AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

APA RESOLUTION on Psychology's Role in Addressing the Impact of, and Change Required With, Police Use of Excessive Force Against People of Color and Other Marginalized Communities in the United States

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With the recent historic passage of important anti-racist and equity-focused resolutions, the American Psychological Association (APA) has explicitly rejected racism and racist ideologies as they are observed and expressed in the United States (US) and internationally (APA, 2021d; APA, 2021b; APA, 2021c). APA has acknowledged that American psychology — including APA itself — has been complicit in actions that have perpetuated racism. Furthermore, APA has resolved to align its ethics, governance, and programmatic activities with human rights principles and practices (APA 2021e, APA, 2021b), and has emphasized the necessity for acknowledging and addressing racism and racial equity. Within the framework of these policies, APA has sought to promote its leadership in psychological science and practices toward the necessary collaborative efforts to address how racism has impacted important social institutions and, consequently, the health and well-being of individuals and communities.

One of the areas of specific demand for APA's investment and collaboration is the challenge that exists with incidents of excessive use of force[1] by police toward people of color and other marginalized communities[2] in the US, and how this has led, at both communal and societal levels, to a perceived low legitimacy of policing and its actions. This failure of trust has served to complicate and even negate efforts made across communities in the US by both individuals and varied political structures toward promoting safety and a shared investment for all citizens. It has led to anger, frustration, and demoralization, for both police officers and their fellow community members.

The purpose of the *Resolution on the Impact of, and Change Required with, Police use of Excessive Force Against People of Color and Other Marginalized Communities* is tied directly to psychology's significant potential to contribute to the dismantling of racism and the promotion of racial equity, by helping to remediate conditions and situations that engage individual, systemic, and institutional sources of racism. With this resolution, we address those conditions and situations that operate within law enforcement and policing organizations at the federal, state, and local level, that directly and indirectly contribute to the challenges excessive force leads to with communities of color and other marginalized identities. APA specifically offers professional psychology's assistance in efforts to dismantle racism within law enforcement operations and organizations, and in their interactions within the communities where they work, by addressing the practices that perpetuate a continued reliance on excessive force.

This resolution commits APA as an institution focused on advocating for and seeking change that will reduce disparities in policing and end the use of excessive force against people of color, most directly Black Americans, but also in interactions with other marginalized communities within the United States (e.g., LGBTQIA+ citizens; Latinx citizens; Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) citizens; Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) citizens; Native Americans and other Indigenous peoples; immigrants; and those with disabilities). The overarching goal of this resolution is to promote the safety, health, well-being, and fulfillment of the human rights of those community members who are most vulnerable — Black Americans and other people of color, and members of other marginalized communities who are affected by excessive use of force — and those who work in law enforcement.

Foundational to this mandate, APA recognizes that law enforcement organizations, and police officers themselves, provide an important function within our society in addressing crime and safety for the public. There is a longstanding and constructive relationship that exists between psychology as a professional discipline, individual psychologists, and law enforcement; this includes psychologists advising and consulting police organizations and their members, providing psychological services to police (and other public safety officers) in response to the stressors incurred by their professional demands, and collaboration within the justice system to insure a rational and reasoned, scientifically informed approach to protecting the human rights of persons navigating the justice system when facing criminal and civil charges. The solidity of this relationship between police and psychologists forms the basis upon which this resolution is undertaken.

APA further acknowledges that within this relationship, many police organizations and officials across the US have been, and remain committed to, working directly to address the implications

of a history of racism and discrimination on the profession and its actions in the communities served. It is through this collaboration and commitment already present that APA seeks to promote a more active and direct engagement with an issue that is deeply challenging at this point in time.

The widely publicized use of excessive force against Black men, women, children, and youth by some law enforcement officers has placed into sharp focus the long term discriminatory treatment of people of color and other minoritized populations in the US (APA, 2021f). Extended nationwide protests and social uprisings, sparked by recent police killings, reflect generations of frustration and resentment that have been building since the beginning of policing in this country. This is a resentment that began within the context of slavery and has maintained throughout the Jim Crow era to today, against laws, policies, and practices that harm people of color and other marginalized communities directly. Furthermore, there is sustained resentment in communities of color in the US toward the failures of many of the efforts to reform policing practices, across all levels of policing in this country; this resentment is particularly held for the perpetuation of practices that have rested from the beginning of policing in this country on White-centric, patriarchal cultural traditions (Hasbrouck, 2020; Liu, 2017) that diminish the value and efficacy of persons of color in the US. Despite the efforts toward improvement and change taken to date, there remains, in the opinion of many living within communities of color and marginalized identity, in the US a belief that the continued failure to correct fundamental racial inequities and mistreatment of minoritized populations is a direct result of an explicit choice by police organizations. This is perceived as a choice, one that has hampered explicitly a capacity for trust and respect, and which has in turn entrenched failures at attempts to necessarily communicate and collaborate in efforts to rectify the situation.

Ending the likelihood for abusive interactions by members of police organizations toward people of color and other minoritized populations and communities is a critical societal problem of urgent concern to scientific and professional psychology. The effects of these abusive interactions have led to a long history of trauma and poor relationships regarding policing and public safety in many communities of color in the United States, most directly affecting Black and Latinx communities. Such abusive incidents — rooted in racism, bias, and discrimination —have contributed to ongoing social injustice, and has fostered years of pernicious impact on individuals, families, and populations, changing the course of health, well-being, and lifetime opportunities for present and future generations (Baćak & Apel, 2020; Del Toro et al, 2019; Geller et al, 2014).

Importantly, this *Resolution on the Impact of, and Change Required with, Police use of Excessive Force Against People of Color and Other Marginalized Communities* aligns with APA resolutions on psychology and racism, human rights, and organizational policies pertinent to the collective efforts between police and psychology, underscoring the necessity of identifying — and then eliminating — overt and implicit racism, misuses of power, and the unnecessary and unwarranted use of excessive force between police and communities. The Resolution, while not exhaustive in terms of addressing the entire gamut of needed police-related reforms, reflects APA's focused policy response and practice recommendations to foster the dismantling of racism and the pursuit of racial equity by ending excessive force. By doing so, safety and well-being will be enhanced among individuals and the communities that police are sworn to protect; and safer engagement by police and their communities will be ensured, engagement designed to foster collaborative efforts toward justice.

HISTORY OF POLICING AND REFORM EFFORTS

Although a comprehensive review of the history of policing in the US is beyond the scope of this resolution, a brief review of the literature indicates that its early development in this country arose in part from efforts of White persons in positions of power to exercise social control over enslaved agricultural laborers in the South, and immigrants and industrial laborers in the North (Chism, 2014; Hassett-Walker, 2021a, 2021b; Potter, 2013; Reichel, 1988). The historic connection of the police with social oppression and systemic racism that remains within the US, and the disparate impact of police use of force on people of color and other marginalized communities, has prevented the police as a social institution from gaining trust and legitimacy among communities most often impacted by crime. The problem of trust and legitimacy persists, notwithstanding increased professionalism of the police and concurrent efforts to reform (La Vigne, Fontaine, & Dwivedi, 2017; Tyler, Goff, and MacCoun, 2015).

The continued disparities in police use of force, and their related problems of legitimacy and trust, have led to calls for "defunding the police" (Merrefield, 2021) by many communities and justice nonprofits across the country. The meaning of "defunding the police" is varied; some communities call for money to be shifted away from police budgets to such efforts as treatment of mental health issues and substance use disorders, the provision of healthcare and community resource development, and the provision of crime prevention programs (Bowleg et al., 2021); others call for the abolition of a direct role for police that is focused on explicitly restricting their capacity to contribute to community violence and trauma (Hasbrouck, 2020). Simultaneously, other community and justice organizations, while acknowledging the need for change, have called for policing to move away from a model of control and coercion to one of consensus and community trust (American Public Health Association, 2018; President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Psychology and psychologists from a number of areas of research and practice have been a part of this dialog, in response to the important roles they play in responding to and collaborating with those addressing the need for change and

improved collaboration in policing (Bowleg et al., 2021; Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2020; Tyler, Goff, & MacCoun, 2015; Young, 2019).

Increasing the diversity of police personnel has been advocated as one way to achieve reform. For many years — including up to the present day, and consistent with how institutions in the US have been constructed in response to deeply entrenched segregation that was promoted by laws and customs across the country — the ranks of many police forces comprised entirely White persons (and, in fact, some departments remain so). This has been due to both the underlying disparities that were historically built into policing and other occupational structures in the United States, and the disproportionate attrition rates for minority candidates and recruits in many areas of the country (as one example, please see the considerations identified in the city of Chicago regarding minority recruitment and hiring as reflected in Ferguson & Witzburg, 2021). While many police forces have worked to increase diversity through recruitment, police officers from minoritized populations and communities still remain seriously underrepresented in many departments across this country (U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. EEOC, 2016).

Another vehicle for effecting police reform, particularly as it relates to the lethal use of excessive force, has been the court system. In some jurisdictions, police officers charged for their use of lethal excessive force have been prosecuted under state homicide statutes. Other cases have been litigated under federal civil rights and hate crime-related laws. The US Department of Justice Office of Civil Rights has statutory authority to pursue criminal charges for violations of civil rights and to sue police agencies for pattern-or-practice violations, and to negotiate consent decrees to institute reforms. As of 2017, four independent studies have produced evidence that reforms tied to US Department of Justice Civil Rights Division's agreements with specific police departments have succeeded in establishing more effective constitutional policing practices and improved police–community relations (US Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, 2017). Although a highly uneven process, and one that is not without its own challenges, use of the court system in the US, which itself has a long history of injustice regarding people of color and other marginalized populations in this country, has been viewed as an important setting for more judiciously dealing with excessive use of force by police officers and organizations. Federal law also permits individuals to sue if police use of force violates one's civil rights. Such claims are evaluated against a standard of objective reasonableness under the Fourth Amendment ban on unreasonable searches and seizures (*Graham v. Connor,* 1989; Ross, 2002). Such lawsuits against police have, in practice, provided limited opportunities to victims seeking redress for the use of unreasonable force, because of the judicially established doctrine that protects government officials from liability under federal law for constitutional violations, so long as they did not violate "clearly established laws" (Schweikert, 2020).

Each of these efforts and options discussed above have shown a variable responsiveness to community demands for reform of the use of excessive force, and they remain an area where significant collaboration can occur through psychological consultation. It is, in fact, the continued development of strategies drawing from what has been learned through these experiences to date where professional psychology can provide its greatest engagement and consultation. Through a mutual effort engaged between policing and the social, behavioral, and organizational sciences that psychologists bring to the table, new efforts can take place for guiding decision-making processes across the many levels of collaboration that are needed to bring forth change.

THE INTERSECTION OF RACE, POVERTY, AND POLICE USE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE

Communities characterized by concentrated poverty and racial segregation are frequently subject to aggressive policing strategies, including drug- and gang-suppression efforts, and higher levels of police discrimination and misconduct — particularly toward young men — and under-responsive policing when community members do report crime and security needs (Foster, 2020; Kubrin, 2010; La Vigne et al., 2017; Fontaine et al., 2019). Extant research indicates that the majority of acts involving police use of excessive force occur in marginalized and under-resourced communities where systemic racism and other forms of discriminatory power imbalances have long been present (Feldman et al., 2019; Gee & Ford, 2011). Evidence about disparate police use of force against people of color and other marginalized communities has been found across the literature addressing these issues, specifically: (a) evidence from surveys or other sources of evidence (e.g., body camera footage) on individuals' contact with police; (b) evidence from systematic identification of cases of police-involved incidents, e.g., fatal encounters; and (c) evidence from studies of community-level variables, e.g., studies using police agency data.

Police-civilian contact. In the 2018 Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS; U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018; Harrell & Davis, 2020), while racial/ethnic groups were *less* likely to report any contact with police compared to non-Hispanic Whites, they were *more* likely to report contact where interactions included threats or use of force. Hispanics were more likely than non-Hispanic Whites to perceive threats and use of force as not necessary, and Blacks were more likely than Whites to perceive threats or use of force as excessive (Harrell & Davis, 2020). In a survey of police-public encounters, DeVylder, Frey, Cogburn, Wilcox, Sharpe, Oh, Nam, and Link (2017a) found that racial/ethnic minorities, and particularly males of color and other minoritized identities, in addition to transgender respondents and younger adults, were at higher risk of police victimization. Furthermore, one study of body camera footage found that Black drivers received ruder and more disrespectful treatment from officers during traffic stops in comparison to their White counterparts (Voigt et al., 2017).

Police-involved deaths. Data sets establish that excessive police use of force is a significant cause of death for individuals of color (Edwards, Lee & Esposito, 2019). Specifically, Black men have been killed at nearly three times the rate of White men; and Black women, American Indian/Alaska Native women and men, and Latinx men are also more likely to be killed by police than their White counterparts (Edwards, Lee & Esposito, 2019). Analyses from another database of police-involved deaths found that neighborhoods where residents were poorer and more likely to be people of color had among the highest rates of police-involved deaths, with the risk of police-involved death being higher for non-Hispanic Blacks residing in the whitest neighborhoods (Feldman et al., 2019).

A Ruderman Family Foundation study of 2013–2015 media reports that police use of force estimated that individuals with disabilities (i.e., inclusive of physical and cognitive disabilities) represent one-third to one-half of all people killed by law enforcement officers (Perry & Carter-Long, 2016). Relevant to this, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018) estimated that individuals with disabilities represent a quarter of the population and are thus the largest minoritized group in the United States. Furthermore, people of color are more likely to have a disability or a mental health disorder due to several factors, including lack of access to healthcare. Individuals with intellectual and neurodevelopmental disabilities, who identify intersectionally with other minoritized identities (e.g., people of color, members of indigenous communities, and those who are LGBTQIA+), are victims of negative police interactions at higher rates than their counterparts without disabilities (The Arc, 2021), leaving them more vulnerable to both negative outcomes and potential death due to excessive force.

Police department records. The Center for Policing Equity has reported that while police employed force in less than 2 percent of all police–community interactions in the 12 analyzed cities, Black community members experienced rates of use of force 3.6 times higher than their White counterparts, and 2.5 times higher than the overall rate in the studied communities (Goff et al., 2016). Jacobs and O'Brien (1998) found higher rates of Black citizens killed by police in cities with a significant Black community or recent growth in their Black population.

While likely an underestimate of the actual events that have occurred, these findings together highlight directly the particular vulnerability seen within the Black community to the impact of excessive police use of force and its reverberations. This is a vulnerability that further shared with other minoritized communities, including women intersectionally, and those who are Native and Indigenous, Latinx, and/or disabled. This is further magnified by the failure of many US police organizations to share information with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), both in the past when requested and since 2019, following the launching of the National Use-of-Force Collection program (Jackman, 2021). Only 44% of local, state, and federal policing organizations have shared information; while an improvement, this has led to a continued and seriously problematic lack of actual data that can guide collaborative efforts at change, and address the extent and full nature of the challenge.

EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO POLICE VIOLENCE AND USE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE ON INDIVIDUAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Exposure to police violence[3] and use of excessive force have both immediate and long-term effects on the health and well-being of individuals throughout their lives. Police victimization has been found associated with suicidality (DeVylder, Frey, Cogburn, Wilcox, Sharpe, Oh, Nam, & Link, 2017a), and psychological distress and depression (DeVylder, Oh, Nam, Sharpe, Lehman, & Link, 2017b). Studies have found that contact with the police, especially if perceived as being unsatisfactory or unfair, is associated with greater stress, and poorer health and indices of well-being (Baćak & Apel, 2020; Del Toro et al., 2019; Geller et al., 2014).

Police use of force has historically had a pernicious impact on the well-being of people of color and other marginalized persons, who remain more likely to be the targets of these practices (Edwards, Lee, & Esposito, 2019; Hall, Hall & Perry, 2016). Black adults are significantly negatively affected by police killings of Black victims (Bor, Venkataramani, Williams, & Tsai, 2018) and the experience of proximity to police killings of unarmed minority victims has a substantial negative influence on well-being.

Excessive force by police has been found to have a demonstrable and devastating impact, on the well-being of both adults and children. Children and adolescents who observe the use of physical force by police or who are themselves victimized by police often experience negative, life-altering effects on their well-being, that potentially continues into adulthood. Del Toro et al. (2019) found that stress mediated the relationship between being stopped by the police and later delinquency among a sample of mostly Black and Latino boys. Black and Latinx high school students showed negative academic and psychological effects associated with proximity to police killings of minority victims (Ang, 2021). As an adaptive response to these negative interactions, young people may perceive authority negatively, have distrust in authorities to provide safety, and develop attitudes that support personal use of violence and resistance to police authority (Fine et al., 2021; Slocum & Wiley, 2018; Smith Lee & Robinson, 2019). This has been particularly a concern with regard to incidents taking place at schools.

Even in the absence of physical force, marginalized populations who feel victimized by police through episodes of harassment, aggressive interrogation, and even community-based negative police-initiated interactions have reported increased rates of mental health symptoms, including higher rates of depression,

substance use disorders, and other manifestations of emotional distress (Baćak & Apel, 2020; Mann-Jackson et al., 2018; Nelson, 2018). Such police practices are highly associated with cumulative stress, including race-based traumatic stress, in community members who are directly impacted. Race-based cumulative stress is a well-known social determinant linked to poor health outcomes (Aymer, 2016; Kauff, Wolfer, & Hewstone, 2017).

A factor that contributes to the negative impact of police use of force on vulnerable populations is that police officers are often called to respond to matters outside the scope of their public safety mission, training, and expertise, such as responding to mental health, substance use disorders, behavioral health emergencies, and family crises and interpersonal disputes (Steadman & Morrissette, 2016). These are often situations that reflect community-based trauma and challenge, during which undue force may be used. While recognizing that relying on law enforcement in such circumstances emanates from the lack of public funding of agencies and trained providers generally better qualified to address significant emotional, behavioral, and psychosocial needs (Steadman & Morrissette, 2016), it is also the case that police training efforts to be responsive to these situations does not effectively reproduce engagement efforts from trained mental health professionals.

Individuals made vulnerable by societal forces, especially people of color, and intersectionally those who are LGBTQ+, disabled, or living with low socioeconomic status and/or poverty, face challenges and barriers to accessing care at community mental health centers, behavioral and substance use treatment programs, inpatient psychiatric units, and shelters serving those without homes or victims of interpersonal violence. As a result, behaviors that would otherwise be addressed in these settings are often required to be dealt with by the police (Hales & Higgins, 2016). These serve as problematized settings for difficult interactions, that may increase negative responses from marginalized persons, and potentially impulsive and deadly responses in return from police sent to attempt to stabilize a dangerous situation. This extends the cycle of trauma and despair that alienates communities from their trust of police, while further impacting the stigma that underlies expectations regarding persons of color and marginalized intersectional identities. The trauma occurs in both directions: police who are poorly trained to address these challenges are often left with significant trauma and negative self-efficacy, contributing to their own vulnerability to mental health concerns.

USE-OF-FORCE STANDARDS AND TRAINING

Police officers "are members of quasi-military organizations, called upon for duty at all times, armed at almost all times, and exercising the most awesome and dangerous power that a democratic state possesses with respect to its residents — the power to use lawful force to arrest and detain them" (see *Policemen's Benevolent Association of New Jersey v. Township of Washington,* 1988, p. 91). Police use of force is regulated by constitutional law, state law, administrative law, and departmental policies and procedures, including training requirements. In general, the use-of-force by law enforcement officers is justified and permissible only under specific, limited circumstances, such as self-defense or defense of another individual or group (National Institute of Justice, 2020).

Most law enforcement agencies have policies on use-of-force that delineate a use-of-force continuum of actions, moving from lower to higher levels of force, that an officer may take to resolve a situation. Although the frequency and nature of police training varies considerably by agency size and other factors, police officers are trained to respond to situations with the appropriate level of force (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2020). However, there are no universal standards for the use-of-force continuum and how officers should apply it (National Institute of Justice, 2009). The degree of specificity and strictness of use-of-force policies vary greatly across agencies and jurisdictions (Obasogie & Newman, 2017). One study of police use-of-force policies in the US found that police departments with policies containing a greater number of specific limits on use of force experienced fewer citizen deaths caused by police (Sinyangwe, 2016). Even though the US Constitution does not grant the federal government power to regulate policing in this country, Congress may exercise its powers to *encourage* states to adopt policing policies that put specific limits on use of force, including by using federal funds to incentivize change.

Use-of-force training includes education on the applicable federal and state laws governing use of force, skills training in weapon use, and tactics for employing reasonable (lethal and nonlethal) force (Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers, n.d.). This is an area where psychologist engagement can be particularly helpful, by assisting in both examinations of the factors that contribute to how use-of-force decisions are made, and how to also assess where errors in decision making occur as a result of internal and external experiences. Such consultation can increase responsiveness to the underlying vulnerabilities that exist toward problematic, potentially racist choices, and how they can be more clearly and successfully confronted to alter their likelihood.

Problematically, Stoughton (2014) has observed that police culture and training within the US encourages the development of a warrior mindset and mentality in which police officers "are taught they live in an intensely hostile world, a world that is quite literally gunning for them" (p. 227). This has been identified as one contribution to a tendency for police officers to perceive a threat from the initiation of an interaction, particularly with minoritized groups, and therefore respond with excessive force, leading to negative outcomes that are more potentially violent than the situation warrants. Consistent with calls for law enforcement to move away from a model of control and coercion and toward a model of consensus and community trust, there

have also been calls for the police to move away from the warrior mindset to a guardian mindset (McLean et al., 2020).

In 2019, major law enforcement organizations, in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, developed the National Use-of-Force Data Collection to provide a mechanism for law enforcement agencies to report their officers' use-of-force incidents for the purpose of compiling national statistics. However, participation of law enforcement agencies is entirely voluntary (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2021) and, as discussed above, remains at a level currently hampering the ability to collect needed national data. It is exactly this type of data that is necessary for building effective means of understanding where direct consultation and guidance from psychologists to police organizations could be engaged and utilized.

WHEREAS the International Bill of Human Rights establishes the obligation of nation-states to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights (APA, 2021e; cite from UNOHCHR);

WHEREAS the APA supports and prioritizes social justice, and human and civil rights, to reduce bias, stigma, and discrimination (APA, 2021a);

WHEREAS the enduring, insidious, and pervasive nature of racism in the United States often operates outside of the conscious awareness of its targets, perpetrators, and beneficiaries, has had an incalculable, negative toll on the basic human rights to survival, security, health, well-being, and societal participation of generations of people in the United States and across the globe (Alvarez et al., 2016; APA, 2012; 2019), and underlies racial disparities in the distribution of a shockingly broad array of basic human necessities, including housing, health care, economic security, education, and employment (Lee et al., 2020; Williams & Collins, 2001);

WHEREAS throughout the long history of law enforcement in the United States, some police have been used to protect and advance the interests of the hegemonic political and cultural segments of a White society that empowered and legitimized them, while Blacks and other disadvantaged groups have been disproportionately subjected to police brutality in the normal course of daily life (Hassett-Walker, 2021a, 2021b; Potter, 2013; Reichel, 1988), as well as to aggressive dispersion tactics during peaceful protests and sit-ins (Nodjimbadem, 2020);

WHEREAS notwithstanding some critical analyses of policing that conclude the institution's central role in the structures of systemic racism renders it fundamentally flawed and demands it be abandoned (defunded) (e.g., Hasbrouck, 2020), policing remains a ubiquitous institution in United States society, and there are significant efforts to address racism and its impact in policing (U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, 2017) and to make changes that remove its significant influence on policing decisions;

WHEREAS some analysts see policing as "moving away from a focus on what is legal or effective in crime control and toward a concern for how the actions of the police influence public trust and confidence in the police" (Tyler, Goff, & MacCoun, 2015; President's Task Force..., 2015) and "areas of research and practice in psychology can contribute to constructive change" (Tyler, Goff, & MacCoun, 2015; APA, 2020);

WHEREAS both direct exposure and geographic proximity to police use of force are associated with poorer health and indices of well-being (Baćak & Apel, 2020; Bor, Venkataramani, Williams, & Tsai, 2018; Del Toro et al., 2019; Geller et al., 2014), including suicidality (DeVylder, Frey, Cogburn, Wilcox, Sharpe, Oh, Nam, & Link, 2017a), psychological distress and depression (DeVylder, Oh, Nam, Sharpe, Lehman, & Link, 2017b), delinquency (Del Toro et al., 2019), and academic underachievement (Ang, 2021);

WHEREAS a lack of accurate data exists on police use of force across United States communities and its association with race, ethnicity, gender, mental illness and other disabilities, LGBTQ+ identity, immigrant, refugee, asylum-seeking status, and other factors (Shane, 2018);

WHEREAS in studies of individuals' contacts with police (DeVylder et al., 2017b; Harrell & Davis, 2020), of police-involved deaths (Edwards, Lee & Esposito, 2019; Feldman et al., 2019; Perry & Carter-Long, 2016), and of law enforcement crime reports (Fontaine et al., 2019; Foster, 2020; Goff et al., 2016; Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998; Kubrin, 2010; La Vigne et al., 2017), people of color, particularly those who are Black, and other marginalized communities, have been consistently shown to be at high risk of police use of force, ranging from threats to death;

WHEREAS in the absence of accessible and appropriate mental health services, treatment programs, and community-based supports, police are too often called upon to intervene in behavioral health and nonviolent interpersonal crises (Steadman & Morrissette, 2016), and where such encounters may escalate to a point where police believe that use of force is warranted;

WHEREAS law enforcement has utilized psychological knowledge to assist police officers in learning how to approach and interact with individuals with various mental health problems and disabilities (Iacobucci, 2014; Tucker et al, 2011), and are in a position to do similarly with regard to working with communities of color and those who are marginalized;

WHEREAS the racial disparity in police threats and uses of force, detentions, interrogations, arrests, criminal convictions, sentencing, and incarceration (Fryer, 2018; Goff et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2020; Pierson et al., 2020; Scales, 2020) "encourages large swaths of American society to see themselves as existing within the law's aegis but outside its protection" (Bell, 2017, p. 2054);

WHEREAS the violence that people of color and other marginalized populations and communities have encountered at the hands of police has resulted in a "stigma of lawlessness," (Hinds, 1979, p. 9) that stains the reputation of all police officers and stimulates the development of a loss of respect for or trust in legal institutions (Tyler, Goff, & MacCoun, 2015; Wood et al., 2021);

WHEREAS police use-of-force training has been shown to be most effective when it reinforces policies that "include rules that establish force continuums and require officers to intervene and prevent other officers from using excessive force" (Obasogie & Newman, 2017, p. 281);

WHEREAS the nature of police work is often traumatic, it can have profound health effects on police officers, in a manner that is shared by persons with whom they interact, including higher rates of cardiovascular disease, sleep disorders, hypertension, glucose intolerance, depression, and lower life expectancy for male police officers (Violanti, 2011);

WHEREAS Congress may exercise its powers to encourage states to adopt policing policies and establish national policing standards;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA reaffirms "its denunciation of racism" in all forms for its destructive psychological, social, educational, and economic effects on human rights and human welfare throughout the lifespan" (APA, 2021a, 2021b, 2021d, 2021f);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA affirms basic human rights and liberties, including access to health, education, and economic opportunities and opposes statutes, laws, and ordinances that contribute to the criminalization of poverty (e.g., subsidy restrictions, bonding requirements, foreclosure rules) (APA, 2021a; APA, 2021e; APA, 2021f; Herring et al., 2020), that further stigma and discrimination, which contribute to a devaluing and disengagement from communities by police assigned to protect them;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA calls for respecting, protecting, and fulfilling human rights to be the foundation for police use of force (APA 2021e);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA acknowledges the history of racism in policing and the important societal need for law enforcement to engage with this history, acknowledge its impact on policing, and work collaboratively with all the communities they serve to gain legitimacy and trust, including particularly people of color and other marginalized communities;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that APA opposes police use of excessive force and other police misconduct against people of color and other marginalized people, including, but not limited to, verbal intimidation and/or violence specifically intended, or reasonably understood, to dehumanize an individual or group (APA, 2021e) and recommends revision of any police department policy, general order, or directive that legitimizes the inappropriate and/or discriminatory use of force and/or instrumental brutality and violence (APA, 2021f);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA will advocate for the development, implementation, and evaluation of empirically rooted, culturally informed policies, programs, and practices that eliminate the use of excessive force by police against people of color and other marginalized communities, as well as other forms of misconduct and discrimination (APA, 2021e; APA, 2021f);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA will advocate for law enforcement standards and practices within police departments to reduce the detrimental impact of police misconduct and use of excessive force, and to promote a healthy relationship between police officers and their communities (Iacobucci, 2014);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA supports research and subsequent program development in collaboration with police and communities in the following areas:

- Policing strategies sought by specific communities, particularly communities of color;
- Police–civilian relations in the aftermath of police-inflicted trauma to develop interventions that promote repair;
- Police functions that may be more effectively carried out by others;
- Strategies for increasing police officer intervention with other police officers to prevent mistakes and in response to witnessing peer-officer misconduct;
- Validation of assessment tools to support improved police selection and interventions to address bias and use of excessive force;
- Training that encompasses implicit bias, cultural humility, and anti-racism;
- Training that engages de-escalation strategies when interacting with individuals with developmental disabilities, mental health disorders, substance use disorders, and in communities that have been historically traumatized by interaction with law enforcement;
- Strategies for promoting repair and establishing legitimacy between police and historically marginalized communities;Strategies examining best practices for crowd control and increasing the use of nonlethal practices against protestors;Mandated federal reporting of use of force statistics by United States police agencies;
- Community policing practices such as community engagement or collaborative problem-solving with community members;Strategies for and engagement in necessary collaborations with educational systems on how to more effectively and safely work with students

and educators within schools and other learning settings to reduce traumatic and dehumanizing approaches to intervention;

- Demilitarization of police tactics, including modes of transportation, crowd and situation management, and increased use of community-focused efforts for engaging in such management of events and situations of concern within communities of color;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA will continue to advocate for the funding of community-based human services to address unmet needs for persons with behavioral health treatment needs, including the impacts of police use of excessive force and community violence among Blacks, other people of color, and other disadvantaged/marginalized groups;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, consistent with an understanding of and support for collective action (e.g., van Zomeren & Iyer, 2009), APA calls for increased collaboration and potential partnerships among law enforcement agencies, police unions, community members and their organizations, and psychologists (and other social scientists) as part of multidisciplinary teams in the community (APA, 2018; Power, 2018), in order to better protect police officers' health and safety on the job, and to better equip them with the tools and resources to de-escalate threats presented by mental health and substance use-related crises (Iacobucci, 2014)**;**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA recommends the expansion of basic police training to include training on how to intervene with individuals with disabilities (including mental health, behavioral, intellectual, physical, and developmental differences), as well as children, youth, adults, and older adults;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that APA advocates for policies that address research and training for law enforcement personnel to promote the eradication of practices that result in the diversion of persons from low SES backgrounds, including from non-marginalized communities, and persons with mental health, behavioral and substance use issues, into the criminal justice system;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA recommends that police departments partner with mental health and other human services organizations to determine the best use of local behavioral health resources with the goal of maintaining the safety of all community members, including such practices as establishing referral networks in their communities to assist in dealing with individuals in crisis, and to consider methods of utilizing culturally and linguistically competent professionals to assist in public interactions; THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA recommends all law enforcement agencies adopt policies that both incentivize and require all officers to accurately and promptly report all relevant incidents of use of force (Oversight Hearing on Police Use of Force and Community Relations, 2020);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that APA encourages use-of-force policies and training that establish meaningful restrictions on how and when police use force against civilians; require the use of de-escalation techniques, when possible; require fellow officers to intervene to stop another officer from using excessive force; and require comprehensive reporting of uses and threats of force;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA urges Congress to establish and incentivize states through federal funding mechanisms to implement a federal standard that police officers (a) use force *only when reasonable and necessary* and only as a last resort after exhausting reasonable options, (b) use, when appropriate, de-escalation techniques; (c) intervene when witnessing the use of excessive force by others; (d) never use force as a punitive measure, as a means of retaliation against individuals who only verbally confront officers, or against individuals who pose a danger only to themselves; and (e) accurately report all uses of force (Oversight Hearing on Police Use of Force and Community Relations, 2020);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that APA supports federal, state, and local mandates for the reporting of use of force statistics by police agencies;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA recommends use-of-force training include de-escalation practices, skills for intervening with other officers using excessive force, and programs that promote officer wellness;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA calls for the creation of robust and genuinely independent entities (e.g., civilian police complaint boards) to investigate police uses of force resulting in injury, death, or disability;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA reaffirms its support for the health and well-being of police officers and recommends further research on the causes of, as well as appropriate treatments for, mental health and general medical conditions that disproportionately impact those in law enforcement; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the APA recommends, when appropriate, police agencies recruit and hire police personnel from within the communities they serve.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] The US Bureau of Justice Statistics (2021) defines police use of force as "the amount of effort required by law enforcement to gain compliance from an unwilling subject" and police use of excessive force as "the application of force beyond what is reasonably believed to be necessary to gain compliance from a subject in any given incident." Throughout this resolution, the term "force" is defined as "physical effort to control, restrain, or overcome the resistance of another," (ASCIA et al., 2020) and includes both deadly force (any use of force that creates a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury) and non-deadly or less-lethal force (any use of force other than that which is considered deadly force that involves physical effort to control, restrain, or overcome the resis-

tance of another). Force does not include verbal commands or other nonphysical de-escalation techniques (ASCIA et al., 2020).

[2]The term "marginalized" refers to any group of persons that the dominant societal group has historically disadvantaged based on socially constructed, perceived differences from and smaller numbers than the dominant societal group.

[3]APA defines "police violence" according to the Police Violence Classification Matrix (PVCM) proposed by Corey and Stewart (2015). This matrix distinguishes between legitimate and illegitimate uses of force by police, recognizing that there are times when use of force is both necessary and justified as well as times when police engage in aggression and violent behavior that cannot be justified under the law. The PVCM allows for delineating the complex factors (e.g., inadequate training, policy, individual motivations) that may lead to violent police behavior.

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