



# COPS

Community Oriented Policing Services  
U.S. Department of Justice

## Quotes from the Field

*Making a positive impact in local communities*

Here's what COPS Office grantees are saying:

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## Community Partnerships

### Alabama

“Coffee with a Cop is a huge success . . . . Another great tool [used in our department] is being involved with the younger adults and children. Be seen, listen, and be willing to understand the different age groups.”

– *Anon. Alabama grantee*

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### Arkansas

“Efforts have resulted in 14 neighborhood watch programs and very positive working environment with the school district.”

– *Camden Police Department*

“Overall there has been tremendous cooperation from our citizens and increased involvement from COPS Office.”

– *Parkin Police Department*

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### California

“The department has worked with the local parks regarding eliminating areas within the parks where transients can camp out. These areas were locations that could not be seen easily by law enforcement. The parks system has removed low-hanging brush that was used to conceal camping spots that had known drug activity.”

– *Oroville Police Department*

“Both the Watts and Boyle Height Community Safety Partnership (CSP)-initiated Girls Scouts Troops and the CSP program were featured on CBS channel 2 and channel 4 television news stations. The *Los Angeles Times* newspaper also published an article on CSP officers working in Jordan Downs. The article covered our community policing efforts and our new relationship-based policing model.”

– *Los Angeles Police Department*

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“The King City Police Department has been able to strengthen their community policing plan by working with the schools, community-based organizations, and local residents in increasing communication efforts to keep residents safe. More recently, the chief of police has met local school officials in preparing evacuation plans [and] reviewing safety plans for ongoing issues. The department has also effectively arranged safety presentations that have reached many students and parents. By providing presentations in both English and Spanish, the department has successfully reached out to those who can make a difference on a daily basis in reducing crime and keeping the community safe.”

– *King City Police Department*

“The Sacramento Police Department would like to share the following successes: smart teen driving class, Nationwide Prescription Pill Take Back Day, sobriety and drivers license checkpoints, scam alerts, Bicycle Safety & Fitness Day, SPD app, [and] Mustard Seed School Bicycle & Helmet Giveaway.

– *Sacramento Police Department*

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## Florida

“The CPOs [community policing officers] planned and participated in the Highpoint Community Cleanup – Take a Bite Out of Grime. This event took place on January 25, 2014, and focused cleanup efforts around the Pinellas Safe Harbor (PSH) facility. One hundred seventy-nine PSH residents participated in the cleanup. Residents, community members, and CPOs spent three hours and collected over 6,000 pounds of trash. This event garnered media attention and created new partnerships with businesses and local celebrities and NFL/AFL current and former players. More large-scale cleanups are planned for the future based upon the success of this first effort.”

– *Pinellas County Sheriff's Office*

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“CPOs created a new partnership with the Pinellas County Real Estate Management Office. Using this government entity, CPOs were able to establish parcel numbers of vacant land owned by Pinellas County. Once the parcel numbers were obtained, CPOs were able to acquire trespass authorizations for these parcels of land. CPOs have made great strides in locating owners of abandoned properties, including a vacant gas station and mobile home park. CPOs have worked with these property owners to acquire trespass authorizations. These trespass authorizations aid deputies in the prevention of homeless crimes and activity.”

– *Pinellas County Sheriff's Office*

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## Idaho

“[We] continued participating in the alcohol task force with University of Idaho. Officers continue to teach Alive @ 25 programming and also held a citizens police academy.”

– *Moscow Police Department*

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## Illinois

“We have implemented a Coffee with a Cop program that seems to be well received by the community.”

– *Waukegan Police Department*

“The creation of these binders, full of COPS Office publication, on community policing has been very well received. The binders provide all components of our community policing initiative hands-on vital information about policing and policing best practices. The information is an easy read for those with a long-time investment in law enforcement to those in the community who only have knowledge of policing when stopped for a traffic offense. Providing these binders has been a useful tool in enhancing our community partners’ interest and education in the dynamics of community policing. It also enhances their buy-in to the project when they feel well informed. The community partners were very excited that the COPS Office has information specific to their needs especially with the booklet about the faith-based community as a core component to the partnership. Additionally, the PCAV [Peoria Community Against Violence] group has used some information from the [COPS Office’s] *Collaboration Toolkit* in selecting appropriate members for committees and for addressing formation of groups.”

– *Peoria Police Department*

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## Iowa

“Our city works with the chamber of commerce on a course called Ankeny Leadership Institute. The police department enrolls one supervisor in every course while the community provides upcoming leadership in their organization to this leadership institute. The attendees are taught leadership values in public and private organizations and how to effectively reach your audience in a service-driven environment. The finale of the course requires the group to establish a class project, and they selected and named the project Inspire Ankeny based on the tenets of paying it forward. Inspire Ankeny created business cards with the words “You’ve just been inspired” and Inspire Ankeny. The card is distributed at the time a good gesture or performance is completed with the goal of getting the recipient of the card to pass the card onto another resident via a good deed. The good deed can be a cheerful greeting, words of encouragement, [purchasing] a cup of coffee, or simply strong role model performances. The concept places the values of the other person first in decision making. As a result, our department is working with the local shelter to raise health products, including diapers, toothpaste, etc., to keep the shelves stocked, and the ownership of this belongs to the Ankeny Police Department.”

– *Ankeny Police Department*

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## Kentucky

“The reading program that we implemented has made an amazing improvement in breaking down the barrier between police officers and the community as a whole. The children and the teachers have been so receptive and excited that they even submitted a story and photographs to the local press about how much fun they were having at their weekly reading program with our chief and how much they all enjoyed the reading program.”

– *McKee City Police Department*

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## Minnesota

“The greatest indication of success with any outreach initiative involving community policing is when you see residents, who otherwise would not turn to officers for help, reach [out] and get involved. This is never truer than with multicultural citizens. Recently, Hopkins police received a call to the police department from a younger Hispanic mother . . . . This mother stated she trusted the police department because of work being done by police at the neighborhood park. This family was connected with important resources for recovery . . . .”

– *Hopkins Police Department*

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## Missouri

“The Crime Prevention Unit officers implemented the Citizens Alert Patrol (CAP) designed for neighborhood associations to have an assigned citizen’s patrol unit. The current CAP consists of 11 volunteers, who patrol the assigned neighborhood during different hours of the day and night. They drive their own vehicles with a magnetic sign (provided by the Springfield Police Department) stating “Citizens Alert Patrol” displayed on both sides of their vehicle. The volunteers attend training to qualify for participation. The volunteers have been reporting suspicious activity, parking violations, and vacant/dangerous buildings to the proper authorities. They also receive extra watch requests from the department and patrol those specific addresses. The CAP volunteers complete a daily activity report and give it to the Crime Prevention Unit.”

– *Springfield Police Department*

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## Puerto Rico

“The Juncos Administration is focusing on providing new alternatives and motivational activities to young people living in the public housing complexes. We have discovered that as long as they are active and involved in activities that keep them away from some areas within their neighborhood, they start discovering their own abilities to help themselves out of the comfort zone and explore the world among their boundaries. Understanding how they think gives the administration tools to search for new alternatives to help them focus on being a better citizen. The program “Puente al Exito,” which means bridge to triumph, is the best tool being used at this moment to help Juncos mayor keep some of them away from the drug abuse and all the negatives aspects surrounding it.”

– *Municipality of Juncos*

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## Texas

“The Harlingen Police Department conducted RAD (rape aggression defense) training for 10 women from a local church. The Harlingen Police Department held the 2nd Annual Autism Awareness event with 400 people attending. During the 99 Reality Show, the Harlingen Police Department had a display booth to bring DWI awareness and education. The Harlingen Police Department participated in the Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Event where child safety material was distributed. Members of the Boys Scouts were invited to the police department for an interactive learning activity and a tour of the police facility. Child Safety presentation was provided to several parents who received instruction in the proper use and maintenance of the equipment. Several neighborhood watch and school presentations were conducted throughout the city.”

– *Harlingen Police Department*

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## Utah

“A specific problem . . . was addressed in January. Parents were waiting in their cars to drop off or pick up their children in the red curb area [and] blocking the through lanes. This was causing safety issues for all concerned. The traffic flow was studied and re-routed to avoid the potential for backup and illegal parking. We were commended for having an SRO readily available to analyze and correct the situation.

Also, we have been in need of additional crossing guards at our elementary school crossings. Our participation in several of the HOA meetings has assisted us in recruiting a few part-time personnel and volunteers to help fill this need. Community response has been positive, and communication improved by our participation in these meetings.”

– *Washington City Police Department*

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## Virginia

“A notable success story is implementation of the Civility project being taught to all 6th–8th grades throughout the county, during health class, four times per year. These students are taught how to be civil to one another and learn the consequences of being mean or being a bully to someone else. Students are rewarded with a special lunch and are presented a certificate of completion signed by the sheriff . . . . If it helps one child understand how to be civil and grow up with a deeper understanding of the other person’s feelings, then it is well worth the effort!”

– *Bedford County Sheriff’s Office*

“A young woman and her mother both lived with a male subject who was abusive to them. The victim refused to testify against him in fear of having no place to live for her mother and herself. The victim, with the assistance of the domestic violence police officer, was able to testify, and an arrest was made in this case. Most importantly, the officer was able to find housing assistance for them through community services available to them. They are in a safe place. The domestic violence officers are able to take the extra time that these delicate cases require.”

– *Alexandria Police Department*

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## Problem Solving

### Arizona

“The department believes it has developed a comprehensive and effective school-based policing effort to assist the schools we serve become safer environments, thus positively affecting the communities and citizens we serve. The acquisition of this COPS Office SRO Hiring Grant has allowed us to enhance our efforts in school-based policing.”

– *Phoenix Police Department*

“Parents continually remark that they are glad to see the return of a police officer to the school and feel their children are much safer with his presence.”

– *Clarkdale Police Department*

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### Arkansas

“As of 2013, all burglary crime have been solved, and they were [previously] on an increase due to economic conditions primarily.”

– *Cotton Plant Police Department*

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### California

“SROs continue to assist school staff with identified at-risk or high-risk children . . . Initial outreach efforts have yielded significant academic improvements, some resulting in 56% to 68% GPA increases in the at-risk and high-risk groups.”

– *Brawley Police Department*

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“Our community policing plan has greatly enhanced our relationship with students, parents, and school staff. The police department is now considered an active participant in the educational goals of local children. Our collaboration with schools and probation has created a renewed interest in solving truancy problems within our school district.”

– *Colusa Police Department*

“The SRO organized a response to a reported bomb threat received by several students via SMS. The evacuation, law enforcement response, campus search, [and] student safety protocols were applauded by the school district. This response has led to other site administrators urging for school resource officers on their campuses within the school district.”

– *Dos Palos Police Department*

“Our SMASH [Synchronized Multi-Agency Safe Housing] operations continue to be an effective community policing tool. One location . . . that was identified by community complaints of drug activity, blight, property crimes, and other public nuisance behavior was severely impacting the quality of life for residents and neighbors. Our district command partnered with city and county representative[s] with a focus on identified problem tenants. After the operation, district command, fire department, and code enforcement staff presented our findings to the property owner. Since then, multiple code violations have been corrected, and there has been a documented reduction in both calls for service and community complaints.”

– *Hayward Police Department*

“We had great success on removing some squatters that had taken up residency in a very nice neighborhood. Our team used many of our abatement and nuisance codes to remove the squatters, but the most impressive thing about the case was we were communicating with the residents using a web-based system called Next Door, <https://nextdoor.com>. It is a web page that lets neighbors communicate about issues in their community. Since we had such success, we have now signed up other areas of the city communities to also use the system. Our area command officers can communicate with the residents about law enforcement and safety issues in their areas. It is sort of a cyber neighborhood watch.”

– *Hemet Police Department*

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“Our 2013 year-end crime report shows that stolen vehicles in our city were down 35% from the previous year.”

– *Kerman Police Department*

“Gang suppression officers made 48 self-initiated arrests, [made] 48 warrant arrests, issued 62 citations, completed 95 field interview cards, and conducted 206 probation/parole searches.”

– *San Jose Police Department*

“An example of a best practice is the mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF). The San Jose Police Department and the MGPTF work hand in hand to fight gang violence. The department and the MGPTF have identified 18 gang hot spots throughout the city. Due to staffing shortages, the COPS Office grant-funded gang cars are being utilized to saturate these hot spot areas. These officers have used prevention, intervention, and suppression techniques that have definitely calmed downed the gang violence for this quarter.”

– *San Jose Police Department*

“As of 4/23/14, statistics have now shown that the Town of Yucca Valley has a 100% return rate for runaway juveniles directly related to the SRO and her partnership with the local school district.”

– *Town of Yucca Valley*

“As a result on having officers assigned to the middle schools, the expulsion and suspension rate has dropped.”

– *Visalia Police Department*

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“Staff has noticed an influx of misbehaving and fighting between a group of 3rd-grade students. After being notified, [the SRO] began to speak with each student individually and ascertained that the issues are due to issues within the neighborhood between several families . . . . [In] response, a meeting was held with all of the 3rd-grade teachers, administration, and [the SRO] to establish some things . . . to combat the issues. A program was set in place to target the group of [students] involved. [The SRO] started to develop a junior crime watch program at the school to keep those students focused on teamwork, responsibility, and making good choices. This program is derived from the crime watch program at the middle-school level but on a smaller scale.”

– Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Department

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## Idaho

“Our new city code for chronic nuisance businesses is making a significant positive impact in our city. This new code gives area sergeants and administrators a new tool to help deal with problems.”

– Garden City Police Department

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## Illinois

“The SRO had a student that was a victim of a robbery in which the victim’s eye glasses were broken. The victim had no health care insurance and was unable to get an eye exam and replacement glasses. Due to the partnership the SRO and the Cahokia Police Department had with a local retailer, the SRO was able to get the victim an eye appointment with Wal-Mart and made travel arrangements to get the victim to his eye appointment. Wal-Mart donated an eye exam and a pair of glasses to the victim to replace the glasses that were broken during the robbery.”

– Village of Cahokia

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“In early 2013, legislators U.S. Senator Durbin and U.S. Representative Bustos met with Rockford area law enforcement leaders to discuss the importance [of] collaboration in fighting violent crime. From this meeting, the Winnebago County Violent Crime Task Force (VCTF) was formed. The task force enhances information sharing between the RPD [Rockford Police Department], Loves Park [Police Department], Winnebago County Sheriff’s Department, Illinois State Police, IDOC [Illinois Department of Corrections], and the state’s attorney’s office. The mission of the VCTF is to reduce violent crime by using an intelligence-based policing approach that prioritizes and coordinates efforts based on continuously sharing data and collaborating on investigations, enforcement, and prosecution. The strategy focuses the efforts [of] multiple agencies on the highest risk offenders, high-risk locations, and high-risk behaviors in Rockford and Winnebago County. Through March 31, 2014, the task force is responsible for arresting 19 suspects on weapons violations, nine are charged with drug possession, and 13 people were arrested on outstanding warrants. By removing high-risk individuals like these from the streets, the desired result will be to reduce recidivism and make our communities safer for everyone.”

– *Rockford Police Department*

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## Kansas

“In February, the Lenexa Police Department held active shooter training at one of our local middle schools. The training took place in two-hour segments of groups of four officers. It also included the use of the fire department as well. The course was broken down into two segments. Role players for the training were provided by the [army’s] 1077th Ground Ambulance Company, which was arranged by one of our current school resource officers. The training consisted not only of review but actual fluid scenarios of shooters and officers responding with the use of blanks and paintball ammunition. Two of the current school resource officers were on scene throughout the entire training to assist.”

– *Lenexa Police Department*

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“From January to March of 2014, [the SRO at a middle school] had 280 student contacts, had 55 parent contacts, held one intruder drill, assisted with four other drills, attended three school functions, and taught 37 classes with 504 students in classes. The majority of the classes . . . taught were intruder classes. The classes walked students through what to do if there was a shooter in the building. All of the students were encouraged to go home and talk to their parents about what they learned. They were also encouraged to always ask “what if” questions to [the SRO]. The K-9 unit came to the PTA meeting and conducted an hour-long demonstration for the parents and staff.

“[The SRO for three elementary schools and one middle school] performed three intruder drills, took six reports, and taught 80 classes with 1,850 students in the classes . . . [The SRO] gave a safety presentation to the Young Explorers group . . . a community program that is put on by the Lenexa Parks and Rec department for four to five year olds . . . [The SRO] also gave an ALICE and general crisis planning presentation at the Lenexa United Methodist Church at their request. This class helps get the word about the ALICE program into the community, as well as get the church thinking about how they would respond during a crisis.

“Prior to the Lenexa Police Department receiving the SRO grant, [a corporal with the department] was only able to be at [a local high school] two days a week and divided his time among four different elementary schools as well. Once the grant was in place, [the corporal] was able to give his full attention to the high school five days a week . . . [The corporal] conducted one intruder drill, attended six school functions, and taught 15 classes with 440 students attending those classes. [He also] proposed and facilitated two evening presentations for parents and students . . . One of the classes was on Internet safety, and the other was on drug recognition and abuse.”

– *Lenexa Police Department*

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“When the SAFE program began in the high school, the seat-belt compliance rate was near 65%; after one full year, that rate at the last data collection was 90%. This is a testament to the partnership of student, SRO, and law enforcement working together toward a common goal of student safety.”

– *Ottawa Police Department*

“The community has taken notice of the [SRO] and the positive impact the SRO has had with the students. The interaction between the SRO and the students has developed a relationship where the SRO has knowledge of the students’ problems and been able to interdict abused children and get them to a safe environment. Without the COPS [Office] program, this would not have been possible.”

– *Tonganoxie Police Department*

“[Our SRO] successfully coached a student to seek mental help with her thoughts of wanting to kill herself . . . . Without [the SRO’s] position, we would not have been able to catch this situation so quickly.”

– *Valley Center Police Department*

“[An officer] completed a community policing activity with the students, called “Touch A Truck.” Several emergency vehicles and military vehicles are on hand for kids to look at and touch while asking questions that are answered by police officers and other emergency staff.”

– *Valley Center Police Department*

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## Louisiana

“The success of the program in Beauregard Parish is [related to] the close relationship that the sheriff’s office has with the Beauregard Parish School Board and local schools. Being a rural parish, the deputies’ families live in the parish and attend the local schools. [The] sheriff encourages the deputies to [be] at the schools and walk around talking to the students and staff (a practice that was started before the school resource officer program). Deputies [are] also encouraged to attend school [activities] during the day and evening. This standard has been carried on for over 20 years, and the school resource officer program will enhance the relationship already in place.”

– *Beauregard Parish Sheriff’s Office*

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## Organizational Transformation

### California

“The use of our new message board / radar trailers have been really successful at getting our messages across in real time to motorist while the same messages on the backend via our Facebook page adds to the fact. The electric motorcycles have been a great PR tool and work great for specialized enforcement in our area.” – Ceres Department of Public Safety

“The GPS tracking program has been extremely valuable. It should be replicated across the country. We are now up to 105 arrests.”

– Redlands Police Department

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### Texas

“In 2010, the Crime Analysis / Command Center Division modified its focus away from producing statistical reports to a more problem-solving approach with greater emphasis on regionalization and pushing information down to the lowest possible level (patrol officers) to impact positive change. This new orientation has increased morale with most all patrol commanders advising that they are now receiving ‘actionable’ information that they can use to improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods they serve. While there are a number of factors (known and unknown) that contribute to a decrease in crime, the city of Houston has experienced historic decreases in crime in the last two years while implementing this new focus for crime analysis. A continuation of this focus for 2012-13 has resulted in violent crime rates that continue to dramatically decline.”

– Houston Police Department

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## Utah

“A success story that the department would like to share is the effort to assign officers to specific areas for longer periods of time to better facilitate relationships with community members and stakeholders. The department’s bicycle squad officers have been assigned to the downtown park areas and have had strong success in establishing relationships with community partners, business owners, and residents to proactively engage in community oriented policing. The assignments have provided citizens and business owners with police contacts who know the neighborhood and who have been involved in the continuing crime reduction efforts. This not only helps improve trust between the police department and the public, but it helps create a dialogue to discuss how to utilize all community resources to address the crime problems facing our downtown neighborhoods.”

– *Salt Lake Police Department*

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## Virginia

“[In] April 2014, an industrial accident occurred where the majority of the victims (50) spoke little or no English. The victims were transported to the local hospital, which had implemented [its] mass disaster response plan. The position funded by the COPS [Office] grant was assigned to the emergency department of the hospital and provided translation services between medical staff and victims. Two officers who had been tutored by the bi-lingual officer in Spanish phrases were able to assist with patients as they arrived at the hospital via EMS.”

– *Galax Police Department*

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