

Trends in Juvenile Justice

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Trends

- Juvenile violent crime reduction
- Youth incarceration rate reduction
- Reduction in prosecution of youth in adult court and placement in adult jails, prisons

Youth Incarceration

- Since 1995, rate of youth confinement has dropped by 41%
- 1995: 107,637 youth confined on any given day
- 2010: 70,792 youth confined on any given day
- Represents a 38 year low
- All regions of the country, some states 50%+ decline

Why youth incarceration decline matters

- States reducing costs - \$88,000 / year to lock up a young person
- States reducing recidivism rates – youth prisons have very high rates of recidivism
- States ending use of inhumane and harmful approaches – states under consent decrees for inhumane treatment of youth
- Effective & less costly alternatives to incarceration utilized

How states reducing youth incarceration

- Limiting eligibility for correctional placements (such as banning placement of kids charged with misdemeanors from being placed)
- Changing fiscal incentives so that localities will use alternatives to incarceration (such as “Redeploy Illinois”)
- Investing in continuum of community based alternatives to incarceration

Youth in Adult Court

- 250,000 youth prosecuted in adult criminal court every year
- 100,000 youth placed in adult jails and prisons every year
- Youth prosecuted in adult criminal court 34% more likely to reoffend than youth charged with same offenses in juvenile court
- Consequences of adult court conviction are serious, negative, life-long and in some cases deadly for youth

Reduction in prosecution of youth in adult court

- In past 8 years, nearly half the states (23) have approved 40 individual pieces of legislation
- Policy reforms reduce automatic prosecution in adult court, halt placement in adult jails and/or prisons, and change sentencing policies
- Efforts led by bipartisan group of lawmakers and governors, supported by public, youth and communities

Importance for Congress

- Congress has invested resources in juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention efforts mainly through the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPa)
 - These funds leverage state and local resources
 - Sets minimum standards in the states
 - JJDPa is overdue for reauthorization
 - Funding has been reduced over past decade
 - Opportunity to accelerate these trends

Contacts

Campaign for Youth Justice

www.campaignforyouthjustice.org

Act 4 Juvenile Justice campaign

www.act4jj.org

National Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
Coalition

www.promotesafecommunities.org