

Lesson Plan / Student Guide

COURSE TITLE: Peer-to-Peer Intervention

TERMINAL GOAL: The student will learn how to recognize behavioral issues and effectively intervene with fellow officers, or ideally, learn how to step in and help before misconduct occurs.

ENABLING OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify the career-saving benefits of intervention and the huge risks (including the growing legal risks) of non-intervention.
2. Identify the signs that an intervention is necessary.
3. Identify two different types of interventions:
4. Identify the “inhibitors” to intervention.
5. Define what it means to be an “Active Bystander”.
6. Actively promote intervention and discourage passivity.
7. Identify how and why to respectfully intervene, and to accept intervention.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

Classroom lecture, handouts, and visual aids (PowerPoint presentation)

HANDOUTS:

Student guide

COURSE DURATION:

1 Hour

CURRICULUM REFERENCES:

1. <https://www.police1.com/police-training/articles/ive-got-your-6-the-value-of-officer-intervention-training-GHES33GnQe3l3XQT/#Blind%20Spots>
2. New Orleans Police Department “Ethical Policing is Courageous (EPIC)” Peer Intervention program webinar. https://pspdata.blob.core.windows.net/webinarsandpodcasts/NOPD_EPIC_Presentation.pdf
3. “EPIC Training is About Officers Helping Officers”, Police Executive Research Forum publication, Vol. 30, No. 2; 2017
4. “Special Problems of Police Officers: Stress-Related Issues and Interventions”, The Counseling Psychologist Volume 11, Issue 2; Stephen Alkus, Christine Padesky; 1983.

5. "Running in the Fog", SWTC Training; Rich Libicer; 2015.

EQUIPMENT, PERSONNEL, AND SUPPLIES NEEDED:

COMPUTER, AUDIO AND VISUAL AIDS; WHITEBOARD

TARGET AUDIENCE:

NEW MEXICO LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS – CADETS / RECRUITS

INSTRUCTOR RATIO:

1 / 50

EVALUATION STRATEGY: Students will discuss and provide examples of intervention strategies and situations.

AUTHOR & ORIGINATION DATE:

SOUTHWEST TRAINING CONSULTANTS LLC JUNE 2023

REVISION / REVIEW DATE(S):

REVISED / REVIEWED BY:

A. Incidents of Officer intervention and the failure to intervene have become headline news nationally.

- a. From the first day of the police academy, it is ingrained in us that we protect our fellow officers to the extent that we will sacrifice our lives for each other.

There are many phrases we use: "I've got your back," "I got you" and "I've got your six." The latter means your "six," the blind spot behind you that you cannot see, I have that covered to protect you.

The other, less obvious blind spot we all share is not intervening when a fellow officer is doing something wrong. With the profession of policing on life support, we must rethink what "having each other's six" means. (1)

- b. Cases like George Floyd and Sergeant Christopher Police have brought this issue to the forefront, where training is getting mandated. This is not a bad thing but rather a chance for law enforcement to improve their service to the community. What this really comes down to is just doing good work, knowing the laws, keeping yourself in check, and toeing the line.
- c. During this block of instruction, we will go over the benefits of intervention. The signs that intervention is needed. The different types of intervention. The inhibitors to someone intervening. The definition of an active bystander. We will also go over how to intervene.

B. What is a "Good Officer"?

- a. A good officer wants to do the right thing.
- b. What is "the right thing"?
- c. Sometimes officers with the best intentions may lack the moral courage and/or the tools to safely and effectively intervene when faced with potential police misconduct or concern for a fellow officer's mental or physical health.
- d. Most officers will find themselves, at some point in their career, caught between two very unsatisfactory choices, or become frustrated to the point of making a bad decision.
- e. Police officers are human beings dealing with inordinate levels of stress and conflict, navigating a challenging job.

C. Bystandership

a. Passive Bystandership

- i. The community understands that police officers make mistakes.
- ii. Non-critical loyalty (Passive Bystandership) and/or cover-ups shift the public perception from a "mistake" by one officer to "corruption" by several officers.
- iii. Watching it happen, knowing you could do something.
- iv. Passive bystandership has a corrosive effect on standards and mental health.

b. Active Bystandership

- i. Acting rather than watching.
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- ii. Custodianship of our profession and our well-being.
- iii. Intervention when we see:
 - 1. An officer doing something or about to do something that would discredit themselves, the department, or the profession.
 - 2. An officer engaging in behaviors that are harmful and/or of concern for well-being, mental health, physical health, etc.
 - 3. An encounter that is likely to end badly (hostile or escalating behavior, unprofessional conduct, etc.)
 - 4. Unsafe behavior or tactics by an officer.
 - 5. Cutting corners that could jeopardize an investigation, safety, or public confidence.

D. Intervention

- a. Assessment
 - i. Is the issue minor? Serious?
 - ii. Can an intervention wait, or is it an emergency?
 - iii. Danger Signs
 - 1. Indicators that stress levels are high, performance is suffering, focus is lacking, etc.
 - b. Non-Emergency Interventions
 - i. It may be best to speak with a coworker privately. Be discreet, if at all possible.
 - ii. Approach with courtesy and respect, to identify the issue and offer assistance.
 - iii. Make the intervention obvious. It may take time to “sink in”, and follow-up may be necessary.
 - iv. Recognize how you would want to be approached. It is a requirement for a professional to learn to accept an appropriate intervention.
 - v. If the coworker dismisses your effort, it may be necessary to “escalate” to a higher rank, or another officer, to make sure you’ve done enough.
 - c. Emergency Interventions
 - i. “Critical” intervention.
 - ii. Improper behavior needs to be stopped immediately, or you sense a fellow officer is under stress and might be on the verge of doing something wrong - such as excessive force.
 - iii. React the way you need to react.
 - 1. Example: Excessive force.
 - a. Could be verbal – “I am taking over,” or “I’ll handle this”, “I’ve got this.”
 - b. Physical – you may have to physically insert yourself into the situation.
 - 2. Some situations will require immediate escalation.
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- a. Threats of suicide
- b. Issues with domestic violence or other criminal acts.
- c. Major policy violations.
- d. Intervention in General
 - i. The ultimate goal of intervention is to PREVENT an incident that could require reporting and discipline.
- e. Inhibitors to Intervention
 - i. Is it your job to support a fellow officer, whether they're right or wrong?
 - ii. Is it your job to correct behavior, especially with a higher-ranking officer?
 - iii. What is your department policy for reporting misconduct or mental health concerns?

E. Conclusion

- a. Police officers operate in a highly stressful environment.
- b. There are higher than normal levels of depression, anxiety, alcoholism, family problems, and suicide.
- c. It is critical to recognize the moments that stress is getting the better of one of our colleagues and to have the courage and tools to step in and offer help.
- d. It is always better to PREVENT a problem from occurring in the first place.
- e. Always respectfully accept intervention.
- f. Always intervene respectfully, effectively, and safely. Be discreet.
- g. Recognize the difference between a non-emergency situation and an emergency intervention.
- h. It IS your job to do the right thing.

COURSE AUDIT

PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR:

SECONDARY INSTRUCTOR:

SUPPORT STAFF:

DATE(S)/ TIME(S) OF INSTRUCTION:

LOCATION OF INSTRUCTION:

RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM CHANGES: Identify inaccurate information, outdated information, new information to be added to update material, etc. (Use additional pages if necessary)

COURSE AUDIT (Continued)

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS: (If any portion of the course content was not presented, indicate the specific content here)

Alternative curriculum was taught.

Accreditation number of alternative curriculum:

	SIGNATURE	DATE
Primary Instructor	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Reviewed by Program Coordinator	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Reviewed by	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Reviewed by Director/Chief or Designee	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>