

HOW WILL CHILDCARE SERVICES PROVIDED FOR A MID-SIZE LAW  
ENFORCEMENT AGENCY IMPACT EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION BY  
2007?

A project presented to  
California Commission on  
Peace Officer Standards and Training

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This Command College Project is a FUTURES study of a particular emerging issue in law enforcement. Its purpose is NOT to predict the future, but rather to project a number of possible scenarios for strategic planning considerations.

Defining the future differs from analyzing the past because the future has not yet happened. In this project, useful alternatives have been formulated systematically so that the planner can respond to a range of possible future environments.

Managing the future means influencing the future; creating it, constraining it, adapting to it. A futures study points the way.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter I	
ISSUE IDENTIFICATION	
Introduction	1
History of Childcare	2
The Current Situation with Law Enforcement Childcare	5
Future Law Enforcement Needs	6
Chapter II	
FUTURES FORECASTING	
The Nominal Group Technique Exercise	7
Description of the Process	7
Trend Statements	8
Summary Trend Table	13
Event Statements	14
Summary Event Table	17
Cross Impact Analysis	18
Cross Impact Table	20
Future Scenarios	21
Normative (most likely) Scenario	22
Optimistic Scenario	24
Pessimistic Scenario	27
Chapter III	
STRATEGIC PLAN	
Introduction	29
Environmental Analysis	29
Threats	30
Opportunities	31
Internal Analysis	31
Strengths	33
Weaknesses	34

Stakeholders	35
Strategies	35
Direction Setting	36
Implementation Plan	37
Chapter IV	
TRANSITION MANAGEMENT	
Organizational Assessment	39
Critical Mass Identification	39
Change Management	40
Financial Considerations	40
Chapter V	
FINDINGS/CONCLUSION	
Key Findings	43
Implications for Leadership	44
Recommendations	45
Conclusion	46
THE APPENDICES	
Appendix A	
Nominal Group Technique Panel	47
Appendix B	
List of Trends	48
Appendix C	
List of Events	51
Appendix D	
Employee Survey	53
BIBLIOGRAPHY	55

## CHAPTER ONE

### ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

#### Introduction

How will childcare services provided for a mid-size law enforcement agency impact employee recruitment and retention by 2007? As law enforcement agencies compete with each other over recruitment and retention of employees, the fulfillment of individual family and childcare needs is often overlooked. Twenty-first century employees, especially those with children, are in a constant struggle between meeting the needs of the employer and taking care of their own family. The complications and frustrations of finding adequate childcare for law enforcement employees is even more troubling when one considers the nature of odd and/or rotating work hours, emergency call back responsibilities, collateral assignments, court appearances, and the unpredictable nature of police work. This project will study the need for childcare services for law enforcement agencies and its potential impact on employee recruitment and retention.

The first chapter includes the history of childcare and its current status in California and around the nation. Employee morale and satisfaction are explored. Also, childcare financial assistance and possible consequences of not meeting employee or family needs are investigated.

The second chapter provides a futures study using the Nominal Group Technique exercise to identify future trends and events and how they could impact the issue. Included in this chapter are scenarios of possible outcomes relevant to the issue of childcare services for law enforcement agencies and their impact on employee recruitment and retention. The three futures scenarios are defined as normative (most likely), optimistic, and pessimistic.

The third chapter identifies a strategic plan for development of childcare service for law enforcement agencies. It includes an environmental analysis of private childcare centers where threats and opportunities are examined. An internal analysis of a mid-size law enforcement agency is then conducted to identify employee demographics, strengths, and weaknesses of such a venture within the agency. Stakeholders are identified, along with alternative strategies and setting the recommended direction for the plan.

Chapter four involves transition management and includes an organizational assessment. It will also involve critical mass identification, managing change, and financial considerations for the agency and its employees.

The fifth chapter summarizes the key findings and implications for leadership. It also concludes with recommendations for the future and answers the question of what impact childcare services provided for a mid-size law enforcement agency would have on employee recruitment and retention in five years.

### History of Childcare

Childcare has been a concern of families throughout history. In much of the twentieth century, the traditional family consisted of one parent working, usually the father, and the other staying at home to care for the children. This began to change during the past thirty to forty years as both parents needed to work to sustain the family. Add to that the higher divorce rate with more single parents raising children, and the issue of adequate childcare became more of a social and financial concern. In law enforcement, the number of working mothers in the profession has increased dramatically since the 1970s. This further complicates the childcare issue because of the stresses and strains of working odd and unpredictable hours. The issue of

finding adequate 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week childcare is becoming a serious concern in the law enforcement profession.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 39.7% of all California households have persons under the age of eighteen (*US Census Bureau, State and County Quick Facts*, 2002). Seven and one third percent of all persons in California are under five years of age. This is a significant number of children, many of whom are in need of childcare services. As stated in the California Budget Project Report, *Lasting Returns: Strengthening California's Childcare and Development System*, "California's preschool-age population (0-4) has increased by an estimated 71 percent since 1970. The Department of Finance (DoF) projects an additional 12 percent increase—to 3.1 million children—by 2010" (May, 2001). It also points out that "only a small portion of licensed childcare programs are available to parents who work outside the traditional work day." Law enforcement is anything but traditional in its work schedules. Finally, the report states "nearly two-thirds of California families with preschool-age children rely on non-parental childcare arrangements." These findings, in conjunction with more working mothers and an increasing number of single parent officers, suggest that childcare services for law enforcement employees are in great need.

In an article from *HR Magazine* titled: "*Work & Family, An Inside Look at Making the Grade*" (Martinez, 1998, p. 398), an overview of the 100 best companies list found that one company said "profit begins with satisfied employees," and "putting employees first versus putting the shareholders first," is what helps companies make it to the list. It goes on to highlight that working mothers are looking for many things, including "childcare benefits such as back-up care, on-site childcare . . ." Another firm that made it to the list was noted for its on-site childcare as well as other family-friendly benefits.

A review of the Society for Human Relations Management (SHRM) web site shows many articles and publications in support of childcare facilities and arrangements for employees. One publication titled *Achieving Work-Life Balance for Employees and their Employers* (Digh, 2002, April, p. 501) states: “The Families and Work Institute’s Business Work-Life Study (BWLS) and National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW) found that employees with more supportive workplaces as well as better quality jobs are more likely than other workers to have:

- Higher levels of job satisfaction;
- More commitment to their companies’ success;
- Greater loyalty to their companies, and
- A stronger intention to remain with their companies.”

“Not surprisingly, the study also found that employees with more demanding jobs and less supportive workplaces experience:

- More stress;
- Poorer coping;
- Worse moods; and
- Less energy off the job; all of which jeopardize their personal and family well being.”

Additionally, they found that “when employees personal and family well being is compromised by work, employees experience more negative spillover from home to work, which diminishes job performance.”

In another publication, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) conducted its annual survey to gather information on what types of benefits employers offer to their employees (*Society for Human Resource Management, 2001, pp. 4-5, 38*). The 2001 SHRM

Benefits Survey results were based on responses from 754 human resource professionals. In part, it states: “In many areas of the U.S., cities and municipalities are beginning to feel the need to increase services centered around children.” The report goes on to describe how employers are responding to this trend by offering several forms of benefits designed to address childcare issues: “Childcare benefits offered include allowing employees to bring their child to work in an emergency (24%), childcare referral service (20%), adoption assistance and lactation program/designated area (each offered by 16% of respondents’ organizations), emergency/sick childcare (13%), on-site childcare center (5%), subsidized cost of childcare and company supported childcare center (each offered by 4% of respondents’ organizations).” There are obviously a very small percentage of businesses that provide on-site or subsidized childcare services for their employees.

#### The Current Situation with Law Enforcement Childcare

The typical law enforcement employee joining the profession today views their time at the agency as a job instead of a career. Generally, these employees are more into themselves, and subsequently their family. This attitude is not bad, just different from those who have joined the profession in years past. As a result, employees will be looking to employers to provide more benefits that help them at home as well as at work. This includes quality childcare available at any time of the day or night. According to the publication of *An Overview of Early Education and Childcare in California* (2001, p. 1), good-quality childcare services are difficult to find. There is also a shortage of childcare teachers for after school programs. Add to this the fact that government-funded childcare services are usually only designated for low-income families and the future of childcare in California is not good. This is of special concern for those parents working shifts in the law enforcement profession.

## Future Law Enforcement Needs

A review of the literature and history of childcare suggests that law enforcement must do much more to prepare for the needs of its employees. Law enforcement, like society as a whole, has more working parents and few qualified childcare centers for its workers. As the demand for law enforcement professionals increases and early retirements take effect, leaders of police agencies will need to become more proactive and creative in enticing quality candidates to their agencies.

Law enforcement agencies that demonstrate care and concern for their employees in the recruitment process will attract employees that are career minded and are more likely to stay with the department. Police leaders will be well served to demonstrate to employees early on that they care for the employee and their families as much as they care for the agency. Those caring, compassionate, and progressive leaders will then receive the benefits of career-oriented employees coming to their department. These employees can then focus on their job and serving the community while knowing their children are properly cared for.

However, in order to adequately prepare for the future needs of employees, particularly in the area of childcare needs, it is necessary to conduct an analysis with subject matter experts. The next chapter involves futures forecasting of possible trends and events by childcare and law enforcement professionals. It involves a Nominal Group Technique exercise where trends and events are not only identified, but also compared to each other through brainstorming sessions. Scenarios are also developed from the trends and events to further explain possible future outcomes related to childcare involving law enforcement families.

CHAPTER TWO  
FUTURES FORECASTING

Nominal Group Technique

A Nominal Group Technique exercise (NGT) was conducted in March of 2002 in order to determine the extent childcare services provided for a mid-size law enforcement agency could impact employee recruitment and retention by 2007. The group consisted of a panel of nine subject matter experts who have experience in the childcare field, or have children while working full time (Appendix A). One of the panel members was a junior high school student who had been sent to childcare centers as a younger child. Although there was some initial concern about having a thirteen-year-old on the panel, her comments and input verified many of the concerns and issues addressed during the process.

The NGT is a structured process of brainstorming (used in this case to project futures) where possible future trends and events are identified through a set of established procedures, quantifications, and mathematical calculations. Trends are defined as a series of incidents taking place, which seem to indicate a direction in which a particular issue may be heading. It is based upon the past, present, and future, and can be qualitative or quantitative. Events are defined as a single occurrence, with a specific date and time.

Description of the process

The NGT began with introductions followed by an explanation of the project and discussion of the issue statement. Participants were then given five minutes of silent thought to stimulate generation of ideas. This resulted in fifty possible trends (Appendix B). The panel used a round robin method where all trends generated were recorded on flip charts. After all ideas had been exhausted, the ideas were individually discussed and clarified. Next, common

ideas were combined resulting in a list of forty-eight. The trends were again clarified to ensure consistency. Panelists voted on the top ten trends. The votes were tabulated and prioritized from one to ten, with one being the most important. The results were indicated in median values (Table 1). All worksheet materials were collected for use in later analysis.

The panel followed the same process for identifying possible events that could impact the trends (Appendix C). A total of twenty-three (23) events were pared down to the top ten (10). These results were also indicated by the median, to eliminate “unusual” variances (Table 2).

The panel used the Trend Summary form to rate the top ten trends. The table is the result of their individual projections that were indicated on rating forms and then collated. The table represents their ratings for four items:

1. Where was the trend five years ago?
2. Where will the trend be in five years?
3. Where will the trend be in ten years?
4. What was the panel’s level of concern regarding the trend as it relates to the question?

#### TREND STATEMENTS

TREND 1: Availability of extended care hours.

This was defined as the availability of private childcare facilities after hours. The panel felt that as licensing and other mandates increase, the number of childcare service facilities would decrease over time. Private citizens would be less likely to open and operate childcare facilities if the legal requirements and oversight became too restrictive. In addition, the panel discussed how there are even fewer after hours childcare services now and those would decrease over time due to private providers generally not wanting to operate in the evening or overnight. There is also less demand for available evening or overnight childcare and costs to stay open

could be prohibitive. However, the panel felt this trend would increase only slightly over the next ten years. This trend was in a four-way tie with number eight as their level of concern.

**TREND 2:** Availability of qualified providers.

The panel described the trend as the number of qualified childcare providers available in the profession. Most panel members felt the number of qualified childcare providers would increase steadily over the next five and ten years to meet the demand. One panel member thought there were a sufficient number of childcare providers five years ago, but their availability has dropped somewhat today. Overall, the panel rated the level of concern as a ten. This was their highest level of concern for all trends.

**TREND 3:** Number of single parents trying to raise children.

This was defined as the number of parents who were either unmarried with children or divorced and raising children alone. The panel felt this was a significant trend for law enforcement officers. Also, the stigma of raising children out of wedlock is decreasing over time. The panel also noted there seems to be an increase in the number of single male officers who end up with custody of their children after separation or divorce. The feeling was also that as the number of female police officers increases, so will the number of single parent officers. With the continuing complexities and stresses of the law enforcement profession, this number will rise over time. The panel saw a moderate, but continuous, rise in this trend over the next five and ten years, but ranked it as seven in level of concern.

**TREND 4:** Security measures of childcare facilities.

The panel defined security measures of childcare facilities as fencing, locks, alarms, cameras, and the designation of separated areas to keep the general public away from the facility. The panel felt the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the bombing of the Murrah

Federal Building in Oklahoma City, which included a childcare facility, will cause security measures to improve. On-site security personnel could be required if more terrorist attacks of childcare facilities occur in the future. Although the panel rated their level of concern as an eight, this trend received the highest estimation of increase within ten years (170).

**TREND 5:** Availability of care for sick children.

This was defined as childcare facilities that provide special care or secure areas for children who are sick. The panel felt this would be a value-added service of childcare, but admitted this type of service is rarely available. Most childcare facilities do not allow parents to bring sick children to the facility for fear of infecting staff and other children. The panel saw this as a huge benefit for employee recruitment and retention as employees would use fewer sick days if they could take their children to childcare in spite of minor illnesses. Realistically, the panel saw the possibility of this actually occurring over the next five and ten years as very slight. Also, they rated the level of concern as a five, the lowest of all trends.

**TREND 6:** Cost of care.

This was defined as the overall cost of childcare to consumers. The panel felt there is a natural rise in costs for childcare over time. They also felt fears and security concerns since the terrorist attacks and the costs for improved childcare services are bound to increase. Another factor the panel noted was that as businesses expand to longer workdays and flexible work schedules, the cost to provide adequate childcare services will also go up. The panel saw this cost of care as increasing steadily over the next five to ten years. The panel rated this a nine in level of concern, the second highest level.

TREND 7: MOU-Benefits/Agreements that include child care.

This was defined as the number of contract agreements between employers and employees that would have provisions for childcare arrangements as part of the benefit package. It could include arrangements for the employer to pay some or all of employee childcare costs, which could also involve providing the facility. The panel saw this trend steadily increasing over the next ten years with more agreements containing childcare benefits, but only ranked it as a seven in level of concern.

TREND 8: Level of pay for childcare providers.

This was defined as the amount of dollars that childcare providers are paid for their services. Several panel members thought that childcare providers are generally underpaid for the level of training and service they provide. One panel member observed that the amount of pay for childcare workers and providers has not kept up with the cost of living. Generally, the panel agreed that pay for childcare providers would gradually increase in five years with a larger jump in ten years. The level of concern was one of four given a rating of eight.

TREND 9: Level of funding for childcare.

This trend was defined as the budget implications for law enforcement should agreements require agencies to fund all or part of childcare facilities for their employees. Although the panel agreed childcare assistance would be a benefit to the employer as well as the employee, there was some concern about sustaining government-sponsored childcare operations in lean budget years. All panel members were unanimous in their opinion that funding should improve over the years as government agencies see the benefit of helping to provide their employees with these types of services. However, the panel rated this only a six in their level of concern. This was

because employees have to pay for private childcare services now and any support from their employing agency would be seen as an improvement in their family situation.

TREND 10: Level of employee performance.

This was defined as the way employees perform when they are not worrying about family needs. The panel felt very strongly that employee productivity, morale, and performance are greatly affected by their personal life. If employees know that their children are safe and secure then they have less stress and better attitudes to focus on their work. There was a feeling that employers who demonstrate care and concern for the families of employees will receive the benefit of a more dedicated and committed workforce with greater longevity and retention of employees. The panel felt employee job satisfaction and performance would rise slightly over five years and then level off as work-sponsored childcare becomes an expectation. The level of concern tied with the other number eight ratings.

## SUMMARY TREND TABLE

(Table 1)

	-5 years	Today	+5 years	+10 years	Concern
T1: Availability of extended care hours	90	100	110	135	8
T2: Availability of qualified providers	75	100	125	150	10
T3: Single parents trying to raise children	80	100	130	155	7
T4: Security measures of childcare facilities	90	100	150	170	8
T5: Availability of care for sick children	90	100	105	110	5
T6: Cost of childcare	90	100	125	150	9
T7: MOU benefits/Agreements	100	100	120	140	7
T8: Pay for childcare providers	80	100	110	140	8
T9: Level of funding for childcare	100	100	125	140	6
T10: Level of employee performance	100	100	120	120	8

The level of concern was rated on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low and 10 being high. Panelists were given an arbitrary value of 100 to use as a baseline value of where they felt the trend is today. The values for -5 years, +5 years and +10 years are in comparison to today.

After the panel examined and analyzed the trends, they followed the same process with the events.

## EVENT STATEMENTS

EVENT 1: Center closes due to lack of use by employees.

The panel forecasts that there is a 25% chance that a department provided childcare center would close for lack of use by employees. Although they felt the first year it could occur is year one, the likelihood of it occurring remained constant at 25% at five and ten years. One panel member commented that once a childcare center opens, it tends to stay open with plenty of business. Everyone agreed it would be a very significant negative impact with a -10 rating.

EVENT 2: City pays substantial percentage of childcare costs.

The panel estimates there is a 25% chance of a government agency paying substantial percentages of childcare costs within five years, with the first probability for it to occur being in year two. They thought there was a 45% chance a government agency would pay a substantial percentage in ten years as it becomes more routine for employers to share in childcare arrangements. Two panel members felt strongly that it is very unlikely that government agencies would pay a significant percentage of childcare costs. The panel felt it was a very strong positive with a +10 impact should it occur.

EVENT 3: City announces employee benefit of provided childcare facility in its recruitment.

The panel forecasts there is a 35% likelihood that a government agency would announce employer-sponsored childcare services in its recruitment efforts. They thought it would increase to 50% by the tenth year, but felt it was at least three years away before it could possibly happen. The panel determined it would be a positive impact with a +8 rating.

EVENT 4: Childcare center closes.

This event was a loss of a childcare center for a reason such as lack of funding. The panel felt there is a 40% chance of a childcare center closing in the next five years, with the first

year it could occur being year one. They felt it would only slightly rise to 50% in year ten because if childcare centers close, it is usually within the first few years of operation. All panel members agreed losing a childcare center would be a negative impact with a -8 rating.

EVENT 5: Revenge act at childcare facility.

The panel defined a revenge act as something criminal that occurs by someone for personal reasons. They saw a revenge act as different from a terrorist act that is committed for political or religious reasons. The panel forecasts a very low probability of someone actually carrying out a revenge act at a childcare facility. They felt there is only a 10% chance it would occur within five years, and increased it to only a 20% chance in ten years. The panel thought although the likelihood of it occurring is low, that the first year it could occur is year one. It was a unanimous decision that such an event would have a very obvious negative impact with the maximum rating of -10.

EVENT 6: Reduction in budget.

The panel determined there would be a 25% chance of declining funding or budget reduction in five years; with year two being the first year it would likely occur. They felt there remained a 25% chance of occurrence to year ten, the consensus being once funding is provided, it would be very hard to take it away. It was a strong -8 rating should it actually occur.

EVENT 7: Loss of childcare licensing.

The panel felt there was only a 15% chance of a childcare facility losing its license in five years and a 25% chance by year ten. One panel member commented this is very hard to forecast. Another panel member noted she has not heard of a license being taken away after ten years of operation. All agreed this would be a strong negative impact with a -10 on the rating scale.

EVENT 8: Terrorist attack on government childcare facility.

Although the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were still fresh in everyone's minds, the panel felt as time goes on the likelihood of a government childcare facility being attacked would diminish. They gave it a 10% chance of occurring at five years, with three years out being the first opportunity the panel felt it could occur. The likelihood remained at 10% at year ten as the panel did not think the odds of it occurring would increase after year five. The panel was unanimous that such an attack would be a devastating -10 on the rating scale.

EVENT 9: Citizens will not support tax dollars for childcare facility.

This event was described as citizens getting involved in this issue. This could be through a ballot measure or simply finding out about negotiations in progress and protesting. The panel determined there is a 30% probability that citizens would not support tax dollars for government childcare facilities in five years, with the first year the issue could come up being in one year. They increased the probability to 40% within ten years because it is so far out into the future. The panel members agreed that citizens are critical of the way tax dollars are spent, but overall felt there would be support for such operations. The panel determined a negative impact of -8 should citizens openly oppose using tax dollars for such a purpose.

EVENT 10: New city council does not support childcare operation.

The panel estimated a 30% likelihood of a city council opposing government-sponsored childcare operations. They did not see an increase or decrease in their estimations between years five and ten. Some of the discussion was council members often change at four-year intervals; therefore it would be hard to forecast how politics could play into the issue. Overall, the panel settled on a -8 impact rating.

SUMMARY EVENT TABLE (Table 2)

	Year < 0	+5 years	+10 years	Impact (1-10) + or -
E1: Center closes due to lack of use	1	25%	25%	-10
E2: City pays percentage of childcare costs	2	25%	45%	+10
E3: Employee benefit announced in recruitment	3	35%	50%	+8
E4: Childcare center closes	1	40%	50%	-8
E5: Revenge act at childcare facility	1	10%	20%	-10
E6: Reduction in budget	2	25%	25%	-8
E7: Loss of childcare licensing	1	15%	25%	-10
E8: Terrorist attack on government childcare facility	3	10%	10%	-10
E9: Tax payers won't support childcare facility	1	30%	40%	-8
E10: New city council doesn't support childcare facility	4	30%	30%	-8

Table 2 displays the panel's estimate of the first year the event could occur, their estimated percentage when it could occur at five and ten years into the future, and the level of impact for each event. The level of impact was measured in a range of minus ten for the lowest impact and plus ten for the highest impact.

## CROSS IMPACT ANALYSIS

Two members of the Nominal Group Technique panel and the author conducted the Cross Impact Analysis several weeks after the NGT exercise. The process involved reviewing the trends and events, comparing the impact of the events on the trends, and completing the Cross Impact Analysis Table. Specifically, each of the top ten events was compared to the top ten trends. The analysis involved making a determination that if the event occurred, what would be the impact on the trend. The analysis used an impact rating scale of -5 to +5. A -1 would be a slight negative impact. A -5 means there is a large negative impact. Conversely, a +1 means there would be a slight positive impact and a +5 would mean there would be a large positive impact. A rating of zero meant there would be no impact from the event on the trend. A negative impact means it would be bad for the issue. A positive impact means it would be good for the issue.

The following events had the most impact on the trends.

Event 2: City pays substantial percentage of childcare costs:

If the government entity over the law enforcement agency agreed to pay a significant percentage of childcare costs, it would positively impact nine out of the ten listed trends. The only negative impact of this event is on trend nine should budget reductions occur. If employees were dependant on employee-sponsored childcare assistance, any reductions in financial assistance or increases in employee childcare expenses would adversely affect employee morale and possibly job performance.

Event 5: Revenge act at childcare facility:

If a revenge act were to occur at a childcare facility, especially if it were one that houses children of law enforcement employees, the results would be devastating. The public would

wonder why law enforcement could not protect their own facilities. They may also feel their overall safety is at risk if children are not safe in government facilities. The availability and retention of law enforcement employees may also be adversely affected as they scramble to find other childcare arrangements for their children.

Event 9:       Citizens will not support tax dollars for childcare facility:

With law enforcement agencies being under the watchful eye of citizens, there would be a large impact on recruitment and retention if suddenly the public does not support tax dollars to be used to help fund individual employee expenses. Although citizens can relate to childcare issues, they may feel law enforcement employees should not have any greater benefit than the average person when it comes to taking care of family needs. Any financial assistance to government employees should be fully explained to the public. With financial assistance, childcare services could be expanded to all law enforcement employees, and possibly all government workers, within the jurisdiction.

CROSS IMPACT TABLE (Table 2)

	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10
E1	-5	0	-4	0	-5	-5	-2	0	+5	-2
E2	+5	+5	+5	+4	+5	+5	+5	+4	-2	+5
E3	0	0	+4	0	+3	+4	+5	0	-2	+5
E4	-5	0	-4	0	-5	-3	-4	0	-2	-4
E5	-5	-5	-5	+5	-4	-3	-2	+4	-5	-5
E6	-4	-4	-4	-3	-5	-5	-4	-4	-4	-5
E7	-5	0	-4	0	-5	-4	-3	-2	-2	-5
E8	0	-1	-1	+5	-1	-3	-1	-1	-4	0
E9	-5	0	-5	-3	-5	-5	-4	-3	-5	-2
E10	-3	0	-1	-2	-4	-4	-4	-1	-5	-3

\*T = Trend

\*E = Event

+5 = Significant Positive Impact  
 0 = No Impact  
 -5 = Significant Negative Impact

- Event 1: Center closes due to lack of use      Trend 1: Availability of extended care hours
- Event 2: City pays substantial costs              Trend 2: Availability of qualified providers
- Event 3: City announces employee benefit      Trend 3: Single parents trying to raise children
- Event 4: Childcare center closes                  Trend 4: Security measures of childcare facilities
- Event 5: Revenge act at childcare facility        Trend 5: Availability of care for sick children
- Event 6: Reduction in budget                      Trend 6: Cost of care
- Event 7: Loss of childcare licensing              Trend 7: MOU/Benefits-agreements
- Event 8: Terrorist attack on gov. facility        Trend 8: Pay for childcare providers
- Event 9: Citizens won't support tax \$ use        Trend 9: Level of funding for childcare
- Event 10: New Council won't support            Trend 10: Level of employee performance

## FUTURES SCENARIOS

A scenario is similar to a detailed picture of a plausible future world, so the reader can clearly see and comprehend the problems, challenges, and potential opportunities presented. A scenario is not a prediction of specific forecasts, but a description of what might possibly occur. Scenarios are designed to describe events and trends as they could evolve.

The information gathered in the Nominal Group Technique, specifically the trends and possible events that could impact the issue, were used to incorporate elements of the scenarios. The three scenarios are: positive or optimistic outcome; neutral or most likely outcome; and negative or pessimistic outcome.

Examination of the trends and events, and comparing the two with the cross impact analysis, revealed several issues that would possibly influence the future of childcare facilities for law enforcement agencies. Funding is an obvious benefit or detriment to the issue of providing childcare to law enforcement employees. Funding can be in the form of grants, employee contributions, employer contributions, or any combination in between. The number of females and single-parent officers has a significant impact on the needs of childcare. The 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week requirements of law enforcement, and the dangerous nature of the profession, make it obvious there are many economic and safety trends and events that impact the issue.

This forecasting will enable decision-makers and planners in law enforcement to grasp the long-term issues and needs for use in the most advantageous way possible. By reviewing the possible ramifications of these scenarios, it may be possible to make the desired future happen and avoid the negative or pessimistic scenario.

Scenario 1: Normative – The most likely scenario for childcare service for law enforcement agencies.

George and Tina Smithers met while attending Metropolitan Junior College. George had grown up watching “Adam 12” reruns and thought being a police officer would be an exciting career. Tina’s father was a police officer and she always admired his dedication and how well he looked in a uniform. Both decided they wanted to be law enforcement officers. George and Tina had been police Explorer scouts for different agencies, however they ended up meeting while taking several of the same Administration of Justice classes together.

Over the course of their two-year junior college period, George and Tina became friends and eventually started to date. They dated all through junior college. George became a reserve police officer and Tina worked part time as a grocery clerk. Tina found out she was pregnant and they decided to get married just as George was being hired full time by the Metropolitan Police Department.

In 2007, George and Tina decided to expand their family. George worked full time and Tina quit her grocery clerk job to stay home and raise their three children. Although Tina really wanted to be a police officer, she saw how much George was gone. If he wasn’t working odd hours, he was in court or being called back to duty for special events. Tina decided to wait to pursue her law enforcement career until after the kids were all in school. However, the kids then became involved in soccer on weekends and after school programs. Tina thought about putting the children in childcare, but decided against it after not being able to find adequate childcare facilities. Some had age limits and almost none provided after-hours childcare. The ones that did charged extra after six o’clock at night. Tina calculated childcare and transportation expenses and found it was not cost effective to work. Tina decided to forget about her law

enforcement career, although she always had an unfulfilled feeling and resented her husband for being able to pursue his dream. George and Tina were able to survive on his salary, but they never were able to obtain their dream home. They decided to be a traditional family and raise their children the best they could. George stopped telling Tina things that happened at work because he could see how it was hurting her. Their conversations focused more on family issues.

George and Tina retired on a modest income. Instead of traveling like they initially had talked about, they stayed close to home to be near the children and grandchildren. George and Tina existed in retirement together more as companions. They did not have memories of a shared career, so they mostly read or talked about the family. George and Tina were not as happy as they could have been, but decided it was fate that they ended up like their parents. They decided they had raised a family and had each other, and that was enough for them in this life.

Scenario 2: Optimistic – Most desired future for childcare services for law enforcement agencies.

George and Tina Smithers are the perfect couple. They both work full time in their chosen careers as law enforcement officers. Although they have three children, George and Tina were able to complete college, have a family, and pursue their dream of working full time as police officers at the same law enforcement agency.

George and Tina met at Metropolitan Junior College while taking Administration of Justice courses. They became friends and quickly started to date. One thing led to another and Tina became pregnant with their first child. They decided to get married, but were determined to also pursue their chosen professions as law enforcement officers. They knew it would be difficult to both work full time and raise a family, however they were determined to find a way to do it.

George and Tina knew that for both of them to work full time in law enforcement it would be necessary to find 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week childcare. They preferred that the childcare be provided by the law enforcement agency and that it be either at the police station or nearby. They knew the demands of law enforcement would require staying after work, going to court on their days off, and being called back for emergency duty. Rather than take a job at the first agency that offered it, George and Tina decided to research law enforcement agencies in California that provided childcare services for their employees.

In 2007, George and Tina's research found the Metropolitan Police Department with childcare services in the central part of California. They found this medium-size police department to be very progressive. It not only offered a variety of shifts and assignments, but it had a history of caring for its employees. The childcare facility was the most recent example of the department's demonstration of care and concern for its employees.

The Metropolitan Police Department had a fairly new police facility, but did not have room for the childcare facility on its grounds. The department, in conjunction with its employee unions and associations, formed a committee to find a suitable location within a few blocks of the police station. The committee also worked on planning, budgeting, and coordinating the implementation of the childcare facility. A suitable facility was found two blocks away from the police station. The City Council eventually approved the committee's recommendations and fully supported the operation. The committee now serves as the childcare facility's board of directors.

Childcare specialists staff the facility on a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week basis. Employees contribute half, and the city pays half of all expenses. Employee costs are lessened as new employees are hired and take advantage of the childcare services.

Since the inception of the childcare facility in 2007, the Metropolitan Police Department has realized an increase in recruitment and retention of employees. Although childcare services were initially designed for police officers, all department employees are now benefiting from this service. Not only did this help to defray costs, but all department employees with children enjoy this convenience. The department has also noticed a decrease in sick time usage and less turnover in the civilian ranks.

George and Tina work the same shift and have the same days off. They take their children to the childcare facility on workdays and take their lunch breaks with them. They rest assured that they can take their children to the facility at any time and know it is safe and secure as police officers are in and out 24-hours-a-day. George and Tina are totally fulfilled in their professions and family life.

The Metropolitan Police Department is more like a family now. Not only is morale at an all time high, but also quality candidates from around the nation are applying for employment there. The department is now going on the road to help other agencies with their own childcare facilities. There are daily visits from potential police officer candidates, as well as childcare specialists who are looking to improve and expand their services much like the Metropolitan Police Department. Child psychologists are studying the results of such a partnership. Metropolitan city officials are now looking for ways to expand childcare services to all city workers. Initial discussions are occurring to find ways to provide funding for childcare services as an employee benefit for all city employees. Metropolitan government officials now have the proof that if employee personal family needs are met, the employee is more available for duty and more committed to the organization.

### Scenario 3: Pessimistic – Least Desired Future for Childcare Services for Law Enforcement Agencies.

Old school executives who believe in command and control practices manage the Metropolitan Police Department in 2007. These managers are mostly from military backgrounds. They believe in keeping work and family separate. The department's hiring practices show there is an under representation of female officers. The department has been suffering significant recruitment and retention problems. Many officers are leaving the department to work for other agencies.

George and Tina Smithers grew up in Metropolitan City and always dreamed of being police officers. After meeting at the junior college, they married in 2007 and started having a family immediately. Because childcare facilities were far away and did not operate 24 hours a day, George and Tina were forced to work opposite shifts. The department had two squads of officers that would work four eleven-hour days in a row, and then were off four days in a row. For childcare reasons, George worked one squad and Tina the other. The only time they would have family time together would be on vacations or if one of them called in sick. They had used the maximum available time off. In fact, the entire department had significant leave time usage problems.

On a warm summer evening in 2007, a terrorist exploded a truck bomb at the city/county government complex in the City of Metropolitan. Although there was no warning of the attack, federal intelligence sources indicated Osama bin Laden had threatened to attack a heart of America Mayberry-type town next time. There had not been terrorist attacks in several years, but now it was happening again. This time it was not happening in major urban areas. It was now happening in the heart of California.

The Metropolitan Police Department had no choice but to put all of its personnel on twelve-hour shifts. All employees were called to duty with twelve hours on and twelve hours off. There were no days off or vacations allowed or planned for in the near future. George and Tina, and families in the same situation, were impacted the most. They could not rotate time off to care for their children, much less get any sleep if they tried. They could not both work and care for their family. The limited number of childcare facilities in the city was overwhelmed. Most childcare businesses refused to stay open all night. Tina decided to quit to stay home and care for the children. Although it had always been a struggle, the terrorist attack and uncertainty of the future forced her to quit her job. Many other employees also quit under the stress and strain of the terrorist attacks and requirements of the profession.

The Metropolitan Police Department tried to scramble to accommodate employees, but it was too little, too late. With so many officers quitting, and everyone already working overtime on a daily basis, the department was forced to call for mutual aid from the Sheriff's Department. Eventually, with all of the budget and personnel problems faced by the City of Metropolitan, the City Council had no choice but to contract services out to the Sheriff's Department. The Metropolitan Police Department ceased to exist.

The scenarios have helped us envision alternative futures. In the following chapter, steps in the development of a strategic plan for a desired future are discussed.

## CHAPTER THREE

### STRATEGIC PLAN

#### Introduction

Strategic planning, as defined by Tom Esensten of Organizational Effectiveness Consulting (2002), is “a structured approach, sometimes rational and other times not, of bringing anticipations of the future to bear on today’s decisions.” The strategic planning process involves defining the future of an issue and its impact on the organization. A thorough strategic planning process includes: An external analysis; an internal analysis; identification of strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities; stakeholder identification; and direction setting. It concludes with an implementation plan and some type of follow up or periodic evaluation.

#### Environmental Analysis

An environmental analysis is looking outside of the agency or issue to determine the current state of the situation. In order to examine the issue of providing a childcare facility for law enforcement employees, and examine any impact on recruitment and retention, it is necessary to look at the current state of private childcare in the community. An environmental analysis of California, and more specifically Stanislaus County, was conducted to assess the availability and quality of childcare for children of working parents. According to a November 1999 Stanislaus Childcare Planning Council report, titled *Status of Childcare Services in Stanislaus County*, 46% of children under age six and 56% from 6 to 17 years of age had parents working outside of the home (Avedon et al., 1999, p. 2). The report highlighted the fact that the birthrate is increasing at the same time more parents are entering the work force. The report also noted that services for mildly ill children are unavailable.

In addition to the Stanislaus County report, a special report titled *Lasting Returns: Strengthening California's Childcare and Development System* (2001) states that only a small portion of licensed childcare programs are available to parents who work outside the traditional work day. Also, the largest share of state and federal childcare funding goes to families receiving government assistance. It also says that “low pay and limited funding have created a childcare staffing crisis that undermines the ability of many community-based childcare programs to provide good quality, stable childcare.” Another finding in this report is that “California’s preschool-age population (0-4) has increased by an estimated 71% since 1970. The Department of Finance (DoF) projects an additional 12% increase – to 3.1 million children – by 2010.” Also, “40 percent of preschoolers have mothers who work during evening or weekend hours, and only 4 percent of California childcare centers and 33 percent of family childcare homes in 1998 offered care during the evening or on weekends.”

### Threats

In this project, threats are defined as anything that could derail or stall the idea or project to be implemented. The most obvious threat to law enforcement and the issue of childcare for its employees is the shortage of quality private childcare providers with hours of operation that extend to 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week. Other threats are the increase in preschool age children, the increase in the number of working mothers, an increase in the number of female police employees and single parents, and the potential of employees leaving the profession due to inadequate or unavailable childcare systems for their children. These things could derail the project. Other threats include opposition from private providers or lobbyists who think this takes business away from the private sector.

## Opportunities

Opportunities are defined as things that could help with implementation of the idea. There are certainly opportunities for law enforcement to impact this situation. Employee associations and law enforcement officials could partner to develop their own quality childcare facilities. They could identify employee childcare needs and share costs to provide facilities and staff at or near their police duty stations. They could recruit and train childcare professionals from the private sector, and train or supplement them with spouses or older children of employees. Police volunteers could also be utilized to assist with childcare staffing and educational needs. The childcare programs could be extended to include educational and nutritional needs as determined by the work hours and requests of the participating employees. Law enforcement agencies that take a leadership role in providing these types of facilities have an opportunity to not only attract and retain quality employees, but will stand out as being caring and compassionate to the community.

There is also an opportunity to gain outside support for childcare centers for law enforcement employees by collaborating and partnering with businesses and other government agencies. This type of outreach would not only help to facilitate such a project for law enforcement families, but would also enhance police-community relations and show the community that peace officers have family concerns and a life away from the job.

## Internal Analysis

An internal analysis means looking inside the culture and operations of the organization to determine the current status of the situation. In order to fully understand the needs and commitment of law enforcement employees when it comes to the childcare issue, it is necessary to look into their thoughts and feelings. The Modesto Police Department was selected for this

analysis. The Modesto Police Department is a medium-size municipal law enforcement agency located in California's central valley. At the time of this survey in the spring of 2002, the department had 355 total full time personnel. Of this total, 251 were full time sworn personnel and 104 were full time civilian personnel. According to a City of Modesto Police Department Equal Employment Opportunity Plan (2001) 26.9% of all full time police employees are female.

To accomplish the survey, a form was developed listing ten questions related to employee family make-up and their childcare arrangements. The first four questions were related to the employee's opinion if childcare facilities would have an effect on recruitment and retention, and if facilities were available, would the employee consider using them. The remaining six questions addressed the individual employee's family situation regarding if they had children, were they planning to have children, the ages of their children, pay for childcare, and marital status. The surveys were anonymous and employees were given a few minutes in roll call or unit briefings to complete the one page survey form. Out of the 355 total surveys passed out to all of the department's full time employees, 182 were returned by the deadline. This was a 51% return rate. Total numbers and percentages were taken from the forms as part of the internal analysis. There were slight differences in the totals as not all employees answered every question on the form. Therefore, the total number of respondents for specific questions ranged from 180 to 182 of the 355 total surveys that were sent out.

The questions and resulting answers are identified in an employee survey with total numbers and percentages. The percentages were rounded off to the next highest or lowest number above or below .5 percent. The survey itself is detailed in Appendix D.

An analysis of the survey indicates that 72% of the respondents felt there is a need for employer sponsored childcare in the police department, however there was a 50% split as to

whether they would use it. Two thirds (67%) of the respondents said having a childcare facility for employees would have an impact on their decision to apply for employment at the agency, however only one third (33%) said it would affect their decision to remain there. Only 41% of respondents said they currently had children who need childcare services now and 22% said they planned on having children who would need these services in the next five years. A total of 79% of the respondents had children between the ages of 0 to 12, which are the most likely ages of children in need of childcare. Regarding employee costs for childcare, 35% reported they pay \$100.00 or less a month. Only 25% of the respondents reported paying more than \$400.00 per month for childcare. Twenty one percent of the respondents indicated that they currently use a formal childcare facility. Another 21% reported they use a private home for childcare, which could also be a licensed childcare operation. The remaining 58% reported that their spouse or relatives cared for their children while they were at work. A total of 10% of the respondents were single and had full or shared custody of their children. Fifteen percent were single with no children. Fifty-six percent of the respondents were married with children, while only 8% were married without children.

### Strengths

Strengths are defined as positive things or existing situations that would benefit the issue. As a result of the internal analysis and employee survey, there are several strengths that can be identified with the idea of providing childcare facilities specifically for law enforcement agency employees. First, almost three quarters of employees see the need for this type of employee-sponsored partnership. It would have a positive impact on morale and recruitment of new employees to the organization. With just over a third of employees indicating it would have an impact on their decision to leave employment of the agency, it is obvious that having such a

facility has a greater impact on recruitment than retention. Another strength is its potential for expansion and continued use of childcare facilities for the law enforcement agency. With a higher attrition rate, due to earlier retirements and more competition for police recruits, come younger parent officers and employees who have children. It appears that at least half of these employees would utilize these services, especially if the costs were lower due to partnerships with the employing agency. There is a potential for expansion and greater use as employees realize the benefits as time goes on.

### Weaknesses

Weaknesses are defined as negative things or obstacles that get in the way of implementation of the idea. The foremost weakness is in getting started by convincing government officials and employees alike that it would work. Another weakness could be identifying the location and costs of such a facility. Most law enforcement agencies are cramped for space and would need to find adequate facilities near the police agency. Since many police facilities are located in commercial or industrial areas, are there potential zoning requirements that would prohibit childcare facilities in these areas?

Where would the department's peace officers association sit on the issue? Would they support the idea as a way to provide another benefit to their officers, or would they be against it because it would likely raise employee dues or deductions from their pay? Would government officials be willing to help pay for childcare facilities to be used exclusively by employees?

Another potential weakness could be state licensing and staffing requirements. Bureaucratic red tape could overwhelm employees trying to pursue such a project. The availability of childcare providers to staff the facility could be another weakness. However, with

vision, patience, and tenacity the future of childcare facilities exclusively for law enforcement employees is not out of the question.

### Stakeholders

Stakeholders are defined as “individuals or groups impacted by what we do” (Esensten, 2002). Simply put, for the idea of childcare facilities for law enforcement agencies and its employees, stakeholders are anyone who will be involved or touched by such a project. Obvious stakeholders who have an interest in childcare facilities for law enforcement agencies are employees, employers, childcare professionals, and government officials. Other stakeholders would be employee organizations and local and state permitting and licensing agencies. Less obvious stakeholders would be the media, citizens, and the children themselves. All of these identified stakeholders would need to be involved in the process from beginning to end. Success or failure of the project depends on early involvement and total commitment throughout the entire planning, implementation, and evaluation process by all of the stakeholders.

### Strategies

Setting a direction starts with identifying alternative strategies before settling on a final path to take. In order to pick the best strategy and direction, it is necessary to identify the alternative strategies. Alternative strategies for implementing a childcare facility for law enforcement agency employees are varied.

One alternative strategy could be to do nothing and wait to see if new legislation or community pressure creates the requirement of childcare facilities to be provided for law enforcement employees. Another alternative strategy might be for employee associations to lobby their local, state, and federal legislatures or put pressure on city and county officials to provide this service as part of a 100% complete employee benefit package. Or, public officials

may decide on their own to offer this service to employees. Another alternative strategy could be for a ballot measure where taxpayers are asked to vote on providing funding for law enforcement employee childcare services. Another strategy is to contract and pay for childcare services for law enforcement employees through existing private childcare providers. All of these alternative strategies are possible, yet the best option may be to collaborate with employee associations, public officials, and private providers to staff a facility at or near police headquarters. Staffing and facility costs could be shared between government agencies and employees, or employee associations could provide the service as a benefit to belonging to their organization.

#### Direction Setting

Direction Setting is a path or direction determined by the leader. Direction setting starts through leadership and vision. Leaders set the direction by doing research, brainstorming ideas, receiving input and formulating a plan in writing. The direction that seems to make the most sense, and has the greatest likelihood of success, is the one of a shared partnership between the employee and the employer. This follows the optimistic scenario as described in Chapter Two. This partnership would have equal representation and have a governing board of directors. This board of directors would start with a committee of stakeholders and would identify an exclusive location near the law enforcement agency to house the childcare facility. The board of directors would determine the terms of employee participation with the childcare facility operation. Staffing, licensing, funding, and other requirements would be formulated after a thorough needs assessment. Square footage and employee/employer costs would be determined by the extent of participation and identified need. Since most law enforcement agencies do not have room at their existing police facilities, a location easily accessible, preferably within walking distance of

the department, would be necessary. Expansion or relocation would be dependent upon increases in need or expansion for use by other law enforcement or government agencies after a cost-benefit analysis is conducted.

### Implementation Plan

The implementation plan begins with bringing together a cross section of the department to ensure there is representation from every unit and rank of the organization. Other stakeholders, such as employee association representatives, childcare professionals, and licensing experts should also be involved early on in the process. After introducing the idea and explaining the vision, a needs assessment would be conducted. This would include an analysis of the needs of the employees, estimates of numbers of children, numbers of employees who would be interested in participating, and an evaluation of available childcare in the community. A focus group or nominal group technique exercise could be conducted to identify possible issues that could impact childcare facilities for law enforcement agency employees.

After the initial needs assessment, a more thorough environmental assessment, followed by an internal assessment, would need to be conducted to ensure a thorough analysis has been conducted. A direction is then set by the committee to begin designing the implementation plan. The implementation plan involves identifying and designing the tasks, structure, people, and processes necessary to achieve the desired result. Some examples may include: creating a timeline, prioritizing the work to be done, developing the team from representatives throughout the department, assigning specific tasks to accomplish, and conducting regular meetings to ensure the project is kept on track.

A periodic evaluation of the plan will be necessary to see if there are any design or organizational culture changes necessary. This can be monitored through an analysis of the

culture, in conjunction with looking at outputs and outcomes. The implementation plan cannot start, however, without a smooth transition management plan, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### TRANSITION MANAGEMENT

#### Organizational Assessment

Any change within an organization causes anxiety among its employees. To facilitate change it is important to first understand the culture of the organization. Today's police organizations are going through significant change. There are fewer employees with military backgrounds. Many of the paramilitary, command and control managers of the past fifty to sixty years are being replaced with a younger and more diverse base of Generation X employees. These employees are generally more educated and want to see what is in it for them instead of simply following orders. They question orders and may be not as career-minded as employees of the past. It very well may be that their time in law enforcement is just a temporary job on their way to some other profession. In general, today's law enforcement professional cares more about family and time off than about living totally for the profession. Therefore, more time and effort is needed to explain what the change is all about and involve employees throughout the organization in the process.

#### Critical Mass Identification

In order to be successful with change in an organization it is imperative that representatives from every work group and rank structure are involved. To explain it another way, "In any complex change process, there is a critical mass of individuals or groups whose active commitment is necessary to provide the energy for the change to occur" (Harris, 1987). This means taking a diagonal slice of the organizational pyramid to ensure all employee groups are represented. The change process will be much smoother and accepted if there is buy-in and commitment from the outset.

## Change Management

Change management requires those implementing it to reflect on their own experiences. Beyond self-reflection, managers should consider three areas that are essential for easing their employees' difficulties with the change process. They are rethinking resistance, giving "first aid", and creating capability for change (Jick, 1990).

Resistance to change is a common phrase used to describe employees who are having difficulty in adapting. Change agents should recognize that resistance is a common reaction to change and work to use it to their advantage. Once they recognize it, managers can refocus and redirect the resistance energy in a positive direction. This is also the ideal time to share information about the change and its direction.

Giving first aid is allowing employees to vent their frustrations. Effective managers will listen to the concerns of employees and will not be judgmental. In the process, managers are able to clarify misconceptions and identify concerns that need further attention. This may be providing counseling or additional resources for employees having more difficulty in accepting the change. At the same time, employees who show initiative and direction with the change may be rewarded.

Creating the capability for change follows the initial resistance and venting stages. It is an opportunity to not only move employees into the current change situation, but to prepare them for future changes. This involves reassuring them that they are safe and alright with the change, and that the organization is there to support them every step of the way.

## Financial Considerations

Identifying potential funding sources is critical to any project, but especially ones that involve facilities, staffing, and the safety and security of children. Financial roadblocks could be

the obstacles that derail such a project. Fortunately, the direction set for this project involves a recommended partnership between the employing government agency and its employees. Much like pre-tax health care arrangements and retirement systems with payroll deduction agreements, employees and employers could apply the same principles for a childcare operation. There could be additional partners, such as employee organizations and foundations that might support the childcare facility financially or with staff assistance. Current examples of this are seen with employee organization office space arrangements and fitness center operations utilized exclusively by law enforcement employees.

Many parents already pay monthly childcare fees with private childcare in the community. The opportunity of sharing those costs with the employer or employee organizations makes the personal financial concerns less stressful and possibly less costly than private childcare centers. Additionally, California and the federal government have funding available to all 58 counties through its childcare development planning councils, although most of that money is geared to low-income families (Publicly Funded Programs for Low-income Families, 2001, p. 8). Employing agencies may be more willing to provide space for childcare if employees were willing to share in the costs. If the childcare operation grew and was expanded to all city or county employees, there is the possibility that it would become financially self-sufficient.

In May of 2001, as part of President Bush's Restoring Earnings to Lift Individuals and Empower Families Act of 2001, a 25% tax credit was authorized for employer-related expenses for childcare (Society for Human Resource Management, 2002, p. 1-2). This credit is capped at \$150,000 per year and the legislation safeguards "ensure that the companies receive the tax

credits for capital expenditures that go toward facilities that stay in operation for several years and that primarily serve their employees.” Some of the provisions are:

- The acquisition, expansion or repair of an on or near-site day care center, after-hours care facility, or sick child facility. This credit is also available for any consortium of businesses that join together to create a childcare center.
- Direct company subsidization of the operating costs of a childcare facility.
- A company’s reservation for their employees of childcare slots in a licensed childcare facility.
- Company expenditures on training and continuing education for childcare workers.

The report concludes with the comment: “Employers who offer childcare attract more highly qualified applicants, greater loyalty and less absenteeism. Clearly, we all have a stake in increasing the supply of quality childcare for working families.”

With government funding assistance, employee/employer partnerships, and the will and common sense to do the right things for families, financial obstacles can be overcome and workers will be more committed at work knowing their children are safe and secure on a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week basis.

This chapter has addressed the steps necessary to transition the organization in accepting the new idea. The following chapter will summarize key findings from the project and suggest recommendations for the law enforcement leader.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FINDINGS/CONCLUSION

#### Key Findings

There are a few key findings, if not surprises, that came out of this project. The current state of childcare is worse than one might think. There are not enough private childcare facilities and very few have after hours or 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week operations. Few, if any, have facilities or special arrangements to care for mildly ill children. Childcare staff is generally underpaid and retention in that field is difficult as employees frequently leave for higher paying jobs.

Government funding for childcare is mostly limited to low-income families or those on welfare to work programs. Middle-income families, where most of law enforcement employees fall, have little or no financial assistance. A 25% tax credit and funding of \$150,000 per year for employers to assist employees with childcare facilities was only implemented in 2001 and it is not well known by employers or employees.

An internal assessment of a medium-size California municipal law enforcement agency revealed interesting survey results. Almost three-quarters of the respondents saw a need for an employer-sponsored childcare center. Half of them said they would use it. Two thirds of them said it would affect their decision to go to work at that agency, if they were not yet employed there, however only a little over one third said it would affect any decision to leave the agency. Almost two-thirds either have children that need such services now or plan on having children in the next five years who would need the services. Based upon the number of respondents who returned surveys, it appears that there is a strong need for childcare services for law enforcement employees and it would have a significant impact on recruitment for that agency.

### Implications For Leadership

Law enforcement leaders have a golden opportunity to improve employee morale and improve performance of existing employees. With early retirements and a younger and more demanding workforce, agencies can become more competitive and attractive to law enforcement applicants. Employees will be less stressed and more willing to do the job, especially during disasters or times of crisis, if families know their children are nearby and well cared for. Employees who see their employers caring about their families will be more committed to the organization and less likely to leave for another agency or profession.

Leaders can walk the talk by setting the direction of their agency to implement a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week childcare facility for employees. They would need to state the vision and identify leaders throughout the organization to obtain results. They would have key personnel as part of the team who are tenacious and are good at managing relationships. Other critical attributes for the leader and managers over implementation of this idea are people who look outside the box and network and interface with those outside of the agency, especially childcare experts in the community. The leader must also set high moral and ethical standards and demonstrate them. Finally, leadership and management must continually evaluate the outcomes and make design changes as necessary to ensure the childcare operation is functioning effectively and efficiently.

### Recommendations

- Conduct a needs assessment of all sworn and civilian employees of the agency.
- Determine the exact number of employees who would participate in a childcare facility partnership with the employing law enforcement agency.
- Identify other stakeholders, such as employee associations, government officials, and subject matter experts in the local community to solicit their ideas and involvement.
- Brainstorm and research potential local, state, and federal funding sources.
- Research childcare licensing and staffing requirements.
- Investigate potential zoning and spacing requirements.
- Look for existing facilities within a few blocks of the law enforcement agency.
- Prepare an implementation and evaluation plan.

## Conclusion

The suggested optimistic future of providing around the clock childcare services exclusively for law enforcement employees is absolutely possible. Although most law enforcement agencies do not have space in their current facilities for such an operation, the ideal situation may be to find a facility within a block or two of the police station. Employees would take less time off from work to care for their children and could visit them on breaks. For those employees who have to stay after work for reports or a late call, or get summoned to court or called out for an emergency or collateral duty response, the 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week operation near the work place is ideal. No longer will employees worry about picking up their children before the private childcare facility closes. No longer will the employee have to pay a premium for after hours care. If the employer/employee childcare facility can obtain licensing to provide care for mildly ill children, the employee will no longer have to call in sick or take personal time to care for them. Employers will see more satisfied and productive employees, which provides a better service to the community. Childcare services for mid-size law enforcement agencies will have a positive impact on employee recruitment and retention in the future.

## APPENDIX A

### The Nominal Group Technique Panel

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) was held at the Modesto/Stanslaus Emergency Services Facility, 3705 Oakdale Road, Modesto, California on March 5, 2002. The session began at 8:00 a.m. and concluded at 2:15 p.m. The panel included:

NGT Facilitator:

Dave Funk, Lieutenant, Modesto Police Department.

NGT Panel:

Julie Balasbough, Program Development Director, Y.M.C.A., Modesto.

April Befumo, Childcare Planning Coordinator, Stanislaus Childcare Development Council.

Deborah Clipper, Director II, Stanislaus County Office of Education.

Brenda McDonald, Assistant Director, Children's Crisis Center, Modesto.

Adam McGill, Police Officer, Modesto Police Department.

Gina McGill, Reserve Police Officer, Modesto Police Department.

Emily Muirhead, Student, Oakdale Junior High School.

Debbie Parr-Noblitt, Program Representative, Stanislaus County C.A.R.E.S. Project.

Cheree Platt, Personnel Analyst, City of Modesto Personnel Department.

NGT Scribe:

Gail Smith, Police Clerk, Modesto Police Department.

## APPENDIX B

### TRENDS

1. Educational requirements.
2. Living in area of rapid growth.
3. The aging workforce in the police force.
4. The number of relative (Guardian) caregivers.
5. Single parents trying to raise children. \*
6. Women entering workforce.
7. Dual income parenting (combined with 14).
8. Availability of qualified providers. \*
9. Availability of extended care hours. \*
10. Cost of care. \*
11. Greater use of technology.
12. Reputation of the law enforcement agency.
13. Track versus traditional schools.
14. Both parents work in household (combined with 7).
15. Effects of quality early childhood education programs.
16. Security measures of childcare facilities. \*
17. MOU agreements/benefits. \*
18. Pay for childcare providers (benefits). \*
19. Childcare cultural and diversity needs.
20. Commuter effect of childcare.
21. Level of funding for childcare. \*

22. After school program funding.
23. Quality and trust in/of providers.
24. Intervention of crime/child crime and victim rate.
25. Transportation issues.
26. Off-site versus on-site facilities.
27. Flexibility of worksite provider's hours.
28. Change from agricultural to urban community.
29. Staffing needs/agency growth (law enforcement and provider).
30. Childcare - special needs (numbers?).
31. Availability of care for sick children. \*
32. Ages of children needing care (infant/toddler).
33. Nutritional requirements.
34. The number of female employees.
35. Changing educational and other requirements for providers.
36. The cost of buying a home.
37. Availability of funds for childcare.
38. Age of new hires.
39. Changes in the welfare system.
40. Level of employee performance. \*
41. Selection process/background checks of providers.
42. Provider job satisfaction.
43. Availability of employee family support.
44. Family dynamics/composition.

45. Changing requirements for child enrollment in care centers (health, immunizations).
46. Parental choice for childcare.
47. Low skill staff/providers.
48. Impact of increased workload for background checks.
49. Employee lost work time due to childcare.
50. Licensing backlog.

\* = TOP 10

## APPENDIX C

### EVENTS

1. Reduction in budget. \*
2. “Three percent at 50” early retirement (attrition factor).
3. Changes in childcare requirements (combined with event 11).
4. Terrorist attack on government childcare facility. \*
5. Childcare declared not number one priority by government appointed commission.
6. Revenge act at childcare facility. \*
7. Loss of childcare licensing. \*
8. Childcare center closes. \*
9. City announces employee benefit of provided childcare facility in its recruitment efforts.\*
10. Natural disaster occurs (impacts law enforcement).
11. Laws passed requiring more education and training for childcare providers (combined with event 3).
12. Universal school readiness initiative is fully funded (3 to 5 year olds).
13. Zoning requirements for childcare centers.
14. Support of changing political influence (new council doesn’t support childcare). \*
15. Child abuse/molest incident at childcare facility.
16. Legislation passed to address the retention of all childcare workers.
17. Lawsuit against government entity regarding childcare.
18. Study indicates stable and quality childcare results in well-adjusted child.
19. Center closes due to lack of use by employees. \*
20. City pays substantial percentage of childcare costs. \*

21. Citizens won't support tax dollars for childcare facility. \*
22. County childcare stakeholder group formed that improves overall childcare.
23. Gunman comes into childcare facility.

\* = Top 10 Events

## APPENDIX D

### Employee Survey

Demographics:

According to responses, current ages of employee's children were:

0-5: 57 (40%)

6-12: 55 (39%)

13-15: 30 (21%)

Childcare services/current cost to employees were as follows:

\$0-\$100: 30 (35%)

\$101-\$200: 10 (12%)

\$201-\$300: 10 (12%)

\$301-\$400: 14 (16%)

\$401 and up: 21 (25%)

The primary methods of current childcare were:

Spouse: 40 (31%)

Relatives: 34 (27%)

Childcare facility: 27 (21%)

Private home care: 27 (21%)

Responders to the survey were:

Single with full custody: 9 (6%)

Single with shared custody: 6 (4%)

Single with no children: 24 (15%)

Married with blended family: 17 (11%)

Married with children: 87 (56%)

Married with no children: 13 (8%)

182 responses (51% of 355 total full time police employees)

1. Do you see a need for an employer sponsored childcare center for Modesto Police employees?

Yes – 131 (72%) No – 50 (28%)

2. If the Department had a childcare center - open 24/7 - would you use it?

Yes – 90 (50%) No – 91 (50%)

3. If the Department provided a childcare center for its employees (fully or partially funded) do you feel this would have an affect on your decision to apply for employment (if you were not already employed) at this Department?

Yes– 120 (67%) No – 60 (33%)

4. If the Department provided a childcare center for its employees, would it have any impact on a decision you might have to seek employment elsewhere or otherwise leave this Department?

Yes – 63 (35%) No – 117 (65%)

5. Do you have children who would need childcare services?

Yes – 75 (41%) No – 107 (59%)

6. Do you plan on having children in the next five years who would need childcare services?

Yes – 40 (32%) No – 142 (78%)

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