

Police underappreciated essay



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It's widely recognized that law enforcement officers possess a demanding and dangerous job. Day in and day out they deal with criminals and the sometimes stressful public. Many see law enforcement as an annoyance rather than a protector. Law enforcement officers often feel underappreciated from the public that they protect every day. "The general public wants nothing to do with the police until they need us," says Pocahontas Police Chief Al Henrickson. Al has been in the police force for 24 years and deals with the daily ins and outs with a submissive calmness.

Sometimes people take for granted the small things that police do for the public like: unlocking cars, daily patrolling, crime prevention in the schools, and enforcing road safety laws. "We have two main highways in the heart of Pocahontas and with that comes heavy truck traffic and the laws need to be enforced, said Al." Approximately \$3.2 billion dollars are spent each year for crime prevention programs in schools put into action by local and state agencies (Wiloch n. p). Police programs conducted in schools are effective in minimizing crime.

These programs include more police patrols in higher crime neighborhoods and the use of specific divisions that recognize and observe repeat offenders after they are released back into the community (Wiloch n. p). It is often typical that the public has a general misconception of the law enforcement profession. Simply put, the public assumes their only responsibility is to arrest the "bad guys". Even though a large part of their work happens to be arresting lawbreakers, it's not as simple as that. "A lot of people may not know that we do school patrol every day.

We patrol in the morning and when school gets out. Our officers actually go into the schools and observe the students and teachers, on a daily basis,” noted Al. The purpose of school patrolling in any community, big or small, is to create a complete summary of the schools’ security training and potential susceptibilities, which in turn, will be used to improve precise safety recommendations for each school (Gewertz n. p). Al went on to say that they patrol nightly around the local businesses to make sure everything is in order.

They serve ordinances, give helpful advice to people who come to them with a question regarding the law, and they also check on the elderly. Police are confronted with tough moral decisions on a daily basis. They must represent a certain level of professionalism when presented with violations of the law. “ The perfect officer in a perfect situation shows no emotion so he or she is able perform their job proficiently,” stated Al. Sometimes officers are faced with the possibility of a conflict of interest in the cases they investigate.

Moral dilemmas are another issue that police are challenged with, especially when it comes to physical abuse on a child or another person. How the officer deals with that particular situation is ultimately up to the individual officer. “ That’s why as the Chief of Police, I determine what officer gets to investigate what crime. For example, if we have a child abuse case, I won’t send an officer that has kids because that could overshadow their judgment of the case and that is not what we want.

We want to collect all the facts with no bias,” said Al. Situations of child negligence and exploitation are often reported by the media. They can

include everything from shaken baby syndrome to seven-year-olds that are physically and or sexually abused by someone they know. Dr. Rahman Zamani writes, “ It is difficult to imagine that any person would intentionally harm a child. Many times physical abuse is a result of inappropriate or excessive physical discipline and lack of awareness of the magnitude of force applied” (qtd. in Kiesbye n. p).

Today countless individuals still find that it’s unfitting for states to intervene with parent privileges, and that’s why so many communities depend on the police and social services to concern themselves with child abuse cases (Kiesbye n. p). Officers are people of a community just like you and me. They are fathers, uncles, husbands, mothers, and sisters and they should be respected and treated with dignity, on or off duty. Possessing a reputable, recognized, and highly regarded law enforcement “ is a necessity in any community,” Al indicated. According to Edward A.

Flynn, “ The success of community policing lies in the development of trust-based partnerships between law-enforcement agencies, local government officials, and citizens” (qtd. in Flynn n. p). The people of a community want to know that the police are there when they need them. Daily patrolling in a community helps to reduce crime, increases police visibility, and improve the quality of life. Together, a combined attempt of law enforcement and the public citizens can recognize the importance of team work when it comes to dealing with crimes. Ultimately the end result is a solid and self-assured community (Flynn n.). “ I think we have it pretty good here, I really do. Our police department is unique and I’m glad to be a part of it,” declared Al. Most law enforcement officers want to make a difference and feel appreciated,

sometimes that's very difficult. The public want things done right now, not yesterday. Sometimes the public doesn't understand that police are officers of the law and have to follow a strict code of ethics they are sworn to uphold. That can become an issue for some citizens of a community. That's why it is crucial in developing and maintaining a confidence in organizations around the community.

The significance of solving and detecting problems remains the dominant workings of crime control efforts today and in the future (Flynn n. p). Law enforcement is important to communities big or small. " Could you imagine a community with no kind of law enforcement, it would be the wild west all over again, or even worse. Every community needs some kind of policing, whether it's an actual on duty officer or just the presence of an officer to compel people to abide by community standards, otherwise you have a big problem," said Al.

The people of any type of community, whether it's a city, town, or suburb should know, comprehend, and appreciate the importance of having law enforcement. Police work is difficult and often underappreciated by the public. Sometimes moral quandaries that face law enforcement transpire to be considerably more difficult to cope with than the work itself. Officers face the difficulties of being discrete about their work, identifying conflicts of interest, and remaining ethical at all times. Officers are at risk everyday protecting our communities, being officers of the law.