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**Lessons Learned from Early  
Corrections and Law Enforcement Family Support (CLEFS) Programs**

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**I. Introduction**

Since 1996 the National Institute of Justice has awarded over 32 grants under the Corrections and Law Enforcement Family Support (CLEFS) Program to address the negative effects of stress experienced by law enforcement and correctional officers and their families. The CLEFS Program was developed in response to Section 2301 of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Assistance Act. The programs that have been awarded grants under CLEFS have been very diverse. The funded programs have included peer support, critical incident stress debriefing, chaplain services, inoculation stress training for rookies and officers on the job as well as the implementation and evaluation of innovative clinical techniques such as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) with law enforcement officers.

In the relative short time of its existence, the CLEFS Program has undergone a number of changes. In 1998 the title of the program was changed from its original title of Law Enforcement Family Support (LEFS) Program to CLEFS. This was done in recognition that correctional officers and their family members also may experience negative consequences as a result of job related stress. This broadening of the program has allowed for a greater understanding of the issues faced by officers and family members and identification of ways to address these issues. Also, the broadening of the program has allowed NIJ to expand the potential impact of the CLEFS Program to address officers stress and its impact on the family.

In addition, with each progressive year of funding, the programs that have been awarded grants under CLEFS have also undergone changes in terms of their ability to address stress

issues for officers and family members as well as in their ability to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and document outcomes. There is value at looking back at the processes that funded programs have undergone in an attempt to achieve their projected goals. NIJ has produced publications that address how such programs should be developed such as Developing a Law Enforcement Stress Program for Officers and Their Family Members (Finn & Tomz, 1997) and Addressing Correctional Officer Stress: Programs and Strategies (Finn, 2000). Both of these publications are excellent resources that explain how programs designed to address work related stress and its impact on the family should be organized and implemented. However there are many factors that can and do occur during the process of developing and carrying out a program that get in the way of allowing a program to achieve its anticipated potential.

Similarly, what may be presented in the final report of a funded program may not provide a clear identification of what was gained from the program. For example, one of the CLEFS grantees received modest funding of under \$11,000 to develop a chaplain program. A review of the final report for this program may lead one to question what was gained from the investment. The goals to be gained from the program stated in the grant proposal were not achieved. Goals of the grant were to reduce employee grievances, citizen complaints and sick leave each by 30 percent. The final report identified a 100 percent increase in grievances (from 8 to 16), a one percent reduction in citizen complaints and accurate recording of sick time confounded by the use of a strict sick time policy implemented during the time of the grant. However in many ways this program was a great success. While the quantitative goals were not achieved, this modest investment allowed a small group of individuals who believed in the program to come together, develop the program, provide training and support, get top administration to buy into the program, gain credibility among department members and make the program work. As a result a program was established that was accepted and utilized by department members with the support

of top administration. Acceptance and utilization are important criteria for any organizational program. The lack of the program's success identified in the final report may be more of an indication of the diligence of this grantee's report writer to adhere to the strict criteria set in the proposal to measure program success.

It is for reasons similar to what is presented above that the process of the grant should be examined. A study of the process of how a grant is conducted can identify more clearly the value of the investment made. Also a study of the process can reveal information useful to future programs that may not be clearly indicated by what is presented in a final report. This current report is a summary of some of the lessons learned from early recipients of CLEFS grants. Presented is information gained from field visits of grant locations as well as a survey completed by grant recipients. Also suggestions are offered as to steps that may be taken to address the impact of stress on officers and their family members.

Information provided in this report has been disseminated through NIJ sponsored conferences as well as meetings of other professional organizations and discussions with the CLEFS Program Managers, but this report offers a more formal review of what has been gained and learned from these earlier programs.

## **II. Gathering of Information**

For this report, grant recipients from the first three years of funding (1996 through 1998) provided under CLEFS were included for analysis. A list of grantees for fiscal years 1996 through 1998 is presented in Appendix A. For this time period, 25 grants were awarded. Two of the grantees were awarded supplemental grants to continue or further develop a program. Therefore, 23 different departments and agencies received funding under CLEFS for the years of 1996 through 1998.

An attempt was made to visit all grantees. In some instances the individuals who managed a particular grant site were reassigned upon the completion of the grant and the programs were no longer in operation. Some grantees chose not to participate in a site visit. As a result, site visits were conducted with 18 of the 23 departments and agencies. In addition a survey was sent to each grantee. The survey (See Appendix B) was designed to identify issues grantees faced in conducting their various programs. The survey consisted of five sections:

1. **Background Information:** Demographic information on the grant including current stage of development, number of departments involved, officers and family members affected.
2. **The Process:** Use of needs assessments, advisory boards, partnerships, marketing strategies, outside influences, data collection, and obstacles.
3. **The Impact:** Target population, family members' involvement, and impact on organizational change and culture.
4. **The Outcome:** Perceived successes and failures, evaluation, products produced, potential for program continuation beyond CLEFS funding.
5. **Future Directions:** Generalizability of the program, suggestions to enhance future programs.

A cover letter, hard copy and disk copy of the survey were sent to each grantee. In addition, hard copies and disk copies of the survey were provided during site visits. Follow up

letters in addition to telephone calls were made to elicit responses. Where appropriate, more than one survey was provided to a grant site to allow different members of a program to respond. The goal in providing these additional surveys was to obtain multiple perceptions of the grant process from programs in which a number of organizations or participants were involved. In some cases a single survey was returned which contained a summary of input from a number of individuals who worked on a particular grant. A total of 19 completed surveys were returned representing 18 organizations which received funding. Therefore, approximately 78 percent of the grant sites returned completed surveys and 78 percent of the grantees participated in site visits.

#### **A. Survey Information**

Participants were assured that any identifying information would be kept confidential. In the information presented in the following sections, no specific responses are linked with any particular respondent. The goal of this presentation is to summarize and identify overall trends that may offer guidance for future efforts to address family support for corrections and law enforcement officers.

##### **1. Background Information**

The majority of respondents (n=10, 52.6%) indicated that at the time that they completed the survey, the grant had been completed. Five (26.3%) were near completion and 4 (21.1%) respondents indicated that their grant was in progress.

The goals of the programs of survey respondents varied. They included:

- Development of a law enforcement chaplains' program.
- Comparison of stress in urban and suburban law enforcement agencies.
- Development of programs for rookie officers and family members.



- Development of stress management curriculum for officers and family members to be used during recruit classes.
- Organization of officer peer support programs.
- Organization of peer spouse support programs.
- Analysis of stress experienced by a population of at-risk inner city officers.
- Development of stress reduction efforts for correctional officers and family members.
- Application of EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing).
- Investigation of domestic violence in law enforcement families.
- Development of on-line support programs aimed to address smaller under-served police departments.
- Development of programs geared for Native American and university campus police.
- Development of statewide programs to be delivered via videotape or through live interactive video conferences.

The survey requested for grantees to identify their perception of achieving the goals of their funded project. Only 5 (26.3%) of the respondents identified that they believed that the grant had reached its goals. The remaining 14 (73.6%) respondents believed that most or some of the goals were reached. Outcomes such as these indicate a need to further investigate the grant process and the issues that are related to a program's ability to achieve its proposed goals.

#### **14. The Process**

##### **a. Needs Assessments and Advisory Boards**

The use of a needs assessment is very important in the development of any program. Sometimes a program does not reach its full potential because those involved may be more concerned about conducting the training program than in assessing the needs of the organization or individuals who are the target of the training. Also the trainer may be sold on a particular training approach and may not adequately identify if the approach is correct in meeting organizational or individual needs (Goldstein & Ford 2002).

Only nine of the survey respondents indicated that a needs assessment was carried out. Of these nine, many used a focus group to gather information; only two used a structured survey. Some grantees described their needs assessment as collecting information informally, or based it on personal experience with law enforcement or clinical judgement and observations. One respondent reported that the assessment was conducted after the start of the process. It is obvious from the information provided that reporting the use of a needs assessment does not give any indication of the quality of the assessment or information gained. The comprehensiveness and credibility of any information gained depends on the quality of the needs assessment that is conducted. The needs assessment can provide information on the sources of stress, identify services wanted by the target clientele, familiarize the target population about the program and generate information for use to sell a program. It appears that for these programs while the use of a needs assessment is identified, in most cases the usefulness of the information gained should be questioned.

The use of an advisory board is another important tool that can facilitate the development and implementation of a program. An advisory board can foster commitment for a program and assess a program's effectiveness. Ten of the survey respondents did develop an advisory board. Many included key individuals from the participating organizations as well as family members. It appears that many agencies also formed partnerships with other organizations to carry out their

projects. One grantee stated that a comprehensive stress reduction program could not be considered without the involvement of other agencies. The partnerships included not only other departments but also universities to handle data collection and analysis, and local psychologists or mental health groups to develop and deliver programs. Rather than using a formal solicitation process, the majority of these partnerships were developed based on personal contacts of the project manager or relationships of advisory board members.

#### **b. Marketing Programs**

For the marketing of the programs, personal contacts were also used to a great degree to raise awareness of the program. In addition a variety of other resources were used to market the programs. Some of the common means for marketing of the programs included letters of support from top command, brochures, newsletters, presentations at roll calls and other in-service training, payroll notices, ride alongs, open house and community meetings for officers and family members. A few grantees sent material to the home of officers, but overall for most respondents the focus of the marketing efforts for programs were aimed at the officer.

While awareness of a program is important, a well-marketed program is of little value if the target population does not trust the program or the program lacks credibility. The survey requested that steps taken to enhance the credibility and trust of a program be discussed. Compared to other sections of the survey, respondents did not have a great deal to say about this. References were made to confidentiality, as a way to build trust and credibility. For many of the respondents, it was assumed that their professionalism, years of service or affiliation with an institution or individual were enough to establish credibility and trust. While confidentiality and affiliations are important steps to establishing credibility, organizations can still take more

proactive steps to enhance credibility and trust from administrators, officers and family members.

Few respondents offered any explanation of steps that were taken to achieve this. To increase credibility among administration, information can be presented as to how the program would contribute to reducing cost associated with sick leave, turnover or stress related compensation. For officers, information can be provided as to how the program will lead to changes in the organization and benefit them personally. For family members, focus could be placed on improved relationship and family life. While many grantees used peers as part of their programs, it is not clearly stated the role that peer officers or family members played in building the credibility and trust for a program.

Given the difficulty that is commonly identified in getting officers and family members to participate in such programs, and the existing data that identifies low reported utilization rates by officers of such programs (Delprino, O'Quinn, Kennedy, 1997) more thought could have been given to this important part of program development.

### **c. Partnerships**

It appears that individuals who played a role in the development and delivery of the program or project were chosen based on qualifications or potential ability to assist in the program development and implementation. This seems like a sound strategy, however at times these individuals also hindered the grant process. Retirements of key personnel or changes in administrations resulted at times in a loss of focus of the grant. In some cases it was reported that a key individual's break with confidentiality, lack of communication or attempt to control the grant jeopardized the project. Such information makes clear the need and importance of choosing competent key individuals to operate the grant and for grantees to have in place contingency plans to deal with events such as retirements or disruptive individuals.

Similarly the selection of organizations is critical. Organizations involved in the funded grants provided access to the target population, provided administrative resources to manage the grant, and assisted in the logistics of organizing training or advertising a project. Participation of some organizations gave credibility to a project or resulted in financial assistance. Many respondents reported that the organizations involved did not hinder the grant process in any way. However a few grantees reported that some organizations tried to control the grant. In one instance it was reported that local union officials tried to control and influence individual responses and group meetings which hindered participants from expressing their views.

Obviously for a family support or stress reduction program it will probably be necessary to bring together a number of organizations or groups such as unions, employee assistance programs or existing peer support groups to carry out the program. In many cases the programs probably could not proceed without some key organizations' support. From what is presented in the survey responses, bringing these organizations together while necessary for the program can also pose a challenge and may need to be constantly monitored.

#### **d. Outside Influences and Data Collection**

Considering the investment that was made into the various programs, it is important to determine what impact if any the intervention made. The main questions are did the intervention make a difference in this situation and what has been gained that can be transferred to other agencies and locations? Many factors can influence the results achieved from an intervention (Noe, 1999). To address these issues, the survey asked grantees to identify outside influences that may have had an effect on the grant process. Also to understand what attempts were made to document a program's effect, grantees were requested to discuss what data or information was collected as part of the grant.

For the majority of respondents, a number of events occurred that may have influenced the grant process and the outcomes obtained. A number of grantees reported changes in personnel. These included turnover in grant coordinators, agency administrators or significant turnover in the officers of a department. As a result, any marketing efforts conducted prior to these turnovers had to be duplicated if possible. For some grantees, union contract negotiations resulted in general feelings of mistrust among organizational members, or administrative policy changes introduced midway during the grant process, such as a new sick leave policy, made it difficult to record useful data. In some cases, multiple obstacles occurred within the same grant site. For example, one grant site experienced the lost of its prime advocate, major changes in organizational administration and statewide natural disasters during the grant process. Events such as these set back the progress of the grant.

In some cases adversity had a positive effect on the grant process. Unfortunately these events involved the death of officers or critical incidents involving officers and family members. The result of such an event was an increased awareness of the importance of family support programs and inclusion of the family in stress reduction efforts. As a result participation in programs increased. In one instance legislation which restricted firearm ownership by individuals convicted of domestic violence related offenses motivated organizations and officers to address related family issues. The influences described above would make it difficult to attribute with certainty any changes experienced specifically to the programs or interventions that was introduced.

The means used to collect data will also influence the ability to draw any meaningful conclusions gained from a program. Survey instruments and focus groups were the reported primary means used to collect data. The majority of data that was collected included information about perceptions of personal, family or organizational stress. Measurements were

also taken of satisfaction with a program, training session or of information learned. At a minimum, criteria used to evaluate the effectiveness of a training program have typically been categorized into four levels: reaction, learning, behavior and results (Kirkpatrick, 1994). The majority of grantees collected data to evaluate program effectiveness at a reaction or learning level of criteria. Grantees evaluated what participants thought of a program, perceived as a source of stress or the learning of facts, techniques or attitudes. While collection of such information is a useful start to understanding the issues related to officer and family support, it is not sufficient. Measurement of an intervention on job or health performance or to promote organizational objectives would provide more valuable information but this information was not typically recorded. Very few grantees made use of sophisticated analysis to identify links between stress and behavior outcomes or health and psychological issues.

#### **e. Facilitation and Obstacles**

As indicated in the previous section, a crisis event provided an opportunity for an intervention to demonstrate its usefulness. Other factors that helped in implementing the grant included the cooperation of administration, buy in from the top and having the infrastructure in place to develop programs. In addition it appears from grantees' responses that the ultimate success in implementing the grant was due to the personal qualities of the individuals involved. Responses included reference to individuals' commitment, dedication, energy, technical skills, enthusiasm and leadership. It may appear obvious that the people involved determine the success of the program, but individual commitment, experience and credibility may be qualities that need to be considered carefully by organizations in assigning personnel for such programs.

Given the obstacles to the grants that were identified, it appears that the personal qualities of individuals managing the grant would be important to solve problems. Other than a few references to problems with gaining access to grant funds, the primary obstacles had to do with

bureaucracy, poor communication, lack of understanding by the various groups involved, or eliciting involvement and cooperation from various groups. So it appears that it was not technical issues that interfered with grants' development but managing and overcoming the human relations' issues.

#### **f. Improving the Grant Process**

The survey requested information as to what role NIJ played in hindering or facilitating the grant process and solicited suggestions for improving the process. Almost every respondent to the survey commented on the time given to complete the grant. The 12 to 18 months allocated for the grant was commented as not being enough time to establish a program of any complexity.

This period of time was considered too short for the development, implementation and evaluation of a program.

Also some grantees reported that the notification of grant award was delayed. This delay created schedule problems especially in trying to coordinate the activities of trainers, officers, family members, and the logistics of setting up a program involving many participants sometimes over several sites. Greater assistance was also suggested as a needed resource for handling financial reporting, paperwork and with the overall grant application prior to submission. It appears that many of the grantees were not very familiar with the grant process or had little experience. They would have benefited from more technical assistance and grant management throughout the process.

NIJ staff and CLEFS Program Managers did receive many complements in terms of their availability and responsiveness to questions and issues that arose during the grants. Even though there were a number of changes made in the position of CLEFS Programs Manager, grantees appreciated that there was a clearly identified contact person. The Cluster Conferences for



grantees were identified as being very helpful in providing information early in the grant process.

## **15. The Impact**

Grantees were asked to identify the population for which the grant was designed, what the target population gained from the grant, the degree of family member involvement, and the grant's impact on the organization.

### **a. Impact on Target Population**

While the majority of respondents reported that the intention of their grants were to provide services to officers and their family members, the majority of respondents also reported that family members were not reached. In some cases family members were included in advisory boards or participated in focus groups discussions, but as a group their actual participation in programs or interventions was very limited.

The number of explanations provided as to why family members did not participate was also very limited. In some instances officers refused and were opposed to family members' involvement. Scheduling conflicts were also given as an explanation. It was speculated that many dual career couples did not have the time to attend outside activities. One respondent questioned the need to include family members in the officer's work, and family members' need or benefit from family support programs.

Family members are a vital target population under the CLEFS Program, and a target group that was identified in the majority of the funded grant proposals. From the responses, it appears that the grantees did not have a clear explanation for the lack of family involvement nor

appeared to have given it much attention. The target population for all practical purposes was the officers.

Despite a lack of focus on family members as a target group, respondents had a great deal to say about what the target population gained from the grant. Gains include the establishment of programs that otherwise would not have been developed. Officers were reported to have gained the ability to vent concerns, gain a sense of well-being, increase awareness of the issues, services and skills to manage stress and access services. These gains however were only supported to a limited degree with clear, objective, tangible evidence. Satisfaction ratings, knowledge identified by test results, and testimonials were offered by the majority of respondents as evidence that the target population was impacted by the grant. For one grant site, utilization of clinical services during the grant was offered as a positive attitude toward services. This may be so, but to make such a claim with clear evidence, comparisons need to be made to use of services prior to the grant. Also if the grant is assisting officers to better deal with job related stress, utilization of services would be expected to increase initially as the population is sensitized to the issues. As the population becomes more aware of how to address job related stress and care for themselves, utilization may drop off.

In summary, the majority of the grants focused on officers. Family members were included to only a limited degree. Also the majority of grants did not collect substantial evidence to document the impact of programs or services on the population for which they were targeted.

#### **b. Impact on the Organization and Culture**

Some changes identified at the organizational level included departmental policy changes

for disciplinary actions and responding to critical incidents. Programs were initiated at the academy level and for in-service training. Changing the police culture in terms of its acceptance of addressing family issues may take some time. However some grantees reported that officers have more comfort with seeking assistance for stress related problems and that family issues have been given greater attention. One grantee anticipated that introducing a large number of new police recruits to work and family issues and job related stress issues will reduce the stigma associated with seeking assistance. As with the perceived impact on the target population, suggested changes in the organization and culture need to be better quantified with objective measures.

### **3. The Outcome**

The survey requested that grantees identify the successful aspects of the grant and changes that would have been made to allow it to run more smoothly. Also, any formal evaluations that were conducted and products produced as a result of the grant were identified. This section of the survey also allowed respondents to discuss steps taken for the continuation of programs developed after grant funding ended.

#### **a. Successes and Failures**

The gains identified from the grants fall into three categories: the programs or product developed; awareness of the issues; cooperation among different organizations. First, for many grantees the programs or products developed such as support teams, survey instruments or interventions would not have been possible without the funding provided. A second value of the grant was that the grant gave a reason for and allowed the discussion of stress and the job's impact on the family to occur. Prior to funding provided by the CLEFS Program, many administrators, officers, union officials, researchers, mental health professionals and family members were aware of job related stress and its impact on the family. Funding provided by the

CLEFS Program has given credibility to the issues, raised awareness and fostered discussion among the various groups. The third value related to this is that greater cooperation and partnerships have taken place between groups, some of which have typically had adversarial relationships.

The grant process was a learning experience for many of the grantees. Some of the shortcomings of the grants included a failure to include family members to a great degree. Grantees identified the need to more clearly identify the programs or goals of the grant to the target groups. Communication between the participants of the grant was also identified as an area that could have been improved especially at times of change in the personnel working on the grant or for change in the administration of organizations involved. Some grantees reported that greater thought should have been given to the criteria identified to measure program success and that more data should have been collected. Two respondents identified a need for a full time coordinator to oversee the peer support teams. It appears that the process of organizing these teams may be more of a challenge than initially realized. Related to this, some grantees would consider narrowing the scope of the grant in the future to make it more manageable.

#### **b. Self Evaluation, Products and Continuation of Programs**

Grantees were asked to identify what formal evaluation they undertook to document the grant implementation process, the impact of the grant on the target population, and outcomes of the grant process. About half of the respondents reported that evaluations were conducted for process, impact and outcome. Obviously there was some confusion with the interpretation of a formal evaluation by respondents. To gain some clarity as to what type of evaluation was done and how it was conducted, the survey inquired as to what measurements were used to conduct the evaluation. For the majority of respondents that reported evaluations were conducted, very limited if any information was provided about the measurements that were used.

Similar to the discussion of the use of needs assessment presented earlier in this report, with the information provided by respondents, the usefulness and comprehensiveness of the reported use of evaluations can not be determined.

Participants were asked to identify the products that resulted from the grant. Products included curriculum development for a variety of training programs, manuals for organizing peer support programs or spousal academy programs, video cassettes, advertising booklets and brochures, Power Point presentations and a web site. Where appropriate, copies of the products were requested that could be included or organized as part of this report. Few respondents provided copies of the products that were produced as a result of the funding provided under CLEFS. On a positive note, a number of the participants did indicate that all or part of the programs created under the grant would in some way be continued by the agencies involved or that local funding would be sought. So it appears that in many cases, at least for those grantees that responded to the survey, the initial investment made by the CLEFS Program has the potential to have some lasting results in terms of program availability. It would be useful to follow up with the grantees that reported plans for continuation of programs in the future to identify to what degree the programs still exist.

### **3. Future Directions**

An important issue for programs and resources developed with CLEFS Program funding is the generalizability of the programs or products to other locations. Respondent were asked to address the potential generalizability of their grant results and what guidance they would offer to others in developing these types of programs. In addition respondents were given an opportunity to identify what they wished they had gained from the grant but did not, and provide a description of an ideal family support program.

### **a. Generalizability and Guidance**

The majority of respondents believed that their programs could easily be adapted to other departments, practitioners, researchers or family groups. Some grantees viewed their programs as a building block that other programs should be able to modify and enhance. Responses to the survey were received from multiple sources for some of the grant sites. The information gained from these multiple sources for a grant site was sometimes conflicting. While one respondent from a grant site reported value in the ability to generalize results gained, another from the same site questioned the value of the grant. It appears that the grant manager marketed the grant as a research project. However the value of such research was never offered to those who participated in the project and it was perceived that nothing was done with the research. Therefore the grant was seen as having no value to line officers that were involved. While generalizability of grant results is very important, grants that involve pure research need to take greater care in communication of the value of such research and be able to in some way develop from the research an application that is of value to the organizations and individuals involved.

Related to this, respondents emphasized the need and importance for communication throughout the grant process. It is not only important to communicate to those involved the goals of the grant but also solicit information from participating groups. It is important to assess the political environment and receptiveness of such programs by all stakeholders including unions representatives, organization supervisors and staff, and obtain assurance from these groups that there is a willingness to take on the challenge of such programs.

Additional guidance offered by the respondents to the survey was related to the individuals involved. Success depends on the quality of the people who participate. Several grantees reported that human resources could make or break the program. The importance of trust, commitment, motivation and confidentiality of the people involved was strongly stressed. Also it was suggested that those involved be carefully screened. Individuals from outside the organization should have experience with the culture of law enforcement or corrections.

It was also suggested that the goals for any family support programs should be realistic. Some grantees report that perhaps their goals were too ambitious or they tried to accomplish a great deal with limited resources. Many respondents would like to see what long term effects their programs will have. It appears that developing a family support program does take time, dedication and cooperation from many different organizations that are associated with a law enforcement or correctional agency.

As a closing question, participants were asked to describe what they believe an ideal officer family support program would include. Greater involvement of all family members, especially the children, was offered. Programs should not only raise awareness but provide training in skills such as coping mechanisms that can be used by spouses and children. An ideal program was described as allowing direct access to family members and making a long-term commitment to their assistance. Involvement that started early in the officer's and family's career and proceeded throughout the career was seen as an ideal. Also it was suggested that such a program would be predominantly an in-house program supported by top management, which made great use of peers as well as external expertise. Many of the grantees had opinions of what a model family support program should include and perhaps their experience of participating in the development of such a program gave them a unique and valuable perspective from which to offer such opinions.

## B. Site Visits

To complement the information collected from the surveys, visits were made to 18 of the grant sites. Only two of the grantees that participated in site visits did not return completed surveys. Three grantees did not participate in the field visits nor returned a completed survey. Site visits were very valuable in gaining a greater understanding of the programs developed by the various grantees. In addition to soliciting participation in the survey, the visits allowed for more in-depth observation and discussion of the issues faced at the various sites as programs were implemented. Concerns similar to what were reported in the surveys were presented, but it appeared that grantees felt more comfortable discussing problems and challenges they experienced during the grant process face to face. Therefore information not typically shared in the formal survey was presented. Grantees did not always want to share the problems they encountered during the grant with members of NIJ. It appears that grantees did not clearly understand the role that the staff of NIJ could play in providing assistance and access to experts or solutions used by other grantees who may have experienced similar concerns. The site visits made it clear that much can be learned from the obstacles encountered in these programs as well as the successes.

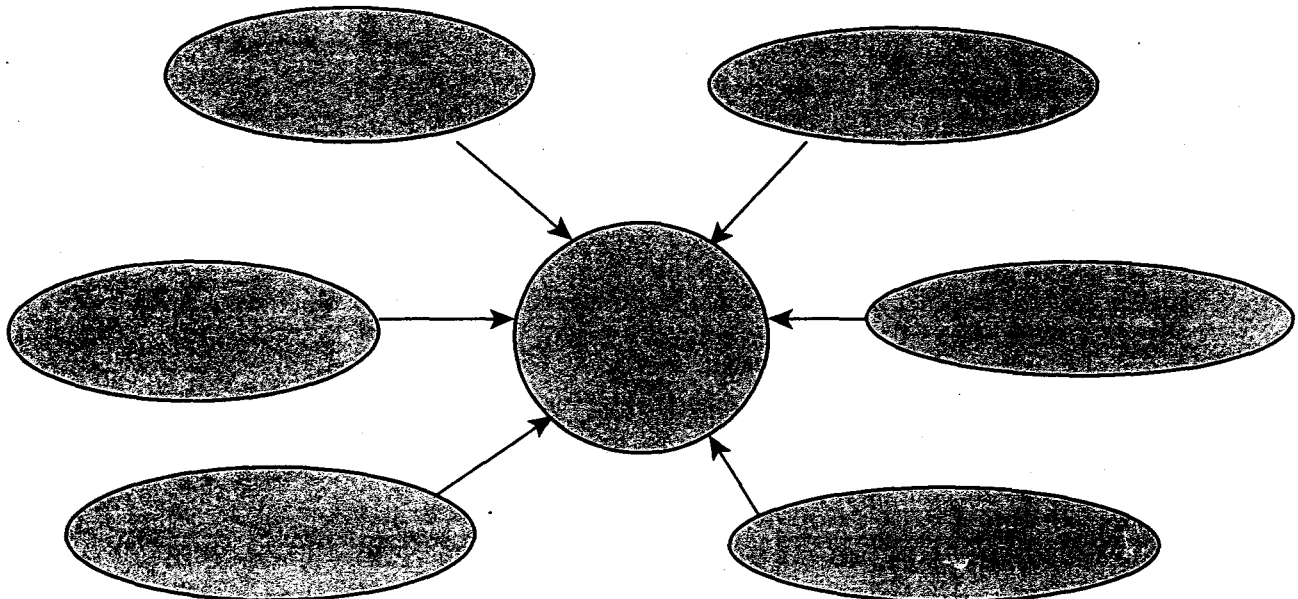
Development of family support programs can be a very challenging and difficult process. There are many factors that go into a program's success. Some key factors identified from the site visits that impact the grant process and the development of family support programs included: family participation; partnerships; continued financial support; buy in from administration; the individuals who run the program; and operating within the law enforcement and corrections organizational culture (see figure 1).



**1. Family Participation**

An important component of the CLEFS Program as the name implies is family support. Family involvement for many grantees was very difficult and in many cases was not the focus of the programs or projects that the grantees developed. Although a strong family component was written into the proposals submitted by the grantees, typically the programs developed became officer-focused. Families became of secondary importance or in some cases were not attended to at all. One rationale offered by grantees for not including family members was the belief that by taking care of the officer, the family was taken care of indirectly. No information was provided to justify this belief in a trickle down phenomenon. Even if this phenomenon were true, it would need to be documented which would require access to the family members. So for many grant sites, the difficulty of including families led to a minimal inclusion of families and focus on officers despite that the focus of the CLEFS grants was to address officer and family stress.

Factors That Influence the Success of a Family Support Program



## Figure 1

**2. Partnerships**

To develop and implement the programs funded under CLEFS required that partnerships be developed with a variety of organizations. Partnerships were formed between law enforcement organizations, correctional organizations, unions, institutions of higher learning, mental health practitioners, and individuals and groups with technical expertise. Also the grants required that many partnerships be developed within the organizations between groups to minimize any internal resistance to the programs or projects that was developed.

One area where partnerships were crucial for the grantees were the relationships that were developed to assist in data collection and evaluation of programs. Many of the organizations that were awarded funding did not have the resources or expertise to do an evaluation, or to conduct data collection and analysis. Typically a grantee contacted a local university to identify individuals who could perform these activities. Problems sometimes arose due to a lack of understanding and familiarity with law enforcement or correctional institutions by the individual identified to assist in data collection and analysis.

Also members of law enforcement and correctional organizations did not always hold individuals with academic or researcher backgrounds involved in the grant process in the highest regard. There had been a history in some organizations where academics or researchers have used the agency as a data collection site resulting in published reports that had little, if any, practical value to the organization involved.

At other grant sites a psychologist or mental health professional in charge had an established relationship with the agency and had earned the credibility, respect and trust of organizational members. In these instances this individual could introduce almost any program

into the organization with minimal resistance. So these individuals were very effective in the development of demonstration programs. Typically most mental health professionals working with law enforcement or correctional organizations are well-trained in clinical techniques and procedures. They do not typically, however, have the training in advanced methodological or statistical techniques that would be used to evaluate programs. Therefore, proper evaluation of the programs could not be performed.

If family support programs are to be accepted by administration, officers, family members, and union representatives, credible information must be feedback to these groups. It is important to identify individuals who can take all of the data and information collected, and translate it into useful information that can be understood and used to sell the program. Equally important is that these individuals have the ability to quantify the effectiveness of a program in achieving its desired goals. This will assist these programs in justifying their existence to financial stakeholders and in gaining information for program modifications. Therefore, partnerships that are formed, especially those formed to address data analysis or evaluation are vital to identify the gains made from programs and their contribution to addressing officers and family members' well-being.

### **3. Buy in From the Top**

Many of the grantees reported that the program they developed could not even have been initiated without approval from top administration. Given the typical command structure of most law enforcement and correctional institutions, it appears that this is the first step to developing any corrections and law enforcement family support program. Support from top administration would increase the likelihood that the grant program would receive resources from the agency for assistance. Some grantees experienced challenges when a change in administration took place during the grant process. In those cases where this occurred, it was not

always a question of if the new administration saw value in the project, but the grant program was viewed as another issue to add to a busy agenda. Rather than continue agendas of previous administrations, newly installed commands focused its energies and resources in other areas.

In a few cases acceptance of the funds to conduct the grant had to be approved by some overseeing body. These were approvals that were not addressed prior to grant submissions. Grants that did not seek this prior approval lost a great deal of time and energy in waiting to get a discussion of the grant included on a overseeing body's agenda and approval to begin the programs or project that were funded.

#### **4. Continued Support of the Program**

Related to buy in from the top was a concern of continuing the program after funding provided by the CLEFS Program was completed. At the time that the site visits were conducted very few of the grantees had commitments from other groups to continue financial support of the programs. The requirements to complete the grant in the allotted time period did not allow grantees much time to respond to the need to identify sources for future funding. This finding conflicts with what was reported in the surveys about continued support.

There was concern among some grantees that not continuing a program beyond the funding period could cause major problems for any future programs. The concern was that after an initial attempt was made to address officer and family issues, an abrupt cancellation of programs would make it even more difficult to get officers and family members to support future programs.

Another threat to the continuation of a program was the concern that if the individual who was in charge of a family support program retired or was reassigned, the program would end. Some grantees had their programs delayed or discontinued because key personnel were reassigned or left the organization. Such concerns make it clear that programs designed to

address officers and family well-being are not well established parts of many organizations. These programs are not yet given the same level of attention and status as other programs such as self-defense training, or training in knowledge of correct procedures. Therefore, it appears that the continuation of programs designed to address work and family issues for officers and family members are more subject to cancellation than other organizational programs.

### **5. Cultural Awareness**

All organizations have distinctive cultures. Culture is made up of shared beliefs, values and norms (Trice & Beyer, 1993). Related to the previous section on continued support, the issue of family support is often not seen as something the department, the officer or the family should deal with. For many officers on the job the family is not part of it. The family is something to protect from what is seen on the job. In addition, many departments still do not recognize the impact or the importance of family support for the welfare of the officer. These beliefs can be barriers to program development and acceptance.

The recognition by departments and officers of the relationship between the job and the family is changing slowly. Successful programs will be those that acknowledge cultural barriers and take the time to allow the programs to become an established part of the agency. If this is done successfully the program will become an accepted part of the organization. For example, EMDR (Shapiro, 1995) can be a controversial therapeutic technique to treat individuals exposed to a traumatic event. One of the grantees used this technique to assist law enforcement officers in one agency. The success of the procedure in assisting officers was so successful that officers recommended EMDR be applied to family members.

In the CLEFS Program the argument has been made that one family support program will not be appropriate for all agencies. The size of the agency and number of officers needs to be taken into consideration when developing a program. Similarly the culture of the organization

should be considered when introducing a program. It is possible that two organizations of the same size may have distinctly different cultures that will influence the success and influence of a program.

It is important to understand at what stage the organization is at in terms of its acceptance of a family support program. Galinsky, Friedman, and Hernandez (1991) identified three stages that organizations may go through in response to work and family support programs. The first stage is described as a programmatic approach. In this stage organizations are extremely cautious, may appoint a task group to oversee the process and assess employee needs by survey or focus group. With one new initiative the view is that it is time to return to real organizational issues. The second stage is an integrated approach. At this stage there are some advocates in management and an awareness of the impact of the issues on the organization. Programs become the responsibility of an individual or group and there is some integration of work-family issues with other agencies personnel policies, programs and benefits. The third stage is characterized by a change in the organizational culture in which it is realized that policies will only be successful in a supportive environment. The organization is aware that it is one thing to have a family supportive policy, but it is quite another to make sure employees know it exists and that supervisors support its use.

Distinction among the stages is important for understanding the general evolution that occurs as organizations overcome resistance and find comfort in the creation of work-family policies. Also understanding at what stage an organization is currently at can provide guidance as how to introduce a program or what work needs to be performed to allowed the program to be successful. The majority of grantees who have received funding under CLEFS could be characterized as existing at stage one with some emerging into stage two.

### **3. Change Agents**

As discussed earlier in this report, the success of a program seems to depend a great deal upon those in charge of the program. This may sound like a rather simplistic concept and make common sense, but law enforcement and corrections can learn from the field of organizational development as how to identify appropriate individuals to run support programs to increase their likelihood of success. The field of organizational development provides useful information in reference to the skills and qualities that a change agent should possess. An effective change agent can create a climate for change and assist the organization to depart from traditions that may hinder a program's development (Harvey & Brown, 1996).

It would be valuable to identify the skills and qualities needed to allow a change agent to be successful in law enforcement and correctional organizations. Some thought has already taken place in terms of distinguishing between law enforcement managers who are installers and growers when it comes to implementing a family support program. An installer manager puts a system in place and if it fails just replaces it with another one. A grower manager works to develop a person or system over time (National Institute of Justice, 1999). Putting a family support program in place is not enough to achieve desired outcomes. Successful outcomes happen by and through the actions of the people in whose care the programs are placed. Given some restriction imposed by the law enforcement and correctional organizations' cultures and the current stage of development of family support programs more grower managers are needed to introduce and run these programs.

### **III. The Future of Corrections and Law Enforcement Family Support Programs**

The discussion of stress in corrections and law enforcement has taken place for some time. A review of the literature indicates that many similar issues related to developing stress programs for officers have been presented in the past, as identified in the National Institute of Justice Issues and Practices Report, Coping with Police Stress, (1985). Also the impact of the

profession on the family has been presented in the literature and programs have been in existence to assist officers and their family members deal with the unique stress that they experience (Depue, 1981; Rogers, 1977; Kroes, Margolis and Hurrell, 1974; Niederhoffer & Niederhoffer, 1978; Anderson, Swenson, & Clay, 1995; Blau, 1994; Kirschman, Scrivner, Ellison, & Marcy, 1992; National Institute of Justice, 1985; Reese & Scrivner, 1994).

It appears that to move the field of corrections and law enforcement family support forward it would be useful to give greater attention to the following areas:

- **Needs Assessment**
- **Knowledge and Willingness to Use Programs**
- **Research and Evaluation**
- **Impact of the Organization**

#### **A. Needs Assessment: Responding to Officers' Needs**

As presented in this report, many of the grantees did not apparently make good use of needs assessment as a tool to identify programs that would best respond to officers', family members' and organizations' needs. Offering services without a thorough analysis of needs or identification of current programs may result in programs that do not directly address the concerns of those receiving the services. As indicated in the NIJ Issues and Practices, Developing a Law Enforcement Stress Program for Officers and Their Families, (1996) no single example of programming will be suitable for all types of agencies. Departments need to tailor their services to the size of the department, geographic jurisdiction, available resources, officers' career levels and particular needs.

Also over time, the number and type and availability of services will change. A comparison of national surveys of large law enforcement organizations reported between 1988 and 1998 (Ver Helst, Delprino, & O'Regan, 2001) has shown a significant change in the number



of agencies that offer services to officers. For example, counseling for job related stress and family problems have increased in that time period by over 30 percent. Also newer services not previously available such as critical incident debriefing or seminars on post traumatic stress are commonly now offered services. Without a proper assessment, decisions for programs or training may be made that do not accurately reflect service needs.

Corrections and law enforcement organizations are not unique in their lack of use of needs assessments. Saari, Johnson, McLaughlin and Zimmerle (1988) reported, based on a national survey of management training practices, that only 27 percent of respondents indicated a needs assessment was performed and when performed they were typically restricted to training for lower levels of management. If family support interventions are to be of any use, they need to be linked to specific needs of officers, family members and the objectives of the organization.

#### **B. Knowledge and Willingness to Use Programs**

Sources of stress for officers and family members have been identified. There also have been many programs developed to assist officers and family members better respond to the unique tensions that occupations in law enforcement and corrections can place on family relationships. Departments' adoption of services may be useful, but their true value will be recognized in the officers' knowledge of and willingness to use these programs. More needs to be done to address the utilization of existing programs by officers and family members.

Officers' usage of services or willingness to use services has been addressed to some degree in the literature. A study by Levitov and Thompson (1981) found that 59% of 250 officers in a major metropolitan area said that they would seek assistance for personal problems. Ebert (1986) reported that 37.8% of a sample of 74 officers indicated they would probably or definitely seek help. While this may seem encouraging, the actual use of services is typically small in most studies. A study by Maslach and Jackson (1979) of 130 California police officers

and their spouses found that while job burnout was associated with domestic, emotional, and behavioral problems, only 10% of the officers sought counseling or support.

Several authors have suggested that police officers are unlikely to seek help. According to Blackmore (1979), police officers were less likely than the average person to seek help for stress-related problems. Ebert (1986) noted that police officers were distrustful of mental health services. She pointed out that seeking help is in conflict with the stereotypical image of the self-sufficient and controlled police officer. Others have also suggested that police officers will not go to a professional psychologist (Mullins, 1994). Reasons cited as to why officers may be reluctant to seek help were that psychologists cannot understand the demands of the officer's job, psychologists are perceived as a tool of management, officers fear being "sick or "unstable", and the possibility that officers who seek help will be stigmatized by management and/or peers. Flater (1994) concluded that many officers or their significant others did not seek out services until their relationship had reached a crisis point.

In a study conducted by Delprino, O'Quin and Kennedy (1997) willingness to use services was far below officers' awareness of services as reported by 1632 officers representing 51 agencies in three regions of the United States. For example, officers reported awareness of the existence of employee assistance programs, family counseling, and marital/child support groups at 74.8, 64.1 and 25.4 percent respectively. The number of these same officers who indicated a willingness to use these three same programs was 16.4, 12.1, 5.4 percent respectively.

In summary, the existence of a program or service is not enough and cannot be helpful if officers and family members do not use them. Perhaps less focus should be placed on the development of programs and instead more emphasis be placed on development of strategies to

raise the credibility, trust and confidence in these programs and reduce the stigma that exists in seeking assistance.

### **C. Research and Evaluation**

Obviously there is still a great deal to learn about the relationship between the occupations of law enforcement and correctional officer and its impact on family members. There has been a tendency to focus on the negative aspect of this relationship (i.e. divorce, suicides, and domestic violence). It is also important to conduct research to understand how the family serves as a support mechanism for the officer and what are the characteristics of individuals and families who get through a career in law enforcement or corrections with healthy, intact family relationships.

Data is needed that clearly documents the link between the job and the family. Such information can form the basis for the development of intervention programs that will address the issues and also allow for the evaluation and modification of existing programs. The lack of current data or lack of evaluations of programs' effectiveness can result in the useless replication of programs that do little to address the issues. Equally important is gaining knowledge as how to deliver the information gained from research to officers, family members and organizations so that the information will be used and be of benefit to the target populations.

Scrivner (1991) in her testimony before the House of Representatives select committee on children, youth and families made the importance for the need to collect data very clear. She reported that while there is a belief that there are significant problems faced by police families the true extent of the problems are not known due to the lack of systematic, national data collection. She went on to report that this lack of empirical evidence limits the understanding of the problem, impedes the development of effective intervention strategies, and makes it difficult to encourage departments to adopt policies that include services to families.

While anecdotal data and testimonials may be useful to raise awareness of the issues to some groups, hard data that clearly quantifies the usefulness, effectiveness and cost savings that family support programs provide would be more useful. Such data could be useful to justify funding for these programs, identify their impact in improving the quality of life for officers and family members, and quantify improvements in work performance or reductions in costs related to sick leave, turnover and absenteeism. There is no doubt that conducting such research in corrections and law enforcement poses many challenges, however, the information gained from sound scientific inquiry will be immeasurable in allowing family support programs to become firmly established resources in law enforcement and corrections.

#### **D. Impact of the Organization**

Much of the attention given by the grantees funded under the CLEFS Program to address the negative effects of stress experienced by law enforcement and correctional officers and their families has focused predominantly on officers with some attention given to family members. An area that has not been addressed which may cause substantial stress for officers and family members is the organization in which the officer works.

There are a number of factors from the organizational level that can cause stress for the officer and family members. Some of these factors include authoritarian management, poor supervision, lack of input in decision making, excessive paperwork, lack of administration support, inadequate pay and resources, unfair discipline and performance evaluation or promotion practices (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 1990).

Research shows that for many, the majority of stress typically encountered is not from the job but more from within their own organization. Kroes, Hurell, and Margolis (1974) reported that from a survey of 100 police officers, one of the most frequently reported sources of stress was administrative policies and procedures. In another study (Brandt, 1993), 130 police

officers from a large metropolitan police department perceived administrative problems as significantly more stressful than work related issues or personal issues. Similarly Violanti and Aron (1993) found that for officers from a large police department, organizational stressors had an impact on overall distress that was 6.3 times greater than inherent police stressors. Inherent police stressors included responding to a felony in progress, high speed chases, dealing with crisis, physical attack upon one's person and death or injury of other officers.

By predominantly focusing on the officer and family, many programs developed may be missing a major cause of stress for both the officer and family members, which is the organization. An agenda for corrections and law enforcement family support in the future may be to take a more holistic approach to study, understand and influence the effects of stress experienced by law enforcement and correctional officers and their families.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The purpose of this report was to summarize some of the lessons learned from early grants awarded under the CLEFS Program. The information gained from the successes of the grantees as well as the obstacles they experienced has provided some clearer insight as to the issues involved in developing and implementing a family support program. It is hoped that this discussion of the grant process will offer a better understanding of the many and complex factors that need to be considered in corrections and law enforcement family support program development.

One of the greatest accomplishments of the CLEFS Program is that it has allowed for the conversation of family support in law enforcement and corrections to happen on a national level. The grants provided under CLEFS had given credibility to the topic and have brought together the various stakeholders (i.e. administrators, officers, family members, union representatives,

mental health professionals and researchers) to address the stress which is an inherent part of the job of law enforcement of correctional officer.

Although some progress has been made, there is still more to do. Many forces including political, social, and technological factors influence law enforcement and correctional organizations. As a result these organizations tend to be reactionary. Out of necessity these organizations need to react to the media, public opinion, and political pressures. As a result they may tend to deal with officer and family members health in a similar manner. It appears that what is needed is a more proactive approach to address the issues faced by officers and family members to keep both healthy and productive. The CLEFS Program has been a proactive step to promote officer and family members' well being. It has allowed for a number of individuals to gain practical experience and an understanding of the issues involved as well as the skills and resources needed to allow family support programs in law enforcement and corrections to be successful.

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## Appendix A

### Corrections and Law Enforcement Family Support Grantees: 1996 Through 1998

#### Fiscal Year 1996:

**Arkansas State Police: 96-FS-VX-0004**  
State-wide chaplaincy program .

**City of Buffalo (NY) Police Department: 96-IJ-CX-0056**  
Stress reduction among law enforcement officers and families: Exploratory study.

**Iowa State University Department of Public Safety: 96-FS-VX-0006**  
Law enforcement and family support program.

**Louisiana Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge #1: 96- FS-VX-0005**  
Louisiana law enforcement family support.

**Miami (FL) Police Department: 96-FS-VX-0002**  
Stress prevention and organizational inoculation training.

**National Association of Police Organizations- Police Research and Education Project: 96-FS-VX-0001**  
Stress reduction education for the police family..

**New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services: 96-FX-VX-0002**  
Training police stress trainers.

**New York City Patrolmen's Benevolent Association: 96-FS-VX-0007**  
Officer and family stress reduction training ad psychological referral network..

**Vermont Department of Public Safety: 96-FS-VX-0008**  
Officer and family members peer support teams.

#### Fiscal Year 1997:

**Baltimore (MD) City Fraternal Order of Police: 97-FS-VX-0001**  
Affecting organizational change.

**Collier County (FL) Sheriff's Office: 97-FS-VX-0004**  
Comprehensive stress education and training program.

**Colorado Springs (CO) Police Department: 97-FS-VX-0004**  
Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing study.

**Los Angeles County (CA) Sheriff's Department: 97-FS-VX-0003**  
Education, training, and treatment program for family violence.

**Los Angeles (CA) Police Department: 98-IJ-CX-0010**  
Comparison of stress intervention methods.

**Tennessee Sheriff's Association: 97-Fs-VX-0005**  
 Statewide comprehensive stress services and comparison program.

**Fiscal Year 1998:**

**Connecticut Department of Correction: 98-FS-VX-0003**  
 Corrections officer maintenance program.

**East Lansing (MI) Police Department: 98-FS-VX-0001**  
 Developing a chaplaincy program for officers.

**Iowa State University Department of Public Safety (supplemental): 96-FS-VX-006 (S1)**  
 Comparison of stress services in urban, rural and university law enforcement agencies.

**Longview (WA) Police Guild: 98-FS-VX-0006**  
 An organizational approach to developing a stress program.

**Metropolitan Nashville (TN) Police Department: 98-FS-VX-0004**  
 On-line stress education, resources , and support for law enforcement families.

**Miami (FL) Police Department of Public Safety (supplemental): 96-FS-VX-003 (S-1)**  
 Creating positive mentors: Provision of supervisory skills training for sergeants and field training officers.

**Michigan State Police: 98-FS-VX-0007**  
 Research of the recruit socialization process.

**Old Pueblo Lodge, #51, Fraternal Order of Police (AZ) 98- FS-VX-0005:**  
 Peer support for Officers in Native American and Campus Police Departments.

**North Carolina State Highway Patrol: 98-FS-VX-0008**  
 Reaching out to North Carolina's law enforcement community.

**Philadelphia (PA) Police Department: 98-FS-VX-0002**  
 Police family life education project.

**Appendix B**

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE  
 CORRECTIONS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM  
 (CLEFS)**

NIJ has made a significant investment to enhance the knowledge and understanding of corrections and law enforcement stress and its effects on officers and their families. The CLEFS grants awarded to date include comprehensive research and evaluations as well as the implementation of demonstration programs for officers and family members.

We realize that your time is valuable. Your input is essential in developing a comprehensive view of the CLEFS program. Your response to the following questions will assist NIJ in summarizing the information gained from these grants. Your cooperation and candid responses to the questions are vital for the successful development of this summary. The goal of the summary is to identify overall trends. While your individual responses will not be anonymous,

your name and any identifying information will be kept confidential. The information you provide will be used to identify promising practices, suggest implications for future research, policy and practice and offer guidance for future efforts to address family support for corrections and law enforcement officers.

While the questions below are written as if your grant has been completed, we realize that the 30 CLEFS grants awarded to date are all at different stages in their program development. Therefore some questions may not seem relevant to your specific grant. Please however, answer each question as it applies to your grant as fully as possible. The examples offered with some questions are meant to serve as a guide to clarify the type of information we are requesting. Please do not let the examples limit your responses.

If the space provided is not sufficient, please use additional sheets and attached then to this set of questions. If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Childress, Program Manager, (202) 307-0200 or Robert Delprino, Visiting NIJ Fellow (202) 616-2008. Thank you for your assistance.

**A. Background Information:**

1. Grant Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Grant Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Your Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Phone number where can be contacted: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

6. At what stage is your grant currently?  
 Just beginning  
 In progress  
 Near completion  
 Completed

7. Briefly describe your grant?

8. What were the primary goals of the grant?

9. Were the goals of your grant reached?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Most goal reached  
 Some goals reached

Additional comments

10. How many departments were affected by the grant? Also, please identify the type of agency (e.g. City Police Department, Correctional Facility, Prison, Sheriff's Department, State Police Agency)

11. How many officers and family members were affected by the grant? Please identify approximately what percentage of officers and families this represents.

**B. The Process:**

1.a. Was a needs assessment performed prior to beginning the grant process?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

1.b. If a needs assessment was performed, how was it done?

1.c. What were the results of the needs assessment?

2.a. Was an advisory board or steering committee developed as part of this grant?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

2.b. If an advisory board or steering committee was used, who were the members and what were their roles? (do not include names but rather titles e.g. Chief of Police, family members, etc.)

2.c. How were members selected?

3.a. What partnerships were developed to carry out the grant? (e.g. partnerships with a College, University, Union, Mental Health Organization)

3.b. How were these partnerships developed?

4. How did you market the grant to law enforcement agencies, unions, associations, officers, family members?

5. How was credibility and trust developed for the work supported by the grant?

6. What outside influences if any, unrelated to the grant, could account for the outcomes or changes that occurred during the time your grant took place? (e.g. change in administration, critical incident involving an officer or officer family member, etc.)

7.a. What data or information was collected as part of the grant? (e.g. surveys, focus groups, knowledge tests, etc.)

7.b. Briefly describe the results of the information gained.

8. What are some of the events or situations that helped in implementing your grant? (e.g. got it up and running, allowed it to proceed smoothly, allowed others to buy into the program, etc.)

9. What are some of the events or situations that were obstacles to your grant? (e.g. slowed down the process, caused goals not to be reached, limited participation by officers and family members, etc.)

10.a. Who were the key individuals that played a role in the development and delivery of this grant? (e.g. department heads, union leaders, researchers, mental health professionals, officers, family members, etc.)

**Please identify the credentials of these individuals.**

10.b. How were these individuals selected?

10.c. How did these individuals gain acceptance from the groups with which they worked?

10.d. How did these individuals assist the grant? (e.g. provided access to organizations, helped to develop training program, etc.)

10.e. How did these individuals hinder the grant? (e.g. tried to control grant, not timely with products, etc.)

10.f. How did you overcome any obstacles related to these individuals?

11.a. Who were the key organizations that played a role in the development and delivery of this grant? (e.g. police department, police officers association, union, university, etc)

11.b. How were these organizations selected?

11.c. How did these organizations assist the grant? (e.g. provided access to organizations, helped to develop training program, etc)

11.d. How did these organizations hinder the grant? (e.g. tried to control grant, not timely with products, etc)

11.e. How did you overcome any obstacles related to the organizations?

12.a. In what ways was did NIJ facilitate the grant process for you? (e.g. responded to questions in a timely manner, offered clear guidance during grant process, etc)

12.b. In what ways did NIJ hinder the grant process for you? (e.g. unresponsive to expressed concerns, delay in access to funds, etc)

12.c. How did you overcome any obstacles related to NIJ?

12.d. What suggestions do you have for NIJ to improve the grant process? (i.e., greater assistance with grant application, budget, more support from program manager, etc)

13. How did the time period given you to complete the grant affect your ability to conduct your grant? (i.e. was the period of the grant long enough, length of time adequate to evaluate outcomes, was the period of time enough to allow for the program to become established, etc)

**C. The Impact:**

1.a. For what population was this grant designed to help or benefit? (e.g. officers, recruits, spouses, children, etc)

1.b. Were all of the groups identified in the above item, reached with your grant?

1.c. Specifically, how did the grant involve family members? (e.g. attended training session, completed surveys, participated in focus groups, etc...)

1.d. If certain groups were not reached, please explain what prevented these groups from being reached?

2. In your opinion, what did the target population gain from this grant?

3. What evidence is there that the target population did gain something from this grant? (e.g.. test scores, reductions in health relate problems, testimonials, no evidence, not sure, etc)

4. What changes have occurred at the organizational level as a result of this grant? (e.g. policy change, mission statement, increase in family programs, initiate programs at academy level, etc)

5. In what ways has the grant had an impact on the police culture? (e.g. reduce stigma with seeking help, increase willingness to use services, greater family involvement, etc)

**D. The Outcome:**

1. What in your opinion were the most successful aspects of your grant?

2. What in your opinion were parts of your grant that were not successful or could be improved?

3. What changes would you make to your grant to improve it or allow it to run more smoothly?

4.a. Was a formal evaluation conducted to document any of the following:

4. b. \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No Document the grant implementation process.(process evaluation)  
What measurements were used?

4. c. \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No Document the impact of the grant on the target population.  
(impact evaluation)  
What measurements were used?

4. d. \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No Document negative and positive outcomes of the grant process.  
(outcome evaluation)  
What measurements were used?

5.a. What products were produced as a result of the grant? (i.e. manuals, policy changes, permanent programs, etc..)

**Please supply a copy of the products.**

5.b. By whom are these products used?

6. What steps have been taken to allow for the continuation of the program after the grant is over? (e.g. local agency funding, State level funding, donations, foundation sponsorship, organized police family support, etc)

#### **E. Future Directions:**

1. To what degree will other police departments, practitioners, researchers or family groups be able to conduct projects or programs similar to the one developed from this grant?

2. What guidance would you offer departments , practitioners, researchers or family groups who plan to conduct programs or projects similar to the ones you used?

3. Is there any additional information that you would like to have gained as a result of this grant but did not? (e.g. officers perception of the grant, family members perception of the grant, long term affect of training, etc)

4. In your opinion, what does an ideal officer family support program look like?

5. Any additional thoughts or comments?

Thank you for taking the time to respond to these questions. Your responses will assist NIJ in identifying promising aspects of family support programs that can assist NIJ and other agencies in developing model programs.

11/99

## **I. Factors that Influence the Success of Family Support Programs**

**Family Participation** – Include family early in the process as part of advisory boards and in the needs assessment. This may be a difficult population to which to gain access and provide information.

**Partnerships** - Relationships between the department, researchers, practitioners, unions need to be fostered and constantly monitored. These partnerships can provide resources that are not readily available within the organization.

**Buy in From Top Administration** – Administration approval can increase the credibility of a project and motivate groups within the agency to cooperate. This is a very crucial especially when changes in an administration occur during a program's development.

**Continued Support**- There must be a long-term perspective as to how a family support program will impact the officer, family and organizations. It is through a long-term commitment that the benefits of such programs can be clearly identified.

**Cultural Awareness**- Those involved in a family support program must understand the history and culture of the organizations with which they are working. Expertise alone is not enough to overcome organizational traditions and values that may hinder a program..

**Change Agents** – Apparently the characteristics of the individuals who develop and implement the program have a great deal to do with its success. They must be seen as credible and trustworthy by officers and family members and highly motivated and resilient to deal with internal and external factors that can effect the program



## **II. Stages of Organizational Preparedness for Family Support Programs.**

Before implementing a program it is important to identify what stage the organization is currently at in terms of its potential acceptance of a program. This knowledge will provide information of obstacles that may need to be addressed and steps that may need to be taken to better prepare the organization. Some organizations may not be ready to support a program to address officer and family issues. In these circumstances it may be appropriate not to attempt to introduce a program or modify an existing program until the organization has reached an appropriate stage.

### **Stage I Programmatic Approach**

- extremely cautious
- appoint task group to oversee process
- assess employee needs by survey or focus group
- with one new initiative time to return to real business issues.

### **Stage II Integrated Approach**

- some advocates in management but not top management
- aware of the impact on the organization
- becomes responsibility of an individual or group
- integration of work-family issues with other agencies personnel policies, programs and benefits.

### **Stage III Changing the Culture**

- realizations that polices will only be successful in a supportive environment
- recognize that it is one thing to have a family supportive policy, but it quite another to make sure employees know it exists and that supervisors support its use.

**Galinsky, Friedman, & Hernandez (1991)**

### **III. Some Areas that Need to be Addressed to Better Support Officers and Family Members**

- 1. Needs assessment** - programs need to come from officers and family members concerns and input and be modified based on results. Many organizations do not conduct needs assessments to identify the issues for target populations prior to implementing a program. Also the assessment needs to be carried out correctly. Just going through the process of conducting a needs assessment will result in information that will be of little use to the development of a quality program.
- 2. Knowledge and willingness to use programs.** - Having a program in place is not enough. Strategies need to be developed that increase officers and family members willingness to use programs and minimize the stigma of seeking assistance.
- 3. Research and Evaluation** – Data that identifies the benefits of these programs, such as their cost effectiveness, improvement in officer performance and family well-being will justify the programs existence and promote acceptance.
- 4. Organization as a Source of Stress** - A great deal of focus has been placed on the officer and family in addressing stress associated with the career as a law enforcement and corrections officer. A more holistic approach is needed that looks at the organization and the development of a healthy work place to minimize the potential negative effects on the officer and family.

#### **IV. Building Trust and Credibility for Family Support Programs**

To enhance program acceptance it is necessary that the program be perceived as credible and trustworthy. While this is a continuous process, there are some proactive steps that can be taken during the early stages of a program's development.

- Written statement of support from top administrator.
- Include statement of family support in organization's mission statement.
- Solicit from officers, family members, administrators and other related groups services to provide. Information collected needs to be feed back to these groups and used.
- Mandate training of supervisors in the value of programs and how to access services for officers.
- Mandate training of all members of awareness of topic and support services.
- Introduce training and program to office and family members early in the officer's career. Introduce in the academy and follow up with the field-training officer.
- Develop and fund family support groups made up and run by officers' family members.
- Allow family members to be part of the process. They can provide training at the academy level or be part of a family critical incident stress debriefing team.
- Clearly identify what each group can gain from the program.
  - Administration- reduced sick leave, turnover, and costs.
  - Officers- stress relief, improved health and performance.
  - Family members- improved family relationships.
- Have program headed by peer officers who are chosen by other officers. Provide necessary training for these individuals.
- Identify community mental health workers, researchers, trainers and other professionals that can assist in the program development and delivery of services. These individuals or groups should be evaluated on their knowledge of the organization, its culture and acceptability by offices and family members.
- The program should be a stand-alone program to avoid confusion of affiliation with other existing department or programs.
- Hold the program accountable to identify the effect it has had on the organization, officers and family members.

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