

May, 2015

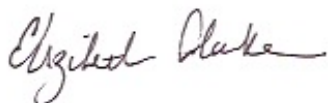
Pay Now or Pay More Later

The Illinois Juvenile Justice Initiative is a statewide non-profit advocacy organization, funded through independent (non-government) funds. The Juvenile Justice Initiative works to implement national research documenting that the most effective approach to reducing juvenile crime is a comprehensive continuum of community based prevention and intervention programs, as opposed to incarceration.

The Juvenile Justice Initiative urges the Governor and Legislative Leaders to maintain state funding for critical prevention and intervention programs, including CCBYS (24/7 emergency services for children and youth in crisis), TeenrREACH (after school programming ensuring youth are productively involved during peak offending hours), and Redeploy Illinois (last-ditch community alternatives to incarceration). Equally critical are services for youth as they age out of the child welfare system, substance abuse services, mental health services, and services for homeless youth. Now that children in Cook County charged with low level drug offenses will be diverted by the State's Attorneys to community-based organizations for drug education and mentoring, it is imperative that funding be restored to organizations that provide these services. This measure will both save children from the harm of detention and incarceration while also saving the state millions of dollars in reduced costs.

These programs are modestly funded – for example, Teen Reach, CCBYS and Redeploy total about \$30 million, while the state allocates \$130 million for juvenile prisons. In addition, to permit policy makers to assess the effectiveness of the programs, we suggest that the renewed funding also include a request to the Department of Human Services, that administers the programs, to report to the governor, general assembly and public on the positive youth outcomes resulting from the programs. Such outcomes could include, as appropriate, the status of the youths' educational attainment, their employment, civic engagement and work with a positive adult over at least 6 months after the program is completed.

In short, the state can spend money at the front end preventing youth crime – or we will spend it at the back end in youth incarceration. Please fully fund community based prevention and intervention services for children in Illinois.



Elizabeth Clarke
President
Juvenile Justice Initiative

Research on Community-Based Programs

Teen REACH After School Program: Teen REACH is a cost-effective, prevention program providing youth, primarily those ages 11-17, with safe environments when they are out of school. The program is unique in providing a comprehensive array of support, including academic support, life-skills building, mentoring and job preparation to ensure youths' future success in school and on the job.

- Teen REACH Improves Academic Performances:
 - 97.1% of Teen REACH seniors participating in the program 9 months graduated, compared to state graduation rate of 82%;¹
 - 76.9% of Teen REACH youth tracked for grades had improved grades;²
 - More than half of the teachers reported an improvement in class participation, satisfactory completion of homework of Teen REACH participants;³
- Teen REACH Prevents Crime and Drug Involvement and Assists Youth Development:
 - 99.9% of all Teen REACH youth were safe from violence during program hours;⁴
 - 68% of youth reported benefits from learning about the dangers of drugs and the skills needed to avoid drugs
 - Teen REACH keeps youth from getting involved in crime by supervising them between 3:00-6:00 p.m., the prime time for juvenile delinquency.
- Teen REACH Saves Money:
 - It costs only \$700 on average to provide Teen REACH services per youth per year. Teen REACH can serve 157 at-risk youth with \$110K - the annual cost of incarcerating one youth in the IDJJ.⁵

Redeploy Illinois: Redeploy Illinois provides a fiscal incentive to counties that provide services to youth within their home communities for youth who are in the juvenile justice system, thereby reducing the county's commitments to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.

- Redeploy Illinois Prevents Crimes:
 - Youth participants who achieved "successful" had a 27% lower recidivism rate than their unsuccessful counterparts. 61% of those who successfully completed the program were not re-incarcerated during 3 years following discharge from the program.⁶
- Redeploy Illinois Saves Money:
 - It costs \$110K to incarcerate one child in the IDJJ annually, while it costs \$3,000 to 9,000 annually per youth to provide community-based interventions through Redeploy Illinois.

Homeless Youth Program:

Teen Living Program offers comprehensive services to youth ages 14-24 in Chicago who are unstably housed or homeless, program outcomes include:

- 57% secured and maintained stable housing
- 63% secured employment
- 84% were reunited with the families or placed in other safe and stable housing
- 63% completed or were enrolled in a formal education/career training program
- 84% attended or graduated⁷

1. Factsheet developed by DHS

2. Factsheet developed by DHS

3. <http://www.cprd.illinois.edu/files/TRAnnualReport04.pdf>

4. Factsheet developed by DHS

5. <http://voices4kids.org/issues/files/Teen%20REACH%20talking%20points.pdf>; http://www.justicepolicy.org/uploads/justicepolicy/documents/sticker_shock_final_v2.pdf

6. Redeploy Illinois Annual Report 2012-2013 <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=70551>

7. <http://www.tlpchicago.org/what-we-do/outcomes/>