

WEEKLY POLICY SUMMARY:

Law Enforcement Community Support for Mental Health Challenges

April 19, 2019

Programs To Help Law Enforcement Handle Mental Health Challenges

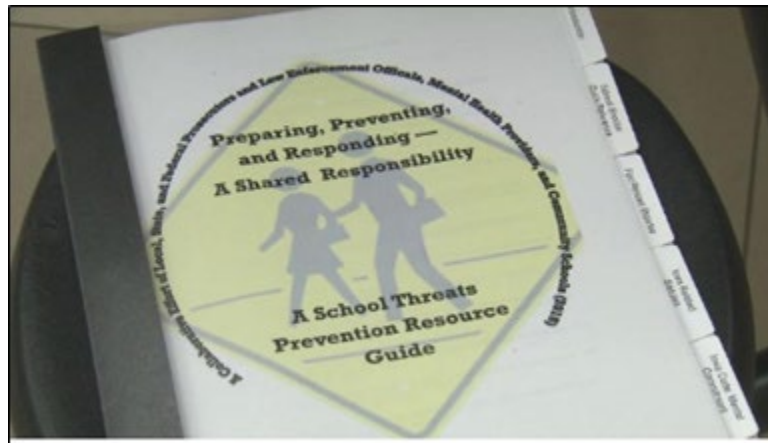
1. [Daily Trib](#): Burnet County, Texas Sheriff officers Deputy Mike Sorenson and Field Officer Scott Orrison saved the county about \$55,000 this year by improving the way in which the county responds to those in mental health crises. About a year ago, Sorenson led the founding of the county's Crisis Intervention Team, which has allowed every Burnet County Sheriff's Office deputy to receive mental health certification, shortening the process of getting those facing mental health challenges the help they need. "In the past, [those facing mental health challenges] just went to jail, or went to the (emergency room), and once they'd go to the ER then the hospital has certain things they have to do," said Burnet County Sheriff Calvin Boyd. An officer then would have to stay with that person until a crisis worker and justice of the peace were called — sometimes in the middle of the night — to draft a warrant so the person could be transported to an inpatient facility for treatment. That process could take hours. The Crisis Intervention Team intends to train all officers in all departments in the county.



Burnet County Sheriff Calvin Boyd awarding Deputy Mike Sorenson with "Officer of the Year" in the department for his work with people in mental health crises.

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2. [The Port Arthur News](#): The Port Arthur, Texas Police Department announced the creation of its Mental Health Unit. The unit will include officers that have received specialized training. The main objective is to bridge the gap between law enforcement and those suffering from a mental illness. “Our hope is to assist family members and consumers alike in identifying and obtaining the resources accessible to them. The Port Arthur Police Department Mental Health Unit will work together with local hospitals and mental health authorities to provide the best available services,” the department said.
3. [Daily Gazette](#): The Amsterdam, New York police officers and the Montgomery County, New York Sheriff’s Office personnel will receive additional training in how to respond to people in acute mental health crises, thanks to a \$45,000 grant from New York state’s Crisis Intervention Team program. For one week in August, the program will train up to 30 individuals to recognize the signs of a mental health crisis and how to effectively direct people to the mental health resources in the county.
4. [KCRG](#): Lynn County, Iowa’s Sheriff’s Office and mental health providers worked together to create a “School Threats Prevention Resource Guide” to help schools in northern Iowa identify mental health challenges that may cause students to pose a threat to themselves or others. The guide includes FBI profiles on what many school shooters have in common and warning signs parents, teachers, and classmates can be on the lookout for. Research shows that school shooters often plan their attacks and display warning signs, but that others often do not know how to handle such challenges. Law enforcement recently shared that guide with the community at Center Point Urbana High School.
 - o [Video](#)



The School Threats Prevention Resource Guide.

5. [Drug Policy](#): Law Enforcement Action Partnership will join with several mental health activist organizations, including the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, Foundation for Excellence in Mental Health Care, and the National Coalition for Mental Health Recovery to host the Coercive Treatment – Moving Beyond “For Your Own Good” Conference in May 2019/ The conference will explore the history and harms of coercion

in drug treatment and mental health settings and explore patient- and rights-centered alternatives.

6. [The Council of State Governments](#): The Council of State Governments Justice Center announced it will soon release a framework to help agencies across the country better respond to the growing number of calls for service they receive involving mental health issues. *Police-Mental Health Collaborations: A Framework for Implementing Effective Law Enforcement Responses for People Who Have Mental Health Needs* is a publication intended to help jurisdictions advance comprehensive, agency-wide responses to people who have mental illnesses. These responses feature cross-system collaborations between the criminal justice and behavioral health systems. Written primarily for law enforcement executives, and with support from the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Assistance, the framework also highlights jurisdictions that have excelled in each area.
7. [Santa Ynez Valley News](#): The Santa Barbara County, California Sheriff's Office awarded Santa Ynez Patrol Lt. Eddie Hseuh a Meritorious Service Medal for his work in developing and launching a comprehensive Crisis Intervention Training program for the Office and other Santa Barbara County law enforcement personnel. Hseuh dedicated hundreds of hours to developing the Office's Behavioral Sciences Unit, which now coordinates the Sheriff's Office's response to calls involving people suffering from mental health issues.



Lt. Eddie Hseahu (far left) receiving the Meritorious Service Medal from the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office.

Reliance On Law Enforcement To Address Mental Health Needs

8. [News 4](#): Washoe County, Nevada Sheriff Darin Balaam is working to improve the county's mental health housing unit after two inmate suicides. Balaam said, "In each one of these (suicides) and each one that we've averted, we deep dive those, we look into those. What did we do well? What can we improve? Is there something we missed?" Balaam said this week he's making his budget recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year and is asking for money to hire additional jail deputies to better staff mental health facilities.

- o [Video](#).

9. [Bozeman Daily Chronicle](#): The Montana State House Judiciary Committee backed a request to study policies that address safety and social justice concerns around homelessness and substance use or mental health disorders. House Joint Resolution 57, sponsored by Rep. Kathy Kelker, D-Billings, passed the committee on a 17-2 vote. The study would include looking for ways to increase access to treatment through combining physical and behavioral health services. It would also examine tools like mobile crisis teams that respond to mental health concerns. Kelker said that responses to mental health needs often falls to law enforcement to decide what to do when someone is a danger to themselves or others because of a disorder.

Full Text of Articles Not Freely Available On The Internet

There is no recent activity.