Medical vs. Correctional

We can “cure” delinquents

vs

Delinquents are just short criminals
A Third Way – Based on Principles of Adolescent Development

- Starts earlier than ever before in history;
- Lasts longer than it has before; and
- Involves a period of heightened brain plasticity

*Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence* by Laurence Steinberg
3 Key Ways Youths Differ from Adults

- Less able to regulate their behavior;
- More sensitive to external influences; and
- Less able to make informed decisions requiring consideration of long-term consequences.
Positive Youth Justice (PYJ)

Butts, Jeffrey A., Gordon Bazemore, and Aundra Saa Meroe (2010)

**Positive youth justice: Framing justice interventions using the concepts of positive youth development**


www.juvjustice.org
PYJ based on principles of Adolescent Development

- Strengths and assets
- Attachment, engagement, and socialization
- Usefulness and belonging
- Broad system of community-based supports
- Allow all youth to experience opportunities and activities that youth in wealthy communities take for granted:
  - Supportive relationships
  - Rewards for work
  - Skill development
  - Success in learning
  - Physical activity and sports
  - Music and the arts
  - Civic engagement
  - Community/political involvement
The number of young people automatically excluded from juvenile court due to their age has dropped by nearly half.
Strategies for Building a Developmentally Appropriate Juvenile Justice System

- Expanding the Use of Diversion
- Making Probation and Aftercare More Effective
- Addressing Mental Health Needs Outside the System
- Reducing the Use of Pretrial Detention
- Reducing Reliance on Prison-like Facilities & Focus Resources on Community-Based Approaches

Enhanced Strategies to Serve Youth More Effectively
Strategies for Building a Developmentally Appropriate Juvenile Justice System

- Addressing Racial & Ethnic Disparities
- Evidence Based and Promising Practices, that are culturally appropriate (not just “the list of EBPs”)
- Having a Trauma Informed Approach
DYRS youth and staff give back to the community by cutting lawns for senior citizens in Ward 5

One of the many civic engagement projects consistent with the principles of PYD
A Widely Used PYD Program

- Supportive relationships
- Rewards for work
- Skill development (and allowed to experiment)
- Success in learning (and allowed to make mistakes)
- Physical activity and sports
- Music and the arts
- Civic engagement
- Community/political involvement
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