

Effective Components for Ideal Juvenile Re-entry:
An Analysis of Current Programs Utilized in the United States

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Effective Components for Ideal Juvenile Re-entry:
An Analysis of Current Programs Utilized in the United States

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Abstract

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Statement of the Problem

Juvenile reentry into the community is an important topic since almost all incarcerated juveniles will eventually be released to the community (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). Reentry is something that needs closer attention since Snyder and Sickmund (2006) found over half of all juveniles released from an institution are rearrested within one year (as cited in Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017).

Juvenile reentry programs need to focus not only on surveillance, such as home monitoring, urinalysis testing and regular visits with probation and parole authorities, but also on treatment, since juveniles are more successful when surveillance is coupled with adequate treatment and programming (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2015). Other issues that current juvenile reentry programs face is the lack of adequate collaboration between all community members involved in the reentry initiative. For example, Minnesota passed legislation in 2010 that allowed for better collaboration and communication between local schools, law enforcement and other community partners as a way to better assist needs of youth and allow for a better reintegration into society (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2015,

p. 4). Juvenile reentry must be evaluated and expanded to include recommendations for community supervision, along with ways for juveniles to obtain meaningful treatment, employment and adequate housing upon release from an institution.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify a proper juvenile re-entry model that can be utilized nationwide with minor adjustments for geographical differences. Statewide agencies will be able to utilize recommendations from this research to provide juveniles with the most effective and helpful reentry into society following incarceration.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this research is the ability to make recommendations for state agencies to implement, as a way of effectively dealing with the issues of juvenile crime and recidivism. This paper will argue the expansion of education, employment, and treatment options along with a smooth transition into supervision are crucial steps in reducing recidivism and improving the overall quality of life of juvenile offenders. This would benefit the entire community if criminal behavior can be stopped before a juvenile offender blossoms into an adult career criminal.

A comparison of juvenile community-based reentry programs will be conducted. Several statewide programs will be compared and contrasted to identify differences and similarities between states and any differences in geographic locations. Specifically, Minnesota's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee will be reviewed, along with recommendations that were given to the governor from prior research on juveniles, including their reentry into the community (The Minnesota Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, 2009). New York's GRASP (Gender-

responsive Re-entry Assistance Support Program), a program aimed at males and females between the ages of 13 and 25 coming home from secure detention, will also be analyzed and compared to other programs (The Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office, 2018). The Texas Youth Commission also recommends an individualized case plan for addressing risk factors and attempting to increase protective factors as opposed to the “old school” method of supervision by itself (Townsend & Smith, 2010). Additionally, the Federal response to juvenile reentry will be used as the national standard and compared to other states.

Methods Used

Data will be analyzed from secondary research and statistics from various studies related to reentry and juvenile justice. Specifically, various state juvenile reentry and correctional programs will be evaluated and compared to federal standards and statistics. No original data will be collected for this research.

Anticipated Outcomes

It is anticipated this research will further advance the reformations that are occurring at a national level to address ideal juvenile justice practices, especially regarding re-entry to the community. Although a few states are already taking steps toward improving juvenile justice and reentry practices, it is anticipated more states will need to adjust their current practices to conform to evidence-based interventions. It is recommended future research continue to address the needs of youth entering the community and find ways to decrease recidivism among this population. It is further recommended that juvenile reentry models are evidence-based, trauma-informed and include communication and collaboration from all available local resources.

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I. Introduction

Every year almost 10,000 young individuals in the United States reenter the community following a period of juvenile placement or incarceration (Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, (2014). Recidivism is another problem for this population that contributes to such a high number. One longitudinal study conducted by Trulson and colleagues (2005) found 85 percent of high-risk juvenile detainees in Texas were re-arrested within five years of release (as cited in Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, 2014). Juvenile reentry is such an important issue for a variety of reasons including the high recidivism rates, mass incarceration and high costs of incarceration. The United States spends \$6 billion every year to incarcerate juvenile offenders, with the average annual cost of \$88,000 for each juvenile (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Housing a juvenile offender in secure confinement costs an average of \$241 per day, compared to only \$68 per day for adults (Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, (2014). Although all this money is spent confining juveniles, research consistently shows very little effect on reducing recidivism (Hess & Verhine, 2017).

“What works” is a body of knowledge, also referred to as evidence-based practices, that attempts to seek and identify programs that are effective in reducing recidivism along with incarceration rates (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2006). This research over the past 30 years has identified several principles of effective intervention, which can be summarized as including risk, needs, treatment and fidelity into programs aimed at reducing recidivism (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2006). Risk and needs will be discussed along with the need for assessment tools that can accurately identified these factors for each individual being assessed. Treatment must

be well designed and implemented, with adequately trained staff, to ensure proper effectiveness. Lastly, the fidelity component refers to ensuring appropriate responsivity factors and barriers for individual treatment can be correctly identified and considered (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2006). Fidelity ensures the programs are implemented in a way that is appropriate and effective. This network of knowledge and research also shows consistent feedback that only higher risk needs offenders are engaging in higher levels and intensities of treatment. In some cases, low risk offenders placed in high-intensity programs actually had increased recidivism rates, further showing the importance of accurate screening of risks and needs (Latessa & Lowenkamp, 2006).

With all this money spent on incarcerating juveniles, under the misnomer of increasing public safety, it appears financial investments should instead focus on successful reentry to the community and ensure appropriate services are offered in the community to reduce recidivism and lower the need for incarceration as a primary means to reducing juvenile delinquency. This paper will begin with a detailed analysis of the current literature, specifically within several states, to determine what the current juvenile reentry practices entail. The next section will look at several criminological theories including social bond theory and labeling theory to determine how components of these theories can be incorporated into reentry practices. The theoretical implications of trauma and addiction are also important to understand, and must be incorporated into trainings and curriculums as part of a successful juvenile reentry program. Finally, a more detailed analysis of evidence-based programs will be offered, along with recommendations for all nationwide juvenile reentry practices to ensure ideal and successful juvenile reentry following a placement or period of incarceration.

II. Literature Review

Re-entry is important because it allows criminal justice professionals to take the time and necessary steps to identify and develop a plan to address various needs and risk factors presented by individuals that are returning to the community. Literature shows re-entry is important to address many areas linked to criminal behavior including: mental illness, substance use, employment, education level, homelessness and an overall disconnect from resources and support in the community (King County Department of Community and Human Services, 2011). It is important to discuss the current literature and trends utilized by different agencies as a means of determining our current practices for juveniles entering the community following placement or incarceration. This section will begin by discussing juvenile reentry practices in New York. Minnesota and Wisconsin's practices will also be analyzed to determine their different practices for placing juveniles in the community. Finally, federal juvenile reentry practices will be explored, along with a brief overview of the demographics of juvenile crime participants.

New York's GRASP Program

One prominent juvenile reentry program takes place in Brooklyn, New York. The Gender-responsive Re-entry Assistance Support Program (GRASP) focuses on children in the Brooklyn area who are returning to the community from some type of facility (Kings County District Attorney's Office, 2018). Although this paper will focus more specifically on the juvenile reentry of youth from prisons and jails, this program also incorporates youth returning to the community from other placements at residential treatment facilities and has a broad range of youth that are eligible for this program. This program has historically been utilized for female

youth between the ages of 13 and 25, and the typical program length is 6-12 months.

Participation is usually voluntary, but it can be a condition of parole or at the direction of various community stakeholders including professionals from family court, children and family services and juvenile probation departments.

Why are reentry programs like this important? Eric Gonzalez, the District Attorney of Kings County explained:

If we're going to be fair and just in the criminal justice system, and we're going to hold people accountable for the actions they have committed, we have to be fair and just when they return. We have to give them an equal opportunity to be productive members of society. We have to help them with the issues of housing and education and employment. Otherwise, we're just kind of perpetuating a cycle where they're going to go back out and not have many options (Gonzalez, 2016).

Even District Attorney Eric Gonzalez, who's primary focus is to prosecute and convict individuals, recognizes the importance of an effective reentry model and that it is a necessary component to keeping our criminal justice system fair and just. This is the essence of an effective criminal justice system; the ability to recognize the big picture that includes reentry following criminal offenses and punishment but proceeding successful reintegration into the community. King County has several reentry programs for various populations, including the GRASP program. All of these programs have seven primary reentry goals for individuals: improved housing status, employment, access to treatment, access to government assistance programs, improved case management and data collection on reentry, increased family connections and improved access to basic resources (King County Department of Community

and Human Services, 2011). Even nearby New York City has a similar problem with all of these areas. Particularly, two-thirds of juveniles released from confinement did not return to school (National Conference of Legislatures, 2011). This lack of advancing education is a major issue to a successful reentry practice since education level has consistently been linked to criminal involvement.

Minnesota Juvenile Re-entry

Over the past decade, youth under the age of 18 made up approximately one quarter of the entire state population. Of this youth population, almost one quarter belong to a racial or ethnic minority, resulting in a more diverse population than the entire state as a whole (The Minnesota Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, 2009). Of those youth minorities, the Hispanic population is growing at a rate that it will soon surpass the African American youth population in Minnesota. From 2000 to 2008, there was a decline in juvenile arrests from 74,751 to 47,229. In 2008, juvenile arrests accounted for 23% of all arrests, which is fairly consistent with the state's population as a whole. This would indicate youth of all ages are similarly likely to be arrested when compared to adults of all ages. These youth arrests can be broken down into three categories consisting of Part 1 offenses, Part 2 offenses and status offenses. Part 1 offenses, which include the most serious violent and property offenses, accounted for 25% of the total juvenile arrests. Part 2 offenses, which include less serious criminal offenses, accounted for the 59% of juvenile arrests. Status offenses such as curfew violations and runaways consist of 16% of the arrests (The Minnesota Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, 2009). Overall, males are consistently arrested at higher rates than females. The only category in which female juveniles are arrested at higher rates than males is for runaways. When looking at racial differences in

these three offense categories, there are some inconsistencies. Caucasian youth are the racial majority in Minnesota, and as such, account for 60% of the Part 1 offense arrests and 67% of the Part 2 offense arrests. When looking at status offenses, offenses where no criminal action occurred, Caucasian youth account for only 30% of the arrests with racial minorities being arrested at disproportionate rates in this category (The Minnesota Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, 2009). In 2007 there were 21,127 delinquency petitions filed, which accounted for 36% of all juvenile arrests. These petitions were for the more serious Part 1 and Part 2 offenses. Although Caucasian youth accounted for between 60-67% of these offense arrests, they only accounted for 44% of the petitions, with the remaining youth being of unknown minorities (The Minnesota Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, 2009).

Aside from these racial inequalities in juvenile arrest and adjudication, there are also noticeable differences in the correctional population of youth in Minnesota. When looking at admissions to secure detention in 2008, Caucasian youth accounted for only 47% while African American youth accounted for 30% of total admissions. Similar trends are also seen for post-adjudication placements in secure institutional settings. The Youth Probation population has also been declining since 2002 and recently served 13,088 youth during 2008. Similar to trends seen with juvenile arrests, overall rates of probation on youth are declining, however, rates of minority youth continue to rise (The Minnesota Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, 2009).

This Committee is also focused on achieving several goals regarding juvenile delinquency and involvement in the criminal justice system. Deinstitutionalization of status offenders is one primary goal to divert youth from entering the juvenile criminal justice system in the first place. Minnesota hopes to obtain this by working closely with schools to develop and

maintain strategies to deal with truancy and other status offenses in the school setting so detention never occurs. Partnering with school districts to change the response to youth behavior such as truancy is an important step forward to addressing the problem appropriately, versus seeking incarceration, which would only continue to hinder a youth's success academically and socially.

Minnesota typically addresses juvenile corrections at the county level, versus a uniform statewide agency. Thus, each county utilizes its own best practices in addressing juvenile reentry and attempts to lower recidivism rates. A 2014 survey asked county professionals in Minnesota to identify the best programs available in their geographic areas aimed at addressing youth delinquency (Minnesota Department of Public Safety, 2014). As to be expected, some counties did not have much for programs or resources, and indicated they rely on Internet resources and other neighboring partners to supply youth with the necessary tools for success in the community. One common theme in these responses throughout the state of Minnesota was the use of restorative justice initiatives as a way to repair harm done to the community and the victims, while enhancing positive youth activities and skills. Other programs and initiatives were identified to address needs for housing, education, employment and treatment, specifically mental health care (Minnesota Department of Public Safety, 2014).

Wisconsin Juvenile Re-entry

Wisconsin utilizes a combination of state, county and local resources to address the individual reentry needs of youth returning to the community. More serious criminal offenses are addressed at the state level with placement into a facility and/or formal supervision on the

community, whereas less serious offenses might result in more informal supervision at the county level of government. As is true with different geographical locations, there are programs that specifically work well with the racial, ethnic and gender populations of youth found in Wisconsin's juvenile justice system.

A 2005 report provided to the Wisconsin Governor's Juvenile Justice Commission and the Wisconsin Office of Juvenile Delinquency Prevention outlines specific programs and resources available for youth in Wisconsin to have a successful reentry into the community following placement at a facility (Small, Reynolds, O'Connor, & Cooney, 2005). The purpose of this report was to identify evidence-based programs in Wisconsin that address the various needs of juveniles in the community in a cost-effective manner.

As the literature suggests, there are a number risk factors and protective factors at various levels that impact youth in different ways. Both risk factors and protective factors can be present at different levels, including individual, family, peer, school and community. Individual level risk factors might include low IQ and protective factors might include the ability to feel guilt. Family risk factors can include living in poverty while protective factors can include having a good relationship with your parents. At the peer level, risk factors can be associated with other deviant individuals while associating with prosocial friends would be a protective factor. Having low academic goals and aspirations would be an example of a risk factor at the school level while academic achievement is a protective factor. The community a youth lives in also plays an important role in determining potential risk and protective factors. A community with easily available drugs and weapons constitutes a risk factor for a youth living in that neighborhood

whereas a neighborhood with low crime rates and a neighborhood watch system in place would create a protective factor for individuals living in that neighborhood (Small, Reynolds, O'Connor & Cooney, 2005). All of these levels are important to keep in mind when determining potential risk and protective factors for youth. Obviously, with more protective factors present, a particular youth stands a better chance of being successful and overcoming their risk factors. It is important to note, however, that not all factors are created equal and people respond differently to unique situations and factors.

Effective programs aimed at reducing juvenile delinquency and increasing protective factors can be split into three groups consisting of primary prevention programs, secondary prevention programs and juvenile offender programs. Primary prevention programs emphasize preschool education, family support programs and other learning programs. Secondary prevention programs include areas of focus such as employment, education and mentoring. Lastly, juvenile offender programs include diversion programs and case management services as ways to prevent juvenile delinquency (Small, Reynolds, O'Connor & Cooney, 2005).

Primary prevention programs target young individuals who may not present many individual risk factors but instead come from disadvantaged families or communities. For example, the Perry Preschool program followed up with participants at ages 27 and again at age 40 to find incredible cost-savings and reduced rates of crime and incarceration. This program lasted between 1 and 2 years for a partial day of school each day and found a cost savings of over \$8 per dollar spent per participant at age 27 and over \$17 saved per dollar spent on participants at age 40. These findings indicate this was a successful prevention program with long-term financial benefits on society (Small, Reynolds, O'Connor & Cooney, 2005).

Secondary prevention programs were not found to be as successful as the early preventative programs or diversionary juvenile offender programs, which will be discussed next. These types of programs are still successful, but do not result in tremendous cost-savings. The well-known Big Brothers and Big Sisters program for example found minimal financial benefit of one cent for every dollar invested (Small, Reynolds, O'Connor & Cooney, 2005).

Many juvenile offender programs are still being developed and analyzed to determine their effectiveness in reducing juvenile recidivism. The initial reports and indications, however, seem promising. One particular youth diversion program that lasted 18 weeks and included 6-8 hours per week of case management and intervention saw reduced recidivism and a massive return on investment. Other interventions such as multidimensional treatment foster care aimed to address residential concerns of youth in the community, and also incorporated necessary treatment for "hard" drug use at a length of 6-9 months. While a program like this is costly, it results in a \$10.88 benefit for every dollar spent per youth due to reduced recidivism and drug use among participants (Small, Reynolds, O'Connor & Cooney, 2005).

When a youth is housed in a secure facility in Wisconsin, there is a team of professionals that begins to meet following 21 days of placement at the facility and approximately every three months after that to begin release planning (Wisconsin Department of Corrections, 2018). This team consists of a representative from the committing county, community supervision agent, social worker and a member of the review committee, along with other "informal" members including the youth and their family members. The purpose of this review committee is to determine appropriate housing while incarcerated and to plan for housing upon release from the institution. This team has the authority to release juveniles when they feel an appropriate release

plan is in place including housing, treatment and any other conditions they may impose. Typically the community agent would determine what specific treatment programs each individual youth would benefit from the most, as everything is determined on a case-by-case basis (Wisconsin Department of Corrections, 2018).

Missouri Juvenile Re-entry

Missouri is one state that recently revamped its juvenile corrections practices to adopt evidence-based initiatives. It closed its large juvenile correctional facilities and opened numerous dorm-like facilities that house a maximum of twelve youth, who are allowed to wear “outside” clothes and are provided with treatment as well as educational and vocational training (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Youth confined in these facilities are released once they display good behavior, work hard and show improvements in their lives, and are not simply left there to serve a sentence (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Perhaps the most stunning fact in this approach to juvenile corrections is the financial savings. Missouri spends \$94 per day for each youth housed there as opposed to \$140 in nearby states, and is approximately half the cost of the national average of housing this population (Hess & Verhine, 2017).

South Dakota Juvenile Re-entry

South Dakota is one of the front-running states utilizing evidence-based practices within juvenile corrections. The 2015 South Dakota Juvenile Justice Public Safety Improvement Act (JJPSIA) is one of the major pieces of legislation that has expanded evidence-based practices in a state that is primarily rural and faces a lack of available resources (Hess & Verhine, 2017). A program known as the “Smart on Juvenile Justice Initiative” was developed from this act by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Their mission statement is to “protect

public safety and hold youth accountable through developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed, and evidence-based practices” (Hess & Verhine, 2017, p. 593). Prior to this program being developed, a statewide analysis uncovered that South Dakota lacked evidence-based treatment programs in the community, especially in rural areas, which dominate a significant portion of the state (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Although it’s too early to evaluate the success of South Dakota’s \$6.1 million investment into juvenile corrections reform, the numbers from the first six months of implementation support the efforts being made (Hess & Verhine, 2017).

Federal Juvenile Re-entry

The above overviews of statewide initiatives and programs utilized to address juvenile reentry are not exhaustive and do not represent every youth or every geographical area. Aside from those notable statewide initiatives, other national trends must be evaluated. Another well-known program in Illinois that began in 2005 focused on providing financial incentives to communities that focus on juvenile treatment and rehabilitation in the community opposed to incarceration. Since the implementation of this statewide program there has been a decrease in the number of juveniles committed to state facilities (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011). Pennsylvania is another leader in juvenile reentry practices. They emphasize the importance of aftercare and have seen positive results since their reform on juvenile correctional and reentry practices. The goal of Pennsylvania reentry is for “juvenile probation officers and residential treatment staff to coordinate in a single plan that integrates treatment and aftercare services, including appropriate education placements and goals developed in consultation with the appropriate school districts” (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011, p. 24). This paper seeks to identify uniform practices that can be applied nationwide to address the general

needs of youth returning to the communities in which they live. The following analysis of current Federal juvenile reentry practices will serve as the framework for nationwide best practices, although each geographical location may adopt these practices in a way that suites their needs.

The National Conference of State Legislatures (2011) discusses how the 10,000 youth released every year into the community face many challenges such as employment, family dysfunction or lack of support, unstable households, mental health and substance abuse issues to name a few. Another obstacle juveniles face appears to be the lack of suitable guardians, since only 19 percent of juveniles entering custody in the United States between 1997 and 2007 came from households with two parents (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011). 56 percent were living with only one parent and 26 percent were not living with any parents (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011). “Approximately two-thirds of incarcerated youth were convicted of non-violent offenses” (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011, p.21). This national population also sees common issues such as anger management, anxiety and depression. More than half of this population experienced major depression and over two-thirds reported regular illegal drug use (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011).

As mentioned earlier, there are two primary ways to address and approach the issue of juveniles reentering the community from incarceration; surveillance and services. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (as cited in National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011), suggests that surveillance is the most effective when it is combined with treatment and other services (p. 22). Treatment may be such an important function partly because of the emotional obstacles juveniles face while they are incarcerated. Dr. Steinberg, a

professor and juvenile justice expert at Temple University points out that juvenile offenders face obstacles from being incarcerated during their developmental years. More specifically, levels of maturity are important factors in determining an individual's ability to cope with the struggles of returning to society (as cited in National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011). Dr. Steinberg continues to point out how psychosocial maturity, which consists of self-competence, relationships and social functioning, and self-governance, is a necessary component for successful reentry, and juveniles by their nature may not have strong maturity due to ongoing brain development (as cited in National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011).

One specific federal longitudinal study, the Pathways to Desistance, focused exclusively on juveniles reentering the community following incarceration, and lasted years in order to determine appropriate recidivism rates following reentry (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011). Pathways, as it is more commonly referred to, found juveniles that received community supervision and engaged in community services and treatment were more likely to go to school, have a job and had lower recidivism rates (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2011).

Another federal program called the Intensive Aftercare Program (IAP) launched in 1995 and focused on providing individualized assessment and case planning services to incarcerated youth (Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, 2014). This program launched in the states of Colorado, Nevada, New Jersey and Virginia and provided services approximately 2-3 months prior to release, along with continued aftercare services in the community, which were individualized based on the risk of each participant (Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, 2014). Although this program initially was believed to be helpful, a quasi-experimental design found

this reentry program did not reduce recidivism at all, and in some cases, actually make things worse for juveniles (Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, 2014). It's hard to say exactly why these results were found, although this program's primary focus seemed to be surveillance over treatment.

Comparing Types of Existing Programs

There are many different types of juvenile reentry programs available. Some examples of existing programs were previously discussed including New York's GRASP program, which aims to assist female juveniles returning to the Brooklyn community following incarceration (Kings County District Attorney's Office, 2018). This particular program was developed through the District Attorney's Office, which is uncommon, particularly in smaller and more rural communities with lower numbers of female juveniles returning to the community following incarceration and lower available budgets.

Therapeutic communities are one type of reentry program. These act as residential treatment programs for youth in need of substance use recovery services in a safe environment where personal issues and feelings can also be safely addressed in a group setting (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). While this type of program has little research available to determine program effectiveness, one meta-analysis conducted by Mitchell, Wilson, and MacKenzie (2012) found no significant impact in reduced recidivism for juvenile participants following release from incarceration (as cited in Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017).

Mentoring is another form of reentry programming aimed at providing delinquent youth the opportunity to have successful role models. Studies of adolescents engaged in the reentry

process unveiled the need for having at least one trusted relationship within the juvenile justice system, and also found many of these juveniles have never had a trusted relationship with an adult in their lifetime (Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention, 2017). There are two main types of mentoring; school based, which typically occurs over the length of a school year, and community based. In community-based mentoring, adult mentors typically meet with their youth for four hours each month for at least one year to engage in activities in the community (Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, 2014). Big Brothers and Big Sisters is possibly the most well known national mentoring program in the United States. An evaluation of the program conducted by Grossman and Tierney (1998) found youth participants were less likely to start using drugs or alcohol, had more confidence academically as well as better grades and higher levels of attendance, and had developed better relationships with friends and peers (as cited in Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, 2014). The Federal Second Chance Act is a grant opportunity that has expanded and supported youth mentoring efforts. Due to the success of mentoring programs such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has invested over 1.6 million dollars in mentoring initiatives for youth involved in the juvenile justice system (Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, 2014).

Case management is another form of juvenile reentry programming. Case management includes identifying both needs and risks of juveniles to determine particular areas of needed development as well as areas of potential risk to the community through continued delinquent activity. There is also limited research available on the effectiveness of case management within the juvenile justice setting and reentry into the community (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). Additionally, the ability to identify individual needs and risks is

merely the first step; an effective case manager must also know how to apply these areas to real-life and available reentry programs.

Cognitive behavioral treatment also works in conjunction with other types of reentry programs in the institutional setting and within the community. Its focus is to teach skills such as problem solving and impulse control to individuals in an attempt to lower criminal thinking patterns (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). These types of programs can easily be incorporated into other programs with minimal additional cost since only one trained professional is needed to facilitate a common cognitive thinking group for a small number of youth. The effectiveness also appears to be satisfactory, with youth who engaged in these programs both in the institution and in the community having less arrests, less drug use and more school involvement within six months of release to the community (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). Cognitive behavioral therapy completed in a group format has been shown to reduce recidivism by 26% (Hess & Verhine, 2017).

Reentry courts are also a newer form of juvenile reentry programs, but again their effectiveness is largely unknown due to the small number of juvenile reentry courts in the United States and the short amount of time they have been operational. In this up-and-coming approach to juvenile reentry, the judge has more involvement throughout the entire process of a juvenile's sentence and acts as the facilitator and bridge between potential services and programs available to that individual (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017).

The effectiveness of juvenile reentry programs in general has been questioned, as different studies seem to have different results. A meta-analysis of 22 existing types of juvenile reentry programs, focused on including a treatment model such as skill development or cognitive

behavioral therapy, conducted by James and colleagues (2013) found small yet significant lowered rates of recidivism for juveniles who had participated in reentry services (as cited in Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). The same researchers also found reentry programs focused on individual versus group treatment had significantly better results. Several studies have also shown these programs are most effective with higher-risk and violent juveniles and less effective on lower-risk non-violent offenders. This supports the risk-needs-responsively framework and the idea that intensive reentry services should be saved for those at highest risk of continued juvenile or criminal involvement (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017).

Project Build, now referred to as the BUILD Violence Intervention Curriculum, is an evidence-based program in the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center in Chicago (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). This program includes case managers assigned to youth even upon release from incarceration to follow-up on things like school engagement and healthy activities as means to avoid criminal involvement. The success of this program was measured by Lurigio and colleagues (2000) and was found to have significantly lowered recidivism rates for participants; 33 percent after one year compared with 57 percent for youths who did not participate in this program (as cited in Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017).

Multisystematic Therapy-Family Integrated Transitions (MST-FIT) was another reentry program introduced to combat co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. The program intended to “connect youth and their families to appropriate community supports, achieve youth abstinence from alcohol and other drugs, improve their mental health, and increase

their prosocial behavior” (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017, p. 8). These programs can last between 3 and 5 months and take place in the community, oftentimes in the family’s home (Hess & Verhine, 2017). A therapist is assigned to the family and helps provide the youth with assistance in the areas of school, work and developing relationships while providing parents the skills they need to be successful and supportive parents (Hess & Verhine, 2017). An analysis found a significant reduction in felony recidivism among participants after 36 months of program completion (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). A 2006 study that looked at participants after 18 months of completion and found greater improvements within the areas of home, school and mood and emotion as well as lower arrest rates (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Specifically, similar youth engaging in other treatment services were arrested at a rate of 3.2 times more often than participants engaged in multisystematic family therapy (Hess & Verhine, 2017).

The Wayne County Second Chance Reentry Program (WC-SCR) also focused on juveniles between the ages of 13 and 18 who had been placed in secure residential facilities and were returning to the community. The program followed the six best practices of reentry identified by the U.S. Department of Justice: Objectively assessing criminogenic needs, enhancing intrinsic motivation, targeting high risk offenders, addressing criminogenic needs, utilizing cognitive-behavioral interventions and determining appropriate dosage of treatment (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). Two years after juveniles completed this program, recidivism rates were only 4.3 percent, compared to 9.5 percent within the control group (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017).

In this section, several different state and federal practices were explored. An overview of juvenile demographics was presented to provide an understanding of the population that is being addressed. Although populations and practices vary based on geographical locations and resources available, it is important to find guidelines that have been shown through research to be effective for all juveniles returning to the community.

III. Theoretical Framework

The following section seeks to identify and explain juvenile delinquency as it relates to common criminological theories. Theories such as the Social Bond Theory and Labeling Theory will be analyzed to determine their relevance when considering a youth's return to the community following a period of incarceration. Lastly, common theories regarding trauma and addiction will also be discussed to determine their importance when understanding juvenile reentry, since many individuals involved in crime have experienced trauma and substance abuse at some point in their lives.

Social Bond Theory

Travis Hirschi developed the social bond theory of crime in 1969 (as cited in Hart & Mueller, 2013, p. 117). This was developed as a way to help explain crime in general, and insisted crime occurred when particular social bonds to society were weak or nonexistent. Hirschi specifically looked at delinquent behavior among boys, but his theory can apply to all types of criminal offenders. Hirschi identified four social bond categories that directly impact the likelihood of an individual committing crime: attachment, commitment, involvement and beliefs (Hart & Mueller, 2013). Attachment refers to relationships with others, including family, peers and other individuals present. Commitment considers the individual's investment in

certain activities, or their level of motivation in life. Involvement captures the amount of time spent on various activities, and the remaining amount of free or idle time. Lastly, belief refers to the individual's level of pro-social norms and morals within a given society (Hart & Mueller, 2013). Hirschi believed an individual's level of involvement with each of these four categories was directly related to juvenile delinquency rates (Hart & Mueller, 2013). Thus, an individual with strong bonds in each of these categories had protective factors from being involved in criminal offenses, and vice versa. Hirschi's theory draws parallels to Talcott Parson's AGIL schema, which consists of four separate but similar functions that capture strong social bonds among individuals (Chriss, 2007). Attachment is similar to integration, commitment is essentially the same as goal-attainment, involvement parallels adaptation and belief serves the same role as latent pattern-maintenance (Chriss, 2007). When Hirschi expanded his ideas of social control to include an emphasis of self-control, the connections were made clear between these two theories as the AGIL schema also draws upon the importance of self-control when an individual engages in criminal activity.

Several previous studies have looked at the effect of social bonds on delinquency. Jenkins (1997) looked at the effects of these four social bonds as they relate to school and compared them to three types of school delinquency including crime, misconduct and nonattendance (as cited in Hart & Mueller, 2013, p. 117). This study found a relationship between the two factors, lending support for the social bond theory. A similar study conducted by Özbay and Özcan (2006) found "...social bond variables had a stronger effect for males than for females when predicting juvenile delinquency (as cited in Hart & Mueller, 2013, p. 118). A study conducted by Hart & Mueller (2013) was aimed at exploring six factors related to social

bonds which included: parental involvement, bond to school, beliefs, commitment to sport activities, commitment to non-sport activities and involvement in school-sponsored activities to see how they relate to juvenile delinquency (p. 136). They also found support for the social bond theory, even after accounting for differences in socioeconomic status and with an appropriate and representative sample of youth who are at-risk for delinquency (Hart & Mueller, 2013). This particular study also focused on delinquency and social bond factors as they relate to school, since that is a primary setting in which delinquency occurs and where youth spend a significant amount of their time. As far as juvenile delinquency relates to school, this study found significant relationships between these variations of Hirschi's social bonds and school delinquency (Hart & Mueller, 2013). Although causation cannot be confirmed, this strong association indicates the importance of strong social bonds related to school. Additionally, this study suggests interventions introduced to strengthen bonds to school may be a more effective way of creating a better learning environment than simply focusing on parental involvement in child rearing, further illustrating the important role education plays in an individual's desistance from crime and antisocial behavior (Hart & Mueller, 2013, p. 129).

Labeling Theory

Frank Tannenbaum (1938) developed Labeling Theory, which asserts, "The young delinquent becomes bad because he is defined as bad and because he is not believed if he is good. The process of making the criminal, therefore, is a process of tagging" (as cited in Schmalleger, 2017, p. 95). This theory would support the notion that even primary deviance; what occurs when an individual only commits one crime and is labeled a criminal, is harmful to their future decisions since they will now carry this negative connotation with them for very long

periods of time, if not for their lifetime (Schmalleger, 2017). Specifically, this label makes it harder for society to feel comfortable providing a “criminal” the title of “employee”, “spouse”, etc. Although labeling theory makes sense to a lot of people, it should be noted it is oftentimes critiqued for not being a “theory” that has the ability to explain criminal theory in the way other criminological theories can. Further, it does not offer any way of effectively dealing with offenders, since labels are sometimes necessary and impossible to control (Schmalleger, 2017).

One study sought to explore the applicability of labeling theory when tested in an experimental design. Authors initially present that labeling theory has two components: first, that a negative label reduces a youth’s opportunities to conventional success and second, that this label leads others to treat labeled individuals differently (Kroska, Lee & Carr, 2017). These authors point out strong literature and studies that seem to support a reduction in educational and employment opportunities, along with reduced access to social networks and increased contacts with deviant peers. There is not much literature, however, on the link between labels and deviant self-meanings. Self-meanings generally consist of self-evaluation, the reflection of feelings and worth; self-potency, the self-efficacy component that results in feelings of achievement and empowerment; and self-activity, the feelings of liveliness through action (Kroska, Lee & Carr, 2017). In this study, two samples of college students and one sample of youths in community aftercare following incarceration were examined. It was found that the delinquency adjudication label is correlated with lower self-evaluation and higher self-potency, as was to be expected according to this theory (Kroska, Lee & Carr, 2017). This study also found, however, that it is related to higher levels of activity as opposed to lower levels. This would indicate the harmful

label as overall being negative, but actually increasing energy levels as opposed to depressing them among youth (Kroska, Lee & Carr, 2017).

Trauma and Addiction

Trauma, defined as being a victim of violence, witnessing violence or experiencing stressful life events, has a profound impact on developing children (Maschi, 2006). Wolff and colleagues (2015) found increased risk of rearrest for youth in the criminal justice system who were exposed to childhood trauma. (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). Trauma is something everyone experiences at some point in their lives, but comes in different degrees dependent on the seriousness of the situation that causes trauma. Children who are abused or neglected often experience trauma at an early age. Current literature indicates child maltreatment is positively related to juvenile delinquency and adult criminality (Maschi, 2006). Specifically, 50-79 percent of male victims of child maltreatment, in cases where the maltreatment occurred before age 12, became involved in serious juvenile delinquency (Maschi, 2006).

One study in particular looked at male youths between the ages of 12 and 17 to determine the different risks that indicate a relationship between trauma and delinquency. This sample consisted of over 4,000 nationally representative males in this age group of various geographical locations, races and ethnicities (Maschi, 2006). This stratified random sample even controlled for socioeconomic differences based in geographical locations by having two separate groups consisting of central city areas and a national probability household sample for non-urban areas. What the researchers found is that exposure to violence and stressful life events, two common trauma-evoking situations, are both strongly related to violent delinquency (Maschi, 2006).

Overall, findings indicate different types of trauma has a positive and significant impact on violent delinquency, giving implications that treatment and attention to trauma is important in preventing youth involvement in the criminal justice system (Maschi, 2006). While it is not feasible to entirely wipe out traumatic events, providing youth with coping skills is an important step in ensuring youth with traumatic childhoods avoid entering the criminal justice system.

Substance use is also strongly correlated to juvenile delinquency and continued adult criminal activity. Literature also strongly suggests youth who experience trauma are more likely to experience high rates of substance use (Smith & Saldana, 2013). It is important to differentiate substance use and substance abuse; abuse is a term that is harder to confirm among youth without additional information such as personal interviews whereas use looks at types, frequency and amounts used. Thus, literature typically refers to “use” instead of “abuse.” Similar to the research on trauma and delinquency, causation cannot be confirmed between these and substance use, however, literature strongly suggests a positive relationship between all three (Smith & Saldana, 2013). Specifically, trauma is associated with higher rates of tobacco use and drug use, including crack, cocaine, opiates and hallucinogens among others (Smith & Saldana, 2013). Aside from the relationship between trauma, substance use and delinquency, several studies have also shown substance use increases the likelihood of recidivism as well as the speed or timeframe between continued juvenile activity (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). One study in particular looked at 166 girls between the ages of 13 and 17 to determine whether or not a relationship exists between substance use, trauma and juvenile girls reentering the community following incarceration or placement at a halfway house or other residential facility (Smith & Saldana, 2013). Links between childhood trauma, particularly

sexual abuse, are strongly related to use of alcohol, marijuana and other “hard” drugs (Smith & Saldana, 2013). This link shows how important prevention and intervention efforts are in reducing and eliminating substance use and delinquency among this population who has experienced trauma.

These are some of the theories that help explain juvenile delinquency and provide further implications with how to effectively deal with juveniles during their reentry into the community. Hirschi’s social bond theory presents important components to an individual’s success in the community. It is clear that strong bonds in the areas of attachment, commitment, involvement and belief are essential to an individual’s likelihood of positively adapting to their surroundings (Hart & Mueller, 2013). Labeling theory also presents an important thing to keep in mind; not all individuals returning to the community should be labeled criminals and should be treated with dignity and respect. It is also important to understand trauma and how it relates to substance use and delinquency. Attention must continue to be given to efforts aimed at identifying and assisting youth who have experienced trauma since such a large majority of delinquent youths may have become involved in the criminal justice system as a direct result of their adverse childhood experiences. These theories assist in providing framework for an effective juvenile reentry program. Based on these theories, an ideal program would be recommended to focus on improving a youth’s overall involvement and commitment in life, with their support system and with their communities. It would further be recommended any program take into consideration the effect of potentially harmful labels such as “juvenile delinquent” as well as the avoidance of terms and topics that could trigger traumatic experiences unnecessarily. When working with

individuals with traumatic histories, only qualified and trained staff should bring up topics surrounding trauma so as not to further harm the individual.

IV. Recommendations for Future Juvenile Reentry Programs

The above sections identify some examples of current juvenile reentry strategies and programs. Now that a brief overview of national juvenile reentry trends has been presented, and an analysis of criminological theories has been presented, it is now possible to dive deeper into the literature and analysis of which programs are the most effective and why. As previously mentioned, effective reentry services focus on the youth before and after release from confinement (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). The following section will identify several recommendations for future juvenile reentry programs based on a more comprehensive analysis of successful and evidence-based programs currently utilized in the United States.

In a 2005 study conducted in Wisconsin, several recommendations were made in a report to the juvenile justice commission regarding appropriate juvenile justice delinquency prevention programs (Small et al., 2005). The primary recommendation in that report is to continue to seek out and utilize evidence-based programs, and also to continue to educate policy makers and important criminal justice figures such as prosecutors and judges on the effectiveness of certain programs (Small et al., 2005). If officials are not aware of the successful programs available in their area, and do not buy into their success, they will be unlikely to refer a juvenile delinquent to that particular program. This highlights the importance of continued education and communication regarding successful juvenile reentry and delinquency prevention programs. Although funding is always a limiting factor when seeking to develop and expand programs in

any government setting, this study focuses on effective financial spending since resources are, and likely will continue to be, scarce. Utilizing cost-benefit analysis is the recommended way to prioritize spending of limited funds, as a way to ensure the programs and resources with the highest effectiveness rates for each dollar spent are the ones that are promoted and expanded (Small et al., 2005).

What an ideal Juvenile Re-entry Program would look like

Evidence-based practices are a fairly new addition to the field of criminal justice, but that does not mean they have not been extensively implemented and given appropriate attention. Evidence-based practices are simply practices or policies that are driven by scientific findings and implications. To break it down further, findings from program evaluations and outcome analyses are considered the “evidence” that helps guide policymaking and funding decisions when utilizing evidence-based practices (Hess & Verhine, 2017). It is logical that programs utilized should be evidence-based in order to effectively reduce recidivism. Evidence-based practices have been shown to reduce recidivism rates significantly and reliably (Seave, 2011). Although this approach to treatment and reentry efforts seems promising, not all states and organizations have implemented this philosophy. Barriers to advancing this include funding, training and other organizational changes that would be required to implement evidence-based practices into current work practices (Seave, 2011). California, for example, has the nation’s highest rates of juveniles in custody, yet there is no state law mandating the use of evidence-based practices (Seave, 2011). Many counties are unable to implement these practices since there is no state funding available to promote this change in organizational practices. The nationwide focus at this point is to look at effective implementation of evidence-based practices

to all demographic areas to ensure proper reentry of juveniles into the community as a means of overriding public safety. After all, several studies including work done by Lipsey & Cullen (2007) have shown improper or excessive confinement of juveniles can actually increase delinquent behavior (as cited in Seave, 2011). A similar Florida study from 2007 found lower risk youths who were incarcerated re-offended at higher rates than those left in the community, and at even higher rates than higher risk youths who were incarcerated as well (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Evidence-based practices, such as the use of risk and needs assessment instruments, can appropriately identify individuals who are high-risk and in need of incarceration, whereas low-risk juvenile offenders who can be diverted from the justice system in the first place will be less likely to engage in delinquent behavior (Seave, 2011).

Many programs have been discussed thus far, however, not all of them are considered evidence-based. Evidence-based programs have consistently produced reduced recidivism rates in high risk juvenile offenders, although only 5% of this population is placed into a program that is evidence-based each year (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Evidence-based programs that include therapeutic counseling, skill building and case management are the most effective for this population (Hess & Verhine, 2017). These areas address common need areas such as anger management, anti-social feelings and thoughts and lack of appropriate role models (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Another important component in juvenile probation, and of course juvenile reentry into the community, is the use of graduated responses, which is a system of incentives and sanctions utilized for certain behaviors (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Research supports the notion of providing four rewards for every one sanction. A reward can be a simple verbal affirmation, or “pat on the back” for a good decision made, whereas a sanction can be anything

from a verbal reprimand or loss of privileges or freedoms. Utilizing this high ratio of positive feedback for good behavior has shown a 63% decrease in detention for probation violations in Hennepin County, Minnesota between a four year span of utilizing this approach (Hess & Verhine, 2017).

Which State Model is Best?

Several models for juvenile reentry practices have been presented earlier in this paper. Some models are clearly better than others, based on the studies and literature that show effective components of programs must be evidence-based. South Dakota and Missouri are leading examples of how to implement effective evidence-based practices into policy, ensuring youth returning to the community are met with scientifically valid practices to assist in their reintegration into the community. This doesn't mean other states are incorrect or utilizing reentry programs in a negative way, rather, they should ensure their programs are also utilizing key components of evidence-based treatment. Thus, these states must evaluate themselves to determine if their current practices are ideal and truly benefiting the population being served as well as benefitting the community.

States and local communities that are implementing re-entry courts and mentoring programs seem to have promising results in effectively assisting juvenile reentry initiatives. Further research is necessary, however, to determine the effectiveness and viability of these programs (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). At this point in time, literature would strongly suggest several components of an ideal juvenile reentry program including: therapeutic communities, cognitive-behavioral treatment, mentoring programs, case management services and ensuring all programs are evidence-based (Office of Juvenile Justice

and Delinquency Prevention, 2017). An ideal program would include each of these components along with three main overriding principles which are discussed below. Utilizing all of these recommendations will help ensure juveniles are met with the appropriate types of levels of treatment, education, employment, and support from family, along with ensuring any other criminological needs are met.

Recommendations

Nationwide, programs aimed at assisting juveniles returning to the community are naturally going to operate differently based on their geographical location and the demographics of the population served. That being said, some consistent themes would benefit all juveniles reentering the community regardless of their individual situation, risks and needs. This entire population must be provided with treatment that is evidence-based. Utilizing evidence-based practices is what “works” and has been proven to work through scientific analyses (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Making decisions solely on what individuals think is appropriate for treatment allows far too much subjectivity during the reentry process, and is ineffective in reducing recidivism. All agencies nationwide must adapt and conform policies and procedures to include evidence-based practices including the incorporation of evidence-based risk and needs assessment tools and the incorporation of graduated responses.

Incorporating trauma-informed services is another important component to a successful juvenile reentry process. Literature suggests a strong relationship between childhood maltreatment and serious juvenile delinquency and adult crime (Maschi, 2006). 50-79 percent of male victims of child maltreatment became involved in serious juvenile delinquency (Maschi, 2006). It is imperative that juvenile reentry efforts continue to consider the impact trauma and

abuse has on the likelihood of criminal involvement. Addressing these topics in the form of treatment and therapy can help bring these issues to light. Further, any criminal justice professionals working with this population must be able to identify areas of past trauma and means to prevent continued trauma while in the community. For example, in cases where family abuse occurred, criminal justice professionals must look for ways to reduce or eliminate the possibility that continued abuse can occur in that living placement. All staff working with this population must be adequately trained on how to properly identify and manage childhood trauma as a means of reducing the likelihood of recidivism.

Lastly, there needs to be continued effective and collaborative communication between all agencies involved in the reentry of a juvenile. The planning for a successful reentry should begin during the initial period of confinement. Any assigned social worker or case manager should begin this planning process by discussing with any supervising community case manager, treatment professionals, and any other professional contacts involved in the care and or custody of the particular juvenile. On a case by case basis, family members and any other applicable community stakeholders including school officials and religious support individuals should also have a role in developing a release plan. The sharing of resources between agencies is necessary to ensure a proper reentry into the community with the utilization of all available resources.

In summary, this section looked at a number of different programs that are evidence-based and appear to appropriately reduce recidivism by addressing individual needs and risks, while taking into consideration other responsibility factors that may arise. Different approaches to juvenile reentry can be used and combined including mentoring, cognitive behavioral treatment, case management services and reentry courts (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency

Prevention, 2017). These are just some of the different forms in which reentry services can be introduced to address the issue to juvenile recidivism and continued adult criminal behavior. Missouri and South Dakota have recently made drastic changes in their approach to juvenile justice. These changes were evidence-based and appear to have effectively reduced recidivism while lowering the cost to taxpayers. Regardless of how these reentry efforts are used in different geographic locations, they should all be evidence-based, trauma-informed and should be used in conjunction with all available agencies and resources.

V. Summary and Conclusions

This paper began by exploring different programs that are currently being utilized to assist juveniles during reentry into the community. Several important key components of an effective juvenile reentry program were discussed including the incorporation of adequate mentors, education advancements, the importance of employment and inclusion of effective treatment programs. These are just some of the areas that are important to think about during a reentry process. Criminological theories can also provide insight into how to combat juvenile recidivism during the reentry phase. Social Bond theory helps explain the importance of having strong bonds in the areas of attachment, commitment, involvement and belief (Hart & Mueller, 2013). It is also important to consider the labels used on juvenile delinquents and the potential harmful inferences these negative labels entail (Kroska, Lee & Carr, 2017). Several additional state-level juvenile reentry practices were also examined to determine potential effectiveness and application nationwide. Current federal standards developed by the U.S. Department of Justice include six best practices for all reentry programs: assessing needs, addressing needs, targeting high risk offenders or delinquents, enhancing intrinsic motivation, using cognitive-behavioral

interventions and determining levels of treatment dosage (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2017).

While this is a good basis for federal best practices, there are a few more necessary components to ensuring juvenile reentry practices are as effective as possible with available resources. A guideline must be in place to assist states in developing policies and procedures surrounding correctional programming aimed at reducing juvenile recidivism. These guidelines must support the use of evidence-based practices to help ensure positive results in reducing future delinquency. Currently, only 5% of juvenile offenders are placed in a program that is evidence-based each year (Hess & Verhine, 2017). Specifically, these evidence-based programs must incorporate graduated responses for positive behavior, along with risk and needs assessment tools to accurately identify areas of needed attention (Hess & Verhine, 2017). These services and individual staff members must be aware of trauma and the large effect it has on delinquency and crime, since childhood maltreatment is positively related with delinquency and adult criminality (Maschi, 2006). Being trauma-sensitive will assist juveniles in understanding their past and being able to cope appropriately, while being able to move forward and overcome those challenges. Lastly effective collaboration and communication between community criminal justice partners is necessary to ensure youths receive the most effective and beneficial treatment and support that is available to them. Without communication and collaboration, juvenile offenders will be left to resolve their own problems without help. As District Attorney Eric Gonzalez explained, in order to have a justice system that is fair and just it is necessary to provide this population with all available and appropriate resources when returning to the

community in order to prevent continued involvement within the criminal justice (Gonzalez, 2016). After all, ensuring effective reentry and success in the community for all juvenile offenders is the most important step criminal justice professionals can take to ensure public safety and reduction of recidivism, while improving the quality of life for those involved.

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