

HEARING SIX

Juvenile Justice

May 5–7, 2020

The following summary is intended to provide an overview and highlights of the testimony and discussion during the hearings. For a full and detailed account of the hearings, please refer to the [Commission website](#) and the audio recordings and transcripts located there.

Framing the Issue and the Need for Accountability, May 5, 2020

First Panelist: *Hon. Tim Irwin, Judge, Knox County (Tennessee) Juvenile Court*

Highlights:

- Knox County has a population of about 430,000. In 2005, it had 299 social service commitments and 51 juvenile justice commitments to the Department of Children Services. Today, in the wake of the opioid crisis, it has 702 social service commitments and 26 juvenile justice commitments.
- Juvenile justice commitments were predicted to follow the trend line of the social service commitments, but are down by half since 2005, despite social service commitments more than doubling. The detention facility where children are held while awaiting trial held 40-45 children a day in 2005; at last count, it held 17, and 11 of those were being held under contract for other counties or the state.
- The first step to reducing the number of juvenile justice commitments was restoring internal communication within the court. Monthly staff meetings, and a bimonthly Safe Policy meeting. The Safe Policy meeting was established by a Memorandum of Understanding with the local stakeholders who take part: police chief, sheriff, law director, attorney general, magistrates, school resource officers, and community organizations—sheltered care, mental health, indigent care, community drug coalition, Boys and Girls clubs. The standing agenda includes discussion of larger trends and individual cases.
- One successful program, founded in 1963, is the Serious Habitual Offender program, or ShoCap. Children in the program are given a photo ID and sign a contract agreeing to rules and responsibilities. One responsibility is a curfew, checked frequently but inconsistently by a Knoxville City police officer or Knox County sheriff's deputy. Children start to form relationships with the curfew check officers, which helps in rehabilitation.
- Boys and Girls Clubs have a facility in the juvenile detention center—mostly, in the short time a child is in detention, they can make contacts and interest the child in participating at the clubs after release. The county did a study of 772 children who had been participating in club programming for 100 days—83 percent from nontraditional families, many low-income or minority. Only one of the 772 had appeared before a judge or magistrate.
- The county has tried to be vigorous about removing children from unsafe situations during infancy and toddlerhood—this is one reason for the increase in social commitments.

Recommendations:

- Accountability must carry across the different components of social service providers, the courts, and law enforcement. They need to fully engage each other, and engage the community.

Second Panelist: Brett Kyker, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Criminal Division, Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Prosecutor's Office

Highlights:

- The approach to criminal justice in the Cuyahoga County prosecutor's office is to divert low-level nonviolent youth offenders away from the juvenile justice system while taking an aggressive stance against repeat violent offenders.
- The prosecutor's officer and juvenile court launched an early intervention and diversion center in February 2019. The center links juveniles with services at the beginning of cases, rather than months down the road at their resolution. All juveniles, whether their cases are ultimately diverted or not, are assessed on intake and the intake prosecutor can wait for the assessment results before making a charging decision.
- There are two basic diversion tracks: care coordination and traditional community diversion programs. If behavioral or mental health needs are assessed, the juvenile is referred to a care coordinator; otherwise, they are referred to programs consisting of more traditional elements like community service and restitution.
- There are also specialized diversion programs designed to address specific behaviors. Project Calm is geared toward low-level domestic violence offenses. It provides officers a drop-off location for juveniles to meet with a clinician for mental health screening and potential referral. It also gives officers and families the option of placing juveniles in respite care for a cooling-down period.
- Ohio Guidestone, a behavioral health agency, runs a behavioral diversion education program for children 13 or younger who have been accused of sex offenses against family or household members. There is also a sexting diversion program—under Ohio law, sexting by minors falls under a child pornography statute and can be a high-level felony; for this reason, they reserve charges for cases involving widespread dissemination, blackmail, or repeat offenses.
- The country drug court has a post-adjudication program. If an assessment by the intervention center recommends drug court, the prosecutor's office usually follows the recommendation and offers a plea; if a juvenile completes the drug court program, charges are dismissed, sealed, and expunged.
- The court and the prosecutor's office developed a diversion criteria grid to make diversion decisions consistent. In 2019, the prosecutor's office diverted about half of low-level felony and misdemeanor cases, allowing them to focus on more serious offenders.
- According to county data, the official number of delinquency cases declined from 8,584 in 2009 to 3,738 in 2018, attributable both to diversion efforts and a decline in case submission by law enforcement. High-level felony rates have increased over this same time. A small portion of juvenile offenders are responsible for a disproportionate number of these serious and violent offenses. The crime strategies unit in the prosecutor's office facilitates communication among the county's almost 60 police departments to identify this small population of crime drivers.

Recommendations:

- Assess juveniles when they first walk through the door. Provide them with specially tailored services to steer them away from the justice system. If their criminal conduct continues and escalates, hold them accountable using the tools at your disposal.
- If you don't have a judge in your area who facilitates communication between all partners, then you need to facilitate it yourself.

Third Panelist: *John F. Clark, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children*

Highlights:

- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) operates two core programs to combat online child sex exploitation: the cyber tip line and the child victim identification program.
- The cyber tip line is a mechanism for members of the public and electronic service providers to report possible child sex exploitation. Most of these reports deal with the distribution of child pornography, but the NCMEC also receives reports related to child sex trafficking, online enticement of children, child sexual molestation, child sex tourism, unsolicited obscene materials, and misleading domain names. Since its creation 22 years ago, it, has received more than 71 million reports, with the volume increasing every year.
- The primary goal in reviewing cyber tip line reports is to prioritize them so they can be made available to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. They often provide tips directly to Internet Crimes Against Children task forces around the country.
- The Child Victim Identification Program (CVIP) tracks previously identified child victims and helps local unidentified child victims, so that law enforcement can locate and rescue them. Many law enforcement agencies send CVIP copies of child sexual exploitation content seized from offenders; they triage it to determine which images and videos are new so efforts can be focused on identifying those children.
- The NCMEC recently convened a cyber tip round table, including federal, state, local, and international law enforcement, other nonprofits, the DOJ, and partners from the technology sector to look at improving reporting mechanisms and developing consistent best practices. They are working with ESPs to oppose end-to-end encryption and urge the Commission to also oppose it.

Recommendations:

- Pursue close and relevant public-private partnerships to combat child sexual exploitation, such as the NCMEC's collaboration with domestic and international ESPs, international law enforcement, and nonprofits. The complexity, volume, and global scale of the issue requires coordination among multiple agencies.
- Continue training law enforcement in combating child sexual exploitation. The NCMEC has been involved in training state and local agencies across the country in tools and techniques they can use.
- Consider ways to work with electronic service providers in investigating child sextortion cases—online enticement, often by an offender posing as an age-appropriate peer. This may happen on any type of online platform.
- Support prevention and outreach efforts. Law enforcement officers in the schools and communities can do outreach on internet safety; the NCMEC has resources and training for officers on how to do this, as well as on services for survivors.

Question-and-Answer Session, April 30, 2020

Q: [For Mr. Clark:] With schools closed for the COVID-19 crisis and students using their electronic devices in unprecedented ways, predators have a target-rich environment, and parents are stretched thin and may not understand all the applications their children are using. What can we do right now, in our communities, to raise awareness on this issue?

A: Take resources into the communities, into community meetings. Make it a point of interest. Talk to parent groups. Many parents have been using the NCMEC's outreach and engagement materials during quarantine; the center has also translated them into Spanish.

Q: [For Mr. Clark:] There is a lack of prosecutors trained in technology, who understand the platforms and mechanisms used to traffic children. Have you seen this lack around the country, and do you advise resources go not only to training prosecutors and law enforcement in technology, but to retraining those employees?

A: Yes, and we'd applaud the effort if the Commission could help with that. Prior to the pandemic the NCMEC was in the process of creating training avenues for state and local prosecutors about online criminal activity. Judges and prosecutors at certain levels don't really understand the technology. We also urge the Commission to understand that the terminology needs to be changed. We still see the use of the term 'child prostitution' in criminal codes. There's no such thing: children don't elect to prostitute themselves; it's 100 percent child victimization.

Q: [For Mr. Kyker:] For a long time, people have viewed juvenile court as a training ground for young prosecutors, who want to move on to bigger cases and get rotated out after a short period of time. Do you think that's a good way to handle prosecutions in juvenile court, or should there be specific training and long-term assignments for the prosecution and the defense?

A: Yes. The big difference between juvenile and adult court is that the goal of juvenile court is to rehabilitate, and in the adult court system that may not always be the goal. In Cuyahoga County juvenile court has traditionally been viewed as a starting ground, but they recognized the importance of having some stability in the unit and the current prosecutor has shifted resources back into juvenile justice: putting in more experienced prosecutors, loaning prosecutors from the major trial unit to authorize pleas and from the child victim and sexual assault units to provide guidance on those cases. They have a safe harbor docket for trafficking victims who come to court for their own offenses, and more experienced prosecutors handle those programs.

Q: [For Judge Irwin:] Accountability seems to get lost in the juvenile system sometimes. Can you speak on that?

A: One thing that scares me to death are children with guns. There hasn't been a large increase in juvenile gun crime in Knox County, but statewide and nationwide there has been. You have to let children know there's a consequence for each action. Accountability runs in a lot of different ways. It would be hard to face law enforcement in the safe policy meetings if he had not been holding children accountable—he has to be accountable to his law enforcement partners. Accountability can mean communication, making sure all his partners are working toward the same goal. Accountability of children to the system is what keeps the public safe.

Q: [For Judge Irwin and Mr. Kyker:] How do you measure success in your programs, from a program management standpoint? How do you determine if you're making progress?

A: [Judge Irwin:] First, does the child reappear in court with another charge? That's a loss. Does the child raise children who are not offenders? There needs to be a focus on prevention, through organizations like the Boys & Girls Clubs and shelters for children who need them, and shelter care organized and interfacing with law enforcement.

A: [Mr. Kyker:] A lot of evaluation is based on recidivism levels. It turns into a numbers game—Cuyahoga County has partnerships with different research entities, including Case Western Reserve University. They have sought an outside agency to evaluate the intervention center, which is new, but some of the longer-term programs like the Calm Program have been through research studies and been found to have much lower recidivism rates than the national average.

How Law Enforcement Addresses Juveniles Involved in Crime, May 6, 2020

First Panelists: *Superintendent Addison Davis and John Newman, Chief of Security and Emergency Management, Hillsborough County Public Schools, Florida*

Highlights:

- In response to the 2018 mass school shooting, Florida enacted the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act, which established a public safety commission tasked with investigating the incident and formulating a recommendation. It also mandated specific protocols and procedures to be established across the state to assist schools in providing safe and secure learning environments.
- The commission submitted an initial report on January 2, 2019. It recommended the development of a statewide behavior threat assessment process, identified stakeholders in that process including law enforcement, and emphasized behavior indicators that have the potential to manifest as threats of violence.
- After this report's release, the Hillsborough County school district conducted a review of its existing mental health processes to determine if the commission's findings were applicable to its threat assessment processes, and identified several areas for improvement in the implementation of its threat assessment protocol.
- Before 2019, Hillsborough's threat assessments were documented via an antiquated paper-based format. Student mobility made it difficult to share paper-based threat and suicide assessment information across sites in such a large district (more than 220,000 students at 249 sites).
- This lack of consistency in implementation also translated into lack of consistency in reporting, exacerbated by the lack of mandated law enforcement participation in threat assessments. Site-based teams were not quickly informed of the concerning behavior of incoming students, and leaders were challenged to ensure that appropriate individualized management plans were enacted.
- The district's first step to address these issues was to ensure that all protocols were followed and that interventions and outcomes were shared with appropriate stakeholders in a timely manner.
- Its next step was to comply with the new legislation and school board policy requiring that threat assessment teams be established at all school sites within the district, and also to mandate that these teams include a school resource officer.
- The district's mental health team, in collaboration with the school safety specialist, reviewed and refined its threat assessment protocol to align with the state recommendations. Hillsborough established a multidisciplinary threat assessment team, defined prohibited and concerning behaviors, created a central reporting mechanism to determine the threshold of law enforcement intervention, established assessment protocols, developed risk management options, created and promoted safe school climates, and conducted training for all stakeholders in the organization.
- The training clearly defined the process and governance concerning student behaviors that may indicate the need for threat assessment. This clarity has improved consistency and quality assurance in reporting across grade-level bands from one school site to the next.
- To improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the district's current behavior threat assessment process, the district contracted with a national consultant who also provided training

and evidence-based tools that align with the national threat assessment center recommendations.

- The behavior threat assessment solution the district adopted was based on the Virginia model referenced by the national threat assessment center, and complies with district protocol and state legislative requirements. The consultant worked with district staff to customize the tools of the threat assessment solution to meet the district's needs before rollout to the school sites.
- The behavior threat assessment solution urges a case management approach with four steps. Step one: Document a student threat and follow immediate risk protocols. Step two: Gather, share, and consider data from various sources, from school records to social media. Step three: Consider key questions for determining risk level and intervention steps. Step four: Prepare a student supervision action plan to monitor and address underlying issues and mitigate risk.
- The systems used for this solution generate email and text alerts and permit threat assessment teams to create robust reports and analyze trends. The solution lends itself well to a standardized assessment instrument. The cost of moving from a paper-based system to a comprehensive digital platform, however, is expensive, and though this threat assessment solution aligns with the efforts required by state statute and law, it is not financially supported by the state. For a district Hillsborough's size, the annual cost is approximately \$230,000 per year; many districts are unable to bear the financial strain of acquiring these tools.

Recommendations:

- The Commission should consider initiating a standardized threat assessment instrument accessible to all school districts in the nation.
- This instrument should subscribe to an accepted school-based threat assessment model and include the development of threat assessment teams. These teams should include law enforcement, school personnel, and other school-based practitioners.

Second Panelist: Mo Canady, Executive Director, National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO)

Highlights:

- Context for these remarks is provided by NASRO's Standards and Best Practices Recommendations, put together two years ago and provided with the written testimony.
- One concern of NASRO is the lack of standardization across the country in the arena of school-based policing. One of these best practices is the Triad Concept, which involves the school resource officer (SRO) operating as a law enforcement officer—the foundation of the Triad—but also in the role of informal counselor and in the arena of education.
- Being in the education process doesn't necessarily mean presenting a curriculum in the classroom. It can happen in the hallway or the lunchroom through interactions with students. The same with informal counseling.
- The number one goal of an SRO should be to bridge the gap between law enforcement and youth—not to defend the campus or guard the door. In many cases, positive relationships between youth and SROs have led to an exchange of intelligence that allows SROs to initiate investigations into potential acts of school violence. (See written testimony referring to the National Police Foundation's averted school violence database).

Recommendations:

- Select the right person for the SRO role. This is frequently a problem, though it has improved over the years. Agencies sometimes select the wrong person for this position—someone they want to retire, or who they can't figure out how to fit into any other assignment. That's always a mistake. The SRO is going to become one of the most well-known officers in the community, for better or for worse.
- Give SROs proper training. SROs need specialized and specific training. They need to understand adolescent brain development—the more they understand about that issue, the better opportunity they have to deescalate an issue. They need to know as much as they can about school law, emergency operations plans, and active shooter response. They also need to understand issues around adolescent mental health. NASRO is already concerned about what issues students are going to have when school begins again after the pandemic.
- Clarify and publicize the definition of SRO, which is often not known to media or even within law enforcement. An SRO is (1) a sworn certified law enforcement officer, (2) deployed into the school environment in a community-policing approach, and (3) in a collaborative effort memorialized in a memorandum of understanding between the school district and the law enforcement agency. Not everyone who calls themselves SROs fits this definition.

Third Panelist: Sheriff Bill Waybourn, Tarrant County, Texas*Highlights:*

- Tarrant County is home to more than two million people. Its juvenile detention center is not under the authority of the sheriff's office, but works closely with them. Texas as a whole incarcerates 50,000 juveniles a year—4,000 in Tarrant County alone.
- Tarrant County is seeing an uptick in violent crimes from juveniles entering the system. Many juveniles are filed on outside the juvenile justice system—for example, by the agency that arrested them—and released to their parents. Tarrant County is a fast-growing county and expects the numbers of juvenile arrests, inside and outside the juvenile justice system, to rise.
- Of these, 70 percent are from fatherless homes, 40 percent are involved with child protective services, 70 percent are diagnosed with mental illness or involved with mental health treatment, and 70 percent have a substance abuse problem. They have high truancy rates and are generally repeat offenders. Most have experienced a major trauma.
 - Homes without fathers: One Juvenile Probation Officer Supervisor has a caseload of 150, and could identify a father for one case.
 - Truancy: They see high truancy rates in K-5, but don't start treating it as an urgent problem until middle school.
 - Child protection: Juveniles coming into detention are often coming from foster homes, both formal and informal—i.e., living with grandparent or other relatives or friends or bouncing between homes. Often parental rights are eventually terminated when the child is about eight or nine—there are between 350 and 400 children between the ages of eight and 17 up for adoption in the county now who are likely to stay in foster care until they age out at 18. By that time, 70 percent will be involved in the juvenile or adult justice system. Many end up on the street. Some end up being trafficked—a recent study from the University of Texas found that 79 percent of trafficked children in the state come directly from the foster care program.
- Incarcerated juveniles are similar to adult offenders—80 percent of adults in the county jail don't have a high school education, 80 percent don't have a father in their life, and 80 percent have a substance abuse issue. Unlike the juvenile offenders, however, only—“only”; it's still a large number—only 45 percent of the adult jail population are clients of mental health practitioners.

- Incarcerating a juvenile costs \$300-\$345 per day, compared to \$75 for an adult offender. The difference reflects the costs of schooling, continuous counseling, and higher levels of supervision.
- Once children have been incarcerated, their road is almost decided. They're in with like-minded peers, and see delinquent behavior and going to the detention center as rites of passage. This happens in the foster care system as well, when group homes have been tried. Many runaways who ended up in these homes had resorted to survival criminal activity and shared experiences with peers. Juvenile mental health facilities and the alternative school are also breeding grounds.
- All these places are necessary as last resorts, but they should be a very last resort.

Recommendations:

- Bring resources to bear, including nonprofits and churches, to help homes become more stable, mentor parents who need help, and keep children from entering the detention system.
- Expand SRO programs to elementary schools to make sure kids will see police officers as mentors and counselors.
- Train specific officers to target delinquents in their neighborhoods on an evening shift, 3:00 to 11:00 p.m., so they can be on the beat during the hours kids are most likely to get into trouble.
- Fund after-school programs and resources like police athletic leagues. But also, make sure that police who are mentoring youth in these programs have social services information at their fingertips—food bank locations, etc.
- Spend the resources on incarcerating children on the front end: support parents, but also reexamine foster programs and, if parental rights are to be terminated, do it when the child is three, not nine.

Fourth Panelist: Deputy Chief Thomas Lemmer, Fraternal Order of Police Lodge No. 7

Highlights:

- While there are valid concerns about juvenile records lingering into adulthood, expunging them while youths are still minors leaves police and social service workers unable to identify appropriate intervention approaches. It also reaches the youth that they can continue in their problem behaviors without consequences.
- In Chicago in 2016, a youth aged 10 to 17 who had never been arrested had a risk of 0.4 in 10,000 of being murdered. A single arrest raised that risk by 38 times, to 15 in 10,000, and four arrests raised it 160 times, to 64 in 10,000. It's not the arrest that raises the risk, but the contact with others, some of whom are inclined towards violence. Expunging juvenile arrest records too early does nothing to lower this victimization risk, but conceals the need for intervention from police and others.
- A significant portion of violent crime involving juvenile offenders has gang connections, especially to the most established gangs and those actively involved in the drug trade. These organizations can be multigenerational and controlled by adults with extensive criminal histories. These gangs have an incentive to seek out juveniles to perform basic criminal activities: they can be easily influenced and can shield adults from legal accountability.
- For example, consider the 1994 shooting of 14-year-old Shavon Dean by 11-year-old Robert "Yummy" Sandifer. Sandifer had already been arrested 40 times for drug crimes and armed robbery and prosecuted eight times in juvenile court, twice sentenced to probation. In the attempt to shoot at a group of boys from a rival gang, on older gang members' instructions, Sandifer shot and killed Dean and was quickly identified as the killer. Concerned Sandifer might implicate them if captured, gang leaders ordered two other juveniles, ages 14 and 16, to execute Sandifer. No adults were ever prosecuted for either murder.

Recommendations:

- Acknowledge the core role of juvenile court structure. All juvenile delinquency intervention, beyond the young person's self-motivation to actively participate, relies on a support structure to guide the youth towards positive change when home, schools, or community programs have been unable to reach them. It falls to the juvenile court to provide this structure. If youths are not willing to engage, absent follow-up monitoring by the police or juvenile court system they simply drop out and do not receive needed services.
- Create a multilayered community response. Do not accept a false choice between juvenile courts and complete deflection to community-based programs; we need the all-of-the-above response, one which includes the following:
 - Robust prevention programming that increases the ability of parents to effectively respond in the home.
 - Effective child welfare monitoring whenever neglect or abuse is detected.
 - Deflection with voluntary program options for first-time nonviolent youth offenders.
 - Diversion programming options that include service completion requirements and appropriate reengagement collaboration efforts by police, juvenile probation, or prosecutors.
 - Intervention support for youths unable or unwilling to meet service engagement requirements, including juvenile court itself.
 - The formal filing of delinquency petitions seeking court intervention with all youth involved with serious acts of violence or chronic delinquency patterns.
- Take a balanced approach to juvenile records expungement. Encourage states to delay automatic expungement of juvenile arrests and court records until the individual has reached adulthood and successfully completed all disposition requirements.
- Address the contributing adult factor. Existing prosecutorial approaches rely heavily on the full cooperation and testimony of the juveniles, who often believe in the gang's promises or solidarity or fear its threats of retaliation. The Commission should encourage legislation mandating sentence enhancements for use at both the federal and state prosecutorial levels whenever adult offenders are convicted of felonies with unrelated juveniles as accomplices. This would not require a charge with a separate offense, but only the inclusion, as part of the factual basis of the offense charge, of proof that a co-offender was a juvenile at the time of the crime. Such enhancements should be on a graduated scale, ranging from an additional non-concurrent year for nonviolent felonies up to an additional 20 years for violent crimes resulting in the death of a victim.

Youth Mentorship Panel, May 7, 2020

First Panelist: Ms. Pam Iorio, President and CEO, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America

Highlights:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) creates one-on-one mentoring relationships for youth. In 2019, 73% of the more than 135,000 young people mentored were eligible for free lunch, 15% had one or more parents incarcerated, 57% were being raised in a single-parent home, 35% lived with a family member experiencing mental health concerns, and 26% had a family member struggling with substance abuse.

- Youth enrolled in BBBS are 46% less likely than peers to begin using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin using alcohol, and 52% less likely to skip school.
- A grant to BBBS from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funded impactful mentoring of 7,900 youth in the last year at a cost of \$18,000 each, compared to \$35,000-64,000 yearly to incarcerate a youth.
- The Bigs in Blue and Bigs in Badges program was scaled up from a local law enforcement youth mentoring program and has grown to 103 agencies in 35 states. Mentors come from police and sheriff's departments, the FBI, the Highway Patrol, and other law enforcement and court entities. Florida Attorney General Ashley Moody has asked all law enforcement in the state to become mentors.
- Social distancing is making it difficult for Bigs and Littles to meet in person. BBBS is building an e-mentoring platform to be integrated into the national tracking database, set to roll out in mid-June.

Recommendations:

- Endorse a one-to-one mentoring model to help prevent young people from entering the juvenile justice system and promote emotional support, positive skills and behaviors, feelings of safety and security, academic skills, and positive relationships with family and peers.
- Expand funding for OJJDP mentoring programs.
- Encourage the Bigs in Blue and Bigs in Badges program on the state and local levels.
- Encourage and support virtual mentoring initiatives during the pandemic.

Second Panelist: *Mr. Steve Salem, President and CEO, Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation*

Highlights:

- The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation's Badges for Baseball program is a juvenile crime-prevention initiative which uses police officers to coach and mentor youth in underserved communities. Children participate in sports activities into which coaches integrate the foundation's discussion-based character education curriculum, focusing on building life skills, developing personal accountability, and respect for community.
- The foundation has expanded the program to other initiatives led by local police officers, including college day experiences, instructional leads, installation of STEM centers, the creation of the I Am Great self-confidence program for young women, and the Strike Out Hunger campaign.
- In 2018, the University of Michigan Prevention Research Center began a three-year evaluation of Badges for Baseball. Preliminary evidence shows significant improvement in many measured outcomes (see written testimony).

Recommendations:

- Police executives should encourage and reward officers, especially those in urban areas struggling with high crime rates, to engage as role models and mentors in youth development programs such as BBBS.
- Congress should appropriate additional funding to the OJJDP for national mentoring organizations with proven evidence-based outcomes
- Congress should appropriate additional funding to the COPS Office to support enhancement of the community development program.

Third Panelist: Mr. Wintley Phipps, President and CEO, U.S. Dream Academy, Inc.

Highlights:

- The U.S. Dream Academy has operated for 21 years, expanding to seven U.S. cities, running minority-led after-school mentoring programs serving children of incarcerated parents and children falling behind in school, with the goal of breaking the cycle of intergenerational incarceration.
- Seeing a parent arrested and incarcerated normalizes incarceration, making it an accepted and anticipated future. This expectation, combined with the trauma of parental incarceration, leads to negative interaction with law enforcement.
- Children of incarcerated parents have an unusually high dropout rate. 80% of males in state and federal prisons are high school dropouts.
- In 2009, the DOJ asked the Dream Academy to lead a coalition to reduce delinquency and violent crime in Washington, DC's Ward 6, which it did by 33% over its term of active engagement. This was accomplished with just one year of funding and significantly eased the burden on law enforcement in Ward 6.
- Brick-and-mortar institutions are all under stress—including those where communities have gone for fellowship and education.

Recommendations:

- Invest in virtual mentoring and use technology to strengthen the capacity of community-based organizations.

Fourth Panelist: Mr. Jim Clark, President and CEO, The Boys and Girls Club of America.

Highlights:

- A study conducted by the Institute for Social Research and the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan found that every dollar invested in Boys and Girls Clubs returns \$9.60 in current and future earnings and cost savings to communities.
- Youth exposed to even one persistent risk factor, such as poverty, family instability, failing schools, and neighborhood violence, are more likely to initiate or escalate unsafe behaviors or become victims of crime or abuse. Many youth are exposed to multiple risk factors in their homes and communities and need highly targeted support.
- Boys and Girls Clubs have worked for more than 20 years with OJJDP to meet the specialized needs of youth involved in the juvenile justice system.
- The Boys and Girls Club youth mentoring program unites the elements already present in clubs with formal, evidence-based prevention programs, providing a combination of individual, group, and peer mentoring services. The National Mentoring Program mentors an average of 30,000 youth ages 6-17 every year, focusing on justice-involved youth, those in contact with or referred by police, and at-risk children under 12. Recently, the program integrated trauma-informed practices.
- Early intervention and prevention reduce the potential for community violence, gang participation, and engagement in high-risk activities.
- Over 90% of Boys and Girls Clubs have ongoing associations with local law enforcement; 56% have members of law enforcement serving on the board and more than half have members of law enforcement serving as mentors. These relationships build ties between law enforcement and

youth. 87% percent of club teens believe law enforcement officials are hardworking and do a good job, although 52% also stated they are afraid to interact with law enforcement.

- The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the risk factors children face at home and in their communities. It is critical to support mentorship and early intervention programs for children now, as they will be highly vulnerable to economic and social changes as we recover from this crisis. Only about half the clubs that apply for youth mentoring grants receive them; emergency investment is necessary to ensure that organizations which serve youth out of school time can continue providing critical intervention services.

Recommendations:

- Increase investment in youth mentoring programs.
- Prioritize early intervention and prevention.
- Make emergency investment in youth-serving programs during critical times.

Question-and-Answer Session, May 7, 2020

Q: [For Mr. Salem:] In how many states is the Badges for Baseball program active, and what separates it from other youth mentoring programs?

A: The program has been implemented in about 550 communities in more than 45 states. Its success depends on the commitment of the police officers and chief, their time availability, and police department resources. Cal Ripken, Jr. spends most of his time supporting the foundation and interacting with children in the program, and his presence in communities generates attention and excitement for the program, benefitting the local youth partner. This exposes the local partners to opportunities for potential funding and media awareness. The foundation's goal is to increase the resources for that local organization. In many communities there aren't a lot of options for local organizations to partner with—Boys and Girls Clubs or BBBS programs, maybe an inner-city Y, police and sheriff's departments, churches.

A: [Commissioner Hawkins]: I would like to add that my department has been using Badges for Baseball and it has been impactful. The officers are dedicated. We intertwine it with our PAL program.

Q: [For Ms. Iorio]: In Florida, by governor's executive order and administrative rule, they've been able to offer law enforcement employees one hour a week of administrative leave to be mentors in this type of program. Do other states offer similar incentives, and is that helpful in recruiting law enforcement mentors?

A: Florida's executive order is not typical, but we think a recommendation should be made that all governors and attorneys general consider such an order. But if leadership wants to mentor, they have the time. It all depends on the police chiefs and mayors—if they lead by example, then you have a flood of officers who want to be Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

Q: [For Pastor Phipps, Mr. Salem, and Ms. Iorio]: At what age should mentors get involved with kids? Often the juvenile justice system feels that criminal enterprise uses kids as pawns, but they're learning a criminal way of life and can end with a life prison sentence. I don't know if we're getting to these kids quickly enough.

A: [Mr. Salem]: There's a tipping point—you need to get to these kids before the gangs do. But there's also a point where they're too young to understand or have the ability to decide what's right and wrong. So they target late elementary to middle school—old enough to digest these lessons but young enough they haven't lost them yet.

A: [Ms. Iorio]: To introduce them to the concept of, hey, law enforcement can be your friend, nine or ten is a good age to start. By that time they've probably seen arrests in their communities. If they can match them with a mentor who can stick with them through middle school, the chances for changing their trajectory are very high.

A: [Pastor Phipps]: They begin with middle school children. It's the most critical age to impact young people's choices. They focus on academic support and character-building.

Comment: [Gordon Ramsay]: In light of stay-at-home orders, one thing many of us in urban environments are seeing is an increase in vandalism—a lot of tagging and park vandalism. But also shootings and homicides are up. They're getting an idea of what happens when structured mentoring and activities programs for youth are out of service and it's very concerning.

Comment: [David Rausch]: An important point is that for youth, mentoring is happening every day—the question is, is it positive or negative?