Reviews of Collections of Programs, Curricula, Practices, Policies, and Tools: Evaluated According to Evidence

Compiled by Judy Smith-Davis, Ph.D.

For more information, see: http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/resources/reviews

This collection originated as part of the Results for Kids: Resources library of The IDEA Partnership, which transferred early contents to NIRN in 2009.

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

A Seamless Web of Support: Effective Strategies for Redirecting the School-to-Prison Pipeline -- Research Brief

Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race & Justice, Harvard Law School. (2010).   L. DeLauri.

"It is obvious that suspension and expulsion rob students of instructional time, endangering their academic performance in the short term. But research also demonstrates a strong association between suspension/expulsion and dropping out of school. It is well established that dropping out is strongly associated with involvement in the criminal justice system and incarceration. This brief explores promising alternatives to suspension and expulsion and offers concrete recommendations to educators, litigators, advocates and the professionals who work with youth and their families. . . . The report considers the most robust and recent research from heretofore separated knowledge sectors so that we might untangle the complex web of interrelated forces that combine to constrict opportunity for poor children of color in the United States."

[Full text – A Seamless Web of Support](#)

A Summary of Best Practices in School Reentry for Incarcerated Youth Returning Home

JustChildren, Legal Aid Justice Center, Charlottesville, Virginia. (2006).
Distributed by the National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk.

"The Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Education commissioned the Just Children, Legal Aid Justice Center to produce a report detailing innovative practices around the country for reenrolling students from locked facilities into the mainstream school system. This report summarizes the initial findings from that investigation and highlights not only innovative practices in a variety of States, but also important findings in the literature. Utilizing data from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the American Bar Association, and a variety of other experts in the field, the authors compiled a list of important factors in successful reenrollment in school for delinquent and at-risk

youths. . . . The authors also highlight current practices for transitioning students back to school in place in California, Florida, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Washington, West Virginia, and New York City."

Full text – A Summary of Best Practice for School Reentry for Incarcerated Youth Returning Home

Addressing the Needs of Multi-System Youth: Strengthening the Connection Between Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice

Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University & the Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps, Boston, Massachusetts. (2012).   D. Herz, P. Lee, L. Lutz, M. Stewart, J. Tuell, & J. Wiig.

First the authors provide "an update on the growing body of research on crossover or dually-involved youth. . . .This paper reviews the research, including that being done concerning implementation of the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM).   Second, the paper introduces into the work on crossover youth the use of Results-Based Accountability^{TM} (RBA) as a measurement and management tool. One of the significant challenges to multi-system reform is the measurement of the work being done by the 'collective.' How we assign and measure individual and collective responsibility for the system and population changes we desire is at the heart of RBA. As members of a coordinated, multi-system effort, each partner is given a set of responsibilities for which that individual is responsible, but which also contribute to the outcomes achieved by the collective as a whole. RBA helps us define what each partner is responsible for in helping us achieve our collective goals and how we will measure each individual's performance."

Full text – Addressing the Needs of Multi-System Youth

Addressing the Needs of Youth with Disabilities in the Juvenile Justice System: The Current Status of Evidence-Based Research

National Council on Disability, Washington DC. (2003).

"This report summarizes and assesses the state of knowledge about children and youth with disabilities who are at risk of delinquency and involvement in, or who have already entered, the juvenile justice system. . . . The report is based primarily on a review of a range of materials, with emphasis placed on those that summarized empirical research on specific topics. The materials included (a) journal articles, newsletters, and other materials published by various government and private agencies, research centers, and professional associations; (b) federal, national, and state/local resources, especially U.S. General Accounting Office and U.S. Department of Education reports; (c) materials available on the Internet; and (d) consultations with knowledgeable service providers, agencies, policymakers, advocates, and researchers about disability/delinquency issues. . . . The report concludes that there is a tremendous gap in empirically based knowledge about children and youth with disabilities, especially those who are either at risk of delinquency or involved in the juvenile justice system. This gap covers a wide spectrum of largely unanswered questions involving distinct sets of policy issues. These issues range from the potentially conflicting philosophies underlying existing laws to what is known about

effective prevention, intervention, and delinquency management strategies and efforts to ensure that the rights and needs of children and youth with disabilities are addressed."

Full text – Addressing the Needs of Youth with Disabilities

Alternatives to the Secure Detention and Confinement of Juvenile Offenders

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice. (2005).
J. Austin, K. D. Johnson, & R. Weitzer.

"Juvenile offenders who commit serious and/or violent crime may require confinement to protect public safety and intensive supervision and intervention to become rehabilitated. On the other hand, many offenders can be effectively rehabilitated through community-based supervision and intervention. . . . Between the 1960s and the mid-1990s, significant research demonstrated that community-based programs (e.g., intensive supervision, group homes, day reporting centers, probation) were more effective than traditional correctional programs (e.g., training schools) in reducing recidivism and improving community adjustment. Even studies with less favorable results showed that community-based programs produced outcomes similar to those of traditional training schools but at significantly reduced costs. Studies conducted on State and local levels also testify to the effectiveness of well-structured, properly implemented, community-based programs as alternatives to secure correctional environments." This paper describes processes and procedures that are effective as alternatives to secure detention. Sources from research and related literature are shown in the reference list.

Full text – Alternatives to Secure Detention and Confinement

Causes and Correlates of Girls' Delinquency

Girls Study Group, Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Dept of Justice. (2010).
S. R. Hawkins (Principal Investigator), M. A. Zahn, R. Agnew, M. Chesney-Lind, G. Dakof, D. Elliott,
B. Feld, D. Fishbein, P. Giordano, C. Kruttschnitt, J. Miller, M. Morash, D. Steffenmeler,
G. Taormina, & D-M. Winn.

"Although the literature examining the causes and correlates of male delinquency is extensive, the extent to which these factors explain and predict delinquency for girls remains unclear. This bulletin summarizes the results of an extensive review of more than 1,600 articles and book chapters from the social science literature on individual-level risk factors for delinquency an factors related to family, peers, schools, and communities. The review, which focuses on girls ages 11 to 18, also examines whether these factors are gender neutral, gender specific, or gender sensitive. . . . Much of the literature on girls' delinquency is based on small, non-representative samples with few longitudinal studies or comparison groups. While recognizing these limitations, it is important to shed light on this issue and identify topics in need of further exploration."

Full text -- Causes and Correlates of Girls' Delinquency

CrimeSolutions.gov

Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. (Continuing Collection).

CrimeSolutions.gov uses rigorous research to inform practitioners and policy makers about what works in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. On CrimeSolutions.gov you will find research on program effectiveness reviewed and rated by researchers and reviewers, and easily understandable ratings based on the evidence that indicates whether a program achieves its goals – effective, promising, or no effects." The section on juveniles covers (a) child protection/health; (b) children exposed to violence; (c) delinquency prevention; and (d) risk and protective factors.

Search the programs – CrimeSolutions.gov

Effective Intervention for Serious Juvenile Offenders

Juvenile Justice Bulletin. (2000). Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention,
U.S. Department of Justice.   M. W. Lipsey, D. B. Wilson, & L. Cothern.

"Although research indicates that intervention programs can reduce overall recidivism rates among juvenile offenders, inadequate attention has been paid to their impact on serious juvenile offenders. This Bulletin describes a meta-analysis that addresses the following questions: (a) Can intervention programs reduce recidivism rates among serious delinquents? and (b) If so, what types of programs are most effective? While the effects measured across the 200 studies reviewed varied considerably, there was an overall decrease of 12 percent in recidivism for serious juvenile offenders who received treatment interventions. The Bulletin describes the interventions that showed the strongest, most consistent impact on recidivism for serious juvenile offenders." This resource describes treatment types, not individual programs.

Full text -- Effective Intervention for Serious Juvenile Offenders

Effects on Violence of Laws and Policies Facilitating the Transfer of Youth from the Juvenile to the Adult Justice System: A Report on Recommendations of the Task Force on Community Preventive Services

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. (2007). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
R. Hahn, A. McGowan, A. Liberman, A. Crosby, M. Fullilove, R. Johnson, E. Moscicki, L. Price,
S. Snyder, F. Tuma, J. Lowy, P. Briss, S. Cory, & G. Stone.

"The independent, nonfederal Task Force on Community Preventive Services conducted a systematic review of published scientific evidence concerning the effectiveness of laws and policies that facilitate the transfer of juveniles to the adult criminal justice system in order to determine whether these transfers prevent or reduce violence among youth who have been transferred and among the juvenile population as a whole. For this review, transfer is defined as placing juveniles aged <18 years under the jurisdiction of the adult criminal justice system. . . . Available evidence indicates that transfer to the adult criminal justice system typically increases rather than decreases rates of violence among

transferred youth. Available evidence was insufficient to determine the effect of transfer laws and policies on levels of violent crime in the overall juvenile population. On the basis of these findings, the Task Force recommends against laws or policies facilitating the transfer of juveniles to the adult criminal justice system for the purpose of reducing violence."

Full text – Effects on Violence of Laws and Policies Facilitating the Transfer of Youth

Evidence-Based Interventions for Juvenile Offenders and Juvenile Justice Policies that Support Them

Social Policy Report. (2011). Society for Research in Child Development.
S. W. Henggeler & S. K. Schoenwald.

"With limited resources and an increasing appreciation of evidence-based practices, policymakers at all levels — federal, state, and local — are more closely examining interventions for juvenile offenders. Scott Henggeler's and Sonja Schoenwald's review of research regarding evidence-based interventions will certainly inform those examinations and discussions. . . . Together, the article and commentaries provide a rich description of the multi-layered issues regarding policies and practices for juvenile offenders. The collective picture portrayed is both daunting and hopeful — daunting in the sense of the immense challenges still faced in implementing evidence-based interventions for juvenile offenders even when there is solid evidence of the effectiveness of particular interventions over others."

Full text – Evidence-Based Interventions for Juvenile Offenders
[Click on No. 1 under 2011]

FindYouthInfo Program Directory

A U.S. Government Website.

FindYouthInfo is a website created by the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (IWGYP), which is composed of representatives from 12 federal departments and 5 federal agencies that support programs and services focusing on youth. The FindYouthInfo Program Directory "features evidence-based programs whose purpose is to prevent and/or reduce delinquency or other problem behaviors in young people." The Background & Methodology page describes how the Program Directory was developed, and how programs are evaluated and categorized. This section also includes a description of the meaning of the level assigned to each program. The Research page describes risk and protective factors and how those factors are relevant to youth programs. It includes a bibliography of recent research.

Search the Program Directory

Focusing Juvenile Justice on Positive Youth Development: Issue Brief

Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. (2005).   J. A. Butts, S. Mayer, & G.R. Cusick.

"The concepts underlying positive youth development are beginning to have an impact on how policymakers, practitioners, and community members think about adolescent development and the methods of encouraging youth to achieve healthy transitions to adulthood. Despite the growing acceptance of these goals by some sectors in the social services system, juvenile justice programs are largely focused on the traditional goals of law enforcement -- detection, suppression, supervision, and punishment. This issue brief examines how juvenile justice agencies might draw from the growing body of evidence on positive youth development to improve services for youthful offenders."

Full text – Focusing Juvenile Justice on Positive Youth Development

Gang Prevention: An Overview of Research and Programs

Juvenile Justice Bulletin. (2010). Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention,
U.S. Department of Justice.   J. C. Howell.

"Despite the steady growth in the number and size of gangs across the United States and the criminal behavior and violence they spawn, little is known about the dynamics that drive gangs and how to best combat their growth. For instance, no consensus exists on how gangs form, and few gang prevention programs have been rigorously evaluated. This bulletin presents a compilation of current research on gangs, including data on the state of gang problems in the United States today, why youth join gangs, the risk factors and attractions that increase youth's propensity to join gangs, and how gangs form. The author examines how community members can begin to assess their gang problems and provide necessary enhancements to prevention and intervention activities. The bulletin also describes a number of effective and promising programs that may help prevent youth delinquency and gang violence."

Full text – Gang Prevention

Also see – Best Practices to Address Community Gang Problems: OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model, Second Edition

If Parents Don't Speak English Well, Will Their Kids Get Locked Up? Language Barriers and Disproportionate Minority Contact in the Juvenile Justice System

A Concept Paper for the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, Maryland. (2010).
Prepared by the Vera Institute of Justice, New York City.

"The Vera Institute of Justice has begun to document how the language barriers faced by parents of court-involved youth contribute to the greater likelihood of their child being prosecuted for criminal offenses, detained while his/her case is pending and, ultimately, being sentenced to prison. . . . Staff of Vera's Center on Immigration and Justice and Center on Youth Justice conducted interviews with stakeholders in New York City's juvenile justice system and in juvenile justice systems across the nation and reviewed the existing literature on the impact of parental involvement on a juvenile's case during key decision-making points. Findings have led to identification of three varied approaches that

stakeholders can adopt to minimize the impact of language barriers on the detention and incarceration of youth of color. By supporting research on impacted populations, tailoring technical assistance to juvenile justice agencies, and developing an innovative interpreter bank demonstration project, the philanthropic community can help to reduce disproportionate minority contact.

Full Text – If Parents Don't Speak English Well

Improving the Effectiveness of Juvenile Justice Programs: A New Perspective on Evidence-Based Practice

Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, George Washington University, Washington DC. (2010).
M. W. Lipsey, J. C. Howell, M.R. Kelly, G. Chapman, & D. Carver.

"This paper introduces a framework for major juvenile justice system reform that integrates evidence-based programs and structured decision-making tools with a forward-looking, sustainable administrative model. Central to this framework are programs organized around services that address criminogenic risk factors and enhance adaptive functioning for the treated offenders. Such programs need not be restricted to the brand name model programs that appear on various lists of evidence-based practices. Meta-analysis of more than 500 controlled studies conducted by Dr. Mark Lipsey has identified the key characteristics associated with positive effects on recidivism for many of the types of programs already widely used in juvenile justice systems. A new tool based on those research findings defines concrete best practice guidelines that can be used routinely within a juvenile justice system to identify effective programs and improve those with the potential to be effective. Completing the repertoire for evidence-based practice are empirically validated needs and risk assessment instruments that provide an objective basis for appropriately allocating those programs to offenders."

Full text – Improving the Effectiveness of Juvenile Justice Programs
[Scroll down to the third title]

Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2011

National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education,
and Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice. (2012).   S. Robers, J. Shang, & J. Truman.

"This annual report examines crime occurring in school as well as on the way to and from school. It provides the most current detailed statistical information to inform the Nation on the nature of crime in schools. This report presents data on crime at school from the perspectives of students, teachers, principals, and the general population from an array of sources -- the National Crime Victimization Survey, the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, the School Survey on Crime and Safety and the School and Staffing Survey. Data on crime away from school are also presented to place school crime in the context of crime in the larger society." The 21 Indicators include discipline, safety, and security measures that public schools undertook to reduce crime and improve safety.

Full text – Indicators of School Crime and Safety

Juvenile Court Statistics 2009

National Center for Juvenile Justice, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. (2012).   C. Puzzanchera, B. Adams, & S. Hockenberry.

"Drawing on data from the National Juvenile Court Data Archive, *Juvenile Court Statistics 2009* profiles more than 1.5 million delinquency cases that U.S. courts with juvenile jurisdiction handled in 2009. The report also describes trends in delinquency cases that juvenile courts processed between 1985 and 2009 and the status offense cases they handled between 1995 and 2009. . . . The data used in the analyses were contributed to the National Juvenile Court Data Archive by more than 2,300 courts with jurisdiction over 82% of the juvenile population in 2009."

Full text – Juvenile Court Statistics 2009

Juvenile Justice: Proven and Promising Programs

Promising Practices Network (PPN), RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, California.
(Continuing Collection).

"The PPN website is a unique resource that offers credible, research-based information on what works to improve the lives of children and families." . . . One of the topics addresses "outcomes related to juvenile justice, broadly defined. This includes programs aimed at preventing juvenile delinquency, as well as programs aimed at improving outcomes for youth already involved in the juvenile justice system — for example, programs aimed at preventing reentry or improving behavioral or social skills."

View Juvenile Justice Programs

Making the Right Turn: A Guide About Improving Transition Outcomes for Youth Involved in the Juvenile Corrections System

National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth,
Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington DC. (2008).

"This Guide has been developed to assist professionals in the workforce development system in gaining a better understanding of the needs of youth involved, or at risk of being involved, in the juvenile corrections system. . . . Although research concerning youth at risk and involved in the juvenile justice system is limited, the emerging promising practices identified and recommendations contained in the guide are derived from the research available, as well as a review of current Federal law. . . . The Guide (a) provides well-researched and documented facts and statistics about youth involved in the juvenile corrections system; (b) offers evidence-based research about the juvenile corrections system and the youth involved in it; (c) provides a template based on the Guideposts for Success to assist states and communities in the design and implementation of programs to meet the multiple challenges of this population; (d) points out areas requiring further attention on the part of policymakers and service providers; (e) identifies promising practices for practitioners and policymakers; and (f) identifies resources and tools to assist cross-system collaborative efforts."

Full text -- Making the Right Turn

Mental Disorders Among Adolescents in Juvenile Detention and Correctional Facilities: A Systematic Review and Meta-Regression Analysis of 25 Surveys

Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry. (2008).
S. Fazel, H. M. Doll, & N. Langstrom.

In this study, "surveys of psychiatric morbidity based on interviews of unselected populations of detained children and adolescents were identified by computer-assisted searches, scanning of reference lists, hand-searching of journals, and correspondence with authors of relevant reports. The sex-specific prevalence of mental disorders (psychotic illness, major depression, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and conduct disorder) together with potentially moderating study characteristics were abstracted from publications. Statistical analysis involved meta-regression to identify possible causes of differences in disorder prevalence across surveys. . . . Twenty-five surveys involving 13,778 boys and 2,972 girls (mean age 15.6 years, range 10-19 years) met inclusion criteria. . . . Adolescents in detention and correctional facilities were about 10 times more likely to suffer from psychosis than the general adolescent population. Girls were more often diagnosed with major depression than were boys, contrary to findings from adult prisoners and general population surveys. The findings have implications for the provision of psychiatric services for adolescents in detention."

Abstract – Mental Disorders Among Adolescents
[Full text for purchase]

Misplaced Priorities: Over Incarcerate, Under Educate

NAACP, Baltimore, Maryland. (2011).   R. Rooks, Project Coordinator.

This is a "report on the country's overfunding of prisons and underfunding of education. It is a sobering account of how we as a nation are wasting our financial resources on over-incarceration while depriving our schools of resources that would help children in some of our most distressed communities — children who, without an adequate education, are at the greatest risk of becoming the next generation of prisoners. . . . The report examines research and analysis from the leading national experts on crime, public safety, and education policy, and analyzes new information gathered at the neighborhood level to provide a unique local perspective on our national incarceration crisis.   It also draws upon research from the Pew Center on the States' Public Safety Performance Project, the Vera Institute of Justice, the Sentencing Project, the Justice Policy Institute, the Institute for Higher Education Policy, Postsecondary Education Opportunity, and other scholars in the fields of criminal justice and education policy."

Full text – Misplaced Priorities

National Juvenile Justice Network: Online Library

National Juvenile Justice Network (NJJN) at the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, Washington, DC. (Continuing Collection).

 "NJJN's online library includes a wealth of resources on a variety of juvenile justice issues and from numerous sources. Use the library to search for the latest research, relevant news articles, targeted reports, positive court decisions, and model legislation." Contents are searchable by (a) locale, (b) issue, and (c) content.

No Place for Kids: The Case for Reducing Juvenile Incarceration

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, Maryland. (2011).   R. A. Mendel.

This report "assembles a vast array of evidence to demonstrate that incarcerating kids doesn't work -- youth prisons do not reduce future offending, they waste taxpayer dollars, and they frequently expose youth to dangerous and abusive conditions. The report also shows that many states have substantially reduced their juvenile correctional facility populations in recent years, and it finds that these states have seen no resulting increase in juvenile crime or violence. Finally, the report highlights successful reform efforts from several states and provides recommendations for how states can reduce juvenile incarceration rates and redesign their juvenile correction systems to better serve young people and the public."

Full text, issue brief, and state data – No Place for Kids

No Turning Back: Promising Approaches to Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Affecting Youth of Color in the Justice System

Building Blocks for Youth, Youth Law Center, Washington DC. (2005)
Distributed by the Center for Children's Law and Policy.

"Research for decades has demonstrated the harsher treatment that youth of color receive in the justice system. . . . To change this dynamic, ten years ago Youth Law Center staff began to consider the components of a coordinated strategy to address the treatment of youth in the justice system. . . . (They) spent two years reviewing the literature, meeting with people who worked at every stage of the system from arrest to incarceration, taking in ideas, and developing a plan. From this process came Building Blocks for Youth, a multi-strategy initiative with the goals to reduce the overrepresentation and disparate treatment of youth of color in the justice system, and to promote fair and effective juvenile justice policies. . . . The purposes of this report are (a) to document effective efforts that advocates around the country have made to reduce disparate treatment of youth of color (often referred to as 'disproportionate minority contact,') and (b) to provide strategies, ideas, and models for advocates, community organizations, public officials, and others addressing disproportionate minority contact."

Full text -- No Turning Back
[Scroll down and click on the first hot link – embedded in the fourth paragraph]

OJJDP Model Programs Guide

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice.
(Continuing Collection).

"The Model Programs Guide (MPG) is a user-friendly online gateway to evidence-based (scientifically tested and proven) programs that address a range of issues across the juvenile justice continuum -- from delinquency prevention to aftercare and reentry. In August 2005, the MPG was expanded beyond

delinquency prevention and intervention programs to include substance abuse, mental health, and education programs." Programs may be searched in 31 topical areas.

Home Page -- OJJDP Model Programs Guide

Programs by topic -- OJJDP Model Programs
[Links to all model programs by topic are provided at the bottom of each of these topical pages.]

Search the Guide

Prevalence and Implementation Fidelity of Research-Based Prevention Programs in Public Schools: Final Report (on drug and violence prevention)

Prepared by Westat for the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, U.S. Department of Education. (2011).   S. Crosse, B. Williams, C. A. Hagen, M. Harmon, L. Ristow, R. DiGaetano, P. Broene, D. Alexander. M. Tseng, & J. H. Derzon.
Distributed by the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC).

"This report presents findings on key program implementation measures for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act: State Grants Program. Funding for the State Grants Program was eliminated in Fiscal Year 2010. Prior to this, grants were awarded to States to support a variety of drug and violence prevention activities for school-age youths. The study examines: (a) the prevalence of research-based drug and violence prevention programs in schools and (b) the extent to which research-based drug and violence prevention programs adhere to the program features on which they are based (the program's implementation fidelity). Findings are based on a review of the research literature and national probability sample surveys of districts, schools and research-based prevention programs. . . . The study identified 19 prevention programs with research-based evidence that suggested an improvement in student behavior. Of all prevention programs that were implemented in the nation's public schools, an estimated 8 percent of them were research-based (the 19 research-based prevention programs represented 8 percent of all prevention programs implemented in schools)."

 Full text – Prevalence and Implementation Fidelity

Prevention and Intervention Programs for Juvenile Offenders

The Future of Children. (2008). Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University & The Brookings Institution, Washington DC.   P. W. Greenwood.

According to the author, "researchers have identified a dozen 'proven' delinquency-prevention programs. Another twenty to thirty 'promising' programs are still being tested. In his article, Greenwood reviews the methods used to identify the best programs, explains how program success is measured, provides an overview of programs that work, and offers guidance on how jurisdictions can shift toward more evidence-based practices. The most successful programs are those that prevent youth from engaging in delinquent behaviors in the first place. Greenwood specifically cites home-visiting programs that target pregnant teens and their at-risk infants, and preschool education for at-risk

children that includes home visits or work with parents. Successful school-based programs can also prevent drug use, delinquency, anti-social behavior, and early school dropout. Greenwood also discusses community-based programs that can divert first-time offenders from further encounters with the justice system."

Full text -- Prevention and Intervention Programs
[Click on the last title and see related papers on this page]

Reentry Programs for Students with Disabilities in the Juvenile Justice System: Four State Approaches

Project Forum, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Alexandria, Virginia. (2011). E. Muller.

"Evidence strongly supports the notion that juvenile offenders, both with and without disabilities, are significantly more likely to experience successful reentry into their home schools and communities if appropriate programs and supports are in place. In spite of this, comprehensive state-level reentry programs for youth are few and far between. The first section of this document defines reentry, describes recent federal efforts to support successful reentry for youth, discusses the prevalence of youth with disabilities in the juvenile justice system, explains why reentry programming matters, and summarizes recommended strategies for successful reentry. The second section describes four states' efforts to support the successful reentry of juvenile offenders into their home schools and communities." The references cite extensive literature on research and practice.

Full text – Reentry Programs for Students with Disabilities

Scared Straight and Other Juvenile Awareness Programs for Preventing Juvenile Delinquency: A Systematic Review of the Randomized Experimental Evidence

The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. (2003).
A. Petrosino, C. Turpin-Petrosino, & J. Buehler.

"Scared Straight and other programs involve organized visits to prison facilities by juvenile delinquents or at-risk kids to deter them from delinquency. . . . The authors report here on the results of a systematic review of randomized experimental tests of this program. Studies that tested any program involving the organized visits of delinquents or at-risk children to penal institutions were included. Each study had to have a no-treatment control condition with at least one outcome measure of 'post-visit' criminal behavior. Using extensive search methods, the authors located nine randomized trials meeting eligibility criteria. After describing the studies and appraising their methodological quality, the authors present the narrative findings from each evaluation. A meta-analysis of prevalence rates indicates that the intervention on average is more harmful to juveniles than doing nothing. The authors conclude that governments should institute rigorous programs of research to ensure that well-intentioned treatments do not cause harm to the citizens they pledge to protect."

[Full text for purchase]

Screening and Assessment in Juvenile Justice Systems: Identifying Mental Health Needs and Risk of Reoffending

Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health, Washington DC. (2012).
G. M. Vincent.

"When agencies are responsible for protecting both the welfare of youth and public safety, two broad issues become important to address among the youth they serve -- mental health and risk of re-offending. . . .The terms 'screening' and 'assessment' are often used interchangeably, but they are really not the same thing. Screening can serve as a cost-effective method for identifying potential mental health problems that can be applied to all youth entering a system or facility. Assessment, on the other hand, can provide more extensive and individualized identification of mental health needs for only those individuals whose screening results suggest it is warranted. The confusion about these concepts has stemmed from multiple sources, such as (a) the use of the term 'assessment' to refer to *any* type of measurement of psychological characteristics, (b) a lack of consensual definitions of screening and assessment in the current juvenile justice literature, and (c) test authors' labeling of instruments as screening or assessment tools without attention to the definition described in this paper. . . . This brief explains why screening and assessment for risk and mental health are best used together by child-serving agencies when planning the most effective course of action for individual youth. . . . The author explores a wide range of validated screening and assessment tools frequently used in facility- and community-based juvenile justice settings." A discussion of quality implementation is also included.

[Scroll down]

The Costs of Confinement: Why Good Fiscal Juvenile Justice Policies Make Good Sense

Justice Policy Institute, Washington DC. (2009).   A. Petteruti, N. Walsh, T. Velázquez, & N. Walsh.

"Approximately 93,000 young people are held in juvenile justice facilities across the United States. Seventy percent of these youth are held in state-funded post-adjudication residential facilities, at an average cost of $240.99 per day per youth. . . . This policy brief details how states can see a net reduction in costs by moving expenditures away from large, congruent care facilities for youth (often called 'training schools') and investing in community-based alternatives. Such a resource realignment can reap better results for communities, taxpayers, and children. Evidence is growing that there are cost-effective policies and programs for intervening in the lives of delinquent youth which actually improve community safety and outcomes for children. While there is no silver bullet that will guarantee reductions in crime, policies that include prevention and intervention for youth in the community have been shown to have a positive public safety benefit." Major findings and recommendations for reform

are delineated. References for all statements are shown numerically in the text. See the reference list at the end of the document for the citations.

The Dangers of Detention: The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and Other Secure Facilities

Justice Policy Institute, Washington DC. (2006).   B. Holman & J. Ziedenberg.

"This policy brief brings together the best existing literature on the efficacy and impact of detention, and also examines the reported outcomes of incarcerating juveniles in secure, congregate detention facilities -- in order to provide practitioners and policymakers with a deeper understanding of 'the dangers' of overusing detention. Some of the findings reported here are the result of research conducted on youth and young adults in facilities or programs outside of juvenile detention facilities. The implications and conclusion drawn from research outside of detention centers proper is worthy of consideration -- detention is usually the first form of congregate institutional confinement that youth falling under the authority of juvenile justice agencies will experience and, like residential or adult correctional or pretrial institutions, it is reasonable to infer that the impact of other kinds of incarceration and secure, congregate facilities do apply to the detention experiences. Every attempt has been made to accurately portray the population that the cited authors were studying, and the environment in which the study was conducted."

The Impact of Prosecuting Youth in the Adult Criminal Justice System: A Review of the Literature

Juvenile Justice Project, UCLA School of Law. (2010).
Distributed by the Campaign for Youth Justice, Washington DC.

"Youth may be prosecuted as adults via a variety of mechanisms -- judicial waiver, direct file or prosecutorial discretion, legislative or automatic exclusions, and age of jurisdiction issues -- and they are collectively referred to as 'transfer laws' throughout this literature review. . . .To complete this study, the authors conducted an extensive search of legal, social science, and science scholarship and acquired the universe of empirical studies and analyses dealing with the included topics, published since 2004. . . . Studies that dealt primarily with anecdotal evidence were not relied on, in favor of studies examining quantitative data. . . .The majority of studies have found that youth transfer disproportionately impacts minority youth and results in high rates of pretrial detention, conviction, and incarceration, with adult courts often sentencing youth more severely than juvenile courts and placing them in adult facilities where they are exposed to high risk of assault and abuse. Furthermore, transfer policies have demonstrated no proven deterrent effect and have caused sharp increases in recidivism across several jurisdictions."

[Scroll down and click on "Literature Review on Youth Tried as Adults"]

Trends in Juvenile Justice Legislation 2001-2011

National Conference of State Legislatures, Washington DC. (2012).

"Today, there is more and better information available to policymakers on the causes of juvenile crime and what can be done to prevent it. This includes important information about neurobiological and psychosocial factors and the effects these factors have on development and competency of adolescents. The research has contributed to recent legislative trends to distinguish juvenile from adult offenders, restore the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, and adopt scientific screening and assessment tools to structure decision-making and identify needs of juvenile offenders. Competency statutes and policies have become more research-based, and youth interventions are evidence-based across a range of programs and services. Other legislative actions have increased due process protections for juveniles, reformed detention and addressed racial disparities in juvenile justice systems. . . . This report is a summary analysis of 2001-2011 juvenile justice legislation in all 50-states and describes the direction of state juvenile justice policy over this ten-year period. It highlights significant pieces of legislation and catalogs the volume and variety of juvenile justice legislation enacted in states."

Tribal Youth in the Federal Justice System

Urban Institute, Washington DC. (2011).
W. Adams, J. Samuels, J. Buck-Willison, H. Dodd, M. Dank, B. Parthasarathy, K. Mallik-Kane,
J. Kelly, S. Mendonca, & K. Kim.

"In 2009, with funding from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Urban Institute (UI) undertook an analysis of juveniles in the federal justice system, focusing specifically on tribal youth. They examined 1999-2008 case processing data from the Federal Justice Statistics Program (FJSP) to answer a number of questions, including the following: (a) how many juvenile cases – tribal and overall – are there in the federal system; (b) where are these cases occurring – in which federal judicial districts; (c) what types of offenses are involved; (d) what are the offender characteristics; (e) how many offenders are handled as juveniles, and how many as adults; (f) what are the case dispositions; and (g) how well do the FJSP data address these questions, and what improvements could be made? In addition to analyzing these cases and their flow through the system, the study explored the complex jurisdictional issues and organizational factors that influence how and why cases involving tribal youth enter the federal system and examined the current practice of handling these cases. As part of this contextual analysis, (the investigators) interviewed more than three dozen federal and tribal officials and reviewed laws, policies, and relevant legal and academic reports to identify and document factors central to the processing of tribal youth in the federal system."

National
Implementation
Research Network

This information is an attempt to gather wide-ranging information in one place, to convey what others have accomplished, and to make valuable resources readily accessible. Information is presented in the language of the developer, publisher, distributor, or author to the maximum possible extent. The National Implementation Research Network has no ownership of contents described in this library. Nor does NIRN make claims about any models, curricula, strategies, tools, products, or papers that are annotated. Links to evidence are provided, so that you can decide whether the evidence is convincing and the material is relevant to your context. Some collected reviews are developed and distributed by a U.S. Government agency. Otherwise, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of any U.S. Government agency, and no endorsement should be inferred.