

## Literature Review on Recidivism of Juveniles

Prepared at the request of Suzi Wizowaty, Representative, House Judiciary, February 2014

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### Breaking the Cycle of Crime

*Written by Harvey Reed, Director, Ohio Department of Youth Services*

*Posted on Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators,*

*<http://cjca.net/index.php/blog/442-breaking-the-cycle-of-crime>*

Fifteen years ago, our facilities held more than 2,200 youth and struggled to provide them with effective treatment and programming. Since then, Ohio has implemented sweeping reform, supporting communities to serve lower-risk youth close to home whenever possible. As a result, we now have fewer youth being sent to our facilities (in 2013 we had an average daily facility population of 515). The youth coming to us are the most challenging youth in all of the juvenile justice system.

In addition to the sharp decline in population, our reform efforts are paying off when it comes to breaking the cycle of crime. The one-year rate for recidivism stayed at a record low of 22.8% for the second consecutive year (tracking youth released in 2011 who returned to DYS or were admitted to the adult prison system). **This means that we were able to keep a total of 693 youth from returning to DYS or being admitted to adult prison.**

The agency continues to make education a priority because for those youth released from DYS with a high school diploma or GED, the one-year rate drops to 13.2% percent. The full report is available

at <http://www.dys.ohio.gov/DNN/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=KEUUTFyniNk%3d&tabid=117&mid=879> . You can also find an abbreviated Recidivism Fact Sheet and Community Corrections Facility (CCF) Fact Sheet here:

<http://www.dys.ohio.gov/dnn/AgencyInformation/Statistics/tabid/117/Default.aspx>.

Yet there is still more work to be done. In the next year, we will focus on providing smooth and uninterrupted services for youth, strengthening healthy, positive relationships with youth and colleagues, and making all of our sites great workplaces. We will assess and make improvements to behavioral health services, unit management, and the Strength-based Behavior Management System. I will share more about these efforts in the coming months. By striving for excellence, we are helping youth who have committed crimes from ending up incarcerated again.

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### The Cost-Benefit Context of Keeping 17-Year-Olds in Wisconsin's Juvenile System November 19, 2013 | The National Council on Crime and Delinquency

Passing Wisconsin Assembly Bill 387 and Senate Bill 308 makes fiscal sense for Wisconsin. AB 387 and SB 308 propose to keep **nonviolent 17-year-old youth under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system instead of the adult system. Research shows that youth in the juvenile justice system have lower recidivism rates than their counterparts in the adult system. Reducing recidivism rates decreases crime,**

**and can save us money.** Established economic research shows that a 1% decrease in crime could lead to a gross domestic product (GDP) increase of \$10.6 million for Wisconsin each year.

To learn more about why passing AB 387 and SB 308 would benefit Wisconsin, click [here](#).

*Reference:*

<http://www.nccdglobal.org/news/the-cost-benefit-context-of-keeping-17-year-olds-in-wisconsins-juvenile-system>

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### **Highlights From Pathways to Desistance: A Longitudinal Study of Serious Adolescent Offenders**

Edward P. Mulvey

Published in March 2011

Full article can be found at: <https://ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/230971.pdf>

Over 1,300 adolescents adjudicated for serious offenses, in either Philadelphia or Phoenix, were followed for over seven years. Key findings included:

- Most youth who commit felonies greatly reduce their offending over time.
- Longer stays in juvenile institutions do not reduce recidivism.
- In the period after incarceration, community-based supervision is effective for youth who have committed serious offenses.
- [Substance abuse treatment](#) reduced both substance use and criminal offending for a limited time.
- Institutional placement—compared to juvenile probation for comparable juveniles—neither increased nor decreased reoffending.

**Note:** The institutional placements in the study varied considerably; these findings are not about one or two specific institutions. This makes the results more generalizable to other places, and also means that these results should not be taken as the upper bound of possible effects of placement in particular institutions.

### **Key Points from the study**

- Most youth who commit felonies greatly reduce their offending over time.
- Longer stays in juvenile institutions do not reduce recidivism.
- In the period after incarceration, community-based supervision is effective for youth who have committed serious offenses.
- Substance abuse treatment reduces both substance use and criminal offending for a limited time.

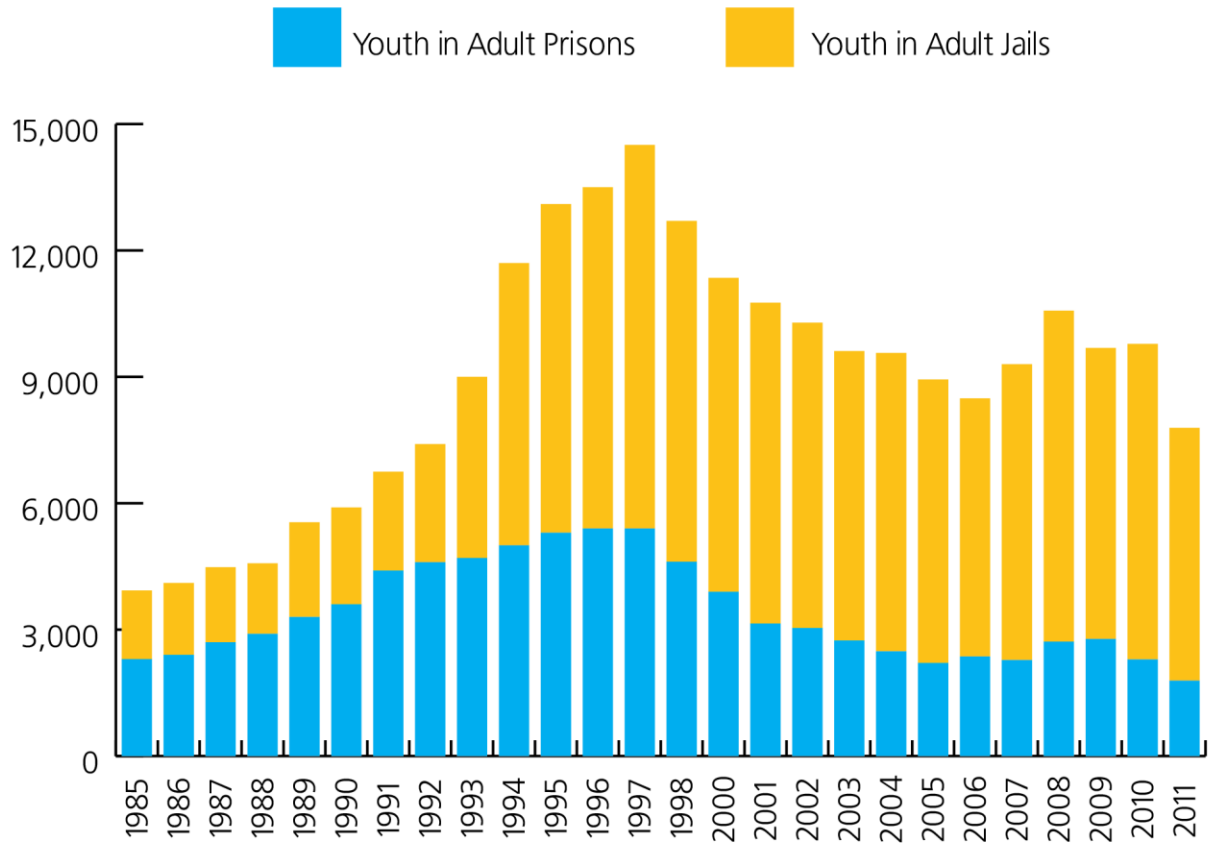
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## **JUVENILE JUSTICE**

There has been a troubling shift in the nation's responses to at-risk youth over the past 25 years. The creators of the juvenile justice system originally viewed it as a system for providing prevention, protection, and redirection to youth, but it is more common for juveniles today to experience tough sanctions and adult-type punishments instead. While

reforms are underway in many places, there remains an urgent need to reframe our responses to juvenile delinquency.

## Number of Youth Held in Adult Prisons and Jails, 1985-2011



Sources: Austin, J., Johnson, K. D., & Gregoriou, M. (2000). *Juveniles in Adult Prisons and Jails: A National Assessment*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Assistance; Bureau of Justice Statistics *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear Series*; Bureau of Justice Statistics Prisoner Series. Strom, K. J. (2000). *Profile of State Prisoners under Age 18, 1985-1997*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

