

Alternative Response to Calls for Service:

Denver STAR

March 25, 2021



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Center for Health & Justice COSSAP Team

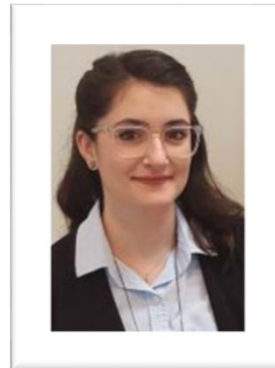
TTA provider for COSSAP FRD grantees since 2017



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 @TASC_CHJ

Denver's Support Team Assisted Response (STAR)

Matthew M. Lunn, PhD
March 25, 2021



DENVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2023

Preventing Crime & Treating People with Respect



Reducing Social Harms



- Mental Health
- Substance Abuse
- Fear of Crime
- Multimodal Transportation

Precision Policing



- Identify Neighborhood-Specific Issues
- Focused Enforcement Efforts
- Domestic Violence Prevention Program

Taking Care of the People Who Take Care of the People



- Resilience & Wellness Programs
- Improving Work/Life Balance

Public Safety Branding



- Increase Public Information
- Decrease High-Frequency Crimes
- Increase Prevention Efforts

New Approach Needed:

- Significant population increase
- Mental health related calls up 13.2% against 3-year average
- 31,264 mental health related calls in 2019
- Sending the right response based on the need

STAR Program Overview

Design:

- Modeled after the CAHOOTS program (Eugene, OR)
- Community-based response
- Meets people where they are

Team Composition:

- Mental Health worker (Clinician)
- Substance use/Peer navigator
- Paramedic / EMT
- Police officer is not a part of the team





Denver sent a team including community members to Eugene, OR in May 2019 to learn firsthand how their program works (CAHOOTS).

Community participation from the beginning to help create the program:

- 6 community based working meetings with the following organizations to help shape the Denver version of CAHOOTS (now known as STAR):
- Servicios de La Raza
- HARM Reduction Action Center
- Denver Justice Project
- Denver Alliance for Street Health Response
- DHOL (Denver Homeless OutLoud)
- MHCD (Mental Health Center of Denver)
- DPHE (Dept of Public Health and Environment)
- Denver Fire
- Denver Police
- Denver Department of Safety Executive Director's Office
- Denver 911 Center
- Denver Health and Hospital Authority
- Denver City Council
- LIVED EXPERIENCE COMMUNITY (individuals that participated, not associated with an organization)

Sending the Right Response

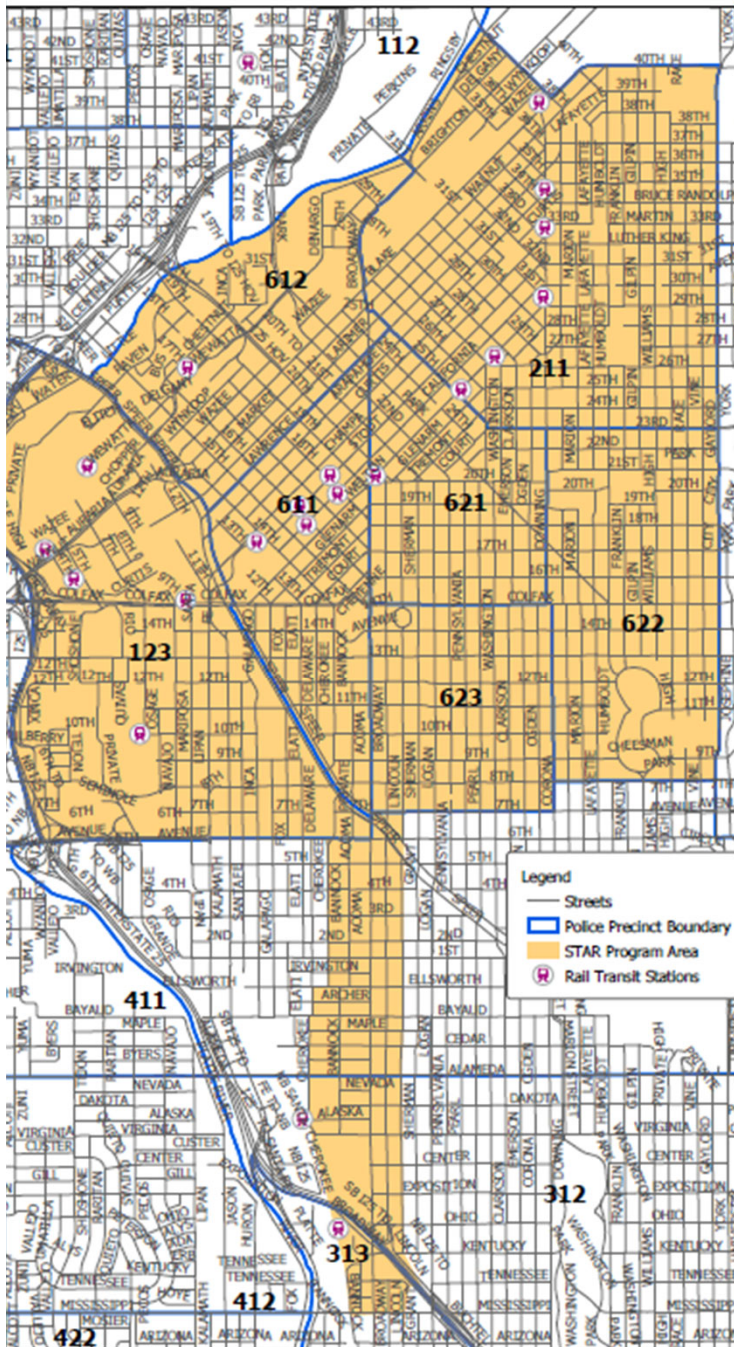
STAR Program:

- No police response
- Low level risk calls (no weapons involved)
- De-escalation (not having a uniformed officer sometimes can be a benefit)
- Get the person the services they need
- Community based
 - Peer navigator
 - Lived experience

Co-Responder Program:

- Officer and clinician respond
- Higher risk calls (potential of violence or weapons involved)
- Utilizing the right resources to de-escalate the crisis and get the person the help they need

STAR Program Area Boundary

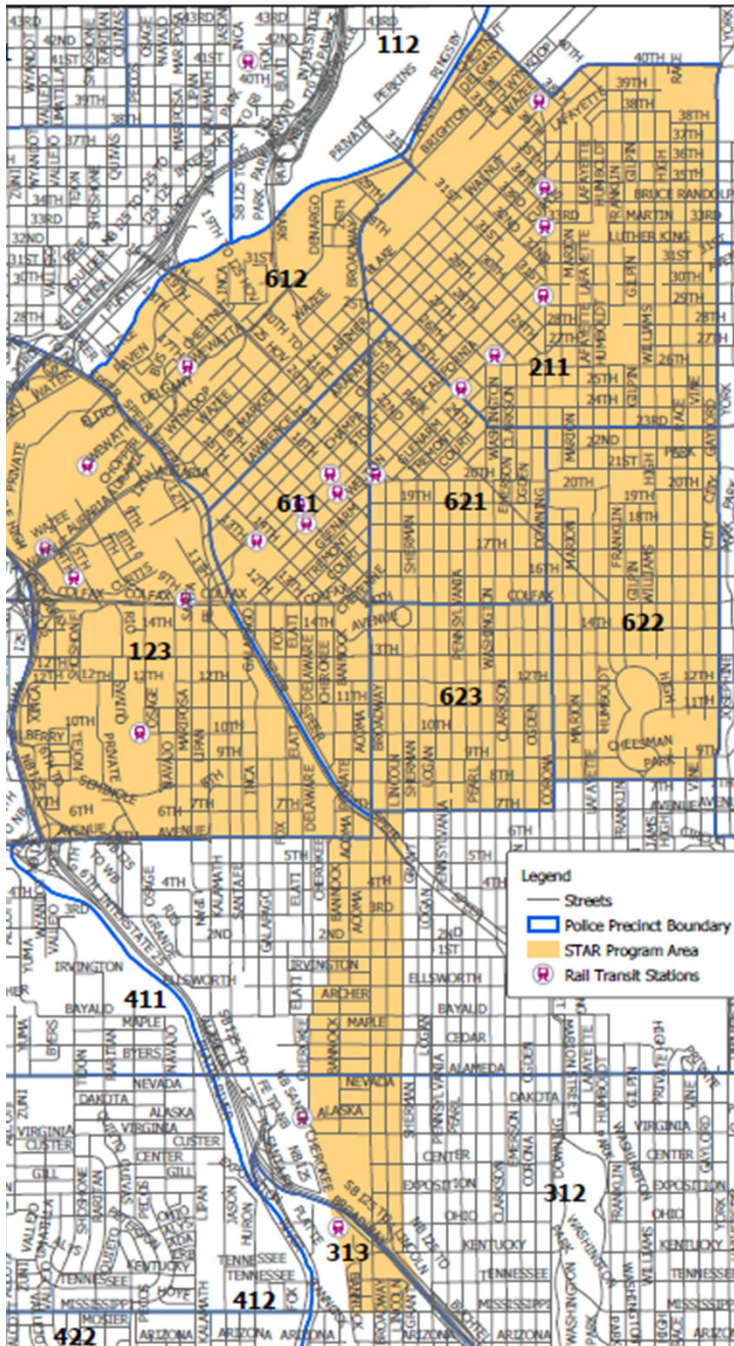


Prepared by the Data Analysis Unit

STAR Pilot Overview

- Collect data to assist in the full rollout
- Make changes/modifications to improve the program
- 40 hours a week (Mon-Fri 10am-6pm)
- Location – Downtown and Broadway/Lincoln Corridor

STAR Program Area Boundary



Prepared by the Data Analysis Unit

STAR Pilot Overview

The seven nature codes approved for inclusion in the pilot were:

- Assist
- Intoxicated Person
- Suicidal Series
- Welfare Check
- Indecent Exposure
- Trespass Unwanted Person
- Syringe Disposal – HRAC

STAR Pilot program funding

- Caring4Denver funds
- From the 10% city services bucket allotted for the expansion of the Co-responder program
- \$449,067 requested
 - Includes Cultural Relevancy training for all **STAR** participants (including 911 personnel, EMT's and Clinicians).

The STAR program is an extension of the suite of services DPD already provides.

Informed and Evolving

2016

- Initial pilot program (4 clinicians)
- Through Senate Bill 97, two clinicians added
- Behavioral Health Navigator added
- Social Impact Bond collaboration added

2017

- Denver Forensics At-Risk cases added
- Denver Police Department Intelligence Unit and Special Victims cases added
- Denver Hoarding Taskforce added
- Denver Fire Department referrals added

2018

- Crisis housing and management added
- Eight clinicians added to cover 7 days per week in all six Denver Police Districts
- Assistance with Denver Sheriff Involuntary Treatment pick-up orders to address compliance

2019

- 16 Clinicians
- Provided expanded response / support to 2017-18 increase in service
- Responded to 2,300 calls for service (co-response) Jan – Nov 2019 (26% increase over 2018)
- 61 individuals permanently housed

Services 2020- Present

- **Co-Responders**
 - 25 Clinicians
 - Looking to add addition for 24/7 coverage
- **STAR**
 - Expanding in 2021 with \$1.4 million from City of Denver and additional Caring4Denver funding
- **Case Manager Hub**
 - Team assigned to every patrol district and our SORT team





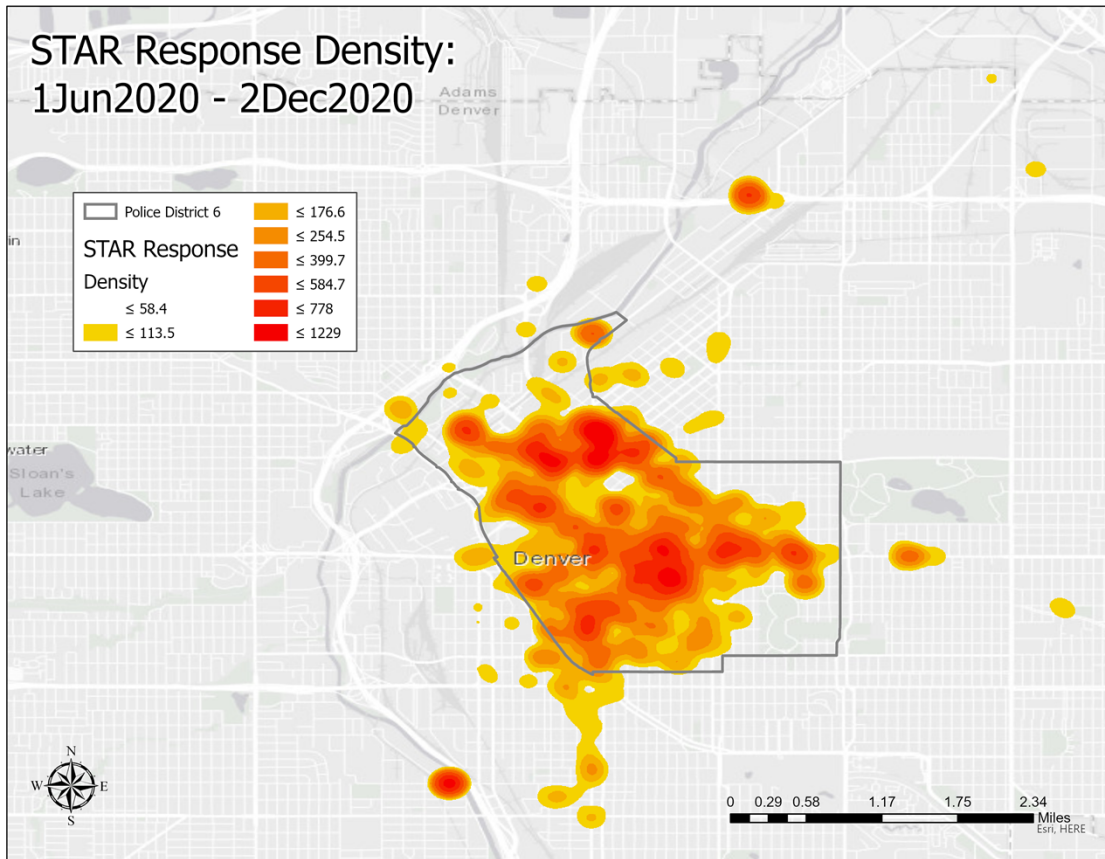
STAR Evaluation Data

Breakdown of Assignment Mechanism

The STAR unit can be assigned to a call for service through three general mechanisms:

1. 911 call takers flagging incoming calls and directly dispatching the STAR unit – This accounted for 313 (41.8%) incidents
2. Uniformed response independently requests STAR to respond on scene – This accounted for 260 (34.8%) incidents
3. STAR self-initiates a response in the field – This accounted for 175 (23.4%) of incidents

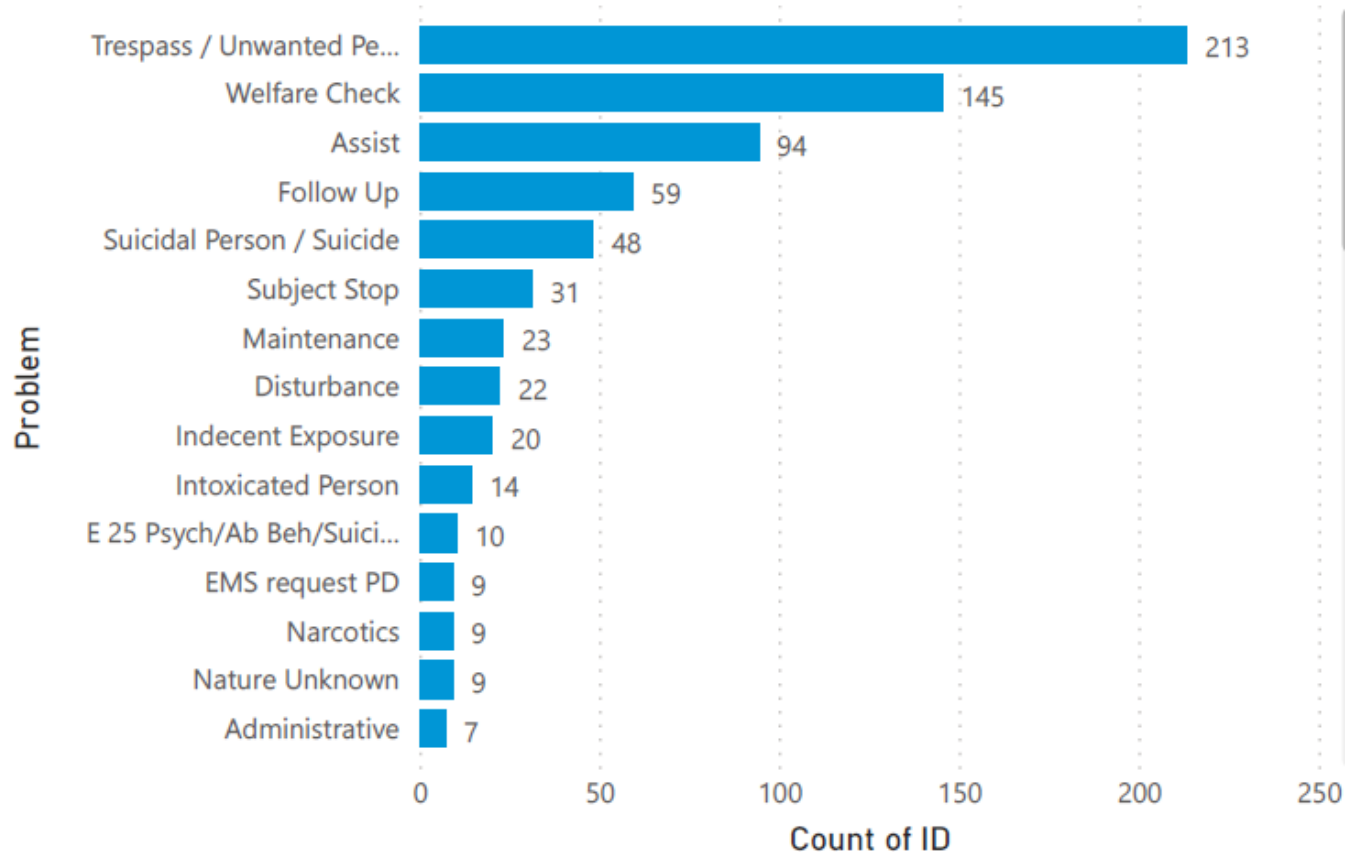
STAR Program Outcomes



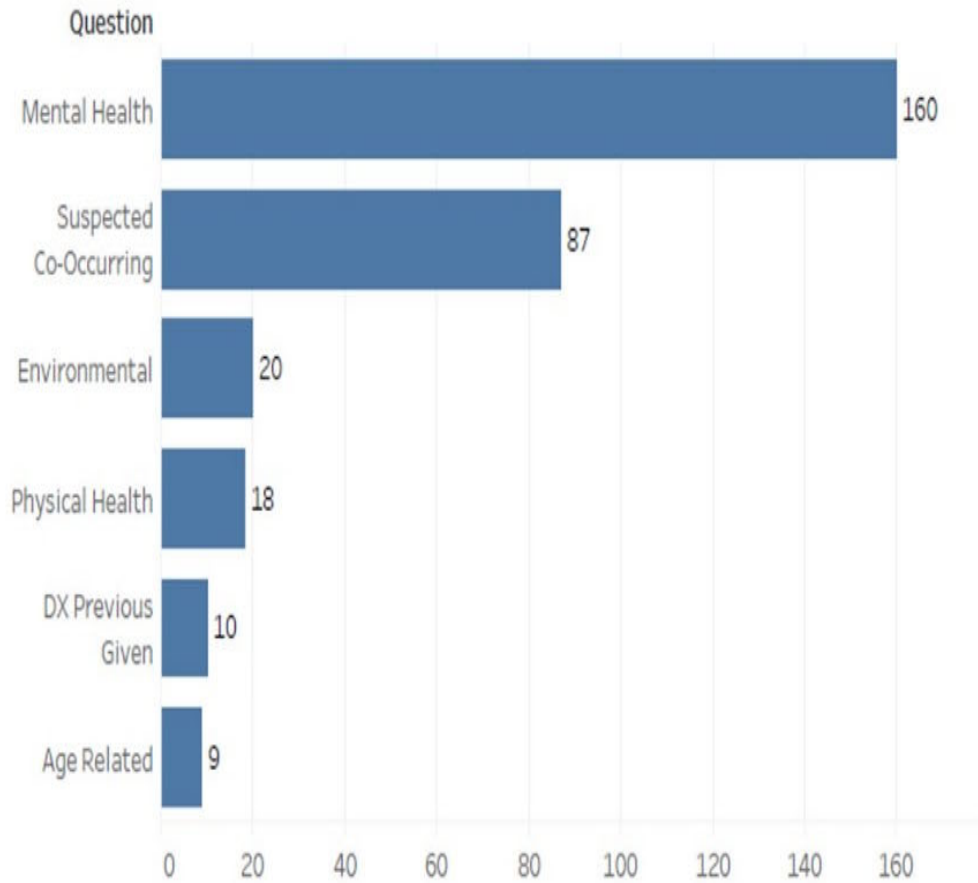
- STAR began operations on June 1, 2020 and responded to 748 calls traditionally fielded by Police, Fire, and/or EMS
- STAR-eligible calls accounted for 2.8% of DPD's call load during this timeframe
- STAR is a lower profile response from Public Safety and responds to an average of 9.43 calls/day

STAR Incident by Problem Type

STAR Incidents by Problem Type



Primary Concern



Top 10 Primary Diagnoses

Schizoaffective Disorder	26%
Bipolar Disorder	19%
Major Depressive Disorder	14%
Mood Disorder	7%
Post-traumatic stress disorder, unspecified	7%
Schizophrenia Disorder	7%
Anxiety Disorder	5%
Depressive Disorder NOS	5%
Other Psychotic Disorder	5%
Alcohol Related Disorder	2%

Lessons Learned

- Properly identify the call types for the STAR team to handle and to construct decision trees that govern their assignment to those calls
- There is a significant need for available supplies to support members of our community
- The data shows a need for the STAR program beyond the current pilot capacity and the majority of appropriate calls for service are in the downtown corridor
- Many service providers were off-line, or their services significantly modified, as a result of the pandemic but there continues to be a need for additional locations for the STAR program to provide warm hand-offs
- To better serve all individuals, future STAR vans should be outfitted with wheelchair lifts

Evaluation Team

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W. Andrew Dameron – Denver 911

Terese Howard – Denver Homeless Out Loud

Matthew Lunn – Denver Police

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Questions?

*Work Hard & Treat People
Right*



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Need TA?

- To request training and technical assistance, contact CHJ:

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or visit the TTA request page on the COSSAP website:
<https://www.cossapresources.org/Program/TTA/Request>