Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force
Projections

Agenda

• Welcome (Co-chairs)
• Care, Not Control coalition
• Dr. Edward Mulvey
• Policy impact projections (Justine Fowler)
• Discussion of proposed changes to subgroup recommendations
• Next steps (Co-chairs)
Desistance from Crime, Institutional Stays, and Development in Justice-involved Adolescents

Edward P. Mulvey, PhD
Professor of Psychiatry Emeritus
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

The Current Juvenile Justice Context
Developmental Science and Juvenile Justice

Neuroscience + Behavioral science

View of an extended period of adolescence

- Recognition by the U.S. Supreme Court
- Policy and Practice Trends
  - Statutory changes in age boundaries for jurisdiction and services
  - Reduced number of adolescents entering the “front door” of the juvenile justice system.
  - Reduced reliance on institutional care
  - Promotion of interventions that promote developmental progress

National Academy of Sciences

- Chartered by Congress in 1863
- Purpose: To advise the government and the nation on critical national issues through objective, scientific, and evidence-based research and analysis
- Designed to be independent, balanced, and objective; not an agency of the federal government
National Academy of Sciences Panel on Juvenile Justice: Findings

- Adolescents differ from adults and/or children in three important ways:
  - lack mature capacity for *self-regulation* in emotionally charged contexts
  - have a *heightened sensitivity* to proximal influences such as peer pressure and immediate incentives
  - show less ability to make judgments and decisions that require *future orientation*

- Behavioral findings line up with biological findings
Major Conclusions

• Being held accountable for wrongdoing and accepting responsibility in a fair process (perceived and real) promotes healthy moral development and legal socialization.

• Predominantly punitive policies and programs do not foster prosocial development or reduce recidivism.

Major Conclusions (cont.)

• No convincing evidence that confinement of juvenile offenders beyond a minimum amount required to provide intense services reduces likelihood of subsequent offending.

• Patterns of racial disparities impede efforts to provide equitable services and contribute to perceptions of unfairness.
Proposed Goals of the Juvenile Justice System

Promoting Accountability
Ensuring Fairness
Preventing Re-offending

Multi-site study that follows 1,354 serious adolescent offenders as they make the transition from adolescence into early adulthood through regular interviews over a seven year period.
Supporters

- Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
- National Institute of Justice
- John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- Pennsylvania Commission on Crime & Delinquency
- Arizona Governor's Justice Commission
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- William Penn Foundation
- William T. Grant Foundation

Working Group Members

- Edward Mulvey
- Laurence Steinberg
- Elizabeth Cauffman
- Laurie Chassin
- George Knight
- Carol Schubert
- Sandra Losoya
- Robert Brame
- Jeffrey Fagan
- Alex Piquero
Study Design

- Two sites: Philadelphia and Phoenix
- Enroll serious adolescent offenders
  - 1,354 felony offenders, aged 14-18
  - Females and adult transfer cases
- Regular interviews over seven years
  - Initial interviews
  - Time point interviews (background characteristics, psychological mediators, family context, relationships, community context, life changes)
  - Release interviews
- Other sources of information
  - Collateral interviews
  - Official records
Factors Examined

Background characteristics

Psychological change

Social context changes

Sanctions/Interventions

Living Situation Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject 1</th>
<th>Month 1</th>
<th>Month 2</th>
<th>Month 3</th>
<th>Month 4</th>
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<td>St Gabe's Hall</td>
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<td>House of Corrections</td>
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Who Are These Adolescents?

- At Enrollment
  - 16 years old on average
  - 86% males
  - Average of two prior court appearances
    - 32% had no prior petitions to court
    - Most of priors were for a person crime
- Ethnically diverse

“Desistance from crime” is a real phenomenon
Trajectories of Self-Reported Offending Over Interview Waves
(controlling for time on the street)


Proportion of Each Offending Pattern Group by Crime Type
Number of arrests per days in the community. Ex: 1 arrest in 121 days in community = .008, 1 arrest in 65 days in the community = .015, 3 arrests in 183 days in community = .016

Median severity ranking for arrests across time (within month)

1 = status offense, 2=misdemeanor, 3 = possession of narcotics (excluding glue and marijuana), 4 = felony, not part 1, 5=major property felonies, 6=burglary, 7=drug felony, 2nd degree sex offense, 8 =felonious assault, felony w/ weapon, 9=murder, rape, arson
Patterns of Offending

• Finding: Adolescents who have committed serious offenses are not necessarily on track for adult criminal careers.

• Even among those who have committed serious offenses,
  • there is considerable variability
  • the pattern is reduced offending
  • there is “plasticity”

Institutional stays don’t do much, if anything, to reduce criminal offending
Patterns of Institutional Placement

- About 50% of the Pathways adolescents have a juvenile institutional stay; on average 2-3 stays

- About 75% of the sample have an adult institutional stay; on average about 5 stays

- Sample spent 37% of their seven-year follow-up period in institutional placement
  - 42% of juvenile time in placement
  - 30% of adult time in placement

Question 1:

*Does institutional placement reduce or increase offending?*

Probation vs. Placement

Unadjusted comparison of re-arrest rate

Mean Yearly Rate of Re-Arrest, by Placement Status

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<th>Rate</th>
<th>Probability</th>
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<td>1.20</td>
<td>Placement</td>
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Propensity Score Matching

- Two step process:
  - A propensity score is calculated for each case. It is the predicted probability that you get placed given all of the background characteristics considered.
  - Take each placed case and match it to one or more probation case with similar propensity score.

- We then can look to see if the placed group looks similar to the matched probation group on a variety of characteristics that might affect the outcome.

- If the groups look alike, we can attribute any difference in the outcomes to the fact that they were placed.
Treatment Effect of Placement

*Matched Groups*

Mean Yearly Rate of Re-Arrest, by Placement Status After Matching

<table>
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<th>Rate</th>
<th>Probation</th>
<th>Placement</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1.20</td>
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No significant differences between groups in rate of re-arrest

Question 2:

*Do longer stays in institutional placement reduce reoffending?*
Approach

- Length of stay is broken up into discrete “doses”
- Methods to get similar cases across different levels of the “dose”
  - 65 of 66 variables show no difference among the groups, meaning we can rule them out as causes of differences in outcomes
- Response Curve is estimated

Finding: For intermediate lengths of stay (i.e., 3-13 months), there appears to be no marginal benefit in terms of re-arrest for longer lengths of stay.
Findings

- Overall, *no effect* of placement on rate of re-arrest (if anything, it may increase re-arrest)

- For intermediate lengths of stay (i.e., 3-13 months), there appears to be *little or no marginal benefit* for longer lengths of stay.

*Perceptions of the institutional environment do have an association with later recidivism*  

Do Institutional Environments Matter?

Approach

- Examine release interviews
- **Data:**
  - Adolescent reports about a particular institutional experience
  - \(n = 1,158\) interviews
- **Calculate eight dimensions of the institutional stay**
  - Safety
  - Harshness
  - Fairness
  - Services
  - Institutional Order
  - Caring Adult
  - Antisocial Peers
  - Re-entry Planning
- **Control for risk factors related to offending**
- **Assess if differences in these dimensions relate to subsequent community outcomes in year after release**
  - System involvement
  - Self-reported antisocial activity

Findings

- Certain dimensions matter for certain outcomes
  - Services and re-entry planning significantly reduce the chances of later systems involvement.
  - Low harshness, fewer antisocial peers, and high institutional order decrease the probability of self-reported antisocial activity
- These relationships don’t differ by facility type
Is a Generally More Positive Institutional Experience Related to Better Outcomes?

Even after controlling for background characteristics, there is a 35%-49% reduction in the probability of system involvement in the next year.

Implications

• Awareness of how practices promote or degrade a sense of fairness

• Periodic assessments of institutional environment from departing residents
THANK YOU!

Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force
Projections
Methodology

- Developed baseline projections if nothing changes
- Determined impacts to that baseline if policy recommendations are enacted as is
- Calculated averted costs available for re-investment
Policy recommendations are expected to reduce the residential placement population 47% by 2026, freeing up over $97 million for reinvestment.

### Projected Residential Placement Populations

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<th>January 1 Population Estimates</th>
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Cumulative costs averted over five years for reinvestment: $97,778,806.

### Next Steps

- **Task Force meetings:**
  - Possible next meeting: Wednesday, March 10, 2021, 3 - 5 p.m.
  - Wednesday, March 17, 2021, 3 - 5 p.m.
Contact Information

Task Force Website: http://www.pacourts.us/pa-juvenile-justice-task-force

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