

An Exploration of Transition and Reentry in Juvenile Rehabilitation



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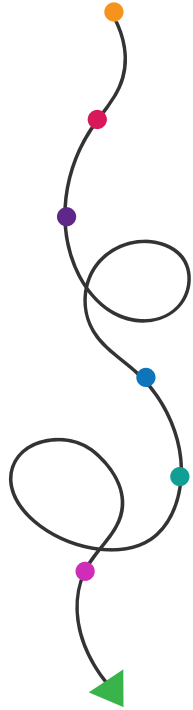


Agenda

- **Historical Overview of Juvenile Rehabilitation and Reentry**
- **Key Components of Successful Reentry**
 - **Family Engagement**
 - **Education**
 - **Employment**
 - **Behavioral/Mental Health**
- **Activity**
- **Discussion/Wrap Up**



A Brief History of Juvenile Rehabilitation



1899: First juvenile court established in Chicago

1960s-1970s: Increased protections for adjudicated youth

1974: Congress first established the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)

1980s-1990s: Increasing penalties and decreased protections

1997: Balanced and Restorative Justice

2008: Congress passes Second Chance Act

2024: 28 states and Washington, DC banned life without parole



Who is Involved in Juvenile Rehabilitation?

- Each year, more than 37,000 young adults in the U.S. are housed in a Juvenile Rehabilitation facility (State vs. County)
- Involved due to adjudication of *many* lower-level offenses or a serious crime, or convicted in adult criminal court (e.g., robbery, assault, murder/manslaughter, etc.)
- It is widely estimated that between 30 and 60 percent of these individuals are eligible to receive special education services
- Black and Brown youth are vastly overrepresented within the system, are less likely to receive the services and supports they need, and have a higher likelihood of recidivating than their white peers



The Pathway to Juvenile Rehabilitation

- Research and evaluation have shown the pathway to Juvenile Rehabilitation involvement is complex and multifaceted:
 - Individual Factors
 - Family Factors
 - School Factors
 - Peer Related Factors
 - Neighborhood and Community Factors
 - Situational Factors and Biases and Prejudices
- When a young adult enters the system, their unique histories and backgrounds come with them (and new ones are developed).
- Supporting successful reentry, means having the tools and resources to understand and address the complexity of risk factors, and build skills and protective factors that will enhance their resiliency.



Reentry in Juvenile Rehabilitation

- Despite decades of targeted efforts to develop policies and practices that improve the transition and reentry experiences, individuals involved in the Juvenile Rehabilitation system continue to experience poorer postschool outcomes upon release, including but limiting:
 - Dropout and low graduation rates
 - Behavioral, mental health and substance use concerns
 - Community reintegration and houselessness
 - Underemployment
- More work is needed to better understand and address these individuals needs, challenges, and barriers to reentry.





Juvenile Rehabilitation and Secondary Special Education and Transition



What is reentry?



Entry

into residential placement



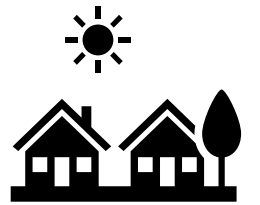
Placement

time in a secure facility



Transition

into community



Aftercare

for 3+ months



We often think about reentry in this way...



Entry

into residential placement



Placement

time in a secure facility



Transition

into community



Aftercare

for 3+ months

50% rearrest
25% reincarceration



...but need to think about it differently.



Transition into community



Key Components of Successful Reentry





Family Engagement

*“If we are serious, uh, about wanting to foster the increase of pro-social skills, accessing and using skills out of education and mental health counseling, **parents and caregivers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, whoever in that child's universe has been there, um, emotional support, they need to be invited and engaged in that process along the road with the teenager.**”*

– Community Partner





Family Engagement ⁽²⁾



*“Um, just **being informed** as to some of the different programs that are out there. Um, there's a lot of programs out there that I wouldn't have known about or wouldn't have had a clue about had, um, nobody contacted me. So just **being able to know that information and then be able to share it with my son.**”*

– Family Member



Family Engagement: Strategies

- Expand the definition of family
- Support professional development for staff on family engagement
- Engage with families at every point between entry and aftercare
- Involve families in creating a comprehensive reentry plan
- Share reentry and transition-related information with family members
- Hold regular reentry meetings throughout all stages of reentry
- Provide follow-up support



Education

*“I was going through an alternative school, and they switched, like basically restarted my, um, quarter, whatever you call it for my senior year. ... And it's just frustrating that they can't, like, accommodate and try to like, go to the schools, especially with alternative schools, like **they should be able to communicate between them.**”*

– Young Adult





Education ⁽²⁾



*“The majority, upwards to at least 75% of youth at [the state] JR facilities have these co-occurring mental health and, uh, disability issues. That means that nearly all of that cohort should be qualifying for special education services that they can access in ... up until age 21. Um, **if the JR facility has not been communicating with the school district that serves them, there's a major disconnect.**”*

– Community Partner



Education: Strategies

- Coordinate timely release and transfer of records
- Increase the availability and accessibility of education and training programs
- Support pathways to graduation
- Support reentry focused school-based transition specialists
- Education should participate in regular reentry meetings
- Support collaborative interagency reentry processes/teams



Employment

*“Helping them with the housing and jobs. Or you know, for example, um, barbering. There's a lot of guys that like, enjoy doing hair or self-care in here. And maybe take it to the next level. Um, and with community uh, facilities, I've had experience with um, **education**. They paid for, uh, my barber school for a little bit.”*

– Young Adult





Employment ⁽²⁾



*"The nice thing about some of the things we've been working on over the last few years with JR, is is that, you know, **we are getting them paid internships. And upon that the internships, they've got like a letter from an employer,** you know, talking about their motivation, attendance and skills. And then we also have some time while they're in the group home to kind of hone on... hone those skills in. Um, you know, if they're showing up for work with some soft skills we may need to work on."*

– Community Partner



Employment: Strategies

- Acknowledge hierarchy of needs (housing, food insecurity)
- Refer to and provide pre-employment transition services for potentially eligible students
- Develop and support career-related transition goals
- Get to know employer policies and laws related to disclosure and hiring people with a felony convictions
- Support opportunities for career-mentorship and paid work experiences
- Provide follow-up support



Behavioral and Mental Health

*"As I said for the other ones, like **AA and all those**, those have kind of **helped me**, um, not cure, but reduce my um, my mental um, anxiety and uh, anger and uh, such."*

– Young Adult

*"So, I would've liked to learn how to deal with my emotions more **better**. And by that, I mean learn how to understand what emotion or emotions I'm feeling, uh, and learn how to express them in a healthy way."*

– Young Adult





Behavioral and Mental Health (2)



*" I think my biggest fear is, when my son has issues where he, like, kind of falls off a little bit, he just spirals. He, he gives up, you know, **if he hits a speed bump, he's like, throwing everything out the window**, and just, he's like, convinced himself that he's bad. So, and then it, it went so bad that every time that he would have a speed bump, he would not only reoffend, or get in trouble in another way, but then he would also, like, have issues of self-harm."*

– Family Member



Behavioral and Mental Health: Strategies

- Utilize a Risk-Needs-Responsiveness (RNR) Approach
- Provide regular mental health assessment and screenings
- Engage family members
- Focus on applied coping skills and social emotional skills
- Provide wrap-around, school-based, and community-based services
- Provide follow-up support



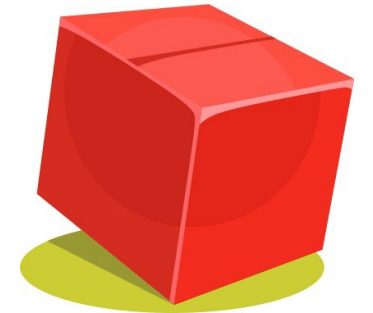
Case Study

- **Individually:**
 - Read through the case study (see handout)
- **In small groups:**
 - Identify your current roles
 - Answer guiding questions



10 minutes!

What was **surprising** about your group's discussion?



What was **helpful** about your group's discussion?

**What, if anything,
will you **take away**
from this
presentation and
case study?**





Summary / Conclusion

- Young adults involved in the juvenile rehabilitation system fall through the cracks every year.
- Despite our best efforts, reentry and postschool outcomes for these individuals are very poor.
- There is more that we can do to support these young adults in their transition and reentry.
- As transition-focused practitioners, we have the knowledge, skills and resources to improve postschool outcomes for these individuals. Let's make it happen!



The background of the slide features several large, light gray question marks of varying sizes and orientations, creating a sense of inquiry and discussion.

Questions and Discussion



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