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by G G

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Juvenile Crime

Introduction

One of the severe issues today concerning crime is juvenile delinquency. Although measures have been put in place to curb the problem, it is still at large (Young et al., 2017). Juvenile crime and violence began in the 1980s where youths were involved in crime-related activities such as robbery and disorderly conduct at an early age, which escalated up to the early 1990s. Additionally, juvenile crime is high in urban and suburban areas, mainly by a large population in these areas. With the introduction of juvenile courts, crime rates among the youths reduced with time. The juvenile system focused more on rehabilitating the children by focusing on their needs instead of the crime they committed.

There are two kinds of juvenile delinquency, status offense, and acts punishable by law such as murder. Primarily, status offense crimes include skipping school, underage drinking, and smoking, and running away from home. Serious crimes such as murder occur when a youth involves themselves in related criminal gangs in the community, resulting in their incarceration in an adult court (Valuiskov et al., 2017). Most of the juvenile crimes are caused by victims with a lot of needs and issues. Issues related to family, neglect, substance abuse, peer pressure, and aggressive behaviors are some of the complex problems that result in juvenile crimes in society today. Notably, today's youths are burdened by these issues daily, and the only easy way they resort to dealing with these problems is through crime. Some fear to seek help due to being judged, while others asked for assistance, but no one came to their rescue. As a result, juvenile delinquency has brought about a mixed reaction from everyone across the world. At the same time, scholars and researchers seek better approaches to curb this issue while protecting them.

Literature Review on Juvenile Crime

Studies show that juvenile crime is caused by elements that lead to aggressive behavior among youths. For instance, it is known that a child whose behavior is violent is likely to commit a crime due to their impulsive nature. According to Sharma and Kirmani (2016), aggression is a normal response to any adverse situation. It is accompanied by attitudes and emotions targeted towards a person or property. When force is used during these circumstances, it becomes pathological since anger acts as a psychological bridge that connects one's cognitive elements. Several factors contribute to violent behavior among youths. Usually, teenagers behaving in that manner are a means of acting out to vent their frustrations, hence engaging in status offense and dangerous criminal activities. The studies show that there are two kinds of aggressive behavior: early-onset and late on-set type (Abdullah et al., 2015). Early on-set aggressive behavior begins at the age of 11 to 13 and is linked with poor parenting practices and hostility between a parent and child. With these situations at hand, it is easy for a young individual to engage in non-violent behavior first, which eventually turns out to be an offense if the action is repeatedly done, such as fighting at school.

Late on-set type of aggressive behavior begins after puberty from 14 years onward and is attributed to a lack of moral support from those close to them. Troubled teenagers have complex psychological issues caused by things done to them by their loved ones, such as physical abuse at home or being bullied at school. In the adolescent stage, young individuals are growing up. They get to experience new things since they are neither children nor adults, plus they are going through several hormonal changes. For that reason, this is a tricky age because violently treating the teenagers forces them to keep things to themselves depending on the youth's personality. In turn, they begin to alienate themselves from other people or family members by behaving

aggressively towards them, skipping school since they do not feel motivated to study or see the need for an education because of being mistreated. Some resort to looking for ways to deal with those feelings and end up in wrong crowds because of peer pressure. They become easy targets since they cannot think straight due to several emotional issues such as rejection they have been through, and lack of self-worth. The moment the teenagers get what they feel, they have been missing, such as being accepted and valued, thereby joining these groups since they are experiencing the same thing.

Although not every teenager who has been mistreated by their family members engages in criminal activities. Some use those feelings to better themselves by focusing on what matters, such as doing well in school to get to leave home and begin their lives again. At a tender age, children are quick to absorb what is done to them. If they are treated well by people around them and are well understood, they turn out to be okay because they have moral support from family members hence their good behavior and vice versa. Therefore, displaying early on-set delinquent behavior may continue until adulthood if the issues they are going through are not handled on time since children act out to crave attention from their parents.

Violent behavior among the youth is also caused by a combination of stressful family situations such as poverty, especially those who come from single-parent households whose breadwinner is unemployed, the mother or father. A parent in this situation focuses on providing for their family that they forget their children's emotional needs. Therefore it becomes difficult for them to concentrate on their studies or even attend school due to lack of school fees hence dropping out. As a result, the youth becomes frustrated quickly since everything they are trying to do to support their parent does not work out, such as looking for a job to help them. Eventually, due to a lack of moral support and stress, they start exhibiting aggressive attitudes

that lead to using drugs at an early age or starting fights in the community to vent out their frustrations. Others in this situation will vandalize people's properties or begin stealing from neighbors or shops to support themselves. If noticed early, violent behavior can prevent youths from engaging in criminal activities, mainly if issues from home or school contribute to the aggressive attitude.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse among youths is another factor that leads to juvenile crime, such as alcohol and smoking. Adolescents begin experimenting with these drugs after hitting puberty due to curiosity, and as a result, some become addicted without them realizing. Marijuana and alcohol are the most frequent drugs abused by teenagers and youths. Underage drinking and smoking is already a delinquent behavior, and teens found engaging in these activities are at risk of being summoned to a juvenile court, whether even if they have not committed any crime. Under the influences of these substances, it is easier for them to become aggressive and cause fights with those around them, especially if they are prone to violent behaviors. Unfortunately, others end up causing accidents while driving under the influence of these substances, which has severe consequences if the incident leads to death. Some steal vehicles in their place of residence while under the influence of alcohol or marijuana to escape their misery. Taking someone else's property is already an offense, and if the vehicle is trashed or damaged from an accident while intoxicated, then it becomes a serious offense. Frequently, several factors contribute to substance abuse resulting in juvenile delinquency, according to a journal by Somani & Meghani (2016). They include poverty, peer pressure, media, family, and availability of the drugs.

Poverty

The constant use of substance abuse among adolescents is higher in lower socioeconomics areas in the country. Hence, due to their situation, youths will begin using drugs to escape from their harsh reality, such as lack of school fees or money for food. Addiction to these drugs follow, and since the youth lacks funds to buy them, they start stealing from households to keep up with their addiction. In the long run, they resort to joining gang-related groups that deal with hard drugs such as cocaine and heroin, start trafficking them in the community and involve themselves in criminal offenses.

Peer Pressure and Media

As mentioned earlier, peer pressure among youths is rampant because they feel better associating with friends who are going through a similar situations in life, such as being neglected by their parents. There are two kinds of peer pressure, negative influence, and positive impact. Therefore peer pressure can be positive if friends encourage each other when they feel low due to family issues, although this is never the case. Negative peer pressure resorts to risky and unhealthy behaviors. This kind of peer influence introduces their new friends to alcohol drinking, smoking marijuana, skipping school, or shoplifting by labeling these activities as "having fun" to look cool. They begin to show behavioral changes such as being rude when spoken to or showing signs of aggressiveness, resulting in delinquency.

With the rise of technology, social media spaces are no longer a safe space for teenagers. Photos of young people drinking, smoking marijuana, and partying are shared daily on these pages. In the teen's subconscious mind, these pictures seem cool to them, and they are influenced negatively without their knowledge when they start experimenting with appearing calm among their peers. According to Ekern (2019), approximately 75% of teenagers said after seeing

pictures of youths their age engaging in alcohol and smoking marijuana on social media, they felt encouraged to do the same, and they did.

Family

The family contributes mostly to drugs together with substance abuse among teenagers. As mentioned above, negative parenting drives a teenager into the ²¹ drug and substance abuse (Shek et al., 2020). Additionally, the risk of substance abuse is higher when a family member is involved in drinking alcohol or smoking. For instance, if an elder sibling in a household or a parent consistently uses drugs in front of their teenage brother or sister, the young girl or boy would want to experiment as well. When nobody is around to supervise them, they sneak in cigarettes or steal some alcohol at home to study since they were never cautioned about it. Usually, if a father is a drug abuser, due to genetic transmission, it is highly likely that a boy in the family will resort to substance use and vice versa. Substance abuse is also higher in an unstable environment in family dynamics. These include an absent father, mother, or a sudden shift from a two-parent to a single-parent household due to issues such as divorce. The divorcing of parents when a child is at a tender age of 10 or 11 highly contributes to early on-set behavior due to the adverse effects it has on them. Moving from home to home affects their behavior and well-being. Therefore, it is easy for them to start immersing themselves in substance abuse to numb the situation since the parent-child relationship is damaged. Family disruptions such as job loss of a parent, illness, or parents overworking themselves to make ends meet also resort to substance abuse due to being neglected or stress (Ali & Masood, 2018).

Availability of the drugs

Drugs today are everywhere; alcohol and cigarettes are sold in supermarkets. Hence, teenagers can easily trick the cashier by providing fake identification cards to get their hands on

these substances. Others use the influence of their peers to obtain these products, such as marijuana from drug traffickers. Alcohol, cigarettes, cocaine, pills, and heroin are also readily available in house parties. As a result, it becomes easy for them to intoxicate themselves with these substances in the name of partying. Eventually, they become addicted to either of the drugs and would do anything to get them. Despite the positive effects technology has had on society today, it also has some adverse effects. In that, accessing drugs is now effortless thanks to the help of technology through social media sites. A teenager who is a non-user can easily be lured to purchase these drugs, such as pills, due to false advertisements. They are labeled as herbal supplements, but in reality, they contain ecstasy and marijuana in them. With just one click, a chronic teenage drug user receives the package delivered to their doorstep (Tam & Foo, 2012). Through the internet, youths learn more about different types of drugs and what effects the drug has once consumed. For instance, some medications can increase one's concentration in school, but they are addictive due to its ability to make one "happy."

Lack of Moral Guidance

Youths need positive directions to lead a life without crime. Parental guidance is, therefore, required to stop delinquency. No child starts as being rude, violent, or even polite. Instead, circumstances and situations that are happening around them cause them to change. In the event, a teenager lacks guidance from their parents or guardians; it is easy for them to slip into delinquency at an early age since they cannot differentiate between right and wrong due to a lack of moral judgment (Baysinger Law, 2019). For that reason, they look for what they crave for in other places to fill the void they feel from being neglected. This is why they end up being influenced negatively, as earlier mentioned, and exhibiting aggressive behaviors in the long run.

The National Drug Control Policy (NDCP) and Potential Approaches towards Juvenile Crime

The ⁵ National Drug Control Policy was created by Executive Office of the President. It aims to reduce the usage of drugs among juveniles in the United States. The NDCCP body, through implementation, assessment, and development of policies to combat the increase of ¹⁸ substance abuse (Office of National Drug Control Policy, n.d.). Under the NDCCP, National Drug Control Strategy is developed to help in dealing with drug-related issues. The National Drug Control Strategy created the following strategies to deal with substance abuse issues according to a 2016 report (National Drug Control Strategy, 2016). One of their strategies is preventing drug use in communities. The second strategy is to integrate substance abuse treatment in hospitals to support recovery. Reduce the stigma associated with substance abuse on recovering addicts by removing barriers that stops them from getting employment or education. Besides, the strategy focuses on funding the coalition of law enforcement and community-based activities conducted by churches, schools, and community rehabilitation centers that are working on dealing with curbing the drug abuse issue in their area. With funding these collaborations, the strategy ensures that the communities affected take measures and adopt different approaches to reduce substance abuse in their area.

Potential Approaches to the Juvenile Crime Problem

Juvenile crime is a nation-wide problem, and different practical approaches have been used to help in dealing with this issue. One of the procedures to deal with the juvenile crime issue is the family function therapy program (FFT). FFT is a family-based program that helps attend to the problems juveniles face or exhibits, such as violent, aggressive behaviors and substance abuse through extended- term behavioral change plans. FFT handles children involved

in crime through therapy sessions and acts as a preventive measure through early intervention (Sexton, 2017). Early intervention prevents delinquent behavior. As mentioned earlier, juvenile delinquency is mostly caused by family dynamics, such as abusive relationships and children being neglected by their parents due to their busy nature or stress. FFT helps repair the relationship between the youth and parents by improving their communication, problem-solving, and emotional connection. The therapists who conduct the FFT session provide an appropriate parental guideline on handling any problematic situation that may harm their family relationship. In some courses, the FFT therapist will create an organizational structure that helps family members communicate effectively without feeling ignored or judged. This approach creates a conducive environment for children to grow up by improving and mending relationships between parents and their children.

The second approach to curb juvenile delinquency is through educating the youths on the dangers of crime and engaging in substance abuse. This approach can be conducted in schools, the community, or churches. Community leaders get to speak with the youths about crime and crime-related activities to help create awareness of the consequences of engaging in criminal activities (Young et al., 2017). In turn, this will desensitize them from joining the wrong crowd, and they will know what to do when they are going through a rough time emotionally by creating a space where the youths can speak freely about their issues and get help in the process. Thirdly, rehabilitation of adolescents in centers where they can get help instead of being stigmatized is another approach that works to reduce juvenile crimes and recidivism. Involving youths in community-based activities will prevent them from engaging in criminal activities (Shoemaker, 2020). Such activities include after-school programs like community service, which keeps them busy from 3 pm.

Strengths and Limitations of the National Drug Control Policy (NDCP) and Potential Approaches

The advantage of NDCP is their involvement in providing funds to support community-based activities that rally stop and prevent substance abuse among the youths. Community members, such as parents, teachers, and law enforcement, collaborate to engage the teens in non-criminal behaviors. One of the methods is by coming up with funfair activities such as a fun day festival whereby youths in the community assemble at one place and interact with their peers. These fairs help to create and spread awareness of the dangers of drug use at an early age. The festival also provides mentors for the youths, and people can look up to for moral guidance and support to overcome challenges that may come their way, especially those who lack such people in their lives. A limitation to NDCP is the lack of constant follow up on the progress of community-based activities and the delaying of funds to help run projects mentioned above. Notably, creating awareness of the dangers of substance abuse at an early age requires funds to promote the agenda and marketing of the event to ensure the targeted people attend.

National Drug Control Policy (NDCP) Potential Approaches

NDCP's potential approach is to use more intervention programs to help reach every community to stop using substance abuse among juveniles. For instance, youths aged 10 to 18 years are school-going individuals. Therefore school-based interventions can be integrated into schools in every community to reach more youths (Substance et al., 2016). That way, it will be easier for community members to follow through on the drug policy's progress in their area. Additionally, NDCP can incorporate evidence-based prevention programs in their agendas to help prevent youths from abusing drugs at an early age.

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²⁵ CHAPTER 3 PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

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Part 3

Policy Recommendation

Introduction

Policies are sets of principles in a governing body that guides and offers decisions to attain rational outcomes. In juvenile crimes, most of the implemented policies are based on juvenile rehabilitation, delinquency prevention, and reducing recidivism. However, over the past years, this has not been the case. Most juvenile justice policies created for juvenile protection has been given a back seat when it comes to funding to promote and upgrade the juvenile system (Bardach & Patashnik, 2016). Some policies ignore children's age when it comes to incarceration and is taken to adult jails and prisons instead of rehabilitation centers. Different states exhibit racial and ethnic disparities, gender biases, and lack of drug treatment and mental facilities for the youths despite the policies they put in place. In turn, this jeopardizes the community's safety because of high rates of recidivism; this situation becomes worse because of the adaptation of punitive and costly approaches that produces the worst outcomes. For that reason, policy recommendations are necessary in improving juvenile justice system policies in safeguarding lives of young kids from a life of crime early. The following are some of juvenile justice policy recommendations to 116th Congress.

Restoring Leadership and Control in Juvenile Justice Policy

For the past decades, the ⁵ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has been overseeing all ^{the} changes required in improving juvenile justice system since its inception. It envisions a world where children are healthy, free from crime-related activities, free from violence, and have access to education (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2019). ¹⁶ The Office of

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) was enacted by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) since its creation in 1974. OJJDP is the go-to place when it comes to overseeing anything related to juvenile delinquency. Although for the longest time, it has been neglected by not receiving enough funds to manage the juvenile justice projects. The funding used to support OJJDP has reduced immensely by over 70% from 1999 to 2010. Since its inception, OJJDP has funded programs and research related to juvenile prevention and rehabilitation (Lieberman et al., 2017). Studies show that prevention works best. The funds should be considered as an important investment. Therefore denying OJJDP funds to mobilize more research that focuses on juvenile crime prevention puts an end to programs that would help the youths lead a better life free of crime.

Additionally, the federal state and OJJDP should strengthen their partnership to create room for accountability and transparency through the making of reports and state plans. As mentioned earlier, due to a lack of friendly juvenile justice policies, most youth offenders are discriminated against due to gender, race, and ethnicity. The OJJDP, despite their efforts for recognizing the importance of researching effective programs, the organization should be able to develop appropriate services that will treat each youth and their families better despite differences.

5 Ensure Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) is Implemented

The JJDPA was reauthorized in 2018. Its oversight has presented an opportunity to promise high-quality standards for the treatment of the youth who often interact with juvenile justice system (Pasko, 2019). For instance, youth offenders found guilty of truancy or running away from home should not be confined in juvenile jails. Instead, they should be taken to a safe place or environment where they can speak freely on the reasons they skipped school. This

action by the JJDPa will safeguard the youth's interests and needs because they now have a safe space where they get to share their problems without being judged while reducing youth's incarcerations. Congress' support is needed as well to ensure that core protections such as jail removal, ethnic and racial disparities are enforced in a fair and just manner by preserving the JJDPa's updated safeguards (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2019). For instance, JJDPa provides opportunities for investing in strategies that help prevent youths from gun violence by promoting positive school environments.

They also empower communities to provide moral support and the required resources their youths might need to get by. In addition to the above, any program under the JJDPa must follow the requirements stated by the commission.

Abolishing of the ¹³Valid Court Order (VCO) Exception to the JJDPa

Since its enactment in 1974, JJDPa has always stopped courts from incarcerating youths who have committed status offenses such as truancy. The VCO exception allows courts to lock children who have committed status offense crimes that have violated the order (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2019). For instance, a girl who keeps skipping school even after a judge ordered her not to, is incarcerated for violating the judge's order. Placing a child in locked confinement, especially after committing a status offense crime is highly likely to commit more crimes as a means of lashing out, especially if they are in the adolescent stage. In such cases, girls tend to commit more status offenses than boys, and their punishment is severe compared to what the boys get, which harms them negatively.

Being incarcerated at such a young age denies the youth from developing excellent social skills that they would have learned from their support systems such as family members and the

community. It is due to the fact that they were forcibly removed from their family. The detention of the youths who committed the status offense crimes does not solve the underlying issues the teenagers are facing. It does not stop juvenile delinquency; rather, it makes it worse. Therefore instead of incarcerating the youth, which is costly, and it does not offer any chances of reforming the child. It is best to provide them with programs that will suit the situation they are going through since they need family and community-based support. These programs have demonstrated to be effective based on research and evaluations that have been conducted in the past years. Family-based intervention houses programs like Family Function Therapy (FFT), which gets to the roots of the underlying issues the youth is facing. FFT provides therapy sessions if the juvenile has problems with their family members to improve their relationship by working on how they communicate with each other. The above-mentioned program is the most effective one compared to other similar programs. Thus, the locking up of children is not a good practice since it lacks practicality. It ends up harming the youths and their community in the long run hence the importance of completely phasing out of the valid court order.

Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) needs to be Updated

The Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ), together with other groups, focuses on the reapproval of the RHYA. It was enacted under JJDPa as part of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act 2018. RHYA provides the runaways, disconnected, and homeless youths essential services hence the need for its upgrade and reauthorization (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2019). Services such as healthcare, shelters, education, employment, family reunification, and housing help prevent the youths from committing crimes since they have better constructive things to do.

A long term reauthorization will be beneficial to the youths with consistent funding to ensure that children highly involved with juvenile justice system are not denied the services

mentioned above. It will also protect homeless children from being trafficked or sexually exploited. These services should be accessible to the LGBTQ and the youths as well. The LGBTQ and the community experiences a lot of victimization, especially when they interact with the juvenile justice system. They have been mistreated and have experienced high rates of violence because of their sexuality at home, school, and by the community. The RHYA update should include a safe space for the LGBTQ and the youths to promote best practices by researching ways that will be beneficial to this community.

Promoting Fairness and Safety for the Youths in Jail and Court

Youths who have been incarcerated endure and experience abusive conditions while serving their sentences. Youths in juvenile justice system experience sexual abuse and violence, and it gets worse for children held in adult prisons. Even though the youths have committed serious crimes, they do not deserve to be abused and victimized. They end up suffering from mental deterioration, contracting diseases, and even death. In addition to this, youths of color are treated harshly compared to other inmates from different ethnic groups and races, yet they are charged with the same offense (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2019). They also get transferred to adult courts frequently compared to their Caucasian inmates. Reducing ethnic and racial disparities in juvenile and adult jails that house the youth needs to be reduced together with excessive use of restraint and isolation.

The JJDPJ jail removal is core protection that needs to be strengthened to the youths under the age of 18. This should be put in action even if they are awaiting trial in adult or juvenile courts. They should be granted no sight or sound interaction with adult inmates. As mentioned earlier, youths face sexual abuse, which creates an unfavorable environment for the

youths. The Prison Rape Elimination Act, 2003 should be implemented entirely in all states by establishing the removal of juveniles from adult jails to perform the act.

Additionally, the act should be funded regularly to reach more facilities across different states to be fully implemented. Youths in adult prisons are often placed in isolation in small cells that are not well lit. These conditions are not safe for youths in their pre-teen years because they will suffer from anxiety, mental illness, and paranoia, resulting in death in the long run if they are not treated. Thus, to reduce the youth's prosecution in adult jails from taking place, the Bureau of Justice Assistance and OJJDP need to invest in effective strategies and programs to help remove them from adult jails since it is not safe for them.

Promoting Youth Reentry Programs

More than 50,000 youths from juvenile facilities under 18 years return to the community after serving their sentences. They go back to the same family struggling with domestic violence and drug abuse. They come back to a society that stigmatizes them and denies them with opportunities to reform their lives and start anew. Re-entry programs are essential because they help reintegrate youth offenders back into the community by assisting them in overcoming the challenges mentioned above (Development Services Group, 2017). The program helps to foster family relationships between the offender and their family to end stigmatization. The state must develop or push for more re-entry services to be established to connect the youths with life-changing opportunities that will guarantee them a better future away from crime. To achieve this, youth re-entry funding should be increased to support the programs through expansion.

Education, labor, health care, and Human services departments need to work together to educate the community and the state about the importance and availability of re-entry programs

in society. Procedures and incentives should be prepared by the Department of Education so that when the youths are free, they can be re-enrolled to school promptly (Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 2019). Together with the state, the mentioned departments should support funding for re-entry programs and offer their services annually to the youths. Thanks to the OJJDP, it has continued to support re-entry programs under its umbrella, namely, the Second Chance Act Youth Reentry Initiative and the evaluations of youth re-entry programs.

Addressing Specialized Needs for Girls

Juvenile delinquency in girls had been on the rise for the past decades, and this has led to them being incarcerated in prisons meant for their counterparts. While in the juvenile justice system, they fail to get their rehabilitative service because of being traumatized. Most of them go through physical and sexual abuse during their term. The OJJDP department should research and evaluate the best gender-specific programs that will meet the needs of female delinquents

Potential Consequences for the Policy Recommendations

One of the potential consequences of restoring control to the juvenile justice policy recommendation is that OJJDP will get to continue with their work diligently of ensuring that in the next coming years, most children will be free from a life of crime or associate themselves in criminal-based activities. Its mission for the youths in America will be fulfilled. The lack of pushing this recommendation forward will automatically result in more children engaging in criminal activities since there will be no governing body that will oversee the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

The consequences of implementing the ⁵ Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) is ensuring any program enacted under this umbrella follows all the protocols and rules

to guarantee any youth who interacts with the juvenile justice system is well served. If implemented, core protections such as jail removal will be successful as well as ethnic and racial disparities. In the event the JJDPa implementation recommendation does not go through, it will damage the core protection that ensures the youth and their family members are treated fairly and justly when they interact with the juvenile justice system. It will also overlook the communities' enthusiasm for the fair execution of justice and public safety.

Abolishing of the valid court order will protect the youths from re-committing status offenses such as truancy because they will be protected from being incarcerated at an early age. This denies them a chance to be with their family or guardian. The consequence of not removing the valid court order will lead to more juvenile delinquency cases since the underlying issues the youth is going through are not resolved, harming them in the process. Therefore instead of incarceration, it is best to use and support community and family-based alternatives such as ²⁴ [Parenting with Love and Limits \(PLL\)](#) to reduce ²³ the overreliance of youth incarcerations (Ryon et al., 2017).

Updating ²³ the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) will protect the homeless children in the streets from sex predators, children traffickers, and a life of crime by providing them with basic needs such as shelter, clothing, and food. Additionally, this will also protect the LGBTQ and the youths from victimization, violent treatment, and stigmatization from ignorant people. In the case the recommendation is not updated, the results will be catastrophic because some of the youths will join a life of crime to survive their harsh situation. In contrast, others will disappear without a trace due to child trafficking.

Safety is a crucial aspect of every person's life. Therefore it needs to be implemented in juvenile and adult prisons as well. The safety and fair treatment of juvenile offenders in court

and prison is important because the youth gets to serve their sentence without being anxious to protect their mental health and stability. Mental health is essential, hence if safety in juvenile and adult prisons is neglected, family members will lose their loved ones due to mental illness, proving that incarceration is not a valid form of correction as it is commonly believed.

The promotion of youth re-entry programs is essential not only to the community but also to the youth offender. Re-entry programs protect the community from crime infestation from already convicted youths. It helps reduce and fight recidivism by creating opportunities for previous offenders to rehabilitate themselves so that they can get back into the community. If re-entry programs are not enacted in almost every state in the country, recidivism rates will increase because of rejection from family members and stigmatization. This will fuel their desire to want to commit crime due to a lack of moral support from those close to them.

Decades ago, juvenile crimes were committed only by the male youths, what was done to them back then is what is being practiced today to both male and female juvenile delinquents. Therefore this traumatizes girls more than boys because of the harsh nature of punishments. If female juvenile delinquents' needs are not met, then most girls will be leaving correctional facilities empty because the practices or programs are not fit for them. The programs or practices conducted in the juvenile justice system should be gender-specific to have a meaningful impact on the female delinquents.

A Plan Development to Evaluate the Policy Recommendations

The policy recommendation's primary purpose is to mandate that the stated interventions can help in the prevention of juvenile crime. Juvenile crime is a problem most youths face due to underlying issues such as aggressive behavior, negative peer influence, and substance abuse.

Selecting of Participants/ Stakeholders

In this case, the participants and stakeholders of this policy evaluation should understand the purpose of the assessment before partaking in any activity to avoid jeopardizing the evaluation plan by focusing on the program's crucial elements (Alexander, 2016).

Evaluation Method

The next phase is to measure the outcomes and impacts of the policy recommendations using a well-written questionnaire or conducting interviews. The findings can be separated into long term and short term goals showcasing the number of individuals affected by the policy recommendations (Alexander, 2016). This will help individuals focus on the results and what they can do to improve the recommendations stated earlier if they are not fully implemented.

Evaluation Design

The appropriate design should depend on the policy recommendation to be acted upon, highlighting useful information about the main objectives of the selected recommendation and its shortcomings.

Data Collection and Evaluation Report

Data collection takes place once all feedback is collected to analyze the results. The report received from the outcome is what will determine the policy recommendations that have been implemented or not. This is done by writing down a report using the data and the result received from the evaluation method. It will include a conclusion about the policy recommendations' ability to change, influence, or accomplish the said goal of preventing juvenile delinquency. The report should also include whether the objectives of the policy recommendations were satisfactory or not (Alexander, 2016). If they did not fully achieve its intended purpose, as mentioned earlier, the report would offer other solutions and recommendations based on the feedback from the participants.

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