makes sense to the recruits, but some of the experienced officers are a tougher sell. Through interacting with children in role-play and the *Juvenile Justice Jeopardy* game, we've seen hard-nosed cops open up to the idea of diversion—that not everyone needs to go to court and not every situation needs to be adjudicated.

We pay closer attention to arrest decisions and now more than 86% of kids going through diversion are not re-arrested. That's success.



Juvenile Justice Jeopardy

Steve O'Reilly, JJJ Director

You can't just lecture kids and expect to make an impact. We recently offered *Juvenile Justice Jeopardy* (JJJ) in a big gymnasium. You could tell the kids weren't too thrilled to see the police walk in, they had their arms crossed and looked like they didn't want to be there. But soon they realized this was something meaningful and important to them.

They wanted to learn about locker searches and what can happen to them if they are with a friend who does something wrong. At the end of this session, asking a million questions, no one wanted to go home. One young man said we needed to make a version for X-Box. That was perhaps the greatest compliment the game has ever gotten.

Young people are getting a lot of misinformation from friends, family, and the media about the law and how to interact with police...and much of it's wrong. We focus on behaviors, de-escalation strategies, and practical advice. We tell kids that ignorance of the law won't help you avoid legal trouble.

We do role plays and role reversals. The light bulbs go on when the youth play police. They learn that a little humility and respect is a much better way to interact with police than acting like a wise guy trying to show off for your friends. They start thinking about their future.



“At some point in their lives, every teenager comes into contact with police, and a lot of teens make decisions without thought to the consequences. JJJ helps them think ahead and avoid some of the pitfalls.”



Commander Michael Jefferson, Indianapolis Metropolitan P.D.

Being non-confrontational is a big part of *Juvenile Justice Jeopardy*. These kids come to the game with some opinions about police. But in JJJ, officers are not yelling at them, just talking to them. It doesn't take long for kids' competitive spirit to kick in, and one or two always emerge as real leaders.

In my 26 years as a police officer I know how important it is for officers to communicate with kids. We often get portrayed in such a bad light. I had heard about JJJ at meetings, but I didn't really know what it was. Then the school liaison officer came into my office and set the game up for me and we reviewed it. Wow. How impressive it was. I couldn't wait to see it in process. Now I take time from my duties to play it as often as possible.

Corey Reeves, SRO, Great Falls, MT

I've been with the police department for 15 years. As a school resource officer, I began to see that we were criminalizing behaviors like "disorderly conduct" and pushing kids into the system for small misbehaviors. I heard about *Juvenile Justice Jeopardy* and it seemed like a great opportunity to build relationships, open dialogues and engage in healthy debates.

It's tough for a School Resource Officer to talk about the law for an hour to a group of kids, but with *JJJ* these kids are absolutely engaged. We ask the kids—what don't you like about this law? We don't just look for answers and move on, we explain the reasons for our actions. Now kids who wouldn't normally feel comfortable visiting my office stop by to talk and ask me questions.



Amanda Mullen Bears, Esq. Children's Law Kentucky

When some of these kids start out, their arms are crossed, they roll their eyes, and you can see, they are thinking "this is going to be silly." But five minutes into game they are leaning forward, they are talking, laughing, asking questions. This game hooks them in really quick. Why? It's interactive. It's not someone lecturing them about what they should or shouldn't do.

What surprises kids most is what can lead to arrest. They act surprised to learn they can get in trouble for being with the wrong people, even if they are not the one who actually commits the crime.

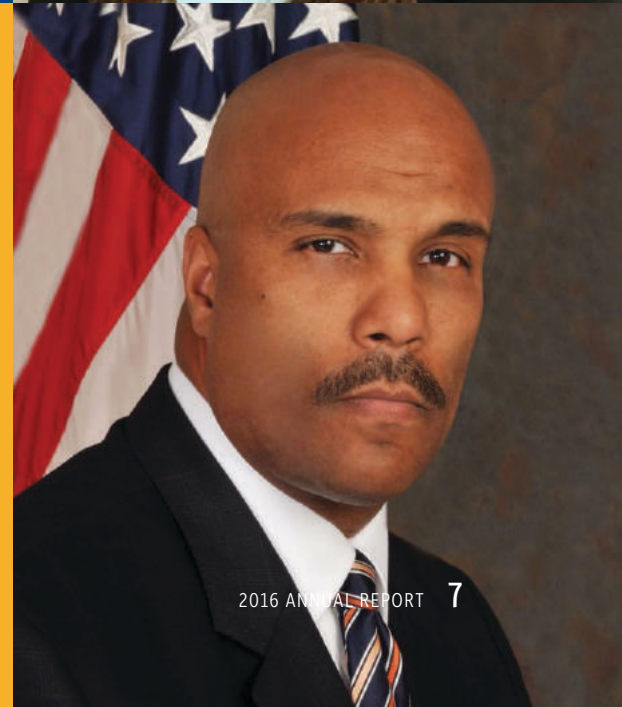


Robert Clark, Former FBI Agent

Juvenile Justice Jeopardy is a fun and interactive platform. I like to incorporate current events and ideas. This isn't just about policing, it also includes information on sex trafficking, social media, fake news, and bullying—issues kids need to understand and deal with in practical ways.

I ask dozens of questions throughout the game and do role playing based on those scenarios. Role playing helps youth understand that when a police officer asks them questions, it doesn't mean they've done anything wrong. They see that if they respect the officer and cooperate, then the officer can get the information he or she needs and they can both move on.

A lot of kids think that police are abusive and overuse force. In this country, we have a robust system of accountability. I tell kids, "You have a process to complain—if you get shot and killed, you are never going to be able to tell your story."



Why We Give

Meryl & Joel Finkel Feldman

When our daughter was in high school, we noticed how differently her minority friends were treated by the police on issues like teen drinking and other minor offenses. They seemed to be treated so much more harshly than white kids.

We realized that we live in a bit of a bubble and that our experiences are not the same as those in other communities. We know how important it is to focus on what happens to all kids; how all kids are treated. Strategies for Youth's approach got us really excited.

Making a financial gift is how we can contribute. What we like about SFY is that it approaches the problem from both sides. We really value these strategies. You can't always assume that the problem is one-sided, both sides play a role. There must be cooperation and respect on both sides to make a relationship work and to keep interactions safe, peaceful and fair.

We like that SFY applies our dollars directly to trainings. SFY is a very lean organization, so the money we contribute goes a long way and flows directly into the communities that need the trainings.

We hope that SFY's funding and recognition continues to grow. Organizations that do such vital work should be generously supported.

“Donating to SFY is our way to contribute to their valuable work, which makes such an important difference in our community.”



Why We Support SFY

Kyong Kim, Holland & Knight

I'm a connector, and that's what I want to do for SFY, to connect it to resources, fundraising, and to *pro bono* work. I want to help SFY accelerate and gain a foothold in CA. I want to galvanize as many resources as I can to support SFY's work.

I am very selective about the organizations that I work with. I looked up the website and saw its mission and I thought this is an organization I would love to be a part of. I've worked with youth in the past, so I had experienced some of the issues that SFY deals with directly. This makes their mission even more important and valuable to me.

I like that SFY takes a two-pronged approach. It educates kids about their rights and about how to avoid violence in encounters with police. On the police side, SFY teaches officers about the adolescent brain and educates them about why kids act like they do. It's not a part of the training that they otherwise would receive. We can't expect youth to act like adults because their brains are not fully developed yet.



Jacqueline Haberfeld, Kirkland and Ellis

Our firm has a strong history of working on civil rights cases and on cases that improve the lives of kids. My job is to keep my finger on the pulse of the office and to bring in *pro bono* projects that the firm lawyers will want to work on.

When I came upon an article about Strategies for Youth, I knew right away that it would interest our lawyers. SFY's mission dovetails perfectly with two key areas of *pro bono* work for the firm—children's advocacy and civil rights.

We've done two *pro bono* projects for SFY. One was to research cases across the country in which there were interactions between police and youth and to see how they turned out. We had 20 lawyers working on this over time, chasing down the cases. All of these attorneys were involved because it really interested them. The first project went so well that we took on a second research project, to research the use of tasers with children.

Our attorneys like to do work where they can see the end game. Here the end game is to make interactions better for kids and better for police. Who can argue with that?





Providing Thought Leadership



SFY IN THE NEWS

SFY's work continued to be featured in national news outlets and law enforcement and juvenile justice publications. As our training programs extended into the Midwest, so did our outreach to regional news media. In 2016 we had coverage in:

the Atlantic

npr

Mother Jones

Pal-Item
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

POLICE FOUNDATION
Advancing Policing Through Innovation and Science

Juvenile Justice
INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The Center for
Public Integrity
POLICE & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

MCCOY
POLICE & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

KQED

THE CHICAGO
REPORTER

Dixon Patch

Sentinels & Enterprise

Great Falls Tribune

Omaha.com

cleveland.com
CLEVELAND'S COMMUNITY VOICE

SFY SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

SFY advocates for policy change by weighing in on national debates on police-community relations and police in the school system. We seek to re-enforce, on a national stage, the urgency of adopting developmentally-appropriate, trauma-informed law enforcement training, policies and practices.

SFY had the opportunity to participate in a variety of public debates and speaking opportunities in 2016, including:

- International Association of Chiefs of Police.** SFY showcased its training efforts with the Cleveland division of police with a packed audience at the National Conference in October 2016 in San Diego.
- Civil Rights and the School-to-Prison Pipeline in Indiana.** The Indiana Advisory Committee to U.S. Commission on Civil Rights convened an online public meeting to hear testimony regarding the application of school disciplinary and juvenile justice policies in Indiana and the extent to which these policies may have a discriminatory impact.
- Re-envisioning Relational Supports for Urban Youth's Learning and Development as Connected with Adults' Role-Linked Practices and Context Character.** The event was hosted by the Urban Research Initiative at the University of Chicago.
- Aspen Institute Panel on Race and Policing.** The panel was part of the Socrates Social Justice Seminar hosted by the Aspen Institute in Washington, D.C.
- Turning Tragedy into Opportunity: Reforming Police Interactions with Youth** at the Annual Coalition for Juvenile Justice in Washington, D.C.
- Students Down the Pipeline: Who Gets Punished?** Massachusetts Mental Health Legal Advisory Committee hosted this panel discussion on how implicit bias and stigma lead to disparate treatment of students of color with emotional/behavioral issues and what can be done about it.

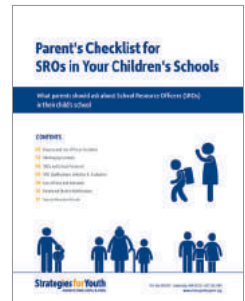
Policy Reform

SFY is committed to ensuring that law enforcement agencies adopt and enforce best practices for interacting with youth. In addition to the inroads we made in 2016 with our training programs, SFY continued to offer technical assistance to help law enforcement agencies' improve their interactions with youth by:

- Developing comprehensive law enforcement agency policies that promote developmentally-appropriate, trauma-informed, equitable policies,
- Reviewing existing agency policies to ensure they comport with best practices and state law,
- Promoting policies that require use of de-escalation tactics with youth and reduce the use of force.

A PARENT'S CHECKLIST FOR SROs IN YOUR CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS

In 2016, we were proud to release A Parent's Checklist for SROs in Your Children's Schools to help build grass roots momentum for improving of police practices in schools. The publication is designed to help parents understand the often confusing and ill-defined role of SROs, it can also help parents improve how they advocate for their children to SROs and school officials.



Funding SFY's Future

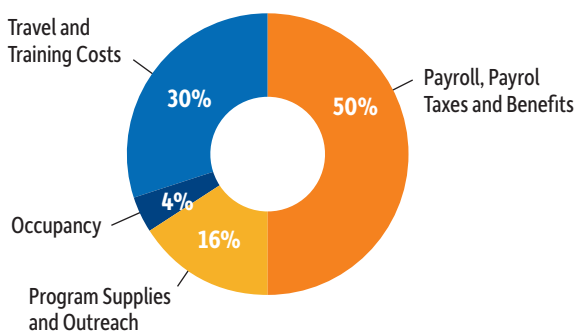
In fiscal year 2016, SFY's annual operating budget rose to \$800,000. SFY's income came primarily from contracts with states, law enforcement agencies, and foundations. We received tremendous in-kind support from Kirkland & Ellis and Holland & Knight to support policy projects that have been completed in 2017. This budget supports three full-time staff and five part-time staff, with additional assistance from a cadre of highly qualified psychologists and law enforcement trainers and coaches.

In order to fund our continued growth, SFY has committed to focusing on the following fund-raising strategies:

- Implementing a more robust and aggressive grant-seeking program,
- Securing more individual gifts,
- Devising new strategies to engage the business community in fund-raising efforts.

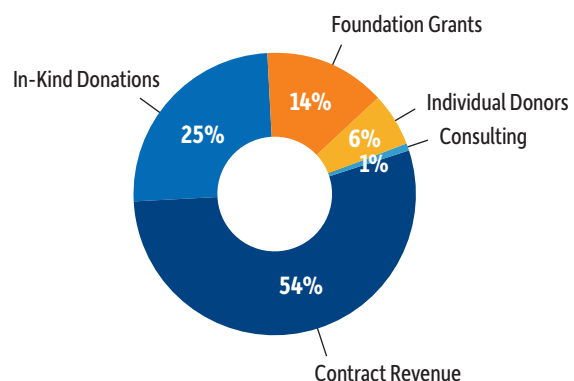
OPERATING EXPENSES, 2016

Total Expenses: \$1,027,046



SOURCES OF FUNDING, 2016

Total Income: \$1,089,872



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