Improving Outcomes for Young Adults in the Justice System
Speakers

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The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center

National nonprofit, nonpartisan membership association of state government officials that engages members of all three branches of state government.

Provides practical, nonpartisan, research-driven strategies and tools to increase public safety and strengthen communities.
Young adults are disproportionately represented in the justice system

78% of young adults were rearrested within 3 years of release from prison

* Most recent publicly available data
A growing body of research shows that young adults differ from both youth and fully mature adults

• Brain development extends well beyond teen years
• Neuroscience is changing the debate over what role age should play in courts
• Neuroscience of 20-somethings: ‘emerging adults’ show brain differences
Young adults have distinct needs from youth and older adults
In response, a growing number of jurisdictions have explored strategies to better support young adults in the justice system.

- Implemented "Youthful Offender" policies that protect young adults from the consequences of a criminal conviction
- Created separate facilities for young adults
- Established dedicated community supervision units for young adults
The CSG Justice Center’s issue brief summarizes the limited available research on what works for young adults.

- Highlights how **young adults are distinct**
- Identifies young adults’ unique needs and **summarizes available research** on what works to address these needs
- **Provides recommendations** for steps states can take to improve outcomes for young adults
In 2017, the CSG Justice Center and the Harvard Kennedy School convened researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to learn more about what research says works to improve outcomes for young adults and identify where gaps in knowledge still exist.
This past September, the CSG Justice Center released a list of dos and don’ts to guide policy and practice.

- Draws on guidance from the Harvard convening
- Informed by both research and practice
- Outlines supervision and service strategies to make efficient use of resources and improve outcomes
Five key takeaways from the *Do’s and Don’ts* publication

1. Use **validated screening and assessment tools** to guide supervision decisions and tailor programming to address young adults’ distinct needs.

2. Fund and provide **research-based programs and treatment** for young adults.

3. Foster sustained **connections to pro social peers and adults** to strengthen engagement in programming.

4. Hold young adults responsible for their behavior while also **accounting for their ongoing growth and development**.

5. Support **collaboration across service systems** to minimize barriers to services and institutional supports for young adults.
Anyone Can Excel (ACE)
Bob Costello
Assistant Commissioner
New York City Department of Probation

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES, CREATING OPPORTUNITY, CHANGING LIVES
Overview of DOP

* Services for 55,000 adults & juveniles annually
  - Intake
  - Investigations
  - Supervision

* Supervision in any given year
  - 29,300 adults
  - 2,900 juveniles
Young Adults on Probation

Total population by age group:
- 25 and up: 61.9%
- 19-24: 12.2%
- 16-18: 25.9%

Percent of total rearrests:
- 25 and up: 44.2%
- 19-24: 34.3%
- 16-18: 21.5%

Note: breakdown as of October, 2014. Rearrests are available between CY 2012 and June 30, 2014.
Shooting incidents by age group

Note: shooting incidents between January 1st and August 31st, 2015
High Arrest Rates for Violent Felonies

* About half of all violent felony arrests in NYC involve 16 to 25 year olds
The Goal

Long-term behavior change, esp. around violence:

• Improved conflict resolution skills
• Connection to supportive role models
• Swift responses for increased accountability
• Connection to community
STAGE ONE: Assessment and Engagement

* Age-appropriate validated risk-assessment instruments
* ALL 16-24 y/o sentenced to probation go through Stage One
* Caseloads according to risk.
* Individual Achievement Plans (IAP)/Circle of Care
* Team supervision
* Trust building
* Start of anti-violence messaging
STAGE TWO: CBT Interventions

* Rigorous individual and group CBT interventions (e.g. Carey Guides)
* Action planning within IAP
* Exposure to Voices from Within (individual/group)
* Assess stages of change
* Addresses thinking, decision-making, and conflict resolution.
  * Peer group management
STAGE THREE: Competency Building

- Existing DOP programs
  - Arches
  - Justice Community
  - Justice Scholars

- New DOP programs under development
  - Young Adult Success Corps (employability, giving back)

- Individualized opportunities through Community Based Organizations
Additional Components

* Use of technology and social media to foster engagement and monitor behavior.
* Enhanced Administrative Hearing/Accelerated VOP process.
* Increase of community-based mentoring options for transition from probation.
* On-going specialized staff training in adolescent brain development, positive youth development, restorative practices and motivational interviewing.
* Behavioral Health Consultations with Clinical Advisors
* Specialized officers for Pre-Sentence Investigations and in Community Progression (low risk supervision)
Questions and Answers
Thank you!

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