

### In This Newsletter

The Smart Policing Initiative (SPI) team is excited to share updates from the SPI sites. This Spring 2021 newsletter reintroduces the Smart Policing Initiative, shares lessons learned from the Anniston, Alabama, SPI and discusses the value of trauma-informed policing from the Brighton/Commerce City, Colorado, SPI. This newsletter introduces the 2020 SPI sites, highlights an SPI team member, gives an update on the SPI National Meeting, and invites agencies to provide input for upcoming SPI workshops and webinars.

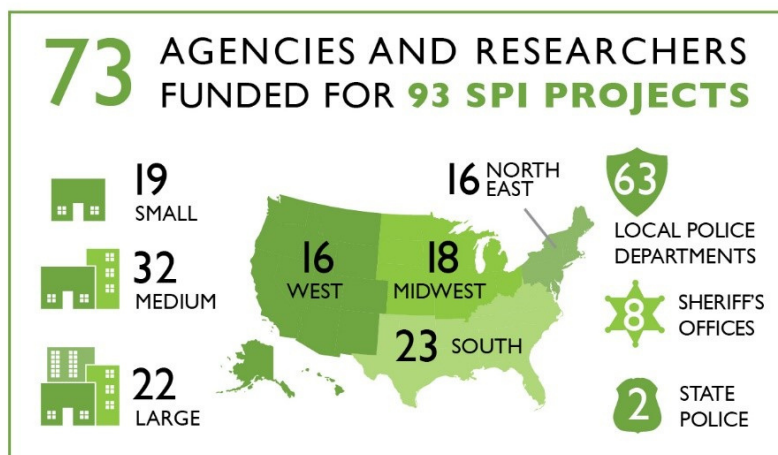
## Welcome Back to the Smart Policing Initiative

The Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) team is proud to announce the relaunch of the Smart Policing Initiative (SPI), formerly the Strategies for Policing Innovation program. The transition to Smart Policing reflects the rededication of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and our team to the original values of the SPI program developed in 2009, which include community partnership and collaboration and rigorous evaluation of policing initiatives.

Since its inception, the SPI's goals have remained unchanged; they include using data effectively to solve complex problems in local communities, partnering with researchers and the community to develop robust programs, and sustaining evidence-based practices long after an SPI award. Smart Policing fully captures this history and idea.

To date, SPI has supported 73 law enforcement agencies across the country for 93 different SPI initiatives. The TTA team looks forward to providing continued support to all SPI sites as they integrate the program's core values into their own SPI programs and agencies.

Please check out our website at [www.smart-policing.com](http://www.smart-policing.com) to learn more about the SPI program, sites, and principles.



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# In Their Own Words: Tips, Challenges, and Lessons Learned from the Anniston, Alabama, SPI

By: Captain Justin Sanford and the Anniston, Alabama SPI team

The Anniston SPI is focused on deterring property-related crimes and motor vehicle theft and improving investigations of these crimes through deployment of closed-circuit television cameras. As the site has developed and implemented its SPI, it has learned a number of lessons. Below are thoughts and feedback from the site, in their own words. These tips, challenges, and lessons are presented to assist fellow SPI sites and law enforcement agencies across the country working to implement innovative strategies and influence change in their communities.

**1. Include your research partner early on in the action plan/project.** We initially struggled with the completion of the action plan because a lot of the technical aspects of the research points were over our head. We were lucky to have a partnership with Jacksonville State University prior to this grant where we could lean on them for support. I would also make sure you have a more than capable partner identified before tackling a project of this size. They should be included in the initial discussions.

**2. Have a good idea about what type of equipment you need to accomplish your goals, and then do a lot of research on that equipment.** We were lucky to have a neighboring agency go through the growing pains of acquiring that type of equipment. We could speak with them and demo individual pieces of equipment. We learned what they experienced as far as successes and setbacks. I reached out to a few different companies to compare prices and capabilities.

**3. Have someone really invested in the project that is willing to commit a lot of time to it.** We are a smaller agency with a specific budget. I knew going in that we would need to get the most bang for our buck and there would be costs later on down the road that the grant would not cover. I looked for sustainable solutions for when the grant funding expires. This included determining how the data would get back to us (cell cards and the monthly cost), how we would replace failed or damaged pieces of equipment (learning what could just be changed out instead of a total rebuild), and how we could expand this program moving forward. We were able to identify cheaper but functional equipment that we could add to our normal budget one piece at a time if needed. I also needed to learn how we could do the majority of this work without contracting (and paying) someone else to do it.

**4. Find out where you can pull resources from.** The local utility companies in our area will not let you put equipment on their poles. I had to get new poles set in several of the locations we used. This required the use and knowledge of our public works department. We also ran into an issue of placing equipment on federal and state right of ways due to restrictions from state agencies. We were able to place new poles just outside of the state right of ways and were still able to get the same views of what we needed. Most of the time this was only a few feet from the desired location. Having another department and contractors set the equipment up delayed our ideal start date. We had to wait on their schedule, so it would have helped if we would have gotten with them sooner.

**5. Know what you are going to do with the feeds once you get them.** This required purchasing a video management system that was capable of pulling all of the feeds into a central location and included a great deal of storage.



## SPI Welcomes 2020 Sites

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) SPI program is pleased to announce that nine new sites joined the SPI community of practice in 2020: Atlantic City, New Jersey; Davenport, Iowa; Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland Security; Fort Myers, Florida; Hamilton County, Ohio; Peoria, Illinois; St. Louis County, Missouri; Suffolk County, New York; and Winston-Salem, North Carolina. These sites will focus on addressing gun violence, violent crime, gang crime, and automobile theft. Check out our [website](#) to learn about all the new fiscal year 2020 sites!

Site	Site collaborators	Targeted problem(s)	Site strategies
<b>Atlantic City, New Jersey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Atlantic City Police Department</li> <li>Atlantic County Prosecutors Office</li> <li>Federal Bureau of Investigation</li> <li>County Chief of Police Association</li> <li>New Jersey Regional Operational Intelligence Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violent crime reduction</li> <li>Automobile theft</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install stationary automated license plate readers (ALPRs)</li> <li>Share ALPR data among public safety agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Davenport, Iowa</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Davenport Police Department</li> <li>City of Davenport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gun crime</li> <li>Intelligence sharing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build a crime analysis unit</li> </ul>
<b>Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland Security</li> <li>SAS Solutions</li> <li>Radford University's Center for Police Practice, Policy and Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gun crime</li> <li>Intelligence sharing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stratified policing</li> <li>Place-based policing</li> <li>Offender-focused policing</li> </ul>
<b>Fort Myers, Florida</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fort Myers Police Department</li> <li>University of Cincinnati's Institute of Crime Science (ICS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violent crime</li> <li>Analytical capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stratified policing</li> <li>Place-based policing</li> </ul>
<b>Hamilton County, Ohio</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hamilton County Sheriff's Office</li> <li>University of Cincinnati's ICS</li> <li>US Attorney's Office (USAO), Southern District of Ohio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violent crime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place-based policing</li> <li>Problem-oriented policing</li> </ul>
<b>Peoria, Illinois</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peoria Police Department</li> <li>Peoria City Council</li> <li>Street Smart™</li> <li>Application Data Systems, Inc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violent crime</li> <li>Gun crime</li> <li>Intelligence sharing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Street Smart™</li> <li>Technology upgrades</li> <li>Focused deterrence</li> </ul>
<b>St. Louis County, Missouri</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St. Louis County Police Department</li> <li>Missouri's Criminal Justice Information Systems</li> <li>Regional Justice Information System Commission</li> <li>National Integrated Ballistic Information Network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violent crime</li> <li>Automobile theft</li> <li>Intelligence sharing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology upgrades</li> <li>Development of an automated dashboard, a built-in dashboard, and report request button to increase report and data sharing among departments</li> </ul>
<b>Suffolk County, New York</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suffolk County Sheriff's Office</li> <li>University of Southern California</li> <li>LEO Technologies</li> <li>USAO, Eastern District of New York Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Team/Task Force</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gang violence</li> <li>Violent crime</li> <li>Community trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phone call intelligence gathering</li> </ul>
<b>Winston-Salem, North Carolina</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Winston-Salem Police Department</li> <li>University of North Carolina at Greensboro's North Carolina Network for Safe Communities</li> <li>Violent Crimes Task Force</li> <li>Safe Streets Initiative</li> <li>Project Re-Entry</li> <li>PSN</li> <li>USAO, Middle District of North Carolina</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gun crime</li> <li>Violent crime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of a real-time crime center</li> <li>Technology integration</li> </ul>

# The Value of Trauma-Informed Policing: Lessons from the Brighton/Commerce City, CO SPI Site

By: Sergeant Rudy Underwood, Commerce City/Brighton Sexual Assault Task Force and Kim Messina, Brighton/Commerce City Victim Services Unit Manager and SPI Project Director

The traditional law enforcement response to sexual violence often does not engage victims in the investigative process, nor does it provide law enforcement with the tools necessary to hold offenders accountable. The Commerce City/Brighton Sexual Assault Task Force (SATF) recognized the shortcomings of traditional sexual assault investigations and implemented a different approach: trauma-informed interviewing.

The SATF is committed to trauma-informed policing, which allows victims to report in a way that works best for them and recognizes the effects of trauma on a victim's memory and communication. A trauma-informed approach also enables law enforcement to gain valuable information for the investigation while not causing additional harm to those who report. This overarching philosophy enables the SATF to treat survivors with dignity and grace while also holding offenders accountable.

One key element of trauma-informed policing is trauma-informed interviewing. This is an interviewing methodology centering on an understanding of the effects of trauma on the brain. The interviewer gathers information based on an understanding of the effects of trauma or high-stress situations on an individual and how that trauma may affect their ability to recall an experience. The practice and requirements of a trauma-informed interview vary, but typically include principles from trauma-informed care such as acknowledging barriers and needs, attempting to avoid re-traumatization, exhibiting empathy, focusing on the senses, and using open-ended questions.

While all trauma-informed interviewing techniques originate from the same basic principles as trauma care, not all trauma-informed interviewing methodologies are created equal. The SATF is trained in the Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview® (FETI®) methodology because it is a standardized interviewing framework that goes well beyond trauma-informed care principles.

FETI is a science and practice-based interviewing methodology that is offered to Commerce City/Brighton police officers. It provides clear and consistent instruction on how to maximize opportunities for information collection while maintaining the neutrality essential to our profession.

Every detective, victim advocate, and agency leader has been trained in FETI.® In the Brighton Police Department, each patrol officer has taken the online Introduction to FETI® course. Commerce City patrol officers have received information on the FETI® methodology during in-service training.

The FETI® methodology provides the following:

- In-depth instruction on the importance of understanding your role during an interview
- How and why you should separate the interview from the investigation
- The potential impact of trauma and stress on memory and recall
- Empathic Listening™ instruction
- Unidirectional Interviewing™ instruction
- Experiential Information Collection™ instruction
- Strategies to increase neutrality and equity
- Best practices for accurate documentation of the interview





Law enforcement investigations and interviews are often based on observable facts and linear direct information. Trauma-informed interviewing focuses on the experience of the victim through empathetic listening and what the victim can remember based on sight, sound, taste, touch, body sensations, and what their emotional and physical reactions were during the incident. The questions asked in a trauma-informed interview are not complex but instead open-ended. The interviewer should be listening, rather than doing the majority of the talking. During a trauma-informed interview, the victim will be sharing with you what they actually experienced, which is crucial for the investigation. The information may not be the typical who, what, when, where, why, and how. The information may also be provided out of chronological order, which may be confusing at first. By approaching the interview in this way, you can still gather the who, what, where, when, etc., and gain insight into how the victim actually processed the experience.

Trauma-informed interviewing should be recognized by all law enforcement organizations as an advanced skill that requires intentional and specific instruction, rather than something everyone should just know how to do. The FETI® methodology allows officers and administrators to have clear and understandable metrics for what a trauma-informed interview is and what it is not. This provides our agency's entire staff with the opportunity to enhance their information-gathering techniques and to be held accountable for interactions based on education they have received in a consistent and repeatable manner. After all, interviewing is one of the most significant tools law enforcement has.

In conjunction with trauma-informed interviewing, Commerce City and Brighton implemented the “You Have Options Program” (YHOP). YHOP, founded in January 2013 by the Ashland, Oregon, Police Department, is a law enforcement-led program that transforms the criminal justice response to sexual assault by focusing on two fundamental elements: increasing the number of victims who report and thoroughly investigating an identified sequence or serial offenders.

YHOP also prioritizes a victim's access to advocacy and medical care even when the victim does not initially choose to pursue a criminal investigation. YHOP creates an environment where victims of sexual assault are in control (as much as is legally permissible) and are able to share their experience without fear or pressure to move forward with a criminal investigation. The program also acknowledges that justice can look different for everyone.

The SATF team, working in collaboration with their community partners, is dedicated to this process. They work tirelessly to deliver high-quality professional outcomes, utilizing trauma-informed approaches, YHOP, and a victim-centered philosophy. Doing so increases the likelihood that victims will stay engaged in the process and reduces feelings of re-traumatization, which leads to better and more thoroughly investigated cases.



SPI previously held a trauma-informed policing workshop where participants from interested SPI sites learned about how trauma affects police work, how it affects the behaviors of residents with whom law enforcement interacts, and how to respond to these types of trauma-related issues. To learn more about the workshop, visit our website [here](#).

## 2020 SPI National Meeting Update

The SPI TTA team held the annual SPI National Meeting virtually January 27–28, 2021. The meeting provided an opportunity for SPI sites to learn about SPI principles and their applications to policing operations and to engage in critical discussions with their peers and national experts on pressing and emerging topics in policing. The agenda included time for sites to connect with subject matter experts and hear successes, challenges, and insights from current and former SPI sites.

This meeting improved and enhanced SPI sites' understanding of the program's goals and TTA resources. The meeting's objectives included the development and dissemination of evidence-based policing practices; the review of each site's progress toward key milestones and successful evaluation of the project's outcomes; the identification of important partnership and peer-to-peer exchange opportunities; and the initiation of plans for program sustainability.

The conference was critical to BJA's mission within the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, and highlighted successful SPI initiatives. The meeting included the following:

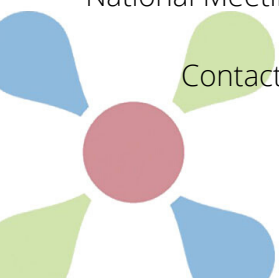
- Overview of SPI initiatives, including principles and practices, site progress and activities, key expectations regarding research partnerships, research methods and outcomes, lessons learned, data and analysis, sustainability, and collaboration
- How to be successful, highlighting SPI sites
- How to sustain these initiatives, highlighting sustainability resources and site practices
- Discussion of best practices on topics of interest (e.g., violence reduction, multi-agency collaboration, officer safety, crime analysis, community partnerships, and technology).
- Peer-to-peer networking exchange opportunities and roundtable discussions
- Planning sessions

Recordings of key meeting sessions are now available. Materials from the meeting are also available on the [SPI website](#).

- [Leveraging an SPI for Organizational Change](#): Chief (ret.) Bill Taylor, Lowell, Massachusetts, Police Department
- [Operationalizing SPI Principles into Agency Practice](#) including presentations from:
  - Atlanta, Georgia, Police Department
  - Brighton/Commerce City, Colorado, Police Departments
  - St. Louis, Missouri, Metropolitan Police Department
  - Providence, Rhode Island, Police Department
- [Building Support for an SPI - Strategic Communication in the Community and Within the Agency](#): Laura McElroy, McElroy Media Group

The SPI TTA team plans to make up for the absence of an in-person meeting with more virtual events, more resources based on sites' needs, and an increase in SPI publications from the team. The SPI team will also consider more site visits in the future to supplement the virtual national meeting when travel and in-person interactions are safe for agencies and the TTA team. Stay tuned for more information on the next SPI National Meeting.

Contact [spi@cna.org](mailto:spi@cna.org) or your SPI Training and Technical Assistance Team with any questions.



## 2020-2021 SPI Workshops

As a reminder, SPI will offer workshops throughout 2021 based on the needs of current SPI sites. Given COVID-19 restrictions, the SPI TTA team will hold these workshops either virtually or live when in-person activities can safely resume. SPI teams are encouraged to talk to their subject matter experts and analysts about any topics of interest. The SPI TTA team will consider these areas of interest and suggested topics when developing SPI workshops. These workshops provide a unique opportunity for SPI sites to meet, discuss, and exchange ideas on pressing or emerging needs within policing. The workshops also allow SPI teams to connect with partners and further develop goals, strategies, and priorities for their SPI projects. Read about past SPI regional meetings and workshops [here](#).

## About Us

SPI is a collaborative effort by the BJA, CNA, state and local law enforcement agencies, and researchers. It assists agencies with identifying innovative and evidence-based solutions to use in effectively and efficiently tackling chronic crime problems in their jurisdictions. As always, feel free to share your thoughts and experiences with us at [SPI@cna.org](mailto:SPI@cna.org). You can sign up for the SPI mailing list online at <http://bit.ly/1M6qLhP>.

## Staff Spotlight: Kira Cincotta

Ms. Cincotta is a research specialist with CNA's Institute of Public Research working for the Center for Justice Research and Innovation. She supports several criminal justice and training and technical assistance (TTA) projects, including as an analyst for the SPI initiative.

Ms. Cincotta supports three SPI sites, the Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland Security; Fort Myers, Florida; and Peoria, Illinois. As an analyst on these projects, she maintains a detailed knowledge of site initiatives and suggests TTA strategies to meet site needs. In addition to her work on SPI, Ms. Cincotta serves as an analyst for two Justice Reinvestment Initiative sites, the Mountain Plains Region for Project Safe Neighborhoods, and a variety of body-worn camera TTA sites. Ms. Cincotta also contributes to several criminal justice projects such as the Using Analytics to Improve Officer Safety study and local police department assessments. Previously, she worked with the Community Justice Network of Vermont and was an intern with the Department of Homeland Security.

Ms. Cincotta received a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Vermont, with a concentration in criminal justice.

**"SPI is a great opportunity to support various innovations deployed by police departments throughout the nation to form sustainable, evidence-based crime reduction strategies."**

