



Accountability Partners: Open the Door for Vulnerability Implementation Guidance

Description

While working at the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, Alsender Miller's supervisor assigned everyone accountability partners to ensure that tasks and responsibilities were being completed. In this podcast, Mr. Miller talks with Chief David Perry (retired), a program lead for the Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers (SAFLEO) Program, about how this partnership became much more than he expected. Mr. Miller and Chief Perry discuss how this program can help officers who face stress in their personal and professional lives by having a colleague to share open and honest discussions.

Suggested Activities for Executives and Administrative Team Staff

1. Listen to this podcast.
2. Distribute or assign this podcast to agency executives and command staff members.
3. Discuss organizational and personal stress officers may be experiencing and the need for officers to have outlets to mitigate stress.
4. Explore implementation of an accountability partnership program in your department and how it would function.
5. Explore pros and cons of a formal/department sanctioned program versus an informal/volunteer program.

Takeaways

- Acknowledge the stress your colleagues face from organizational issues, critical incidents, everyday duty-related responsibilities, and personal challenges.
- Leading by example supports a culture that encourages open communication about mental health and wellness.

- Understand that humanizing yourself and developing relationships can have profound positive effects on individuals in your sphere of influence. Everyone contributes to the culture of an agency. You can be the person that makes a difference for someone else.
- Take notice of when a colleague is acting “outside their norm” and consider the best approach to offering support.

Resources

Sources of Support poster:

<https://safleo.org/ResourceLibrary/Resource/8a4b7976-a2ee-4eda-b507-08da341296ee>

Serving While Hurting: <https://safleo.org/ResourceLibrary/Resource/3809047f-2c1f-4e22-cf4b-08da43eecf11>

Using Courageous Vulnerability to Influence Police Culture on Mental Health: <https://safleo.org/ResourceLibrary/Resource/96f9185a-ea16-412e-d053-08da32c23b06>

Fear of Seeking Assistance:

<https://safleo.org/ResourceLibrary/Resource/19390194-494e-4611-db54-08da380302e6>

Speaker Biographies

Mr. Alsender Miller began his career with the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice in 2005. He is a Public Safety Training Instructor, Firearms Instructor, Aikido Control Tactics Instructor, Georgia Master Resiliency Trainer, and a certified Juvenile Corrections Officer. Prior to working at the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice Mr. Miller worked at Murphy Harpsts Children's Centers on a dual diagnostic unit for youth with mental illness. Mr. Miller is passionate about mental wellness after losing coworkers to suicide and personally suffering from depression and overcoming depression through therapy. It was this therapy that helped him realize his purpose in life. His purpose is to serve those around him that have experienced trauma and loss and help them overcome it. Mr. Miller received his associates degree in business at Georgia Highlands College in 2003.

Chief David L. Perry (retired) is a senior research associate, lead instructor, and facilitator for the Institute for Intergovernmental Research. He is a program advisor for the VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program and the National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program. Chief Perry retired as Assistant Vice Chancellor for Public Safety and Chief of Police for the University of North Carolina and previously served as the Assistant Vice President for Safety and Chief of Police at Florida State University. In those roles, he provided oversight for all law enforcement operations. He earned his master's degree in public administration

from Albany State University and his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Albany State College. Chief Perry has extensive expertise in campus public safety and the private sector in relation to leadership, management, and best practices for safety and security.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2018-VI-BX-K003 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART). Points of view or opinions are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.