

WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

LEADERSHIP CORNER

Let's talk prioritizing mental wellness in your unit and community relationships.

POLICE PSYCHOLOGY

Explore the history of modern psychology and its applications in law enforcement.

FINANCIAL FOCUS

With the right tools and strategies, take control of your money and work toward financial security.

INDUSTRY INSIDER

Welcome to The Shield, your resource for bolstering resilience, promoting wellness, and enhancing mental health within our law enforcement community. This newsletter is dedicated to those who serve on the front lines, offering practical tools, research-backed strategies, and inspiring stories to support your mental and emotional well-being.



www.CummingsCFBH.org



(775) 826-3311



4781 Caughlin Pkwy
Reno, NV 89519



Hi everyone! My name is Megan, and I recently joined the CFBH as a Grants and Project Specialist. I'm excited to be on the team and look forward to working with each of you. I am dedicated to improving the health and well-being of police officers, and I hope this introduction helps explain the "why" behind my work.

"She looks familiar. Do I know her?"

I was an officer in Arlington for several years. After field training, I was detailed to the organized crime section for an undercover assignment and then spent the rest of my time on patrol. Once I left Arlington, I joined the Supreme Court Police Department, where I had the chance to experience federal law enforcement and dignitary protection. Like most of you, my time in policing was eventful and spanned a number of impactful moments in society:

- I started in 2014, shortly after the death of Eric Garner
- Worked undercover
- Had my share of dealings with internal affairs
- Was on the scene of an officer-involved shooting
- Policed through COVID and the death of George Floyd
- Was honor guard for Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's lying in repose and Justice Amy Coney Barrett's confirmation
- Was on Capitol Hill on January 6th, and its aftermath



DESPITE HOW MUCH I LOVED THE JOB, AFTER SERIOUS CONSIDERATION, I MADE THE DECISION FOR MYSELF AND MY FAMILY TO STEP AWAY FROM POLICING.

For me, it was time to prioritize my own well-being and use my experience to give back in a different way. Before joining CFBH, I spent almost four years with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), where I led their officer wellness and suicide prevention initiatives. During my time with the IACP, I had the opportunity to impact officer wellness in many ways

- Creating over 20 resources for the field
- Developing an academy-level wellness curriculum
- Serving as a member of the FBI's Law Enforcement Suicide Data Collection Task Force
- Developing and delivering training and technical assistance to the nation's Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) grantee sites
- Implementing and improving agency wellness programs, and
- Drafting recommendations in response to a White House Executive Order.

Building the IACP wellness portfolio into what it is today was a privilege.



IN THE SPIRIT OF TRANSPARENCY

01. I used to hide going to EAP, which was our only support back then. When my supervisor mandated it due to UC work, I resisted. I appeared happy and bubbly but was **seriously struggling**.

02. I've spent hours in the gym **avoiding what was happening in my mind**. I've struggled financially but couldn't bear more overtime. I've felt like the world would be better without me and endured the pain of lacking agency support in a culture of toxic leadership. It's exhausting to hear *'take care of yourself'* while being mandated for more overtime.

Struggle is inevitable, but it should be and can be temporary.

This career takes a toll, both on the streets and within the department. It's normal to have emotions about what you see and do. Admitting you need help can be hard, but you owe it to yourself, your loved ones, and your community to be your best. Support your colleagues—it goes beyond responding to calls. You deserve a happy, healthy life. Don't let the job take that away, and never suffer in silence.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF POLICE PSYCHOLOGY

Dave Baker, Ph.D.

Like many fields, psychology is ubiquitous, yet its history and training are less familiar to the public. Modern psychology began in late 19th-century Germany, where laboratory methods were applied to study the mind, shifting such inquiries from philosophy to science. In the U.S., psychology emphasizes practical applications. Psychology found uses in various sectors, from the military to industry, education, and marketing. Figures like Hugo Munsterberg advanced employee selection and eyewitness testimony, while Lillian Gilbreth's work in industrial psychology improved efficiency at work and home, inspiring the film *Cheaper by the Dozen* (Baker & Benjamin, 2014).

Clinical psychology emerged in 1896 when Lightner Witmer opened a clinic to address learning and behavioral issues in children. This field grew rapidly during WWII when the demand for mental health professionals surged. The National Mental Health Act of 1946 enabled the development of training programs, culminating in the 1949 Boulder Conference, which established the scientist-practitioner training model. Later, the 1973 Vail Conference introduced the scholar-practitioner model and the Psy.D. degree, advanced by Dr. Nicholas Cummings, who also championed the Doctor of Behavioral Health (DBH) degree (Cautin & Baker, 2014; Austed, 2014).



PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIETY



The Doll Test, 1947

Mamie and Kenneth Clark

Psychology's focus on the human condition naturally involves addressing social issues. For over a century, psychologists have used science to challenge stereotypes and stigma. The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), founded in 1936, has supported research and action on diverse social concerns.

Major contributions

- Helen Thompson Woolley and Leta S. Hollingworth challenged gender stereotypes in the early 20th century (Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987).
- Mamie and Kenneth Clark's studies on race revealed the harmful effects of school segregation, influencing the landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.
- Evelyn Hooker's 1957 research showed no psychological differences between homosexual and heterosexual men, helping to de-pathologize homosexuality (Garnets & Kimmel, 2003).

Advocacy for African American issues in psychology grew with the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) founding in 1968 (Guthrie, 2003).



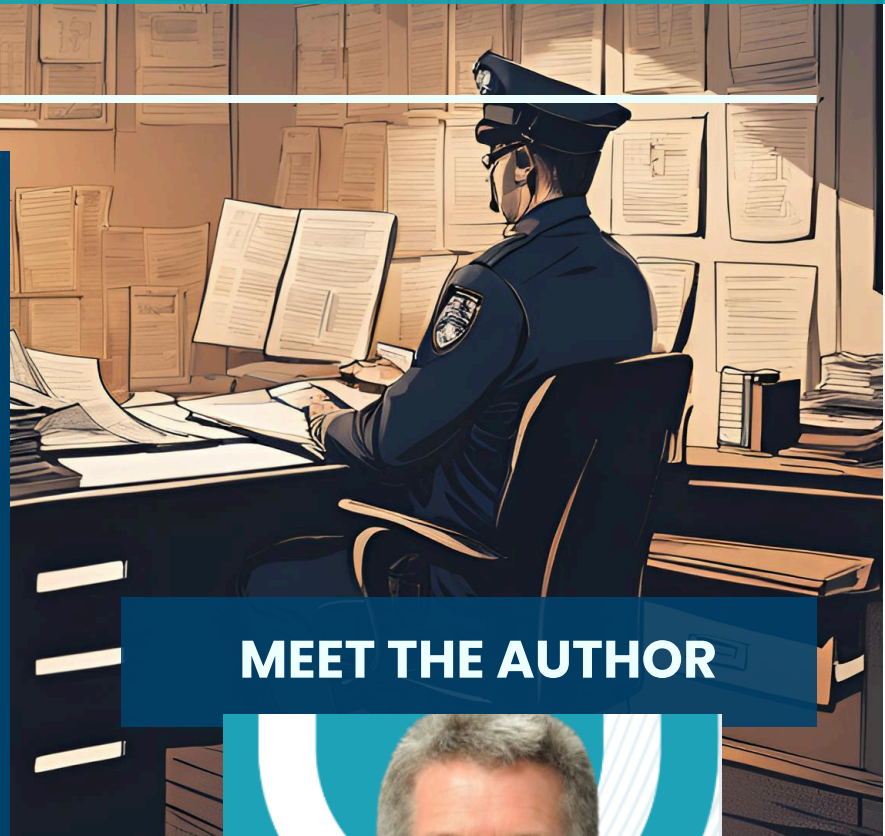
EXPANSION AND POLICE PSYCHOLOGY

American psychology has consistently expanded, with fields like social, developmental, and personality psychology contributing significantly to understanding humanity. Currently, neuroscience is experiencing remarkable growth.

Police psychology, formally recognized as a specialty by the American Psychological Association in 2013, reflects this growth in applied psychology. This field, also known as "police and public safety psychology," focuses on assessment, clinical intervention, operational support, and organizational consultation to ensure law enforcement operates safely, ethically, and effectively (Police Psychology, 2024).

In recent decades, attention has turned to the behavioral health of police officers, with high rates of suicide, PTSD, anxiety, and depression leading to the passage of the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2017. Numerous programs now address these challenges.

The Cummings Foundation for Behavioral Health (CFBH) plays a critical role by promoting evidence-based, culturally competent programs integrating physical and mental health to support police officers and their communities.



MEET THE AUTHOR



DAVE BAKER, PH.D.

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ARE WE BUILDING BRIDGES OR JUST SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER?

Jordan Pate-Garrett, LMHC



'Tis the season for community-focused initiatives. The International Association of Chiefs of Police's (IACP) official policy emphasizes that "trust and transparency between law enforcement agencies and the people they serve is vital to community stability, officer safety, and effective policing." While turkey giveaways, toy drives, and holiday meals look good on paper, how are these efforts authentically beneficial to community relationships, or are they performative gestures aimed at public relations?

Recent studies highlight the potential benefits of these programs when executed with intentionality and specific action steps. Community engagement events provide officers with the opportunity to interact with residents outside of enforcement contexts. Efforts such as Coffee with a Cop or police-led holiday drives help break down barriers and build trust, fostering positive perceptions of law enforcement (Department of Justice, 2015).

When done thoughtfully, such efforts are not only festive but also create a foundation for mutual understanding and collaboration, making the holidays brighter for everyone involved. Community engagement and trust-building should not be a one-sided relationship. Community members should consider the following:

- **Approach Law Personnel with Openness:** Attend community events with a willingness to engage. Share your experiences and concerns openly and take the opportunity to ask officers questions.
- **Let Your Voice Be Heard:** If possible, collaborate with local precincts to help organize or suggest events that reflect your community's unique needs. This ensures that events promote a sense of shared investment.
- **Participate Beyond the Holidays:** Engage with police-community events beyond the holiday season. Trust is not something that's established during an isolated period. It's a continuous and intentional effort.



Meet the Author



Jordan Pate-Garrett, LMHC

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PERSONAL FINANCE: A GUIDE TO TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR MONEY



FISCAL REMINDERS

- 01. Check Your Retirement Accounts. Make Adjustments Where Necessary**
- 02. Review Your Financial Goals. Are You on Track?**
- 03. Invest in Financial Education. Do You Know If Your Money is Growing or Going?**

Managing personal finances can seem overwhelming. For many of us in our earning years, our relationship with money is often one of conflict and/or stress. Regardless of what we earn, worrying about money often remains a dark passenger in our money management journey. For example, the rising costs of everyday goods are one of the leading causes of stress in America (“Stress in America,” n.d.). But with the right tools and strategies, anyone can take control of their money and work toward financial security. Here are some steps to get started:

Keep it Real

For most of us, we have subconscious beliefs when it comes to money. According to *The Psychology of Money* (2023), this tendency is described as “money scripts.” These scripts fall into four categories: money avoidance, money worship, money status, and money vigilance. To break free from unproductive patterns, make money management tangible. For instance, use cash instead of cards to stick to your budget, download interactive budgeting apps, or organize and track paper bills and statements.

Create a Budget

A budget is the cornerstone of financial health, allowing you to track income and expenses. Start simply—pen and paper work just fine—or explore budgeting apps like Mint, Every Dollar, or Quicken Simplifi. These tools often connect to your bank accounts, making updates seamless. Your budget should be an ally, not an adversary, so embrace it as a vital part of your financial routine.

Build an Emergency Fund

Life’s unpredictability makes an emergency fund essential. Aim to save three to six months’ worth of living expenses to cover unexpected costs like medical bills or car repairs. This cushion offers peace of mind and keeps you from relying on credit cards or loans in a crisis.

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MEET THE AUTHOR



Keith Glidewell, MBA