

IMPACT REPORT 2020

KEEPING THE FOCUS



ON KIDS

Strategies for Youth
CONNECTING COPS & KIDS®

Dear Friends:

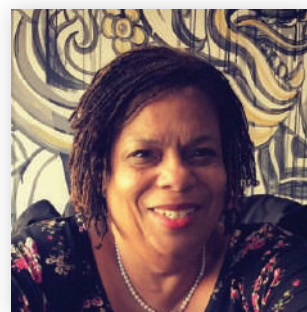
It's been almost exactly a year since any of us have experienced what we may wistfully look back upon as "normal." Yet, as disruptive as the COVID-19 pandemic and the widespread protests against police brutality have been for all of us, they have been far more devastating for vulnerable children, the population that SFY seeks to protect. These young people have lost so much—their education, their friends, family members, and, for many, any lingering trust in law enforcement. We know that, for children of color in particular, every video or personal experience of a police officer unnecessarily harming an individual or group of individuals, brings psychic wounds and trauma, some of which last a lifetime.

But, for all of the loss that so many have experienced this year, we also see great opportunity and hope, in the public's raised awareness of the need for comprehensive police reforms. It is an awareness shared by many police chiefs and officers, who recognize that children are not mini-adults, that their brains process information very differently, that their bodies are extremely sensitive to the use of force, and that they carry the scars of hostile and violent interactions well into adulthood. They are working with us to bring about reforms appropriate for the 21st century, multi-racial democracy in which we live.

Strategies for Youth, like so many other not-for-profit organizations, has struggled this year. It has lost revenue due to cancelled training contracts, and been adept at "seizing the moment" and this year has proven to be quite a moment to seize.

We are proud to help lead a pragmatic organization that seeks, regardless of circumstances, to bring new solutions and innovations to the difficult and sometimes seemingly intractable challenges involved in policing youth using a developmentally-appropriate, trauma-informed, and racially equitable lens. We hope you enjoy reading about the ways in which SFY has continued to make a difference in the lives of young people who are so easily forgotten by so many.

Very truly yours,



Deborah Lashley
Co-Chair, Board of Directors



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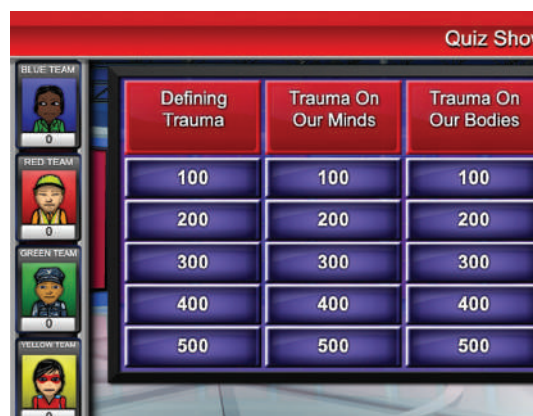
Offering *Juvenile Justice Jeopardy™* Games Online

SFY's games are now in 21 states nationwide.

The United Way of the Midlands supported bringing the *Juvenile Justice Jeopardy™* game to youth in the Columbia, South Carolina region. The number of adults who trained to become game leaders—from juvenile defense attorneys to librarians and staff at the state's Department of Corrections—broke all previous records for the region.

"Although we made a shift to a virtual platform due to COVID, we have been able to engage our youth in quality conversation about street laws related to juveniles and share strategies on how to respond when approached by law enforcement," said Andre Goodman of United Way. "Our game leaders have done an amazing job providing pre-recorded skits illustrating both appropriate and inappropriate interactions. JJJ is a great tool to educate youth on the juvenile justice system and highlights the importance of proper approaches in communication."

It took him three years of navigating miles of red tape, but Officer Jeremy Bohannon of the Austin Police Department brought Jeopardy to Austin youth through the city's PAL. "The most important thing that policing can do is build trust and empathy by connecting with our youth," said Officer Bohannon. "The Jeopardy games facilitate this in the best way. When you combine information, research with genuine dialogue, it helps both youth and officers build empathy towards one another."



JJJ game interface online.



SFY brought the JJJ game to Austin, TX.

Youth Engagement

3
New JJJ
Jurisdictions

72
JJJ Game
Leaders Trained

7
Game Leader
Trainings



JJJ game at the YMCA of Cambridge, MA.

Training Law Enforcement on Better Ways to Engage with Youth

- Thanks to the leadership of SFY Board Member Gary Simson and the Macon SFY Task Force, we brought *Policing the Teen Brain™* to the Bibb County, GA, Sheriff's Office and School District's school resource officers.
- SFY conducted trainings with police and probation officers in Indiana and Detroit.
- SFY continued to work with officers in the Cleveland Division of Police.

This training is exactly what our officers need to serve the whole child.

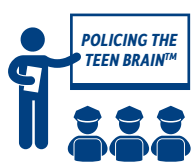
– Chief Russell Bentley,
Bibb County School District Campus Police Department



This training makes me realize that we are trained for combat and school shooting and then asked to be social workers.

– School Resource Officer in Macon, GA

Policing the Teen Brain™



7

Policing the Teen Brain™ Trainings



110

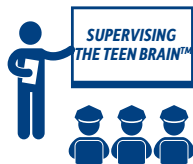
Patrol Officers Trained



20

School Resource Officers Trained

Other Training Programs



1

Supervising the Teen Brain™ Trainings



40

Probation Officers Trained

SFY Reports



How Do School Resource Officers Impact Racial Equity in the Nation's Schools

Review of research on the impacts of SRO's on racial equity.



Two Billion Dollars Later

States begin to regulate SROs in the nation's schools, a survey of state laws.



Where's the State?

Creating and implementing state standards for law enforcement interactions with youth.



First Do No Harm

Model practices for law enforcement agencies when arresting parents in the presence children.



If Not Now, When?

A survey of juvenile justice training in America's police academies.

Tirelessly Advocating for Policy Reform

The need for police reform has always been disputed; this year the need became undeniable. SFY worked tirelessly to ensure that reform in policies and practices—through laws, referenda, or executive order—reflected the needs of youth.

SFY published an **Agenda for Reforming Youth Policing Policies and Practices** in June. In it, SFY makes the case for developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed, racially equitable policies and practices for police interactions with youth and provides an agenda for reform efforts at the municipal, state, and federal level.

In our home state of Massachusetts, Strategies for Youth worked with a coalition of youth advocates to:

- Amend the State’s Police Reform Bill, passed in December 2020, to include protections for youth.
- Release findings showing the failure of police and school departments to adhere to the 2018 Criminal Justice Reform Act.
- End the Boston Public School’s collection and disclosure of student’s immigration status to ICE and the DHS.
- In collaboration with Citizens for Juvenile Justice, publish an analysis of scholarship on whether using police to enhance school safety is antithetical to goals of racial equity in education.

In September, SFY collaborated with the Nebraska Court Improvement Project to present the state’s annual *Through the Eyes of the Child* conference. SFY has also been working hard to support the enactment of the federal *Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act*, which would divert federal funding currently allocated for school police to psycho-social staff to support youth.



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Agenda for Reforming Youth Policing Policies and Practices

2020 was a year in which the public clamor for police reforms in Massachusetts and across the country intensified dramatically. SFY proposed a set of reforms that individuals, communities and decision makers should push for to ensure that officers and agencies are equipped to use developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed, racially equitable policies, practices, and partnerships when they interact with youth. Check these recommendations on our website homepage: strategiesforyouth.org

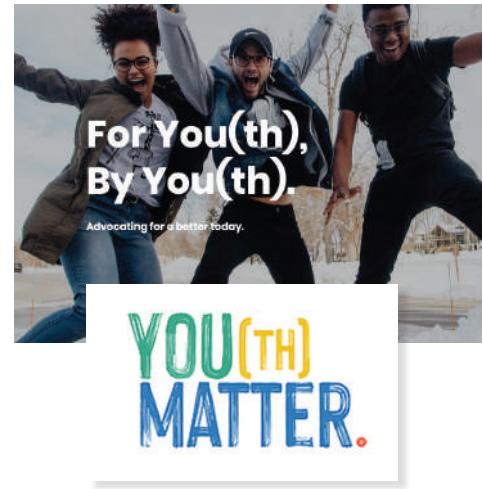


Media Stories Featuring
Strategies for Youth in 2020

Bringing Youth Voices to Strategies for Youth

This year, SFY launched **YOU(th) MATTER**. Spearheaded by an trio intrepid of youth leaders; Laura Jenny, Isaac Annan and Hannah Sussman; **YOU(th) MATTER** was created to:

- Form a youth-led advisory board representing youth voices across Massachusetts, with the goal of conducting regular meetings to understand and discuss different youth concerns surrounding policing and justice.
- Offer recommendations to inform Strategies for Youth's policy reform agenda, law enforcement trainings, and youth programming.
- Understand and amplify the perspective and experiences of young people, while equipping them with a platform to promote reform.



Young people across America tell us:

"I'm scared of being shot" • "I feel like I've got a target on my back" • "It's best if I just expect the worst"

African American youth in particular, and youth of color, express fear about the violence they see when their families and friends are arrested, and when a minor event escalates into the sudden arrival of five cops with guns drawn .

- Excerpt from "Hope Springs Infernal" article by Lisa Thraou, Strategies for Youth

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