

History/Inception of the SRO

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Department

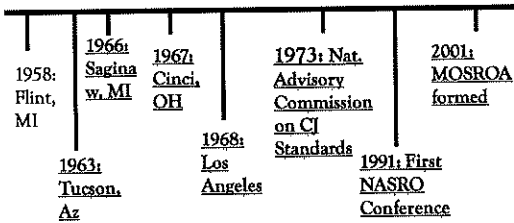


- You drop your kids off at school or at a bus stop and tell them you will see them after school
- You are going about your day like every other day
- A co-worker runs to you and ask if you have heard the terrible news
- You find the news story streaming live and find out that a local school had been invaded by a gun wielding intruder
 - 20 are dead and more than 40 are wounded
 - It took law enforcement over 30 minutes to respond, devise a plan, and enter the school
 - The intruder had control of the school for over 25 minutes before he ran out of ammunition and took his own life
 - Mass hysteria is being reported around the school
 - You later find out it was your child's school this occurred at
- Your first thoughts are "Where is my child and are they alive"?
- Your second thought is "Why did it take so long for law enforcement to show up and take action"?

Course Objectives

- Upon completion of this course of instruction the student, given the lecture, handouts and notes, will
 - List 2 major dates relating to the SRO History/Inception
 - List 3 types of crimes typically committed in schools
 - List 3 duties/goals of the SRO
 - Identify the 3 categories of the SRO Triad

SRO HISTORY



Dates in SRO History

- Prior to 1950's there was no SRO program
- 1958 – Flint, Michigan
 - Goals:** Present Educational programs
 - Counsel students and parents
 - LE officer on campus
- 1963 – Tucson Arizona
 - Goals:** Improve relations with LE and juveniles in junior high
 - It was successful so they expanded to high school

Dates in SRO History Cont.

- 1966 – Saginaw, MI
 - Goals:** Two officers for 2 high schools, 5 JR High Schools, 27 Elem. Schools
 - Demonstrated not enough officers
- 1967 – Cincinnati, OH
 - Goals:** Main emphasis on classroom contact and LE capacity in emergency situations
 - 1969 study reflected this as successful
- 1968 – Los Angeles, CA
 - Goals:** Officers assigned to JR High School and full time faculty status
 - Successful and moved to High Schools

Dates in SRO History Cont.

- 1973 – National Advisory Commission on CJ Standards concluded:
 1. All LE Agencies should present at least one annual school presentation to every grade level in their jurisdiction
 2. Programs should cover the role of LE in our society
 3. Every agency that has over 400 employees should assign a full-time officer to each JR High and High School
 4. Officers should teach classes, counsel students, be a resource person for the school and enforce the law

Dates in SRO History Cont.

- 1991 – First National Association of School Resource Officers Conference was held in Sarasota, FL

- 2001 – Missouri School Resource Officers Association was established

The Missouri School Resource Officer's Association (MSROA) is a non-profit 501 3c organization made up of Law Enforcement Officers who work in the School setting, School Administrators and Educators formed in 2001. The Association is dedicated to promoting education, training and networking between school based police officers and facilitating cooperation between the community, schools and Law Enforcement

Dates in SRO History Cont.

- 2013 – Missouri Revised House Bill 152 is passed

- Bill allows a school district to commission school officers to enforce laws committed on school property, at school activities, and on school buses

- At a minimum, SRO's must complete 40 hours of basic SRO training to include legal operations, intruder training, juvenile law, and any other relevant topics

Causes of Student Crime

- Peer Pressure
- Racism
- Family – Financial and Personal Stress
- Lack of Opportunities and Positive Role Models
- Abuse of Drugs and Alcohol
- Easy Access to Weapons
- Lack of Support Networks Among Family, Friends, and Neighbors

Possible Issues That Arise In Schools

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| ▪ Disgruntled Parents | ▪ Playground Accident |
| ▪ Student Fights | ▪ Abused Youth |
| ▪ Angry Bus Drivers | ▪ Labor unrest |
| ▪ Weapons In School | ▪ Ethnic disturbance |
| ▪ Fires | ▪ Snow emergency |
| ▪ Power Outages | ▪ Hostage situation |
| ▪ Suicide | ▪ Alarms |
| ▪ Food Poisoning | ▪ Drunk staff or students |
| ▪ Gas Leak | ▪ Internet threats |
| ▪ Abused Youth | ▪ Food fight |
| ▪ Bus Accident | ▪ Student uprising |
| ▪ Rape | ▪ Allergic reaction |
| ▪ Abductions | ▪ Hazing |
| ▪ Accidental death | ▪ Heat Alert |
| ▪ Evacuation Panic | ▪ Trespassers |
| ▪ Epidemic | ▪ Workplace Violence |
| ▪ Cult Activity | ▪ Rumors |
| ▪ Drive By Shooting | ▪ Terrorism |

SRO - TRIAD Concept

- Law Enforcement Officer
- Educator
- Counselor

TRIAD – Law Enforcement

- Credible form of authority
- Full law enforcement authority
 - Arrest
- Deterrent to crime related activities
- Provides safety and security
- Investigates criminal activity on the campus
 - ❖ Thefts
 - ❖ Drugs
 - ❖ Assaults

TRIAD – Law Enforcement Cont.

- Primary contact for juvenile offenders & victims
- Develops intelligence information
- Individualized police services
- Crime prevention
 - ❖ Safety & security
 - ❖ Crisis planning

TRIAD - Educator

- **Educate Faculty & Staff**
 - ❖ Legal issues
 - ❖ Police procedures
 - ❖ Crime prevention
 - Personal safety
 - Workplace violence
 - ❖ Classroom presentations
 - ❖ Emergency response
 - ❖ Current trends
 - Drugs
 - Community issues

TRIAD – Educator Cont.

➤ **Educate Students**

- ❖ Role of the SRO/law enforcement
- ❖ Police procedures
- ❖ Criminal law & legal issues
- ❖ Juvenile laws & juvenile justice system
- ❖ Personal & school safety issues
- ❖ Citizenship issues

TRIAD – Educator Cont.

➤ **Educate Parents**

- ❖ Legal issues
- ❖ Police procedures
- ❖ Youth issues
- ❖ Drugs & alcohol
- ❖ Emergency response plans
- ❖ School related safety issues
 - Bus safety
 - Child exploitation/Internet Safety

TRIAD – Educator Cont.

➤ **Educate Community**

- ❖ Role of the SRO
- ❖ Community Policing
- ❖ Develop community partnerships
- ❖ Community liaison

TRIAD - Counselor

- Intervention
- Sounding board
- Listener
- Establish rapport
- Helper
- Identifying and clarifying problem situations
 - ❖ Personal, family, peers

SRO – Specific Duties/Goals

- Bridge the gap between police officers and kids
- Increase positive attitude toward law enforcement
- Reduce juvenile crime through counseling, teaching, personal interest
- Act as positive role model, liaison, resource

SRO – Specific Duties/Goals Cont.

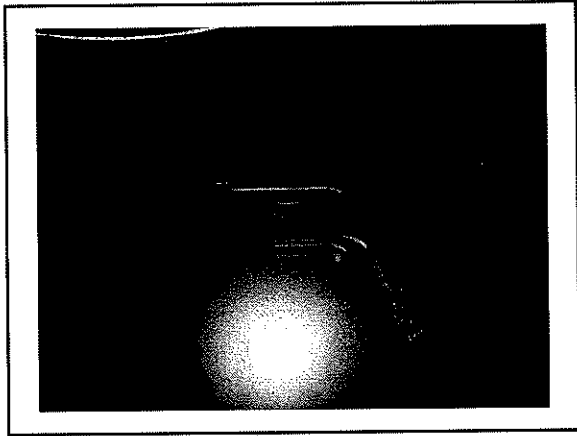
- Visible and accessible
- Interact positively with students and school community
- Participate and support school functions
- Maintain relationships with parents, school administration

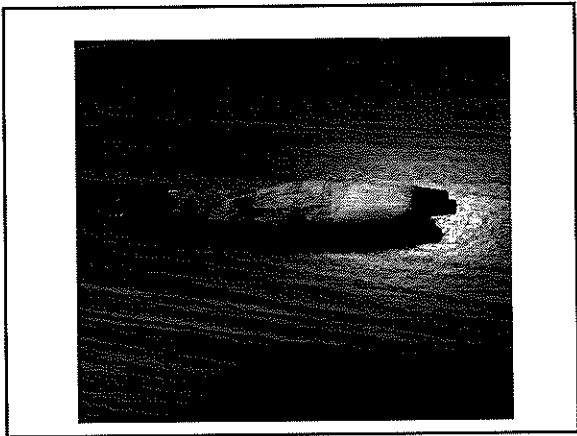
Guidelines of the MO SRO

- >SRO's are not disciplinarians. An SRO takes action only when a violation of the law has occurred.
- >SRO's coordinate their activities with administrators and staff members and seek advice and guidance before enacting any program within the school.
- >SRO's are police officers sworn to up-hold the law.
- >SRO's make presentations on various subjects of law-related education in order to increase student understanding of the laws.
- >Should it become necessary to conduct criminal investigations in the school, SRO's conduct those investigations in accordance with the Law, school district policy and policy of the law enforcement agency.

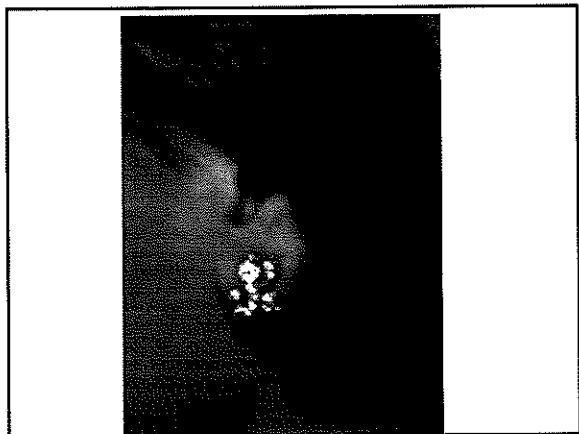


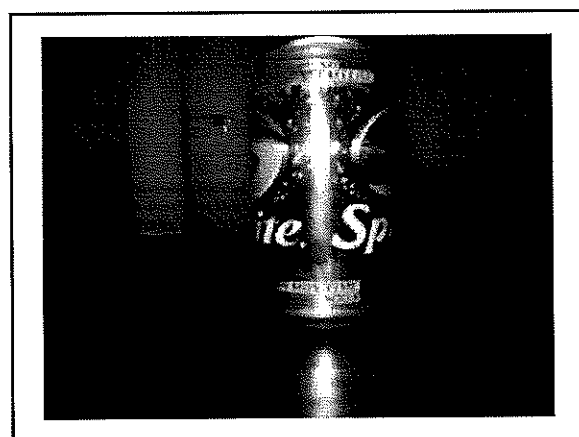


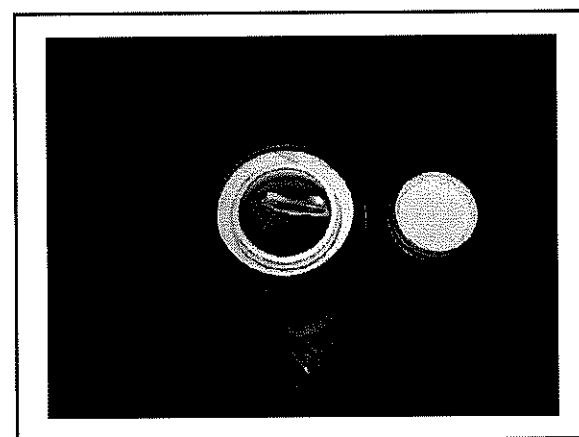


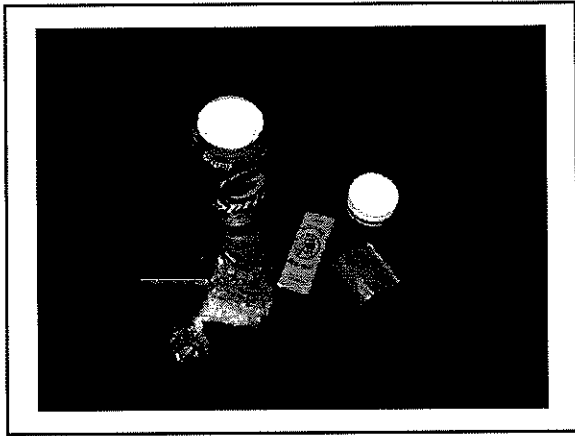


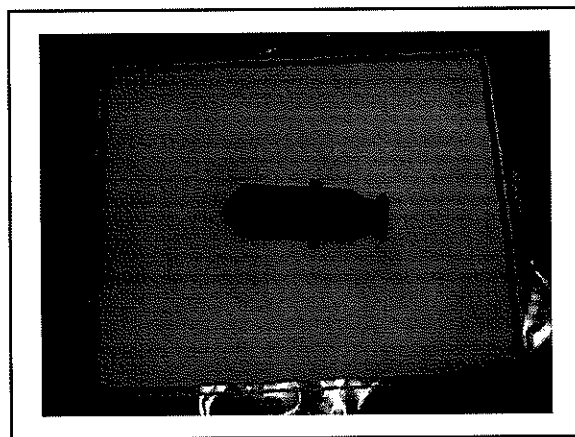


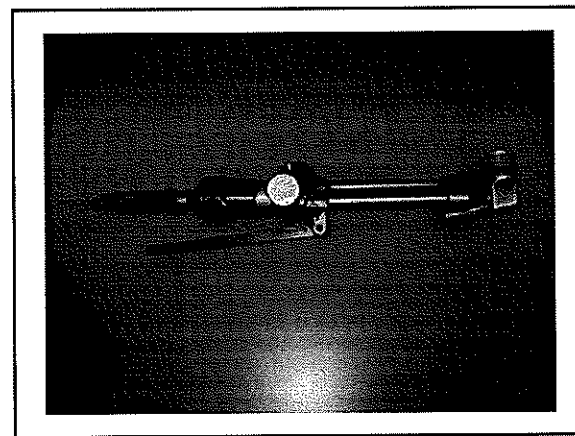




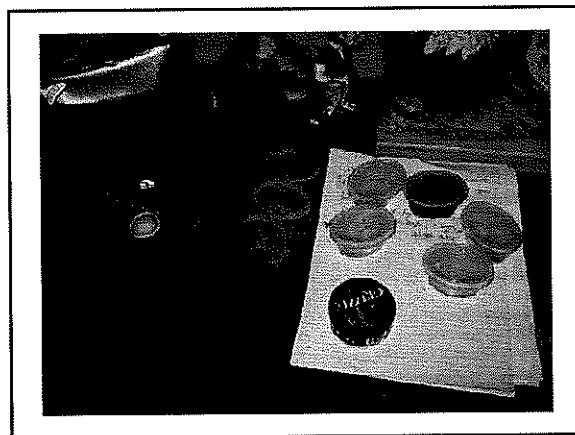


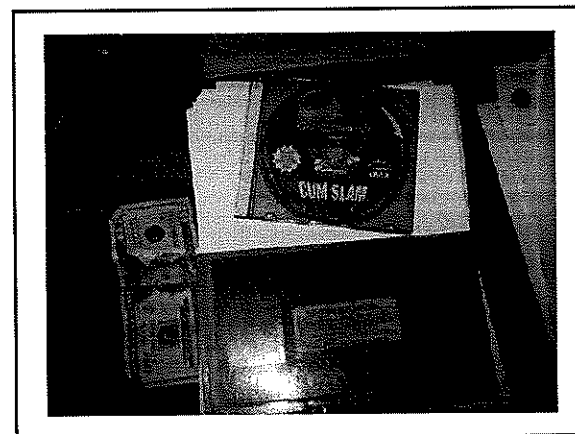


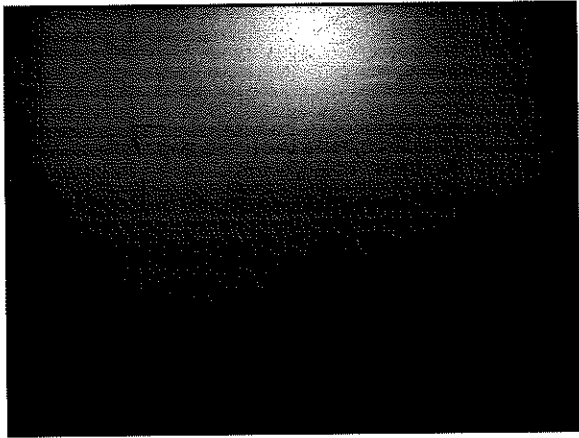




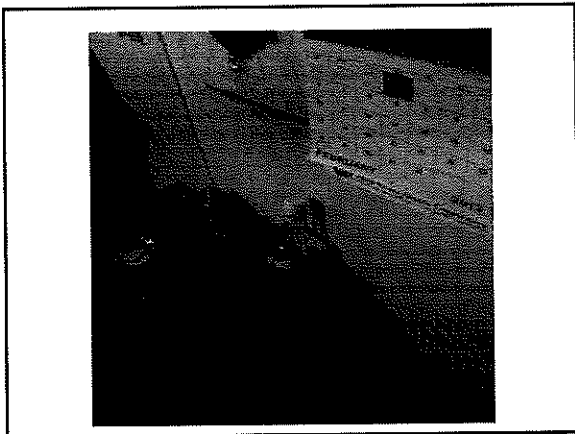






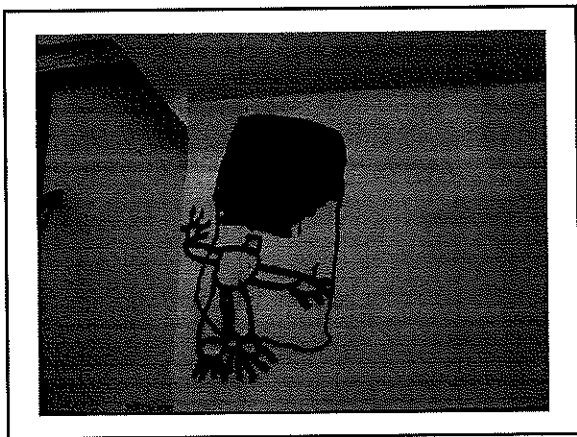


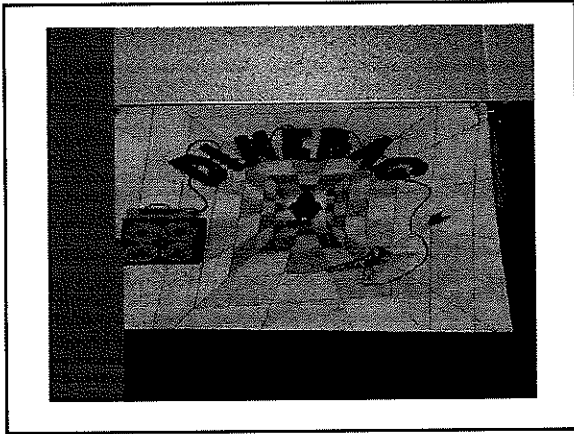


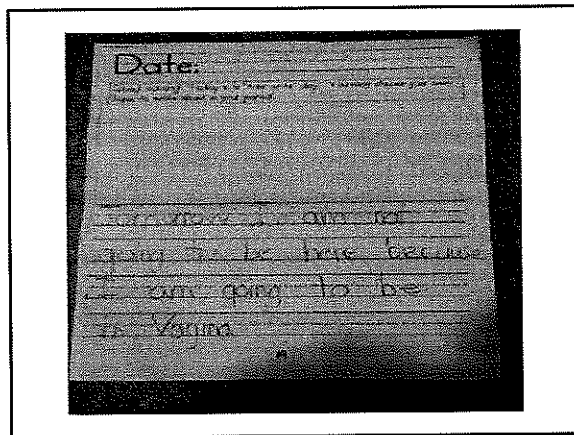


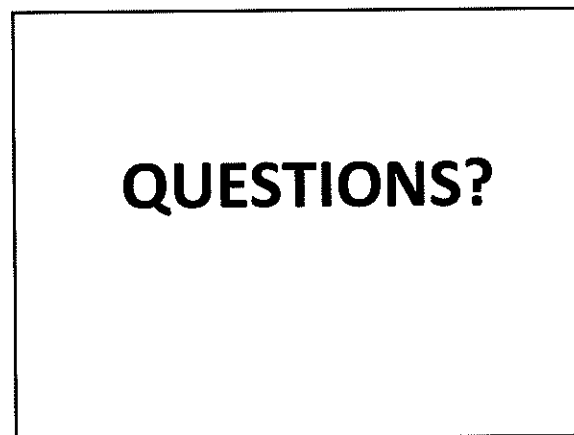












History/Inception of the School Resource Officer (SRO)

One of the most valuable possessions that a person has is their children. Parents send their children to school every day believing that their children are safe and will be back at home that night. They drop them off at school or put them on the bus and go to work. The parents are at work doing their day to day business when a news alert is broadcast explaining that a local school was the subject of a gun wielding intruder and multiple children are dead or seriously wounded. The report explains that 20 are dead and more than 40 are wounded and it seems that the intruder was in complete control for over 25 minutes before he ran low on ammunition and then took his life. The only thought running through the parents mind is "Where is my child now and are they alive"? Mass hysteria occur and the town in which this happened has basically shut down trying to deal with this tragedy with no one working, shopping, etc. The town's economy is in a downslide until this incident is put behind everyone. The local news is reporting that no one in the school was able to stop the intruder and it took law enforcement over 30 minutes to respond, devise a plan, and enter the school. If only there had been law enforcement close or better yet stationed at the school!!

In the beginning the primary reason for an SRO in the schools was to deal with school/student issues which took manpower off the street. Another reason they were assigned at schools was to bridge the gap between students/facility and law enforcement. The perception of law enforcement with children was that if you saw a cop at your school, someone was going to jail. This is primarily due to the fact that the only time they engaged with a cop was when they were in trouble or their parents were being hauled off to jail. There are many more duties/goals that SRO's were put into the schools to provide/achieve, which will be discussed in this block of instruction, but due to the increased violent nature of the world and the people living in it, SRO's are there for protection or the first line of defense.

History

Many believe that the SRO program got its start just recently, late 1990's into the 2000's, but that is not true. Prior to the 1950's there was no SRO program but beginning in 1958, Flint, Michigan began presenting educational programs, counseling both students and parents in matters of law enforcement and how it affected them. They also were the first to actually assigning law enforcement officers to different school campuses. This program worked better than expected. Then in 1963, Tucson Arizona placed law enforcement officers in junior high schools in order to improve relations between law enforcement and students due to numerous issues spilling from the schools into the community. Their intent was to try and stop the problems before they reached the community. It worked so well they expanded their program into the high schools. Next Saginaw, Michigan in 1966 placed two officers into 2 high schools, 5 junior high schools and 27 elementary schools. They found that two officers was not nearly enough to support 34 schools, even though the majority of student problems arose from the

junior high schools and high schools. A year later in 1967, Cincinnati, Ohio began an SRO trial program with the main emphasis being on classroom contact with law enforcement and students and also having the law enforcement capacity in emergency situations. A study of this year long trial program revealed it was very successful and they then expanded their program. In 1968, Los Angeles, California assigned full time officers to junior high schools, believing that issues with students began in junior high and the thought of getting to them early might solve some of the issues they were having in the high schools. They also were given a faculty status which meant they not only had law enforcement powers, but school administrative powers as well. This was very successful so they as well moved their program into the high schools as well. Next the National Advisory Commission on CJ Standards conducted a study in 1973 to determine guidelines on what they believed SRO duties should encompass. They concluded the following:

1. All law enforcement agencies should present at least one annual school presentation to every grade level in their jurisdiction
2. Programs should cover the role of law enforcement in our society
3. Every agency that has over 400 employees should assign a full-time officer to each junior high and high school
4. Officers should teach classes, counsel students, and be a resource person for the school and enforce the law

Even though these were just guidelines, the majority of departments who decided to assign officers to schools follow these general directives in some fashion. Following this commission study, the first National Association of School Resource Officers held a conference in Sarasota, Florida in 1991 solidifying the ideal of SRO's and the work that they do. In 2001, the Missouri School Resource Officers Association was established. The mission statement of the MSROA is that it is a non-profit 501 3c organization made up of law enforcement officers who work in the school setting to include administrators and educators. The association is dedicated to promoting education, training, and networking between school based police officers and facilitating cooperation between the community, schools, and law enforcement. Lastly, in 2013 the Missouri House passed HB 152 which allows a school district to commission school officers to enforce laws committed on school property, at school activities, and on school buses. Included in this bill is that an SRO must complete 40 hours of basic SRO training to include legal operations, intruder training, juvenile law, and any other relevant topics.

Causes and Possible Issues of School Crime

Students are faced with many decisions every day in a school setting. Their brains, body, etc. are continuing to grow and they are trying to fit in with other students, to include choosing paths they want to head in while confined to a classroom for 8 hours a day. There are also outside factors putting pressure on them to make the right decision or the right path to go down. The right decision or path is not always chosen correctly by all students. The list that follows are a few of the causes of student crime relating to poor decisions that are made:

- Peer Pressure
- Racism
- Family – Financial and Personal Stress
- Lack of Opportunities and Positive Role Models
- Abuse of Drugs and Alcohol
- Easy Access to Weapons
- Lack of Support Networks Among Family, Friends, and Neighbors

Once again these are only a few of the pressures that are put on students which effect all decisions that they make. Because of these pressures and poor decisions, issues/crime does happen in schools as well as on the streets. These issues/crime range from disgruntled parents at home with the student to rape, suicide, and hazing to weapons in school, abuse, and even terrorism. Terrorism is a fast growing concern as it relates to our schools. Terrorists have said that one of the worst attacks they could plan and execute would be on a school. They are fully aware that American's most valued possession is their children. Not only would an attack on a school be devastating personally to Americans but also devastating to our economy. Those involved would not work, shop, etc. causing the market to plummet. The rebuild would be costly and probably not occur for a lengthy amount of time once again causing the local economy to struggle.

SRO Triad Concept



The SRO triad is comprised of 3 main areas; Counselor, Teacher/Educator, and Law Enforcement. These main areas were tested, evaluated, and implemented through trials and studies that we have already discussed. These 3 main areas will now be discussed further.

The first area of the triad is Law Enforcement. The SRO is a credible form of authority in the school by the actions, attitudes, and appearance. They have full arrest authority and at the same time are a deterrent to crime related activities by their presence and even the presence of their patrol car parked in the front parking lot. They provide safety and security to the school and are able to investigate criminal activity on the campus alleviating the need to call a road officer off the street to take care of any situation that might occur. SRO's are a primary contact for students, parents, and staff of the school. SRO's can provide individualized police services to include crime prevention by instruction and planning.

The second area of the triad is Teacher/Educator. The SRO can educate faculty of the school in legal issues, police procedures, crime prevention to include personal safety, workplace violence,

etc., classroom presentations, emergency response, and current trends in drugs, gangs, and community issues. The SRO can educate students in the role of the SRO and law enforcement, police procedures, criminal/civil/juvenile law, personal/school safety, and citizenship issues. Parents can also be educated by the SRO by presenting legal issues, police procedures, youth issues, drugs & alcohol, emergency response plans, and school related safety issues such as bus safety and child exploitation/internet safety. Lastly the SRO can educate the community in the role of the SRO, community policing, community partnerships, and being a community liaison. SRO's are asked on a daily basis to develop many types of specialized presentations to teach on. This area of the triad is important not only to the school but to the community as well. The bridge that is developed between law enforcement and the school, student, and community starts here.

The third area of the SRO triad is counselor. Even though no law enforcement officer wants to admit it, they are in fact counselors in some shape or form. A cop will always say, "They didn't teach me that in the academy" doesn't mean that they won't do it on the street on a day to day basis. The counselor area for an SRO is very important due to the fact that when an SRO is counseling a student, the student can come away with the feeling that cops are humans too, they think and feel the same way we do, which again is important to bridging the gap between students and law enforcement. SRO's counsel in the following ways; intervention, a sounding board, a listener, and a helper. They can establish a rapport with the student which can last a lifetime if done correctly. The SRO can also help identify and possibly clarify problem situations with a student that they might have thought of. In general, the SRO is not necessarily thought of as an administrator of the school so students feel a little easier about talking to the SRO and not automatically feeling that what they say will definitely get them into trouble.

SRO Specific Duties/Goals and Guidelines

The SRO concept does have specific duties/goals in mind, even though the majority of people believe all they are there for is to take students to jail and to make life harder on them as possible. Once again the SRO can bridge the gap between cops and students, all the while increasing a positive attitude toward law enforcement. They can reduce juvenile crime through counseling, teaching, and personal interest. SRO's will act as a positive role model, liaison, and resource for the school, student, parent, and community. SRO's will be visible and accessible throughout the school day for anyone. They will positively interact with students, school, and community. They will participate and support school functions to maintain positive relationships with school, students, and community. Even though the specific duties/goals of the SRO are to be reached whenever possible, there are guidelines that affect how they achieve those duties/goals. SRO's are not disciplinarians and are not to take action when only a school violation has occurred. SRO's are generally not given the "Faculty" authority in a school but some have been given that authority. "Faculty" authority and law authority is a fine line. There are several thoughts as to this status but it is up to the department in which the SRO works for and the school district they work in. SRO's are police officers who are sworn to up-hold the law. They will coordinate their activities with administrators and seek advice and guidance before enacting any program within the school. SRO's will make presentations on various subjects

pertaining to law-related education to increase student understanding of the law. Lastly the SRO's, should it become necessary, conduct criminal investigations in the school in accordance with law, school district policy, and the policies of the law enforcement agency. There are many rules concerning criminal investigations in schools and the SRO should be cognizant of such when performing their duties.

Police/School Partnership and Contracts (MOU)

The decision to place an SRO into a school is not an off-the-cuff decision to be made by either the department where the officer is from or the school district in which the SRO will work. A contract must be developed to explain to both the school district and the department what each is responsible for when it comes to employing an SRO. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is required between the school district and department. In that MOU it should be understood that this is a conjunctive effort by law enforcement and the school district. It will outline the expectations of what responsibilities each entity have as it pertains to this agreement to include officer salary and overtime, equipment such as an office at the school for the SRO with a computer and access to school records, and a vehicle with maintenance and replacement. Most school districts are willing to pay partial salary for the SRO which includes equipment. This is a year by year agreement between the entities and can be cancelled by either of the entities on the anniversary date of the agreement.

Gaining Department Support for the SRO Program

Historically the SRO's in the departments are thought of as those who can't perform on the road or those who have no drive to self-initiate anything during a shift and just want to do the time and go home. They are lovingly referred to as "Booger Police", "Kindergarten Cop", or "ROD – Retired on Duty". This perception has changed throughout the years with more and more younger officers becoming interested in helping kids out. They believe they can do more good by reaching young offenders earlier than picking up the pieces when they are older. The support from the department for an SRO goes a long way in making the assignment successful. Patrol division officers are realizing that if there was an SRO at a school, they wouldn't have to respond to take care of an incident that is minor in nature but causing them to expend hours of paperwork and time on the incident. They also are realizing that an overall police presence in a school is an excellent deterrent to crime and they can also protect their own children in situations of an active shooter or a terrorism threat at a school. The SRO is a first line of defense for these situations and could possibly foil and attempt prior to it being executed. Not only do the patrol division officers realize the need for the SRO but also the investigative division. Detectives understand that SRO's are a wealth of knowledge when it comes to them personally knowing the students but their parents as well. Information flows in both directions helping them solve many crimes that have occurred. In addition, the interview capabilities are endless. The detective can respond to a school and interview the student, either as a suspect, witness, or victim and they feel more comfortable talking due to the fact they are in a more comfortable setting as compared to juvenile hall or the department interview rooms. Detectives are also understanding that the SRO's have rapport with these students and if the SRO interviews them, it is more likely that

more information will be shared to the SRO than with the detective. This also includes the parents of the students due to the rapport the SRO has with them.

The SRO program has made leaps and bounds compared to the way it was in its inception. More and more younger, technologically smarter cops are feeling the need to become an SRO which is a benefit to not only the students for rapport reasons, but to the department and schools. Active shooters, intruders, and even terrorists make the job of an SRO one of the most important in the department. The badgering will continue between the SRO's and the rest of the department. Face it, that's what cops do to each other. The bottom line is that the world is becoming more and more violent and the fact still remains that the most prized possession that a person has is their children so the SRO is and has been always needed!!!!

Photos

Through the course of my years as an SRO, I was involved in many school incidents which had an impact on me, not only as an SRO, but as a law enforcement officer as well. The photos presented in this course of instruction were taken by me and I included them within the course to add validity to the course of instruction. These photos range from a pellet gun found in the backpack of an elementary student who was showing other students that they had a gun in school to artwork from various age groups depicting violence and drugs to actual weapons used in a school as a joke but actually causing harm to other students. It is amazing what students will do or bring into a school environment, either as a joke or expressing their feelings and likes to gain friends or notoriety.