Police Brutality: How Can we Stop it?

Police officers are supposed to protect citizens, but what happens when they do the opposite and harm the innocent? Racist police officers are making police brutality a bigger issue than it should be in the United States. This issue can be helped in this country by changing laws, changing the police academy, and fining and making harsher punishments on the police.

Although it has gotten better over time, police brutality is a big problem in the United States. Although it only ranks 17th where this issue is the worst, the average US citizen is more likely to be killed by a police officer than a terrorist (Francis-Santiago). Police brutality means the use of excessive or unnecessary force during an encounter with a civilian.

One change that needs to happen to help put and end to police brutality is changing local laws of different police departments. According to statistics from Police Use of Force Project police departments with more strict rules had fewer killings of victims than departments with less strict rules on when officers can use the force ("Police Use of Force"). This means that there are less killings when police use violence later on people rather than right when they see them. Another statistic shows how having rules helps prevent police brutality. According to results from the Police Use of Force Project, "for each of the 8 policies examined, police departments that had implemented the policy were less likely to kill people than police departments that had not" ("Police Use of Force"). This means that in all eight of the categories they studied,

(chokeholds, shooting without warning, shooting at moving vehicles, etc.) each police department with rules on them is less likely to kill someone. This would result in fewer killings of innocent people and a more peaceful environment if more police departments started changing the rules.

Another thing that has to change is police training. When police officers are in the training process, they witness videos of police officers, being attacked after a moment of hesitation (Stoughton). This teaches them to be more on guard in every situation and encounter. When they are more aware, they think certain actions are threats even if they are not. For example, there have been multiple cases of people reaching into their pockets to get things out, but officers think that it is a gun they are reaching for and may harm or shoot them. Another example of bad training is the "first rule of law enforcement". It states that the ultimate goal is at the end of your shift is to be alive ("First Rule of Policing"). This "rule" tells police officers to be safe and protect their own lives as well as the others around them. This also has police officers going into the day expecting the worst and being paranoid about everything. Training academies need to set limits on when the training officers use violence and stop having them get paranoid.

The last thing that needs to change to stop police brutality is what happens to the police officers after they are accused of brutality or unnecessary force. According to a 1970 study, 280 people accused officers of unnecessary force, but only 21 officers were found guilty and the worst punishment was a small fine ("Only Tough Penalties"). These punishments need to change in order to help end police brutality. Many police officers are getting away with police brutality and in order for them to do it less, they need to make harsher punishments on the officers that do it. Again, it says that, "police records indicate that of thousands of complaints each year, few

officers receive swift, certain and serious penalties" ("Only Tough Penalties"). The police officers are doing horrible things to people , which is doing the opposite of their jobs and only some of them get harsh punishments. This will make the police officers realise the bad things that could happen to them when they do bad things to other people.

Some people may say that more white people are affected by police brutality than blacks ("Mapping Police Violence"). This is a very big issue for all races, however white people make up around 65% of the US population while black people only make up around 13%. Blacks also make up 25% of police brutality cases ("Mapping Police Violence"). This means that if you are a black person, you have a bigger risk of being abused by a police officer than if you are white.

Police brutality is getting out of hand in the United States because of paranoid and racist police officers. Some of the ways to make it better are changing laws and rules of local police departments, have less violent police training, and having harsher punishments for police officers that commit crimes of police brutality.

NOTE: OVERHANGING INDENT IS NOT CORRECT ON THIS ESSAY

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