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by Y D

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Which intermediate sanctions do you think have the most utility from both a public safety and a reform perspective?

The Justice system incorporated intermediate sanctions to reduce recidivism and incarceration and, in the end, reduce overcrowding and overspending in prisons. The reasons for introducing these sanctions were genuine, but most of them have put public safety in the line. However, I have reason to believe that some sanctions have played a significant role in reforming offenders without entirely risking public safety. For instance, boot camps have emphasized discipline and self-control by painting the image of military boot camps to offenders. Categorical boot camps have incorporated drug control and rehabilitation to assist in the reformation of offenders, hence managing physicality and behavioral aspects (Hanser, 2014). Consequently, public safety is controlled where boot camps are involved because; the offenders are not released to the public but are confined in camps that run the programs. In my opinion, although boot camps have not reduced recidivism as expected, the introduction of rehabilitation programs in more camps will go a long way in serving both public safety and reformation needs.

Drug courts have also proved to be a flourishing intermediate sanction over the years. I'm supporting having courts that only focus on support programs as they have proved to address the root of crimes. Research has shown that offenders from drug courts have a lower risk of re-offending than other focus groups (Hanser, 2014). The drug court program's effectiveness has ensured that society gets back more reformed individuals, therefore reassuring safety. Drug courts are not control-oriented as the boot camps and Intensive Supervision probation, but their results are admirable. In my opinion, it's not always about the amount of suffering subjected to an offender that matters. Still, the ultimate goal is to get reformed individuals and, in turn, a safer society. Drug courts strike a balance for both public safety and reformation.

Reference

Hanser, R. D. (2014). Community Corrections (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Response

¹ The mention of forgiveness and justice in the same sentence does not sound right at all. I agree with you that if forgiveness would be a core component of criminal justice, then there would be no need to talk about justice. Forgiveness would overrule criminal justice's main goals, which are retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, rehabilitation, and restoration. You've put it out clearly that the offender needs to face his or her consequences to ease the victim's spirit because that is what defines justice. It is worth noting that no form of justice can repay what offenders caused them; therefore, forgiveness would never be an option. You have highlighted the role of restorative justice in reconnecting the victims, offenders, and society and I concur that the correction measure has worked very well in restoring society. With such corrective measures, everyone would go home happy, but the criminal justice system would be cornering the victims with forgiveness.

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