A Message from JJI
This is a very hopeful time in juvenile justice in Illinois.

• We have reduced the number of youth incarcerated by half since 2005. The reductions have led to the closing of two of our eight juvenile prisons.

• Redeploy Illinois released its annual report, which notes that preliminary results of a cost-effectiveness study of the four original Redeploy sites point to a 14.2% reincarceration rate for Redeploy participants, compared to a 57.4% rate among non-participants. Even youth who failed Redeploy had lower reincarceration rates than youth who did not participate. The report further notes that Redeploy not only reduced repeat offending, but saved the state $40 million in cost avoidance by diverting over 800 commitments.

• The change bringing youth age seventeen charged with misdemeanors back to the juvenile court two years ago has been so successful that the IL Juvenile Justice Commission recommends expanding it to include seventeen year olds charged with a felony.

• Senator Dick Durbin recently chaired the first Congressional hearing into the critical issue of the School to Prison Pipeline. Government officials and advocates stressed the need for an individualized, school and community based response to school discipline issues, rather than referral to court. Senator Durbin praised Redeploy Illinois as an example of a successful individualized community program.

Never before has it been more important to divert youth from incarceration. Senator Patrick Leahy noted that the United States locks up five times as many youth as any other nation in the world. You will read comments by Prof. Ed Mulvey that his study, Pathways to Desistance, documents the ineffectiveness of incarceration. And you will read comments from Dr. Linda Teplin on the unacceptably poor outcomes of youth who went through the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center – It’s astonishing that in a system as wealthy as the U.S., the systems fail these children, according to Dr. Teplin.

Now is the time to expand this shift of our limited resources away from incarceration and into community-based programs including Redeploy Illinois that have proved successful. All of our children deserve every opportunity for a chance at a positive future.

Elizabeth Clarke
President
Juvenile Justice Initiative
Illinois Joins 18 States that have Closed More than 50 Juvenile Facilities Since 2007

Illinois has approved closing two of the eight state juvenile facilities - Murphysboro has closed and Joliet is closing shortly. The good news is that these closures were made possible by a dramatic reduction in the use of incarceration along with an overall improvement in public safety.

Juvenile justice advocates note that alternatives to incarceration that led to the reduction in incarcerated youth are better for public safety, better for the youth and more cost effective for taxpayers. Juvenile Justice Initiative President Elizabeth Clarke said the state’s investment in community-based alternatives to incarceration through Redeploy Illinois has reduced the state’s juvenile prison population by over 40 percent, which means youth facilities are operating far below capacity.

“The state is benefitting by now finally closing two of the eight juvenile prisons,” Clarke said. “The youth who are treated in their communities, rather than in facilities, benefit. And the public benefits through dramatically lower repeat offending rates. We must ensure that Illinois continues to shift limited public safety resources to less costly and more effective community-based programming for youth in conflict with the law.”

Cost benefit to State - Gov. Pat Quinn announced in February, 2012 that he wanted to close the two juvenile state facilities, based on the lower juvenile population, as part of an effort to close a budget gap. The administration estimates closing the two facilities could save taxpayers up to $13.8 million in FY13. By contrast, the annual appropriation for Redeploy Illinois is $2.4 million – the potential cost avoidance of averting 883 commitments to the Dept. of Juvenile Justice is $40 million, according to the Illinois Department of Human Services.

The Governor’s June, 2012 Efficiencies Fact Sheet, noted: DJJ operates eight youth facilities, which account for 89 percent of the agency’s budget. As of June 2012, DJJ has a system-wide population of 976, down 218 from a year ago and 434 from five years ago. These closures will help DJJ refocus its mission and resources from detention to prevention and diversion programs with proven track records of success, like Redeploy Illinois and aftercare. DJJ is currently at the lowest recorded population in the department’s history.

Public benefits from lower repeat offending rates resulting from community based treatment. Preliminary results of a cost-effectiveness study of Redeploy IL sites point to a 14.2% re-incarceration rate, compared to a 57.4% rate of youth who do not participate but go to juvenile prison.

Youth benefit from individualized treatment in community based settings.

Prison downsizing a bi-partisan effort across the nation – According to Right on Crime – “Conservative governors and legislators are now demanding the same fiscal accountability from prisons that they expect from other departments. The results have been outstanding. In recent years, several states have made remarkable progress in cutting prison costs, saving literally billions without compromising public safety.”

Consent Decree in Lawsuit over Conditions in State Juvenile Facilities (DJJ)

“On Thursday, December 6, 2012, U.S. District Court Judge Matthew F. Kennelly approved an agreement in a case brought by the ACLU of Illinois designed to dramatically improve conditions and services for young people confined at state-run juvenile justice facilities across Illinois. …The … consent decree calls for developing a remedial plan, based on the investigation and opinions of independent court-appointed experts, to improve conditions in five areas: (1) mental health services; (2) educational services – including general education, special education, and services for youth with a high school diploma or a GED; (3) the use of room confinement; (4) safety of young people inside the facilities from violence by staff and other youth; and (5) continued commitment of youth beyond their release dates solely for lack of a community placement. For more information: http://www.aclu-il.org/federal-court-approves-agreement-to-improve-conditions-in-illinois-juvenile-justice-facilities/
Broken Illinois Juvenile Parole System: Lawsuit Filed

The system used in Illinois to determine whether to revoke parole for youth is unconstitutional and amounts to “kangaroo courts,” according to a class-action lawsuit filed in October in U.S. District Court in Chicago.

The lawsuit, filed by Northwestern University Law School's Roderick MacArthur Justice Center on behalf of all youth on parole in Illinois, charges that the Illinois Prisoner Review Board routinely deprives juveniles of their rights to a fair hearing and legal representation.

The complaint also charges that parole agents often mislead youth into waiving their rights to a preliminary hearing; that most juvenile parolees cannot review the nature of the charges against them until the date of their hearing; and that juvenile parolees are often denied the assistance of legal counsel.

“Over the years, thousands of Illinois youth have wrongfully languished in prison because the Illinois Prisoner Review Board violates the most basic tenets of fundamental fairness and due process,” said Alexa Van Brunt.

In 2011, the parole board revoked parole in 735, or 65 percent of the 1,132 juvenile cases submitted to it, according to the lawsuit, citing the agency’s annual report. More than half of the revocations stemmed from technical violations, according to the lawsuit.

Last year, the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission also harshly criticized the juvenile parole process, saying, for example, that lawyers were present in only one percent of revocation hearings.

The lawsuit names Adam Monreal, chairman of the Illinois Prisoner Review Board, and Gov. Pat Quinn as defendants. The plaintiff, a 17-year-old male being held in custody by the state Department of Juvenile Justice, is identified by his initials, M. H. According to the complaint, he has been incarcerated since Sept. 13, 2012 for allegedly violating the terms of his parole, and he was never provided a preliminary hearing to determine whether there were reasonable grounds to believe that he violated his parole.

According to the lawsuit, reincarcerations as a result of parole revocations can cost taxpayers between $67,000 and $140,000 per youth.

The complaint is available here: http://jjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/Parole-Complaint-filed1.pdf

To read the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission Youth Reentry Improvement Report, go to: http://www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27896/documents/By_Division/DCHP/RFP/IJJC_YouthRentryImprovement.pdf

Van Brunt’s action also accuses the state of creating a system that severely taxes the state’s residents.

At certain facilities holding youth, for example, Van Brunt said the parole revocations result in re-incarcerations that carry price tags ranging from $67,000 to $140,000 per child.
Disproportionality: Illinois Data on Juvenile Arrests

African American youth made up 19 percent of the youth population in Illinois in 2011, but represented 57 percent of the youth arrested that year, and were over-represented for drug arrests, according to a new study by Kanako Ishida, JJI’s policy and research analyst.

Ishida examined juvenile arrests in Illinois in calendar year 2011 to study whether there were racial disparities involved in arrests in the juvenile justice system, and found that in spite of efforts to reduce disproportionate minority contact (DMC) (e.g., training, technical assistance, statistical reports to the State, five-phase DMC Reduction Model) the juvenile arrests showed significant racial disparities.

There were 1,417,154 youth aged 10-17 in Illinois in 2011. Seventy-six percent of the statewide youth population was White, and 19 percent was African-American in Illinois. Cook County accounted for 39 percent of the statewide youth population, with 62 percent of the Cook youth population White, and 31 percent African-American.

Although the African-American youth population accounted for only 19 percent of the general youth population, they accounted for 57 percent of youth arrested in Illinois in 2011. That is, African-American youth were overrepresented at the point of arrest at a level triple their representation in the general youth population.

In Cook County alone, African-American youth were overrepresented at the point of arrest at a level of 2.23 times higher than their representation in Cook county youth population.

Disparities in Drug Arrests

More than half of drug-related arrests involved African-American youth although the recent study conducted by professors at Duke University shows African-American youth are less likely to abuse drugs compared to other racial groups. Yet, in Cook County African-American youth were over represented in drug courts at a level double their representation in the youth population. Moreover, Cook County’s drug arrests accounted for 69 percent of Illinois total drug arrests.

These disparities indicate a need for renewed attention to reducing disparities at the front end of the system, particularly for low level property and drug offenses.

Acknowledgements
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1 The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) administers the Formula Grants program under Title II, part B, of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP Act) of 1974. OJJDP requires States participating in the program to address DMC in their State juvenile justice and delinquency prevention plans. States are to develop and implement plans to reduce the proportion of minority youth detained or confined in secure detention facilities, secure correctional facilities, jails, and lockups if they exceeded the percentage of minority groups in the general population.

The Juvenile Justice Initiative hosted two psychiatry professors and a former prosecutor in three events last fall in our Cook County Discussion Series. Held at the county’s Juvenile Court building, the series was open to all building staff, including judges, prosecutors, defenders and employees of the probation and court administration.

Ed. Mulvey (below), a professor of psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, spoke on Nov. 9 about his work on how serious adolescent offenders make the transition to early adulthood, known as the “Pathways to Desistance” study. The study is a large, comprehensive study of over 1,300 youth from juvenile and adult court systems in Maricopa County (Phoenix), Ariz. and Philadelphia County, Pa.

Mulvey said previous research provided a substantial amount of information about how initial arrests take place, the families of juveniles who get into trouble and developmental risk factors for getting involved with juvenile court. But relatively little was known about why most kids eventually stop getting into trouble. One aim of the study, Mulvey said, was to obtain better information about that desistance, or the process of stopping offending.

The adolescents in the study were, on average, 16 years old. Eighty-six percent of the sample are male and they had had an average of two prior court appearances. The group was ethnically diverse, with 44 percent African-American, 25 percent Caucasian, 29 percent Latino and 2 percent other.

Mulvey said that the presenting offense at the time of arrest did not predict which adolescents would continue to report offending at a consistently high level in the future (the next seven years).

“Nothing we have at disposition gives us a good picture of who ends up on which path,” Mulvey said. “We can get you a statistically significant model but don’t think we’re going to find some magic disposition screening instrument that will tell us where they end up.”

As a result, Mulvey concluded that policies about placement or program eligibility that are based on criteria related solely to the presenting offense will be poor ways to determine who will show recidivism or positive development in the future.

For more information on the Pathways to Desistance study, go to: http://www.pathwaysstudy.pitt.edu/

Linda A. Teplin, the Owen L. Coon Professor of psychiatry and the Director of the Health Disparities and Public Policy program at Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine, gave the final talk in the series on Dec. 14. She presented information about her longitudinal research on youth in the Cook County Detention Center.

Teplin said that she tells people that the Northwestern Juvenile Project is not the best longitudinal study of the mental health needs of youth in the juvenile justice system but the only one. Few other large-scale studies examine delinquent youth for various reasons, Teplin explained, such as lack of access to incarcerated youth (her project received special permission to interview youth in prison).

The project started collecting data in the mid 1990s and sampled about 1,800 youth as they entered detention in Chicago. The researchers chose Chicago because it is: 1) a typical large American city, with typical big-city problems and 2) the legal structure and criteria for detention are similar to other counties and states and 3) Chicago is racially and ethnically diverse, especially among Latinos.

The Northwestern Juvenile Project found that the prevalence of disorders, while much higher than the general population, tended to drop over time for both males and females. The prevalence of major mood and anxiety disorders dropped dramatically for girls and less so for boys. Likewise, substance use and disruptive behavior disorders dropped more dramatically for girls than for boys over time.

Use of alcohol and marijuana among non-incarcerated males at the three-year follow up was very high. For hard drugs, 32 percent of white males reported using at the three-year follow up, compared to 23 percent of Latino males and only 1 percent of African-American males.

One surprising finding was the number of youth who had died over the course of the study – of 1,829 youth enrolled in the study, 120 had died, Teplin said. In an analysis of the initial 65 youth who had died six years after the study began, 84 percent had died by homicide by firearm, compared to just 47 percent in the general population.

In concluding, Teplin said that the study had shown that poor youth often fall through the cracks because the systems that provide services in the communities fail. Kids sometimes get good care while they are in detention, but then return home to communities where the systems fail them, she said.

It’s astonishing that in a system as wealthy as the U.S., the systems fail these children, she said.

Raise the Age

Eighteen (18) is the age of majority in most laws in Illinois. Currently in Illinois, a young person under 18 years of age does not have the right to vote; cannot obtain a full driver’s license; cannot serve in the military; must abide by statewide curfew; cannot legally purchase tobacco, lottery tickets, or pornography; are identified as child victims in child abuse cases and cannot apply for entitlements or benefits. As of January 1, 2010, 17-year-olds charged with misdemeanors in Illinois are tried in juvenile court rather than adult court. Advocates including JJI are currently working to “Raise The Age,” or to allow 17-year-olds charged with felonies to be tried in juvenile court rather than adult court.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Raise the Age (RTA) to 18?
A: An expansion of the Illinois Juvenile Court Act to try 17 year-old youth charged with a felony in juvenile court.

Q: Will it cost a lot to implement?
A: The fiscal impact is estimated to be modest. Seventeen-year-old misdemeanants are already in juvenile court, and violent offenses will still be tried as adults, so the number of low-level felonies subject to this change is small. Further, Illinois found the fiscal impact of trying youth age 17 charged with misdemeanors to be far less than expected because police have the authority to divert cases of youth (require counseling/restitution/etc.), while they can only refer cases to court in the adult system.

Q: Is there a fiscal incentive to do this now?
A: Yes. As of January, 2013, states including Illinois are liable to lose federal dollars if they expose youth under 18 to the danger of sexual assaults in adult jails and prisons – so Illinois has to consider moving youth under 18 out of adult jails and prisons anyhow. This change will facilitate compliance with federal PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act).

Q: How many states try seventeen year olds in the juvenile court?
A: The overwhelming majority, thirty-eight (38) states, allow youth to be tried in the juvenile justice system until they turn the age of 18. It should be noted that Colorado, Oklahoma, and Missouri have made provisions to expand eligibility for youth over the age of 18 in specific circumstances.

Q: What about other countries?
A: The US stands alone in trying youth under the age of 18 as adults. International law (U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child) establishes the age of adulthood and criminal responsibility at the age of 18. Every nation has ratified the Convention, except the United States, Somalia, and South Sudan.

Q: What are some of the differences between the juvenile and criminal courts?
A: The main difference is that there are more options in juvenile. For example, police can divert cases requiring counseling/restitution without sending the case to court. Juvenile court tends to emphasize treatment and rehabilitation over punishment, which means mental health services, drug treatment and community-based services can be accessed. Research shows that youth who go through juvenile court are less likely to commit more crimes than youth tried in adult court. Juvenile Court also provides individualized sentencing and offers confidentiality.

Q: Does “Raise the Age” mean that all youth under 18 will be in juvenile court no matter how serious the offense?
A: No, this change does not affect current transfer provisions. Youth as young as 13 can still be prosecuted as adults in the criminal court in Illinois.

Q: What does the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission recommend for RTA?
A: The Juvenile Justice Commission examined the impact of the 2010 change to try 17-year-old misdemeanants as juveniles, and found the outcome was so positive that they have voted to recommend that Illinois expand the juvenile court to include 17-year-old youth charged with felonies.

For more information: http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org
JJI Receives Moroccan Perspective

In October, the Juvenile Justice Initiative hosted Ahmed Hamzaoui, 34, of Rabat, Morocco for an internship through Citizen Bridges International, a Chicago nonprofit that promotes “the development of civil society around the world by bringing participants from a wide range of backgrounds together with their U.S. counterparts to learn best practices through the sharing of professional skills and knowledge.”

A former English teacher, Hamzaoui works for the Department of Criminal Justice in Morocco, where he teaches civic education and English to juveniles in detention, helping to prepare them to reintegrate into society after their release.

Hamzaoui previously served as a Fulbright scholar teaching Arabic at Texas A&M University from 2007 to 2009.

At the Juvenile Justice Initiative, Hamzaoui spent time with JJI staff at the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center, a workshop on advocacy, the Chicago Area Project, an exhibit and discussion on juvenile justice at the Gage Gallery, an adult expungement help desk, and a federal courthouse, among other places.

Q: What is your overall impression of the criminal justice system in the United States?
A: I’ve learned a lot here. I’m just amazed by the experience that the juveniles here go through concerning the educational facilities, the social programs, also the judicial operations—they were very interesting and amazing. The United States is a pioneer in this kind of juvenile justice. There is social and civil awareness of juveniles. There are lots of organizations that try to focus and to spotlight these kinds of issues. You will find very rarely people will talk about these issues in Morocco. We do have very few organizations dealing with these issues but they deal with it as a holistic approach, not specifically juveniles. We do have one well-known civil organization known as Mama Assia, a nongovernmental organization. They deal with juveniles while incarcerated or once they are released. They try to provide services for these kinds of detainees so they try bring programs to them, like artistic programs, or bring them clothes, try to reconcile them with their families, make sure human rights are applied in incarceration. Post incarceration, they try to provide programs to reintegrate the juveniles, try to get them back to school for example if they have quit school before. They try to be a springboard between the community and the state.

Q: What are the main differences that struck you between the United States and Morocco, in terms of juvenile justice?
A: The facilities here in the United States are far beyond what we have in Morocco—the dormitories, schooling. In Morocco, schooling for juvenile detainees is not seen as a right but a privilege. Also the image that society holds about juvenile detainees places obstacles for reintegration.

Here, most of the organizations try to play the defender of the juveniles. In Morocco, a juvenile is not considered as an offender until he is 12 years old. If he is [younger], they’re not going to put them in juvenile detention, just a childcare center. Once he or she turns 12 years old, they are just going to take them to a juvenile detention center. Juvenile would be considered between 12 and 21 years old, which means that be it a felony or a misdemeanor, we still consider him or her as a juvenile until the age of 21. Also, juveniles receive lenient sentences because they take into consideration age. Sometimes also, the maximum sentence that they can get is 10 years for any crime. In Morocco we don’t have juvenile detention for females, a juvenile female is [incarcerated with] adult females.

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<tr>
<th>Morocco</th>
<th>United States</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)</td>
<td>One of only three nations that has not ratified the CRC</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 years old = Min. detention age</td>
<td>10 years old - Min. detention age in Illinois</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 years = Max. length of a sentence for any offense for a juvenile</td>
<td>Life without parole = Max. length of sentence for juvenile in Illinois</td>
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Q: Are there ways in which the United States is behind Morocco?
A: Expungement. In Morocco, if someone has been incarcerated and benefited from school programs or vocational programs, then his criminal record is over by his release. But they have to get a degree, could be vocational, high school degree. To get this kind of help from the judges to expunge their criminal record. For Morocco, we have two types of expungements, for felonies and misdemeanors. For misdemeanors, the expungement period will last for three years and one day (after release); for a felony, it lasts for five years. It means that the ex-offender has to apply for expungement by the civil court and then he gets his criminal record clear by finishing this period.

Q: How are the jails different?
A: In Morocco, they allow family visits, they can bring food to them, blankets if it gets cold, they can bring them clothes. They are allowed to have two visits each week. We don’t have individual cells, maybe a dormitory for 20 people sharing the same bathroom. Some organizations pay visits to detention centers so they can provide programs, entertain the juveniles while in detention. They can sometimes bring them some clothes, blankets as well. If a juvenile detainee suffers from a very serious illness, they may take him to an outside, public hospital. Juveniles have the right to have access to an attorney while they are in detention. They go to school while they are in detention but only those who want to go to school because it's optional. Most of the time they choose to go for vocational training to learn like electricity, plumbing, carpentry.

Q: Did anything you learned here change the way you will approach your job at home?
A: I will try to get more people involved in the issue of juvenile detention, try to make public awareness more strong about juvenile detention and maybe I will also try to create some programs like making a gallery for these kinds of students, painting, display their works outside and make other people get aware about the issue of juveniles. I cannot do anything about changing the laws because that remains something out of reach, that’s the legislative process. The only thing I can do is more social, more communal than institutional.
In the News

Juvenile Justice Issues: A Sampling of National and Illinois Media

Lee News
End of Murphysboro youth prison set for Jan. 4, youth lockup in Joliet also slated to close
December 27, 2012

“As you know, the juvenile justice population in our state has dramatically declined since 1991,” Jennifer Florent noted in an email. “In fact, we are at a historical low in population of youth in facilities. DJJ’s eight facilities have the capacity to house approximately 1,500 youth. Our population today is 906.” Read more: http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/illinois/end-of-murphysboro-youth-prison-set-for-jan-youth-lockup/article_c22a0d88-e5e3-5917-8dd0-46f05dd5995.html

Associated Press
Ill. says Kewanee mental health fixes being sought December 14, 2012

A report by the John Howard Association, a correctional-system watchdog, said mentally ill detainees at Kewanee should be removed until treatment services are adequate. It found only eight of 17 mental health posts filled at the facility the state has designated for severely mentally ill delinquent young people. JHA Kewanee report: http://thejha.org/kewanee

SouthtownStar
Letter to the Editor: Youth prisons deserve closing December 7, 2012

It costs an average of $85,000 to incarcerate a juvenile for one year, and the recidivism rate for those youth is well over 50 percent. What a waste! That money could be used to rehabilitate youths safely, more effectively and much, much less expensively in their communities through programs such as Redeploy Illinois. The recidivism rate for youths who have been treated through Redeploy Illinois is less than 15 percent. Read more: http://southtownstar.suntimes.com/opinions/letters/16857496-474/forum-youth-prisons-deserve-closing.html

CBS News
Teens confess to crimes they didn’t commit December 7, 2012

The Chicago Police Department is now the subject of a federal Justice Department investigation into its interrogation practices. “Quite simply, what Cooperstown is to baseball, Chicago is to false confessions. It is the Hall of Fame,” said Peter Neufeld, the co-founder of the Innocence Project. “There are more juvenile false confessions in Chicago than anywhere else in the United States...It’s not because the kids are different...it’s because of the way the police keep pounding and pounding and pounding away in those interrogation rooms. Read more: http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18560_162-57557675/teens-confess-to-crimes-they-didnt-commit/

NY Times
Juvenile Injustice November 24, 2012

States must henceforth make “individualized sentencing decisions,” in Justice Elena Kagan’s words, rather than imposing mandatory life without parole. They must take into account a youth’s age, maturity, family circumstances and history, potential for rehabilitation and other factors. And states must engage in meaningful review of juveniles in prison so they have the opportunity to re-enter their communities if they are rehabilitated. The (Supreme) Court has done more than set new limits on punishment. It has also set new expectations about American criminal justice. It has asked the states to observe not just the letter of its decisions but their spirit, one that establishes rehabilitation as a primary concern of justice. Read more: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/25/opinion/sunday/juveniles-injustice-and-the-states.html

Chicago Tribune
Editorial: I want to go to school November 15, 2012


The Chicago Bureau
Illinois Advocate Sues to Speed Juvenile Parole Reform October 25, 2012

“This flawed (juvenile parole) system creates a revolving door that ensures most young people who leave prison will return at some point. Not necessarily because they commit a new crime, but because the parole process imprisons youth without a hearing based on a mere allegation that the youth committed a minor violation of his parole,” said Alexa Van Brunt, an attorney with the Roderick MacArthur Justice Center, who filed the lawsuit. Read more: http://www.chicago-bureau.org/?p=1016

Chicago Tribune
Juveniles held in detention centers more likely to suffer mental health problems later October 24, 2012

“We need to develop preventive interventions when kids return to communities,” said Linda Teplin. She recommends improving the link with mental health services “to prevent a revolving door between correctional facilities and communities.” Read more: http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-10-24/health/ct-x-northwestern-project-20121024_1_mental-health-substance-use-disorder-linda-teplin

The Chicago Bureau
Solitary for Youth: The Fight in Illinois October 11, 2012

Solitary confinement should be reserved for violent offenses, such as fighting or attacking a guard, according to federal law. But investigations of Illinois’ juvenile facilities conducted by the Juvenile Justice Project at the John Howard Association found that youth were frequently isolated for non-violent offenses. Juvenile offenders have been separated for transgressions as minor as eating a guard’s food. The IL ACLU goal: settle a lawsuit on behalf of 2,217 incarcerated youth with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Corrections over the system’s inadequate services and often-hostile environment. Read more http://www.chicago-bureau.org/?p=960
Support JJI’s Juvenile Justice Reform Efforts

The Juvenile Justice Initiative is an independent, non-governmental advocacy entity that exists on contributions from foundations and individuals. Through the printing of research reports, newsletters, and a website, as well as the provision of workshops and conferences, we have been able to share current research and legislative information. Please consider a donation to JJI so we can keep providing you with timely information on juvenile justice issues. In an effort to update our database, please fill out the form below and return it with your donation. Please call us if you have any questions at: (847) 864-1567.

Juvenile Justice Initiative Donation Form

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Juvenile Justice Initiative Friend: $50
Juvenile Justice Initiative Supporter: $100
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Juvenile Justice Initiative
518 Davis
Evanston, IL  60201

Or donate securely online using PayPal - www.jjustice.org

SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

Senator Dick Durbin recently chaired the first Congressional hearing into the critical issue of the School to Prison Pipeline. Government officials and advocates stressed the need for an individualized, school and community based response to school discipline issues, rather than referral to court.

Senator Patrick Leahy said the high rate of US incarceration, compared to other nations, was unacceptable - “Something is wrong here.” Minorities, he said, were overrepresented by any measure, and urged that youth be kept in juvenile court and given treatment in the community:

As a nation we can do better. As a nation for the sake of our soul we must do better. Sen. Patrick Leahy.

Rep. Robert Scott handed out charts detailing that the US incarceration is the highest rate of any nation in the world, and similarly that the youth incarceration rate in the U.S. is the highest in the world. Rep. Scott concluded that we must dismantle the cradle to prison pipeline, and replace it with a cradle to college/career pipeline. He cited a quotation that it is easier to prepare strong children than to repair broken men.

Rep. Danny Davis urged that the federal government lead an effort to address the School to Prison Pipeline. He noted this is an elusive and complex issue that has led to rates of more youth in prison in the U.S. than any other nation. Rep. Davis urged that the U.S. examine school discipline data within the civil rights data collection, using disparate data to direct supports and interventions like Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning.

To read JJI’s testimony visit:
RECENTLY RELEASED REPORTS

POLICY & RESEARCH


EDUCATION


For many years JJI has been an active partner in Models for Change. An initiative of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation which supports a network of government and juvenile justice officials, advocates, educators, community leaders, and families working together to ensure better outcomes for justice involved youth. This work and that of others active in the Initiative has played a significant role in shifting paradigms and policy affecting juvenile justice systems in various states around the country. Visit Modelsforchange.net to learn more.