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Juvenile Re-entry Program

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Juvenile Re-entry Program

Re-entry programs are put in place to facilitate transition of individuals who have left prison into the community to reduce recidivism (Wilson & Petersilia, 2011). Juvenile re-entry programs cater to youths aged 10 to 25 years who have served time in jail or probation in a detention facility because they face several challenges: education and employment barriers and lack of support from family members (Development Services Group, 2017). Therefore the goal of juvenile re-entry programs is also to assist the youths in overcoming these challenges.

¹ Allegheny County (Penn) Jail Based Re-entry Specialist Program is a good example catering to juveniles who have left prison at the age of 18 and above. It serves both male and female delinquents (Office of Justice Programs, 2016).

The program operates in two main phases. First, phase 1 offers delinquents with an in-jail program and services as a means of preparing them for release. Secondly, phase 2 gives 12 months of services supporting their re-entry to the community (Willison et al., 2014). It is accompanied by a team of five individuals, one Probation Officer in charge of re-entry, and the other four are specialists in the re-entry process. The three evidence-based elements of this program are reducing the use of drugs using preventive programs, enhancing educational results through peer tutoring, GED classes, and adult basic education. The third element is improving and supporting healthy family relations via parenting classes and scheduled family visits.

The element that I think is most effective is the improvement of family relations. Most juvenile offenders begin to change when treated differently by their family members, and they begin to feel isolated and neglected. It is an important element because family helps build and develop the character of a child through guidance and instilling moral values they can live with up to their adult life without departing from them.

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