

# Three Ways to Improve Criminal Justice in Louisville

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# 1. Invest in non-police responders

- 20.6% of U.S. adults experienced mental illness in 2019 (51.5 million people or 1 in 5 adults).
- People with untreated mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed by police, and no one is ever held accountable.
- See <https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/overlooked-in-the-undercounted>
- When you replace police, it really works! See <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/denver-health-professionals-replaced-cops-in-handling-hundreds-of-low-level-incidents-for-6-months-and-successfully-did-so-with-no-arrests/>

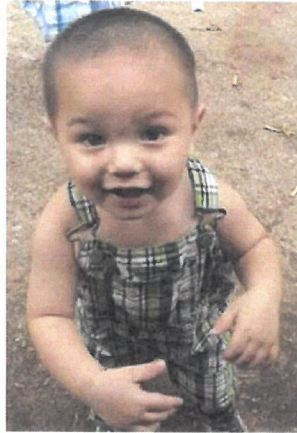


During the first six months of the program, from June 1 to November 30, health professionals responded to 748 calls, including trespassing, welfare checks, narcotic incidents, and mental health episodes, according to the report. None of those cases required help from Denver police and no individuals were arrested.

## 2. Stop using SWAT

- SWAT created in late 1960s
- In 1980, there were approximately 3,000 SWAT raids in the United States. Now there are more than 80,000 SWAT raids per year.
- These raids disproportionately affect communities of color nationwide
- Many metropolitan areas use “threat assessment matrices” or other tools that result in gross overuse of SWAT.
- Hypermilitarization of police simply doesn't work. See:
  - <https://www.cato.org/white-paper/overkill-rise-paramilitary-police-raids-america>
  - <https://www.pnas.org/content/115/37/9181>

## A SWAT TEAM BLEW A HOLE IN A 2-YEAR-OLD BABY



The Phonesavanh family was sleeping in the same room, one bed for the parents, one for the girls, and a crib for the baby boy. After a SWAT team broke down the door, they threw a flashbang grenade inside. It landed in the boy's crib. Flashbang grenades were created for soldiers to use during battle. When they explode, the noise is so loud and the flash is so bright that anyone close by is temporarily blinded and deafened. It's been three weeks since the flashbang exploded next to the sleeping baby, and he's still covered in burns. There's still a hole in his chest that exposes his ribs.

### 3. Implement rigorous screening procedures for prosecutors

- Approximately 97% of all cases end in guilty pleas, and there are about 10M arrests every year (20k in Louisville) - the system will eat whatever we feed it.
- The rest of the world does NOT do things this way.
- A careful screening procedure *by prosecutors* reduces caseloads and improves policing.
- This approach has been successful in other jurisdictions (Alaska, NOLA).
  - See [https://www.google.com/books/edition/Alaska Bans Plea Bargaining/GZ0NnKKzhiIC](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Alaska+Bans+Plea+Bargaining/GZ0NnKKzhiIC)
  - Alaskan district attorneys refused to prosecute only about four percent of the felony cases they received from law enforcement. After the plea bargaining ban, the refusal rate jumped to an astonishing *forty-four* percent.