



POLICE DEPARTMENT

Michael Bussiere
Chief of Police



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 28, 2016

CONTACT: Sgt. Roger Landry, 207-513-3138, Ext. 3306
David Walker, 207-752-6274

Law Enforcement Officers from Lewiston Police Department Join Training for Best Practices with Juveniles

Law enforcement officers from the Lewiston Police Department and juvenile probation officers from the State of Maine will be gathering together to learn how to improve interactions with youth through the *Policing the Teen Brain* training February 2nd – 5th at the Lewiston Police Department in Lewiston, Maine.

“We look forward to this unique training as a step toward enhancing our work with youth, and as part of the work being undertaken by the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group and we appreciate their financial commitment to bring this training to Lewiston”, said Lewiston Police Chief Michael Bussiere. “Through it, we hope to offer officers new skills in interacting with youth and to strengthen Lewiston Police Department’s relationships with youth-serving community organizations.”

The mission of the Maine Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) is to advise and make recommendations to state policy makers and to promote effective system level responses that further the goals of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDA). “We know that children who are detained are more likely to be removed from the community long-term.” said Nate Gagnon, correctional compliance monitor for the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group. “This not only disrupts their connections to schools, services, and family, it also has lasting impacts on both educational and employment levels. The JJAG is committed to statewide implementation of efforts to provide information and training to juvenile justice professionals to benefit youth and all those involved with Maine’s juvenile justice system. *Policing the Teen Brain* training provided by Strategies for Youth is a key part of realizing this goal.”

Developed by Strategies for Youth, the *Policing the Teen Brain* training improves interactions between law enforcement and youth, gives officers a better understanding of the development of the teen brain and thought process and provides tactics for de-

escalating interactions and avoiding use of force. An important goal of the training is to help officers be aware of and address disproportionate minority contact.

“We are excited to be a part of the JJAG’s commitment to equipping officers with skills and best practices for working effectively with youth,” said David Walker, Training Director for Strategies for Youth. “Chief Bussiere understands the importance of a strong and meaningful relationship between his officers and Lewiston youth and we are happy to have this opportunity to train his department.”

Law enforcement officers selected from the Lewiston Police Department will participate in an intensive four-day course in which they will learn from Dr. Matt Aalsma – Associate Professor, Indiana University School of Medicine and Strategies for Youth’s Training Director – David Walker, how teens perceive, process and respond to stimulus using different parts of their brains than adults. The insights from the training will equip officers with the necessary skills to work effectively with youth. Following the February training, participating officers will train their peers in a series of events focused on sharing their new skills across the Lewiston Police Department.

Strategies for Youth is a national nonprofit training and policy organization dedicated to improving police/youth interactions and reducing disproportionate minority contact. Strategies for Youth has worked law enforcement agencies across the country, including departments in Indiana, California, Massachusetts, Virginia, Wisconsin, Ohio, Washington, Alabama, New York, and other states.