

2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on

# Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Studies

June 18-19, 2018 | Rome, Italy

## Youth and police: Making peace

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The volatile climate between police officers and community members throughout the United States, especially in low-income urban areas, creates a dire need for interventions that mitigate harmful interactions. Interventions are necessary to alleviate the collateral damage of policing tactics. Youth aged 16–25 years old, especially of color in low-income urban areas, have more police contact than adults. The Youth Police Initiative (YPI) attempts to address these issues by bringing youth who have had or are most vulnerable to police contact together with the local beat officers to share personal stories, meals, cultural norms, job expectations, tactics and ultimately community actions plans. Police and youth let their guards down long enough to have the difficult and honest discussions that are necessary in order for real change to take place. This paper is a mixed methods evaluation of the YPI to understand its ability to impact the attitudes and behaviors of the youth and police officers that participated. Although the YPI has operated for almost 15 years in cities across the US and two other countries, this is the first time it was evaluated to determine the outcomes and effectiveness of the approach. Evaluation of the YPI employed a mixed methods approach. Attitudinal and behavioral outcomes were assessed using a combination of pre and post interviews, and pre, post, and follow-up surveys of both youth and police participants. The evaluation benefits the fields of policing and juvenile justice by providing evidence about the efficacy of a unique program approach in the area of police-community relations.

### Recent Publications:

1. Fischer N R (2011) Model approaches for children and youth with serious emotional disturbance: systems of care and wraparound. *New Directions in Behavioral Health: Service Delivery Strategies for Vulnerable Populations*: Springer Publishing 87–104.
2. Arthur H, Bowler S and Fischer N R (2011) Children, youth and families. *New Directions in Behavioral Health: Service Delivery Strategies for Vulnerable Populations*: Springer Publishing 71–85.

### Biography

Nina Rose Fischer completed her PhD in Social Welfare Policy, and is an Assistant Professor at John Jay College in Interdisciplinary Studies. Her expertise is in Youth Justice and Mixed Methods Evaluation. She conducted a study of a youth police intervention Long Island's probation and police, and in Brooklyn, New York at a precinct with a significant violent crime and police citizen complaint rate. She evaluated a reentry intervention for young women and a harm reduction curriculum in a New York City high school.

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