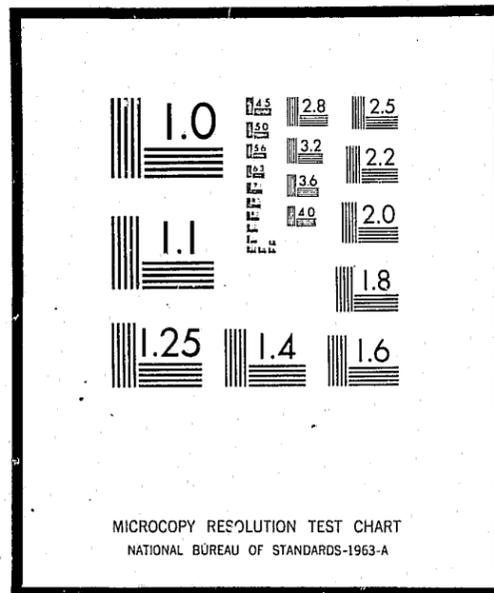


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EVALUATION OF POLICE TRAINING IN
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT CONDUCTED BY
THE FAMILY CRISIS PROJECT
(A preliminary Report)

Submitted to
Edward M. Colback, M. D.
Project Director

by
Milton K. Davis, Ph.D.
Harvey A. Goeman

Northwest Psychological Services
January 4, 1972

26203 Evaluation

This is the preliminary report of an evaluation study designed to measure the impact of the training program entitled "Police Training in Conflict Management" conducted by the Family Crisis Project. This project is funded through the Columbia Region Association of Governments.

It has been established that law enforcement agencies have found a significant part of their work is non-criminal in nature. These non-criminal activities include community relations work, calming potential suicides and psychotics, and settling family disputes. Traditionally, police officers have often a minimal amount of training in the psychological side of law enforcement work. This training project has been designed to help police officers deal more effectively with these non-criminal activities.

Specifically, goals of the Family Crisis Project have been outlined as follows:

1. To help police officers become more adept at handling all of the psychological aspects of their work.
2. To give police officers and police agencies more flexibility in meeting changing societal demands.
3. To specifically increase the effectiveness of police officers in handling individuals in emotional crisis.
4. To increase the psychological health of police officers and police agencies.

The specific procedures and study designs have been more fully explained in the following section entitled "Study Design and Procedures".

PRELIMINARY STEPS

FAMILY CRISIS PROJECT STAFF

A number of preliminary meetings were held between the consultants and members of the Project staff. These meetings resulted in general agreement for the evaluation

study goals, number of interviews to be completed, the type of information desired, and for coordination with the Multnomah County Department of Public Safety.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Meetings were held among the members of the Project staff, consultants, and representatives from the Multnomah County Sheriff's Department. The final step was to incorporate all of these agreements and proposals into a single document which was presented to Sheriff J. Bard Purcell, Director of Public Safety. Sheriff Purcell reviewed the basic proposal, modified certain portions of this proposal, and made a number of suggestions which were incorporated into the final study design. He also provided the consultants with a letter of authorization that identified each consultant and indicated his support and approval for this particular study.

It should be mentioned without the wholehearted help and cooperation of the Sheriff's Department, it would not have been possible to complete this study. Specifically, Sgt. Steve Tillinghast, Director of Planning, Sgt. David Wilson, Records Division, and Capt. Walter Jahn, Commander - Uniform Division were all very helpful in providing help and necessary data to implement this study. In addition, Mr. Harvey Goeman met with all of the officers on duty at the uniform division for each shift. At these meetings, Mr. Goeman explained the purposes of the study, outlined the procedures to be followed, reassured the officers that the purpose was not to identify performance of individual officers, assured them that information obtained from this study would be anonymous both with respect to officer's behavior and citizen responses and asked for their cooperation. We did not believe that a study of this type could be successful without the awareness and cooperation of the members of the uniform division.

As indicated earlier, wholehearted cooperation from all representatives of the Department of Public Safety was obtained. It was felt that this was a very important aspect of the planning process and one that justified the expenditure of consultant time and energy.

QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION

A preliminary questionnaire was constructed which was designed to measure citizen responses and attitudes toward the members of the Sheriffs Department. Initial questionnaire form was reviewed by the members of the Family Crisis Project, representatives of the Multnomah County Sheriffs Department, and representatives of the Portland Police Department. As a result of their suggestions, a final questionnaire was designed.

A copy of the questionnaire has been included as Appendix A of this report. This questionnaire was prepared in such a manner that it also served as an interview guide for the consultants. By including these comments on the questionnaire format itself, it increased the uniformity of the actual interview and insured that each interviewee was given the same set of questions and these questions were presented in the same order with uniform instructions.

STUDY DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this section is to describe in some detail the actual procedures followed in this evaluation. The actual procedures follow very closely to the proposal presented on November 10, 1971 to Sheriff Purcell. Any modifications from that November 10 proposal have been described below.

BASIC DESIGN

The basic research design was based upon results obtained from an interview survey

of Multnomah County citizens who had had recent occasion to request assistance from the Deputy Sheriffs Division. The majority of these interview were conducted within two weeks of the actual contact with the Deputy Sheriff. In some cases the time interval was three weeks or slightly longer. However, this did not appear to present any problem of recall or ability of the citizen to make a complete report. About 90% of the interviews were conducted in the citizen's home and approximately 10% were conducted by telephone. Telephone follow-up was especially valuable in cases where it had been extremely difficult to find the citizen at home. In some cases, as many as three calls had been made to the same address without successful contact.

This study was originally designed to obtain citizens information and reactions to officer's behavior for three separate groups. These groups were as follows:

1. Citizen interviews on officers who had not completed the 40 hour training program. These were designed as non-trained officers.
2. Citizen interviews on those officers who had completed the 40 hour training program and who may have had some additional group or individual training exposure.
3. Citizen interviews on calls where the officer had been accompanied by one of the graduate social work student counselors.

These three groups of officers would make it possible to determine if there were differences in citizen responses between those officers who had received the 40 hour training and those officers who had not received the training course in conflict management. A second comparison would be made between the officers who had the benefit of the social worker counselor present at the time of the call. The second group could be compared primarily with those who had received no training and who had not had the social workers present.

The original design called for an equal number of reports for each of the above three groups. However, the small number of social workers and their limited time in the field has limited their contact calls.

The original plan was to have 50 reports for each of these three groups. Presently, the number of calls has been approximately reached for those officers designated as trained and for those officers designated as non-trained. Only three calls have been completed where the social worker was present. It is likely that the final report will contain fewer than 50 reports for calls when the social worker was present. However, the other two groups, trained and non-trained, can be equalized and a better distribution of officer contacts obtained.

SAMPLING OF DEPUTY SHERIFFS BEHAVIOR

Since the primary purpose of this evaluation study was to determine the effects of training on the Deputy Sheriff's behavior, it was felt necessary to include some additional controls. These controls were added to eliminate possible extraneous contaminating factors so that the major difference among officers would be the amount of training they had received or the fact that a social worker was present. It was decided to limit the interviews to those uniformed officers who were under 35 years of age and who had received a college degree. This also tended to somewhat equalize the number of years each person had on the force. This sub-group provided a sufficiently large number of incidents to provide for representative sampling.

From Departmental records it was possible to determine those incidents which included officers in our sample as well as the degree of training they had received. This information was not available to the consultant who did the majority of interviews. That is, at the time he contacted the citizen he did not know if this represented a case for a trained or a non-trained officer. Control records were kept of the number of cases involving each officer group. It was also possible to determine the number of calls that had been made on a particular officer. At this time, one officer has six reported incidents, and one officer has five. All of the others have less reports. Future interviews will be obtained only from those officers with a minimum number of calls. No more than five calls will be

collected for a single officer. The only exception to this would be those cases where an officer has incidents in which he answered the call alone combined with incidents in which the social worker was present. In these cases, the total combined number of calls may well exceed five. This control has been instituted so that a non-representative sample based upon the undue influence of one officer will be avoided.

GAINING PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE

One of the pleasant surprises in this study has been the high degree of public willingness to respond to questions. There was only one refusal to answer the questions from the first 100 interviews. In other words, the refusal rate was about 1%.

In addition, it was necessary to use the documentation letter prepared by the Sheriff in less than 5% of contacts. It did not appear to make any difference in gaining public acceptance if one interviewer was lone, if two interviewers were present, or if the information were obtained by telephone. The general response of the public to this survey was almost uniformly favorable, the actual results have been presented in the following section.

When the interviewer contacted the citizen he first introduced himself and the reason for the call. Early in the contact he indicated to the citizen that, according to his records, the citizen had had a recent occasion to require the assistance of a Deputy Sheriff. The interviewer then mentioned the time and date of this contact. He then went on to reassure the citizen that the purpose of this contact was to obtain the citizen's reaction to the behavior of the Deputy Sheriff and that he was not concerned about the specific incident itself, was not attempting to get information which would either be favorable or unfavorable to the individual officer, and was not obtaining information that would identify the respondent in any way. In the high majority of contacts, the citizen readily

invited the interviewer into his home and spoke willingly about the items on the questionnaire. Naturally, much extraneous information was also obtained and usually the person talked about the individual case in some detail.

It appears that a key point in gaining public acceptance is specific knowledge of the specific incident. Once you have indicated to the citizen that you are talking about a specific incident that they know had occurred, it seems that this rapidly establishes credibility for the interviewer. It is unlikely that without such information such a very high percentage of non-rejections would be possible.

Individual incidents were identified by examining both coded off reports and file reports from the Central records of the Multnomah County Department of Public Safety. Without access to these records, it would have been impossible to complete this study. The records were examined in terms of the date of the incident, the officer involved, and the type of incident. All of those incidents which met these three acceptable standards served as the major source for obtaining interviews. As it happened, the balance between incidents obtained for trained and non-trained officers was equal. These two groups total almost 100 completed interviews.

Intensive review of the record will be necessary to identify a pool of incidents which qualify as those with the social worker present. This is being done and will continue until a sufficiently large pool has been obtained.

DEFINITION OF A FAMILY DISTURBANCE INCIDENT

Since the basic purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of training for non-criminal incidents, a selection was made in the type of incidents reviewed. These incidents were those which could be listed under a rather broad heading of

"family disturbance". These were calls which would be fairly well related to the family crisis training goals. Family crisis calls are identified, for the purpose of this study, by the following call codes and descriptions:

12-14	Run-Away - Missing
12-24	Drunken Disturbance
12-25	Fight
12-26	Drunk
12-27	Family Disturbance
12-28	Disturbance in Auto
12-31	Man Exposing
12-32	Peeping Tom
12-34	Mental Case
12-38	Investigate Needy Family
12-41	Molest
12-43	Injured Person by Criminal Attack
12-44	Death

RESULTS

A partial summary of results obtained to date have been prepared in this section. Although the written comments to various questions have been summarized and tabulated, they do not all appear in this preliminary report. When the summary of write-in comments appear significant, it will be reported.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CITIZEN SAMPLE

Certain selective characteristics of the citizen sample, or demographic data have been presented in Table I. From Table I it can be noted that there are virtually no significant differences between the trained and non-trained deputy sheriff groups. These differences have not been tested for statistical significance but with the possible exception of the person contacted and the socio-economic level, it is unlikely that these differences are significant. These latter variables will be checked to determine if an unrepresentative sampling problem does exist.

The information on race was not reported since 99% of the respondents were caucasian. The one exception was an Indian. Information on occupational levels have not been reported since this is largely incorporated into socio-economic level.

TABLE I
CHARACTERISTICS OF CITIZEN SAMPLE

	Trained N=48	Not Trained N=49	With Social Worker N=3
<u>SEX:</u>			
Male	17	18	
Female	31	31	3
<u>AGE:</u>			
10-14		1	
15-19	5	5	
20-24	9	7	2
25-29	8	7	
30-34	7	6	
35-39	5	5	1
40-44	6	2	
45-49	4	7	
50-54	3	4	
55-59		1	
60-64	1	2	
65-69		2	
<u>CHILDREN AT HOME:</u>			
0	12	18	
1	14	8	1
2	10	9	1
3	8	7	1
4	1	2	
5	2	3	
6+	1	2	
<u>SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVEL</u>			
Low	5	9	
Lower Middle	10	18	2
Middle	25	15	1
Upper Middle	8	6	
High		1	
<u>PERSON CONTACTED</u>			
Person who made call	35	26	2
Person who caused call	6	9	
Observer	7	14	1

REACTIONS TO OFFICER'S BEHAVIOR

In general, no real differences exist among citizens responses to officer's behavior as a function of such officers being trained, non-trained, or operating with a social worker. If any trend appears, it would be that the incidents involving the social worker were viewed more negatively by the citizens. Since we have only three cases and since it is possible that a selective factor is operating here, little importance is attached to these preliminary findings.

From a total departmental viewpoint, there are a number of items which do indicate possibilities for improvement. These include the following: he introduced himself politely and clearly; he helped to calm down those who were here; and possibly, he demonstrated understanding of the problems. These negative results are definitely in the minority and would suggest that the overall performance of deputy sheriffs is quite satisfactory in the public view.

The next item on the questionnaire asked a citizen the following question: "Did you feel that the officer handled the situation properly?" The tabulated responses to this question have been presented in Table III. It is obvious from this table that there were really no significant differences between the trained and non-trained group. As suggested earlier, those officers who had a social worker present were uniformly viewed in a negative manner.

TABLE III

Did you feel that the officer handled the situation properly?

	Trained N=48	Non-Trained N=49	Officer with Social Worker N=3
Yes	46	46	
No	2	3	3

TABLE II

REACTIONS TO OFFICER'S BEHAVIOR

In order to record your opinions and feelings, I will ask you a number of questions about the Officer's behavior. First, I would like to ask you some questions in which you may disagree strongly, merely disagree, express no feeling either way, merely agree, or strongly agree.

	<u>DS</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>Don't Remember</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
He introduced himself politely and clearly.							
Trained	4	3	6	4	21	10	
Non-Trained	6		8	4	25	6	
With social worker	1				1	1	
Total	11	3	14	8	47	17	
He was polite and respectful to those present.							
Trained			2	4	42		
Non-trained		2		1	46		
With social worker	1				2		
Total	1	2	2	5	90		
He demonstrated understanding of the problems presented.							
Trained	2	1	4	4	37		
Non-trained	2	1	3	1	41		1
With social worker	3						
Total	7	2	7	5	78		1
He helped to calm down those people who were there.							
Trained	3	1	11	10	22		1
Non-trained	1	2	16	8	22		
With social worker	3						
Total	7	3	27	18	44		1
He maintained self-control at all times.							
Trained				1	47		
Non-trained				1	48		
With social worker				1	2		
Total				3	97		
He was non-threatening to those present.							
Trained				2	46		
Non-trained			1		47		1
With social worker				1	2		
Total			1	3	95		1
He conducted himself in a professional or gentleman-like manner.							
Trained	1			2	45		
Non-trained					49		
With social worker					3		
Total	1			2	97		

TABLE II Continued

	<u>DS</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>	<u>Don't Remember</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
He appeared nervous or unsure of himself.							
Trained	42	3	1		2		
Non-trained	43	1		5			
With social worker	2	1					
Total	87	5	1	5	2		
He got angry, used swear words and was abusive.							
Trained	48						
Non-trained	49						
With social worker	3						
Total	100						

The question regarding whether or not the officer took sides and his objectivity in doing so and whether or not he should have remained impartial are indistinguishable among the various groups. In about 2% of the cases with the trained group the citizens indicated that the officer did take sides and about 9% of the non-trained group they indicated the same thing. One out of three reports from citizens where the social worker was present indicated that the officer had taken sides. No real information is suggested from this data.

The next question was: "Did the officer make any suggestions that might help prevent similar situations?" The summary of this data has been presented in Table IV. Again, the results are remarkably equivalent. If anything, the indication is that the non-trained group made more helpful suggestions than either of the two other groups. This has not been tested for statistical significance. It is highly unlikely that it would, in fact, reach statistical significance.

Since there were arrests made in less than 10% of the cases, no separate analysis of this area has been included in this report.

The same is true for the question dealing with the amount of physical force used by the officer. Less than 5 or 6% of the citizens responded in a positive manner to this particular question.

GENERAL REACTION TO THE QUALITY OF POLICE AND DEPUTY SHERIFF SERVICE AVAILABLE

The general reaction of those citizens interviewed to the quality of police and deputy sheriff service available has been summarized in Table V. The total responses on this question indicate that approximately 10% indicate the service to be either very poor or rather poor. No differences were noted between those officers trained and those non-trained. The three cases involving social workers covered the entire range with one each at very poor, satisfactory, and excellent.

The comments regarding the Multnomah County Sheriff's Division and the Portland Police Department have been summarized under a separate category. In general,

Those comments available regarding the Portland Police Bureau have been relatively negative.

Specific Reaction to Recent Contact

Questionnaire responses were analyzed from written comments in terms of the citizen's reaction to the way that he felt his current situation had been handled. These results have been summarized in Table VI. This table does indicate a slight bias toward more favorable responses among trained officers. However, this was done rather hurriedly and may not actually indicate any measurable difference.

For comparison purposes, the following items were classified for the trained officers:

1. Comment: It was handled satisfactorily - (14 cases) - classified as neutral. He did his job competently (9) - classified as somewhat favorable.

For the non-trained officers, the following comments were classified as follows:

1. They handled it properly - (28) classified as neutral.

The best conclusion from the above information would be that there are relatively little differences between those officers classified as trained and non-trained.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CURRENT FAMILY CRISIS CALLS AND PREVIOUS SIMILAR CALLS

One additional analysis was made from this data. It was felt that information regarding the number of repeaters in family crisis situations would be of importance. If the number of repeater calls could be minimized, this would certainly alleviate police time and attention.

Table VII indicates the relationship between the present Family crisis call and the total number of previous family crisis calls. Those calls represent a more narrow definition of a family crisis incident. Certain categories are excluded such as threats from non-relatives, non-family drunks creating a disturbance within the home, child molestation, exposing, non-family assaults and similar non-immediate family situations. It will be noted that using this more restricted definition

63% of the cases interviewed would qualify. These 63 incidents represent a total of 180 previous calls. In other words, the average for each more restrictive definition of a family crisis incident represents the third time that deputy sheriffs have been called.

SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

1. Based upon this preliminary data, it cannot be concluded that there are any measurable differences in deputy sheriff's behavior between those officers who have been trained and those officers who were not trained.
2. The data available for incidents in which the social worker accompanied the deputy sheriff are too limited to justify any conclusions. This aspect will require concentrated attention.
3. The willingness of Multnomah County citizens to respond to qualified representatives is extremely high. They are willing to answer these questions honestly, directly, and in a very cooperative manner. It should be noted that of the 100 contacts made there was not a single negative or hostile statement at the end of the interview. Responses to the opportunity to express themselves were universally favorable.

TABLE IV

Did the officer make any suggestions that might help prevent similar situations?

	Trained N = 48	Non-Trained N = 49	Officer with Social Worker N = 3
Yes	28	34	1
No	19	12	2
No answer	1	3	

TABLE V

IN GENERAL, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE QUALITY OF THE POLICE AND DEPUTY SHERIFFS SERVICE AVAILABLE TO YOU.

	Very Poor	Rather Poor	Satisfactory	Very Good	Excellent
Trained		2	11	15	20
Non-trained	1	1	12	17	18
With social worker	1		1		1
Total	2	3	24	32	39

TABLE VI

CLASSIFICATION OF COMMENTS ON HOW THIS SITUATION WAS HANDLED

	Was Handled very unfavorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Neutral	Somewhat Favorable	Very Favorable
Trained	1	4	17	24	1
Non-trained		6	28	7	3
With social worker	1		2		
Totals	2	10	47	31	4

TABLE VII

PREVIOUS HISTORY OF POLICE SERVICE IN TERMS OF FAMILY CRISIS CALLS

1	26
2	13
3	6
4	3
5	4
6	4
7	3
8	3
9	1
10	
11	
12	
Total calls	180
Number of Individuals	63

SUGGESTIONS ABOUT HOW LAW ENFORCEMENT
PEOPLE COULD BE OF GREATER SERVICE

SUGGESTION	TRAINED	NON- TRAINED
No suggestions.	24	20
There ought to be more officers on the street	5	
They could be faster in responding to calls		4
They need more training; they do their job well		4

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE QUALITY OF THE POLICE
AND DEPUTY SHERIFF'S SERVICES AVAILABLE TO YOU

NO. MAKING
COMMENT

COMMENT

- 4 They come to help you.
- 4 They've always been good.
- 4 When you call, they're here rapidly.
- 1 The Multnomah County Sheriff's Department is the "elite" force. The Portland Police leaves much to be desired.
- 1 Deputies are great. Portland Police are very poor.
- 1 Deputies are excellent. Portland Police are some good and some poor.
- 1 County deputies are easier to get along with, more courteous than Portland Police.
- 1 County deputies are rated "excellent" only.
- 1 There is a very poor rating on Portland Police.
- 1 Very understanding and kind - much better than Portland Police.

NORTHWEST PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

FAMILY CRISIS PROJECT

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

Case: _____

IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

DISPATCHER

OFFICER

Date call received _____ Time received _____ Time arrived _____ Time closed _____

Name of person who called: _____ Telephone No. _____

Address of incident: _____

Type of incident: _____

Officers: _____

Additional back-up: _____

Type: Trained _____

Not Trained _____

Officer and Social Worker _____

Other _____

Interviewee: Person who made call: _____

Person who caused call: _____

Observer: _____

When the officer arrived what happened? _____

A _____ S _____ R _____ C _____

O _____ S E _____

