"Empowering Children to Change the World"
A Mixed-Methods Analysis of Improving Police-Community Relations

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INTRODUCTION
Perceptions of law enforcement are critically important for increasing compliance and fighting crime.

- Police who treat the public with respect, dignity and fairness foster positive perceptions of law enforcement.
- People who view the police as legitimate are more likely to voluntarily follow the law.
- Positive perceptions of the police are linked to more public cooperation such as (e.g. reporting crime).

Current Focus
Repeated prosocial exposure to police may foster positive perceptions of law enforcement.

The current study explores the impact of prosocial contact within a structured, in-school setting on their perceptions of law enforcement.

TEAM KIDS 501(c)(3)
- TKC brings first responders and Team Kids Coaches into elementary schools.
- Kids select a charity to support and work with law enforcement throughout the challenge.
- TKC Leadership Team (LT) plans a carnival.
- Carnival proceeds go to the charity.

MISSION STATEMENT: To empower our kids to change the world

TEAM KIDS CHALLENGE
- Four weekly, school-wide "Challenges" benefit students-chosen charity.

School-wide assembly
School-wide carnival

YOUTH SAMPLE
- % Hispanic/Latino or Black/African American
- % Participation in National School Lunch Program

RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YOUTH PERCEPTIONS</th>
<th>Individual Change in Perceptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-TCK</strong></td>
<td><strong>Post-TCK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>School 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>School 2</strong></td>
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<td><strong>School 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>School 4</strong></td>
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<td><strong>School 5</strong></td>
<td><strong>School 6</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>First Responder Sample</th>
<th>Voluntary participation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 pre/post surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 in-person interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>TKC 2016-2018</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>L.A. County &amp; Brooklyn, NY</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Sample</th>
<th>5th &amp; 6th grade students</th>
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<tr>
<td>Predominantly racial/ethnic minority</td>
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<td>990 pre/post surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>TKC 2016-2018</td>
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DISCUSSION
Schools with higher percentage of students living in poverty and students who see Hispanic/Latino or Black/African American had worse perceptions of the police.

First responder participation in TKC resulted in increased job satisfaction and perceptions of the community.

- First responders actively want to participate in TKC.
- Humans and demystifies first responders.
- Builds relationships between first responders and the community.
- Provides youth with a role model.

Policy Implications
- Bringing first responders into schools to work collaboratively with youth improves police-community relations.

Research Implications
- Youths’ perceptions of police officers are still malleable, and as such, procedural justice researchers should be focusing on this age group.

Implications for Policing
- How police officers interact with children matters because it has the potential to influence future compliance with the law and cooperation with the police.

CONCLUSION
- Positive encounters might be able to improve youths’ perceptions of law enforcement.
- Positive encounters might be able to improve law enforcement perceptions of youth.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
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