Juvenile Reentry: Practice and Policy

Laura S. Abrams, PhD
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Reentry by the Numbers

- Approximately 90,000 youth offenders are confined in the U.S. on any given day.

- Young people ages 10-24 comprise almost a third of all reentries annually.

- In 2008, the average cost per youth for state-funded youth correctional facilities was:
  
  $240.99 per day; or
  
  $88,000 per year

Sources: American Correctional Association, 2008; Justice Policy Institute, 2009; Snyder, and Sickmund, 2010.
Facilities and Funding Streams

- Facilities for incarcerated youth are diverse
  - locked vs. unlocked
  - short-term vs. long-term
  - public vs. private
  - co-ed vs. single sex

- Across the U.S. (2010): 69% public and 31% private;

- Wide state variation:
  - Pennsylvania: 24% public, 76% private
  - Hawaii: 95% public, 5% private
Confined Youth: Racial/Ethnic Composition 2010

- White: 32.4%
- African American: 40.9%
- Hispanic: 22.0%
- Native American: 1.7%
- Asian/PI: 1.9%
- Other: 1.0%

(Sickmund, Sladky, & Kang, 2010)
Repeat Contact with Law Enforcement

- California DJJ—70% re-arrested within two years.
- Texas—85% re-arrested within 5 years.

Low Engagement in Work and School

- Oregon—only 30% of formerly incarcerated youth were either in school or employed at one year post-release.

Sources: Bullis et al., 2005; California DJJ, 2007; Trulson et al., 2005.
What is Recidivism?

- There is no “universal” measure
- Benchmark?
- Timing of measurement
  - 6 months, 1 year, 18 months, 5 years?
- What is tracked as recidivism?
  - Other states, adult crimes?
Federal Grants for Reentry

- Second Chance Act Program (OJJDP)
  - Youth Offender Initiative
  - Youth Mentoring Initiative
- Weed and Seed Program
- Department of Labor: Ready 4 Work

Social Ecology of Reentry

- Economy
- Neighborhood
- Family
- Resources
- Schools
- Culture
- Law
- Youth
- Peers
Individual Level

- Barriers to Successful Reentry Include:
  - Substance Abuse
  - Mental Health Concerns
  - Histories of School Failure/Transience
  - Peer Group Associations and Gangs
  - Others
1. Youth

2. Behavior

3. Community Safety

Prevailing Model
Prevailing Model
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Control Group Recidivism Rate</th>
<th>Treatment Group Recidivism Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Aftercare Program – Nevada (1 year follow up) (Weibush et al., 2009)</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring Program (6 mo. follow up) (Bouffard, J. A. &amp; Bergseth, K. J. 2008)</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Family Level

- Barriers to Successful Reentry Include
  - Parental Incarceration/Criminal Affiliation
  - Child Welfare History – Abuse/Neglect
  - Precarious housing
  - Compromised Family Functioning
  - Parental Substance Abuse
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<th>Intervention</th>
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<th>Treatment Group Recidivism Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional Family Therapy (Drake et al., 2009)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Integrated Transitions (Aos, 2004)</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Neighborhood Level

- Barriers to Successful Reentry Include
  - Unemployment
  - Alcohol outlet density
  - Community Violence
  - Neighborhood Disorganization/Absence of Collective Efficacy (i.e., Broken Windows Theory)
  - Absence of community resources or investment in youth development programs
# Reentry Ratios and Risks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Re-entries from Camps</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Income &lt; $25,000</td>
<td>14.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off Premise per Area</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bars per Area</td>
<td>0.86</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Neighborhood Resources

### West LA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services (per 1000 kids)</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>South</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>12.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### South LA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services (per 1000 kids)</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>South</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probation</td>
<td>7.12</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Legend

- **Re-entry per 1,000 children**
  - 0
  - 0.01 - 0.43
  - 0.44 - 0.90
  - 0.91 - 1.32
  - 1.33 - 11.1
  - Service Planning Area
Reentry Best Practices

- Risk assessment
- Treatment-based programs
- Family involvement/intervention
- Positive Youth Development Incorporated
Pilot Study on Length of Service

Months of re-entry service by reconviction rate (n = 75)

- **Juvenile system***
  - Not reconvicted: 8.87 months
  - Reconvicted: 6.61 months

- **Adult system***
  - Not reconvicted: 9 months
  - Reconvicted: 7.4 months

*p < .05


*Notes*

- The term "juvenile system" typically refers to a group of individuals who are younger than a certain age (often 18) and are involved in the juvenile justice system. In this case, the study compares re-entry service lengths and reconviction rates between juvenile and adult systems.

- The chart illustrates that individuals in the juvenile system who did not reconvict had a re-entry service length of 8.87 months, compared to 6.61 months for those who did reconvict. Similarly, in the adult system, the re-entry service length for those who did not reconvict was 9 months, while those who reconvicted had a service length of 7.4 months.

- The *p < .05* indicates that the differences in re-entry service lengths and reconviction rates are statistically significant, suggesting a meaningful relationship between re-entry service dosage and recidivism rates.
Research Considerations

- Who is most likely to benefit from targeted re-entry interventions?
- How long (and from whom?) should re-entry interventions be delivered?
- How can we optimize intervention effects through community involvement?
One size does not fit “all”: A careful study of community is needed.

Important to leverage existing resources, including public – non profit partnerships.

Including voices of system-involved youth and family as stakeholders along with law enforcement.

Partner with researchers to evaluate pilot efforts.
Contact

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# Interview and Think Tank Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number in Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community-Based Organizations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Members/Advocacy</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County/City Agencies</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Academia</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Involved Young People</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government/Elected Officials</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
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GOAL 1: HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

- Begin rehabilitation and reentry programming during confinement.

- Implement promising community-based reentry strategies for all young offenders for at least one year post-release.
Examine current funding streams and resources to leverage them more efficiently.

Develop mechanisms for increased collaboration and reduced duplication of service efforts.

Enhance knowledge about effective young offender reentry programs in the County.
GOAL 3: PRO-SOCIAL FUTURES

- Develop innovative reentry programs (mentoring, restorative justice, etc.) and models that benefit the community as a whole.

- Expand educational avenues for returnees.

- Expand career opportunities for returnees.
Recommended model for implementation includes an oversight group comprised of:

- CBOs
- Community Members
- Government
- Law Enforcement
- County Agencies

Must include a centralized repository of information

A range of leadership options are possible
Challenges and Opportunities

- **Current Challenges**
  - Funding, budget woes, & unemployment rates
  - A full agenda for reform at LAC probation
  - Absence of resources dedicated to the young adult population

- **Opportunities**
  - Federal and State priorities concerning reentry
  - Recent leadership changes at LAC Probation
  - Greater emphasis on best practices, data collection among CBOs and government