



# The *JCSWB* – Looking back and thinking forward

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As I reflect on a decade of exceptional insight provided by the *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being (JCSWB)*, two impressions immediately come to mind. First, I can hardly believe it has already been 10 years, the Journal still feels fresh, innovative, and ground-breaking. Yet, at the same time, it also feels as though it has always been there, shaping conversations about community safety and well-being.

Perhaps that latter feeling exists because the Journal's Editor-in-Chief, Mr. Norm Taylor, has been such a consistent presence in forward-thinking discussions about policing and community safety for so many years. I first connected with Norm in the early 2000s when he, Chief Matt Torigian (retired), and I collaborated on a discussion paper for the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) examining the changes we believed were coming to the profession. Even then, well ahead of many other thought leaders, Norm was already exploring deeper solutions to what we now commonly call "wicked problems." He understood early that collaboration, innovation, joint problem-solving, community engagement, and shared goals would be essential to the future of community safety.

As Norm helped pioneer the community safety and well-being approach in Ontario and other provinces, it quickly became apparent that there was a significant gap in the literature supporting this emerging movement. While criminology research traditionally focused on what works to fight crime, there was far less attention paid to understanding what works, or does not work, in addressing the broader social challenges that affect communities and police services alike.

During this same period, while serving as co-chair of the OACP Community Policing Committee, now the Crime Prevention and Community Safety Committee, we embarked on an initiative to build a Community Mobilization and Engagement Model for Ontario under the stewardship of Dr. Hugh Russell. At the same time, a Community Mobilization Hub model was emerging in Saskatchewan. Norm Taylor played an important role in drawing the connections between these initiatives and helping to advance research focused on their outcomes and successes.

This is where, for the policing profession in particular, the *JCSWB* filled a critical void. Policing increasingly requires evidence-informed approaches to address the complex array of community issues to which police are called to respond. Peer-reviewed research and academically grounded analysis

are essential tools for police leaders and community partners who must make strategic decisions about how best to allocate limited public resources.

The challenge, however, has often been access to relevant research in a timely way. Research that speaks directly to the real-time challenges facing communities whose well-being may be stretched to crisis levels is extremely limited and sometimes non-existent.

For the OACP, this need is particularly acute. Unlike some jurisdictions, Ontario does not have a formal "college of policing," and much of the criminological research available to practitioners originates in other countries, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom. At the same time, criminal incidents typically account for only 15–18% of police calls for service across Ontario. The majority of police interactions involve complex social issues that intersect with multiple sectors and ministries. Police leaders therefore require access to information about programs, collaborative approaches, and proven solutions that extend beyond traditional law enforcement responses.

The connection between the *JCSWB* and the Community Safety Knowledge Alliance (CSKA) has been essential in meeting this need. Having been involved with CSKA and having witnessed the value of timely, practitioner-relevant research, I can attest that the Journal plays a critical role in ensuring that this knowledge reaches the audiences who need it most.

Those audiences are broad and diverse. The Journal supports not only the policing profession but also the many partners who together form the community safety ecosystem. By sharing research, practical insights, and emerging practices, the Journal helps individuals, organizations, and communities identify areas of alignment and work toward shared goals of improved safety and well-being.

As we move forward into increasingly complex times, when misinformation, disinformation, and global narratives can influence both perceptions of safety and actual community conditions, the need for trusted research and credible cross-sector dialogue has never been greater. The *JCSWB* is uniquely positioned to serve as that trusted voice, helping to advance evidence-informed, non-partisan conversations about how best to strengthen communities.

If the past 10 years are any indication of what is possible, the next decade holds tremendous promise. I consider myself fortunate to represent a profession and an organization that

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continues to benefit from the innovative thinking and collaborative spirit that have defined the JCSWB since its inception. *Congratulations to the Journal on its 10th anniversary and on the important contributions it continues to make to advancing community safety and well-being.*

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

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