

**YOUTH JUSTICE IN  
ACTION**





- ✘ Advises the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors on the "unmet needs" of youth
- ✘ Areas of focus include juvenile justice issues, starting with Prop 21 in 2000
- ✘ In 2012 and 2013, we focused on youth concerns with SFPD and Juvenile Probation Department

# Our Goal...

We want a city where young people are treated with dignity and respect, and where we take a preventative and rehabilitative approach to dealing with juvenile crime.

**This is about YOU!**

YOUR LIVES, YOUR  
NEEDS, YOUR  
EXPERIENCES, YOUR  
FUTURE!

**We hope you will...**



**TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!**

# Our priorities related to SFPD



# 3 Recommendations to SFPD

- ✘ In March 2012, the Youth Commission held a joint hearing with the Police Commission focused on youth-police relations.
- ✘ Over 70 youth and juvenile justice experts testified.
- ✘ Following that meeting, the YC made 3 recommendations to SFPD...

# #1 Train officers on youth-police relations





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# **Know Your Rights for Youth in San Francisco**



The San Francisco Police Department seeks partnership with families, schools and youth providers to prevent and solve problems affecting children and youth.

# #2 Distribute Know Your Rights Pamphlets

# #3 Establish an MOU agreement with the School District



# #1 Training on Youth-Police Relations

**We think a training for new hires and advanced officers should focus on...**

- ✘ Juvenile law and Dept. order 7.01**
- ✘ Adolescent development and youth mental health**
- ✘ Issues of racial profiling**
- ✘ Practical skills for de-escalation and asserting authority effectively**
- ✘ Real-life scenarios that involve youth in the training.**

# Training on Youth-Police Relations cont'd...

- ✘ These trainings are already in use in other police departments around the country, including San Diego.
- ✘ We are asking SFPD to consult with Lisa Thureau of Strategies for Youth, a nationally-renowned trainer.

# OUR GOAL...

✘ Police understand how to work with young people and receive ongoing training on working with youth

## #2 Distribution of Know Your Rights Pamphlets

- ✘ SFPD developed a brochure for youth focused on youths' rights and what to expect during arrest and questioning.
- ✘ The brochure is based on the Dept. order 7.01 and is usually handed out before and during arrests.

# Distribution of Know Your Rights Pamphlets cont'd...

- ✘ We want youth to know their rights before they have contact with police.
- ✘ We have recommended SFPD distribute these pamphlets to schools, community centers, and youth organizations four times a year.
- ✘ In conversations with the YC, the school district agreed to place the pamphlets on the district website and in the SFUSD student handbook.

# OUR GOAL...

- ✘ San Francisco youth know what to expect when dealing with police and are aware of their rights *before* they come in contact with police



# #3 MOU with the School District

## We want to see...

- ✘ an MOU with the school district that lays out procedures for when police come onto campuses to question or arrest students.
- ✘ an MOU established before the upcoming 2013/2014 school year.

# Why an MOU?

- ✘ We want to see a joint document that clearly lays out the roles and responsibilities of the school district and the police department.
- ✘ SFPD and SFUSD should each develop department orders and administrative regulations based on the content of the MOU.
- ✘ Several community groups have put a lot of work into seeing that an MOU is established.

# What should an MOU say?

- ✘ Include excerpts of the DGO 7.01
- ✘ Use binding language and specify separate roles of SFPD and SFUSD
- ✘ Address procedures for arrest, parental notification, and interrogation
- ✘ Address how school administrators will be informed when police come on campus and how police and school admin will work together to determine if an arrest is necessary
- ✘ Address what kinds of school-based offenses are grounds for arrest
- ✘ Address what kind of training SRO's will get from the school district

# OUR GOAL...

- ✘ Students feel safe on school campuses and are not unnecessarily referred to law enforcement for school-based offenses.
- ✘ The school district and the police department work together in clear and consistent ways when responding to concerns on campuses.

# Where are we now?

- ✘ Chief Suhr agreed to the YC's 3 recommendations at a Police Commission meeting in April 2012.
- ✘ SFPD new recruits have begun volunteering at youth programs, but the recommended training has not yet been established.
- ✘ SFPD and the YC had a meeting in April 2013 to discuss the recommendations and are in touch to make sure the recommendations are followed through.
- ✘ We are looking forward to continued conversations!

# Next Priority: What's up with Tasers?



- ✘ Tasers are stun guns that deliver an electric shock when fired at someone.
- ✘ They are often called ‘less-than-lethal’ weapons.
- ✘ So far, at least 500 people in the U.S. and 92 people in California have been killed by tasers during arrests or while in custody.
- ✘ They are most dangerous for old, young, thin, and pregnant people, or when people are wet or have heart problems.

- ✘ Three San Francisco police chiefs have proposed arming SFPD with tasers. Each time, the community has voiced opposition.
- ✘ The Youth Commission passed a resolution against the use of tasers in February 2013. Commissioners participated in a Tenderloin community forum on tasers in March.
- ✘ **Chief Suhr dropped his recent proposal for tasers last week.**



## **Argument for tasers:**

‘Police need alternatives to using firearms.  
Tasers give police a safer option.’

## **The YC says:**

‘Tasers are not a safe alternative. They can harm  
and kill people. We would be concerned for SF  
youth if tasers were in use.’

## **Argument for tasers:**

‘Tasers are a safer way to respond to crisis situations.’

## **The YC says:**

‘SFPD has not followed through with a plan to implement crisis intervention training with 20-25% of its officers and 911 responders.

We want to see efforts to use the Crisis Intervention Team model when responding to crisis and when handling people in psychiatric distress.’

# VICTORY!

The Chief announced April 11<sup>th</sup> that he was dropping the plan to acquire tasers following community and youth feedback.

This is a community victory!

Our voices really matter!!!

# Our priorities related to Juvenile Probation



# Against the arming of Juvenile Probation Officers



# Background...

- ✘ In January 2013, Chief Sifferman announced to the Juvenile Probation Commission that he was reviewing the department's safety protocol and was considering arming juvenile probation officers.
- ✘ The Juvenile Justice Providers Association spoke out and the YC passed a resolution against the arming of JPO's in February 2013.

# Background cont'd...

- ✘ Chief Sifferman cited state juvenile justice realignment and the return of repeat offenders to SF, as well as young people's increased access to guns as reasons for reviewing safety protocol.
- ✘ In April, the Chief announced he had discontinued any plan for JPD to arm PO's, but that some JPO's were being sent to SFPD for training to work on a joint police-JPD task force.
- ✘ In April, an article in the *Examiner* titled "The Mean Streets of San Francisco" focused on the dangers caused by 'super-predator' youth.

## **Chief Sifferman commented in the article:**

*“These kids are different from when I started 43 years ago when it was stealing hubcaps, riding in stolen cars and shoplifting...The complexities that the kids present and trauma that they’ve been exposed to make it more difficult.”*

## **We want to know...**

Why would the response to traumatized youth be to expose them to more arms and increased enforcement?



We are glad JPD has dropped the plan to arm PO's, but we want to understand...

- ✘ Will JPO's on the task force be armed by SFPD?
- ✘ Why is the task force necessary when JPO's already make visits with officers from the gang task force?
- ✘ What are the long term effects of this change? Will more youth on probation be exposed to police contact while on probation?

What do you think about this  
issue?



# What can you do?!

- Come out to a hearing on this issue on Thursday, May 2, 2013 at 3:30PM, Board of Supervisors Chambers, City Hall

# Next priority: Recreation Access at Juvenile Hall

The Juvenile Probation Department should prioritize capital improvements to recreation areas in order to provide full access for youth detainees



# Background...

- ✘ In December 2006, the San Francisco Juvenile Probation Department opened a newly constructed juvenile hall
- ✘ The newly renovated Juvenile Hall cost the city \$47.4 million
- ✘ The new hall includes a large outdoor recreation area with a grass soccer pitch, amphitheater, tetherball and volleyball courts.
- ✘ But the rec yard was not opened because of safety concerns, including a wall that was not built high enough

# Background cont'd

- ✘ The YC wrote a resolution urging for access to Juvenile Hall's outdoor recreation areas in March 2012
- ✘ Youth spoke out on the issue at our public hearing in February 2012
- ✘ The BOS Public Safety Committee held a hearing on the issue in May 2012
- ✘ The YC brought the issue to the Juvenile Probation Commission and the Juvenile Justice Commission

# There was lots of press on the issue!

- ✘ The Bay Citizen and the New York Times wrote articles in February, August, and October 2012
- ✘ The second article quoted a letter to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors from Layla Welborn, and nurse at the Hall, who described the *“mostly bare cement rooms” where youth are confined for much of the day as less than “optimal conditions for physical or mental health for any human being.”*

# Where are we now?

- ✘ In February 2012, the JPD agreed to provide youth detainees access to two of the basketball courts in the outdoor recreation area.
- ✘ However, access to the full recreation area is still not allowed.
- ✘ In December 2012, Youth Commissioners met with JPD to review logs and ensure detainees were getting their 1 hour of recreation time a day, as mandated by state law.



- ✘ Chief Sifferman has made clear that detainees cannot be provided safe and secure access to the full recreation area without additional funds.
- ✘ JPD has not included the recreation yard in its 10-year capital improvement plan
- ✘ After five years of almost total disuse, the Youth Commission wonders if detainees will *ever* have access to the full recreation area. Will SF's youth detainees have to wait over a decade to use the rec area at Juvenile Hall?

We are going to continue to brainstorm ideas and urge JPD to do whatever possible to allow detainees to fully access the recreation yard!

We want to hear what  
YOU think!