

A Report of the
Children's Defense Fund

America's Cradle to Prison PipelineSM

About the Children's Defense Fund

The Children's Defense Fund's Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start* and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

CDF provides a strong, effective voice for *all* the children of America who cannot vote, lobby or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. CDF encourages preventive investment before children get sick or into trouble, drop out of school or suffer family breakdown.

CDF began in 1973 and is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundation and corporate grants and individual donations. We have never taken government funds.

We exist because each day in America:

- 4** children are killed by abuse or neglect.
- 5** children or teens commit suicide.
- 8** children or teens are killed by firearms.
- 33** children or teens die from accidents.
- 77** babies die before their first birthdays.
- 192** children are arrested for violent crimes.
- 383** children are arrested for drug abuse.
- 906** babies are born at low birthweight.
- 1,153** babies are born to teen mothers.
- 1,672** public school students are corporally punished.
- 1,879** babies are born without health insurance.
- 2,261** high school students drop out.
- 2,383** children are confirmed as abused or neglected.
- 2,411** babies are born into poverty.
- 2,494** babies are born to mothers who are not high school graduates.
- 4,017** babies are born to unmarried mothers.
- 4,302** children are arrested.
- 17,132** public school students are suspended.

America's Cradle to Prison PipelineSM

A Children's Defense Fund[®] Report

Acknowledgments

CDF commissioned two nationally distinguished journalists, Julia Cass, a Pulitzer Prize winning reporter and co-author of the award winning book, *Black in Selma: The Uncommon Life of J.L. Chestnut, Jr.*, and Connie Curry, prize winning author and documentary filmmaker of *The Intolerable Burden*, to document more systematically what we were hearing from advocates, families, young people and child advocates across the nation. Julia Cass traveled to Ohio, and Connie Curry to Mississippi to conduct in-depth interviews with children and families trapped in the Pipeline to Prison and with a wide range of professionals committed to dismantling it. We chose Cincinnati, Ohio, and Sunflower County, Mississippi, for geographic balance and diversity and because both are states with longstanding CDF offices. Mississippi is a southern, predominantly rural state with a legacy of segregation and poverty. Ohio is a northern Midwestern state with a history of migration of Southern Blacks and Appalachian Whites to work in urban areas. Although the stories are different in these two states, the challenges and frustrations of children and families are largely the same. Julia Cass's writing gives life to the children in the Pipeline and urgency to the cause of ending it.

Steve Liss's powerful photographs on the cover and in Chapter 2 on juvenile detention and poverty are poignant illustrations of children in or at risk of entering the Cradle to Prison Pipeline.

CDF thanks a team of advisors to the Cradle to Prison Pipeline® initiative whose support, wisdom and expertise were invaluable. They include Carol Biondi, Carlton and Elizabeth Jones Bradshaw, Geoffrey Canada, James Comer, Edward Cornwell III, Inger Davis, Peter Edelman, Ron Ferguson, Angela Glover Blackwell, Winifred Green, Maya Harris, Donna Lawrence, Gary Orfield, Malika Saada Saar, Sandy Trujillo and Roger Wilkins. We are grateful to these and many other experts and advocates who are working in effective ways on a piece of the Cradle to Prison Pipeline who helped inform us as did a range of Black and Latino community and systems leaders who attended Best Practices Institutes at CDF Haley Farm over the past several years.

We also thank the many young leaders who attended CDF's "Beating the Odds: Dismantling the *Cradle to Prison Pipeline* Symposium" at Georgetown University Law School. Their brave struggles, thoughtful ideas and heroic examples are infused throughout this report and inspire all of CDF's work.

As always, this report was a CDF team effort. Morna Murray and Jill Morningstar led CDF's early efforts to develop the report aided by Jonathan Stahler and Jadine Johnson. We are deeply grateful to MaryLee Allen, Karen Lashman and Susan Gates for their guidance and leadership and to members of CDF's policy staff for the completion of this report. CDF's research team, Janet Simons and Paul Smith, provided much of the data included in the report as they so ably do for all CDF publications. CDF-Ohio and CDF-Mississippi staff provided great assistance with state-level research, reporting and outreach. And CDF communications staff, Casey Aden-Wansbury, Anourack Chinyavong and Elizabeth Alesbury, produced and published this report.

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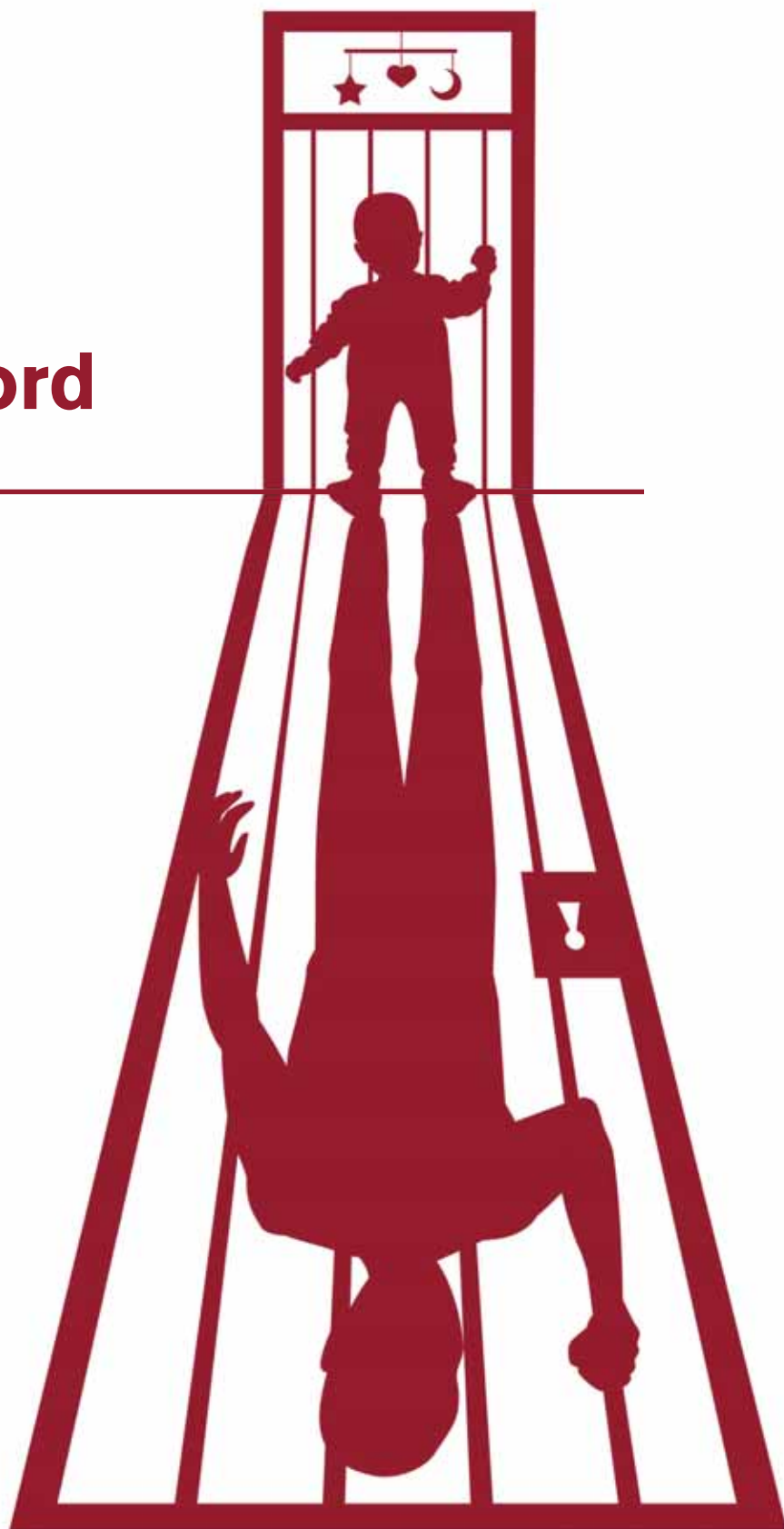
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Foreword



A Call to End Adult Hypocrisy, Neglect and Abandonment of Children and America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline

This very painful report on America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline® crisis is a loud siren of alarm and *wake up call to action* to every parent, faith, community, public policy, political and cultural leader, child and family serving agency and citizen.

I am often asked “*What’s wrong with our children?*” Children having children. Children killing children. Children killing others. Children killing themselves. Children roaming streets alone or in gangs all day and night. Children floating through life like driftwood on a beach. Children addicted to tobacco and alcohol and heroin and cocaine and pot, drinking and drugging themselves to death to escape reality. Children running away from home and being thrown away or abused and neglected by parents. Children being locked up in jails with adult criminal mentors or all alone. Children bubbling with rage and crushed by depression.

Well *adults* are what’s wrong with our children. Parents letting children raise themselves or be raised by television or the Internet. Children being shaped by peers and gangs and foul mouth rappers instead of parents, grandparents and kin. Children roaming the streets because there’s nobody at home or paying enough attention. Children going to drug houses that are always open instead of to school houses and church houses, mosques and temples that are too often closed. Children seeing adults take and sell drugs and be violent to each other and to them. Adults telling children one thing and doing another. Adults making promises we don’t keep and preaching what we don’t practice. Adults telling children to control themselves while slapping and spanking. Adults telling children to be honest while lying and cheating in our homes, offices and public life. Adults telling children not to be violent while marketing and glorifying violence and tolerating gun saturated war zones in communities all across our land. Adults telling children to be healthy while selling them junk food and addicting them to smoke and drink and careless sex.

*Our “child and youth problem” is not a child and youth problem;
it is a profound adult problem as our children do what they see
us adults doing in our personal, professional and public lives.*

What's wrong with our children? We are what's wrong with our children. And I hope God will help us to repent, to open our eyes and ears and see and hear our children's cries for help and guidance, and act to save them *all—now!*

What must children feel when parents, kin, neighbors and cultural icons abuse drugs and engage in or condone violent behavior? What must children feel when those entrusted with caring for them in their homes, neighborhoods, schools and other institutions abuse and neglect them? How great must be their fear and anger when parents and relatives are snatched away from them by drugs and gun violence and incarceration. How scary it must be for a child to sleep in an unsafe shelter full of strangers with no place to call home. How angry and rejected a child or teen must feel when there is no loving, reliable person s/he can trust and who is being shunted from one family foster home or group home to another and from one school that suspends and expels him to another. How isolated and alone it must feel when no one sees or cares whether you're truant or home before dark or struggling to see the blackboard or have a learning disorder. What can children believe when important adults in their lives tell them in word and deed that they are not worth much and treat them as a burden rather than a gift, don't expect and help them to achieve, or abandon them altogether to raise themselves? What do children learn about right and wrong when they see corporate leaders being arrested for pillaging their corporations and the life blood of workers, seniors and stockholders? How can children trust political leaders who repeatedly promise to alleviate their poverty, to rebuild their flooded homes and schools, to ease their suffering and then leave them like debris *still waiting over two years later*, in a purgatory of hopelessness and uncertainty, for their nation to help them heal their monstrous losses and to prepare them for productive lives? Who can children believe when religious leaders, charged by their faith to protect and nurture them, abuse them instead? And who can rudderless children and youth look up to as s/heroes in a culture that permits violence and guns and prison and underachievement to be promoted as cool, almost as rites of passage, and bling as worth living, killing and dying for?

It is time for adults of every race and income group to break our silence about the pervasive breakdown of moral, family, community and national values, to place our children first in our lives, and to struggle to model the behavior we want our children to learn. Our "child and youth problem" is not a child and youth problem, it is a profound adult problem as our children do what they see us adults doing in our personal, professional and public lives. They seek our attention in negative ways when we provide them too few positive ways to communicate and to get the attention and love they need. And we choose to punish and lock them up rather than take the necessary, more cost-effective steps to prevent and intervene early to ensure them the healthy, head, safe, fair and moral start in life they need to reach successful adulthood.

Are We Part of the Problem or Solution?

As parents, adults, citizens and leaders we must examine ourselves regularly to determine whether we are contributing to the crisis our children face or to the solutions they urgently need. And if we are not a part of the solution, we are a part of the

problem and need to do better. Our children don't need or expect us to be perfect. They do need and expect us to be honest, to admit and correct our mistakes, and to share our struggles about the meanings and responsibilities of faith, parenthood, citizenship and life. Before we can pull up the moral weeds of violence, materialism and greed in our society and world that are strangling so many of our children, we must pull up the moral weeds in our own homes, backyards, neighborhoods, institutions and public policies. So many children are confused about what is right and wrong because so many adults talk right and do wrong in our personal, professional and public lives.

The Cradle to Prison Pipeline and the Dangerous Intersection of Poverty and Race

It's time for America to become America. The *Cradle to Prison Pipeline* crisis can be reduced to one simple fact: The United States of America is not a level playing field for all children and our nation does not value and protect all children's lives equally. As Connie Curry and Julia Cass report in Part II, countless children, especially poor children of color like baby Eric and Frankie, "already are in the Pipeline to Prison before taking a single step or uttering a word," and many youth in juvenile justice facilities never were in the pipeline to college or success. "They were not derailed from the right track; they never got on it."

So many poor babies in rich America enter the world with multiple strikes already against them: without prenatal care and at low birthweight; born to a teen, poor and poorly educated single mother and absent father. At crucial points in their development, from birth through adulthood, more risks and disadvantages cumulate and converge that make a successful transition to productive adulthood significantly less likely and involvement in the criminal justice system significantly more likely. Lack of access to health and mental health care; child abuse and neglect; lack of quality early childhood education to get ready for school; educational disadvantages resulting from failing schools that don't expect or help them achieve or detect and correct early problems that impede learning; zero tolerance school discipline policies and the arrest and criminalization of children at younger and younger ages for behaviors once handled by schools and community institutions; neighborhoods saturated with drugs and violence; a culture that glorifies excessive consumption, individualism, violence and triviality; rampant racial and economic disparities in child and youth serving systems; tougher sentencing guidelines; too few positive alternatives to the streets after school and in

We are guilty of many errors and many faults but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made, and his senses are being developed. To him we cannot answer "Tomorrow." His name is "Today."

—Gabriela Mistral, Chilean poet, educator, Nobel Laureate

summer months; and too few positive role models and mentors in their homes, community, public and cultural life overwhelm and break apart fragile young lives with unbearable risks. Without significant interventions by families, community elders and institutions, and policy and political leaders to prevent and remove these multiple, accumulated obstacles, so many poor and minority youths are and will remain trapped in a trajectory that leads to marginalized lives, imprisonment and premature death.

The most dangerous place for a child to try to grow up in America is at the intersection of poverty and race. That a Black boy born in 2001 has a 1 in 3 chance and a Latino boy a 1 in 6 chance of going to prison in their lifetime is a national disaster and says to millions of our children and to the world that America's dream is not for all.

Key Immediate Action Steps to Protect and Rescue Children from the Cradle to Prison Pipeline

I hope the sobering facts in this report will wake us up, lead each of us to conduct a personal, community and national audit and commit to do whatever is necessary for as long as it takes to stop the flow of children into the Pipeline, get as many out as early as possible, and reroute them to successful adulthood.

*The Pipeline is not an act of God or inevitable; it is a series of human choices at each stage of our children's development. We created it, we can change it. We know what to do. We can predict need. We can identify risk. We can prevent damage. We can target interventions. We can monitor progress. In so doing, we can guarantee returns on public investments and control costs to children and society. We can train professionals and create programs that heal and nurture. We can adapt and replicate strategies that work in communities across our nation and incorporate them in policy. We can restore hope and build on child strengths and resiliency. We can wrap buffers around our children's fragile places, bind up their wounds and prepare them with spiritual anchors inside to better weather the storms of life. We have the knowledge and the experience to do this. It is not impossible or futile as countless inspiring stories of children and youth beating the odds every day attest. What it takes is a critical mass of leaders and caring adults with the spiritual and political will to reach out and pull children at risk out of the Pipeline and *never* let go and who will make a mighty noise until those in power respond to our demands for just treatment for children. This will not happen unless we come together and do the hard work to build a movement to save all our children and nation's soul. *Beginning right now we can:**

1. Name and change the Pipeline and work together, recognizing that children do not come in pieces but in families and communities and are profoundly affected by the norms, priorities, policies and values of our nation and culture. I and my CDF colleagues have convened and participated in many meetings and discussions and best practices institutes over the past three years since this effort began. There are many wonderful people engaging in effective efforts all across our land addressing a piece of the Pipeline, some described in this report. Our challenge is to connect all the pieces, understand the whole Pipeline while breaking it down into manageable pieces for action, always seeing how each piece affects the

whole child. Our siloed organizational, governmental, policy and funding streams must comprehensively address the whole child from birth through the transition to adulthood in the real context of their lives responding to all of the major forces that help shape them. False either-ors between personal, family, community and societal responsibility for children need to stop. All of these child shaping forces must collaborate and *put the child's healthy development at the center of our decision making*. Children's needs are too often lost or are beside the point as too many adults use rather than serve children for their own professional, organizational, profit-making and private self interests.

2. Call and work for a fundamental paradigm shift in child policy and practice away from the too frequent first choice of punishment and incarceration to prevention and early intervention and sustained child investment. The only thing our rich nation will guarantee every child is a jail or detention cell after s/he gets into trouble, fails in school, becomes a child parent or explodes in rage from undiagnosed and untreated health and mental health, neglect and abuse problems.

3. We must begin early by ensuring every child a healthy start through guaranteed comprehensive health and mental health coverage and coverage of pregnant women wherever they live in America. Children and pregnant women cannot wait until health coverage for all is debated and enacted. A child has only one birth and childhood. That children are dying from tooth abscesses and from conditions exacerbated by bureaucratic barriers and bungling is a national disgrace. That our President and Congress refuse to invest enough money to provide *all* nine million uninsured children the health care they would not deny a single one of their own children for a single day, and that taxpayers provide them, should be an urgent issue in 2008 and until a *national* child health and mental health safety net is in place. The lottery of birth should not dictate child survival.

4. Ensure quality Early Head Start, Head Start, child care and preschool to get every child ready for school. High quality early childhood programs help children do better in school, avoid special education and stay out of trouble. Yet only 50 percent of children eligible for Head Start get it.

5. Link every child to a permanent, caring family member or adult mentor who can keep them on track and get them back on track if and when they stray. The fabric of community must be rewoven to catch falling children until our torn family fabric can be repaired. We must bring to scale promising practices that engage and enrich children during out-of-school time and encourage more minority youths to see teaching and child advocacy as urgent callings. *And every adult who works with children in our education, health care, child welfare and juvenile justice systems should love and respect children or go do something else.* The most important mentors in children's lives are those they come into regular contact with. We must be mindful of what we are teaching through our action and inaction.

6. Make sure every child can read by 4th grade and can graduate from school able to succeed at work and in life. An ethic of achievement and high expectations for every child must be created in every home, congregation,

community and school and in our culture and public policies and practices.

Turn off the television and pick up the books. Make reading cool and fun. That only 14 percent of Black, 17 percent of Latino and 42 percent of White 4th graders are reading at grade level, and 11.8 percent of Black and 23.8 percent of Latino 16- to 24-year-olds have dropped out before graduating from high school imperils America's internal stability, future and competitiveness and sentences illiterate children to social and economic death. No external enemy poses as great a threat to America's security as our millions of unhealthy, uneducated, angry children who will fill our prisons rather than bolster our economy. This ethic must begin in the early years. While parents are the frontline of responsibility for children, you can't teach what you do not know and no one raises a child alone. Research shows that children of welfare mothers when compared with children of more affluent educated parents have an enormous parent-child word interaction gap by age 3. Yet Early Head Start reaches only 3 percent of eligible children during this crucial period of brain development.

7. Commit to helping the richest nation on earth end the child and family poverty that drives so much of the Pipeline process and the racial disparities faced by Black, Latino and American Indian children who are disproportionately poor. It is not right, sensible or necessary to have 13 million poor children in a \$13.3 trillion economy. No other industrialized nation permits such high rates of child poverty. Benjamin Franklin said a long time ago that the best family policy is a good job. A majority of poor children live in working households, yet private sector and government policies do not ensure that work pays enough to escape poverty and get health care. Parents need a range of work and income supports to make ends meet including expanded and refundable earned income tax and child tax credits and minimum wage laws adjusted for inflation. They also need access to education and training to improve themselves including at least the chance to attend a community college.

8. Dramatically decrease the number of children who enter the child welfare and juvenile and criminal justice systems, stop detaining children in adult jails, and reduce the racial disparities in these and other child serving systems. Children need strong and loving families and communities who work together to keep children safely at home whenever possible: to be moved out of foster care promptly and into permanent caring families, and to be helped not to reenter care unnecessarily or get shunted from child welfare to the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Measures to prevent teen pregnancy, provide quality parent-child home visiting programs, comprehensive and quality community family support programs to prevent neglect and abuse, and comprehensive family-based substance abuse treatment to keep children out of the child welfare system are critical.

9. Confront America's deadly, historic romance with guns and violence and stress more nonviolent values and conflict resolution in all aspects of American life. Since 1968 when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Senator Robert Kennedy were assassinated, more than 1.1 million Americans have been killed by guns; another 724,000 have died by other violent means. The majority have been White. This is more internal deaths than American combat deaths in the 20th and 21st centuries. Since 1979 over 100,000 children have been killed by guns. We also must

stand for common sense gun control and against excessive violence in the media and entertainment industry. We must also challenge negative cultural messages inside and outside our communities and families that spread toxic racial and gender stereotypes which divide rather than unite us. It is time to provide a counter vision in word and deed to help our children redefine what constitutes success in life.

CDF's Next Steps

This CDF report is the beginning of a national and community crusade to engage families, youth, community leaders and institutions and those in power in every sector in the development of healthy, educated children. It will be supplemented by:

- Community toolkits for various target groups;
- A moving video presentation of the Pipeline and one positive alternative vision—the CDF Freedom Schools® program—for house party, congregational and community discussion and action;
- Annual child and gun violence reports, *Protect Children, Not Guns*, to track the killing of children and call for effective gun control measures and nonviolent conflict resolution training;
- Continuing publication of annual National Observances of Children's Sabbaths® manuals for congregations of all faiths to lift up the needs of children in prayer, worship, service and action each October;
- How-to kits to conduct Beat the Odds® celebrations of the strengths of our children and provide college scholarships and leadership opportunities to youths who surmount devastating odds. *Beat the Odds* programs need to take place in communities across the country to highlight and reward achievement and combat stereotypes about at-risk young people who many wrongly write off as beyond salvation;
- How-to manuals for conducting jail and detention Child Watch® visits in communities to experience firsthand the suffering of children in the Pipeline and what can be done;
- Annual *Cradle to Prison Pipeline* Best Practices and Leadership Training Institutes at CDF Haley Farm and ongoing information about best practices across sectors;
- Connecting and convening our country's best and most effective women, community and faith leaders, service providers, policy makers and other concerned adults to share ideas and monitor progress about ways to break up the Pipeline at the community, state and national levels;
- Conducting spiritual retreats at Haley Farm to connect, renew, inform and motivate our leaders working for children;

Over 60,000 children have had a summer CDF Freedom Schools® reading and service enrichment experience sponsored by community institutions and taught by college mentor servant-leaders. About one-third of these young teachers are Black males who grew up in the children's communities and are giving back.

- Training a critical mass of servant-leaders across faith, race, income and discipline—especially young people—to empower them to stand up for themselves and providing them ongoing structures for service and advocacy including Freedom Schools; and
- Implementing several long-term pilot community projects to begin to dismantle the Pipeline in states with CDF offices and where a critical mass of key stakeholders are ready and willing to come to the table for united and sustained action.

We have models to build on thanks to the quiet and persistent sowing and nurturing of seeds by many through the Black Community Crusade for Children (BCCC) over the past 15 years. Over 12,000 young servant-leaders have been trained at CDF Haley Farm; hundreds of children have gone on to college through *Beat the Odds* scholarships and are giving back; over 60,000 children have had a summer Freedom Schools reading and service enrichment experience sponsored by community institutions and taught by college mentor servant-leaders. About one-third of these young teachers are Black males who grew up in the children's communities and are giving back. A safe haven for discussion of sound old and new ideas and strategies will continue at Haley Farm, which helped incubate a number of promising practices. These have included the Harlem Children's Zone under Geoff Canada's wonderful leadership and the CDF-Southern Regional Office's advocacy and Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative empowerment efforts under Oleta Fitzgerald's fine leadership and various youth leadership development models. At Haley Farm we connect the Joshua generation leaders with Moses generation leaders from the Civil Rights Movement. Young people need to know their history and how children and youth helped change America and can do so again. And the annual Samuel DeWitt Proctor Institute for Child Advocacy Ministry each third week in July at Haley Farm will continue to bring hundreds of faith leaders together with young people to examine how the religious community can regain its prophetic voice for justice for the young and poor.

But no single or few organizations can tackle this looming national catastrophe alone. The neglect, underachievement and abandonment of our children manifested in the Cradle to Prison Pipeline must become the agenda not only for the Black and Latino communities but for the entire nation for the next decade. New voices for new choices that protect all our children's well-being must be the litmus test for all our actions and votes as we stand up to those in our homes, communities, schools, neighborhoods, political and cultural life who hurt children. The longer term policy vision in Chapter 1 can and must be achieved by 2015 but it will require focused and insistent demands from a critical mass of leaders and citizens until all the components for healthy child development are in place.

How This Report Is Organized

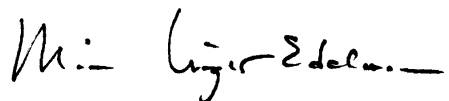
Chapter 1 of Part I provides an overview of the major factors behind the Pipeline through stories and statistics and longer term policy goals. Chapter 2 shows the faces of children in the Pipeline through 30-year veteran *Time* Magazine photographer Steve Liss's moving photographs. Part II shares Julia Cass's and Connie Curry's

case studies describing how the Pipeline affects children on the ground in Mississippi and Ohio at one point in time. They believe that saving children like baby Eric and others, whose families you will meet, is complex yet possible and that while growing a child to successful adulthood is not silver bullet proof—and obviously not all children can or will be rescued—many can be saved. Part III calls for the hard work and persistence needed to build a transforming movement to finish the work begun by the Civil Rights Movement and Dr. King’s Poor People’s Campaign to put the social and economic foundations beneath all children and families. Part IV-Appendices includes brief descriptions of some promising approaches to help keep children out of the Pipeline, research tables and selected state-by-state data of key child indicators.

Dedication

This report is dedicated to Miz Mae Bertha Carter and her husband Matthew who wanted a better life for their younger children which they believed required a good education. They challenged Mississippi’s sham “freedom of choice” desegregation plans by applying to enroll their children in “White” Drew, Sunflower County, Mississippi, public schools, home of powerful segregationist Senator Jim Eastland. I was privileged to be their attorney and watched with awe and humility as their family courageously withstood violence, eviction, daily harassment and abuse. The younger Carter children, with their parents’ unwavering love and support, weathered the daily cruelties in school and community, graduated from high school and college, and became professionals contributing much to our nation. Connie Curry describes the heroic struggle of Miz Mae Bertha and her family in an inspiring book, *Silver Rights*. When Connie told me that Miz Mae Bertha’s grandson, Lorenzo, was in Parchman Prison in Mississippi, it reignited my determination to sound the alarm against the growing re-segregation, incarceration and miseducation of Black children and youth, especially young Black males, that threaten to undo the hard earned racial and social progress of the Civil Rights Movement, disempower the Black community and stain our nation’s future. Lorenzo’s story and that of other young Black males in the Pipeline are shared in Curry’s investigative case study of Mississippi in Part II.

History teaches if racial apartheid happened before, it can happen again unless we are vigilant and address now the huge disparities Black and Latino and other poor children of color face. It’s time for a new generation of Miz Mae Bertha Carters to stand up and be counted and to do whatever is necessary to assure our children the better life for which she and so many sacrificed and died. I hope you will be one of them.



Marian Wright Edelman
President, Children’s Defense Fund

A Parent, Community and National Audit

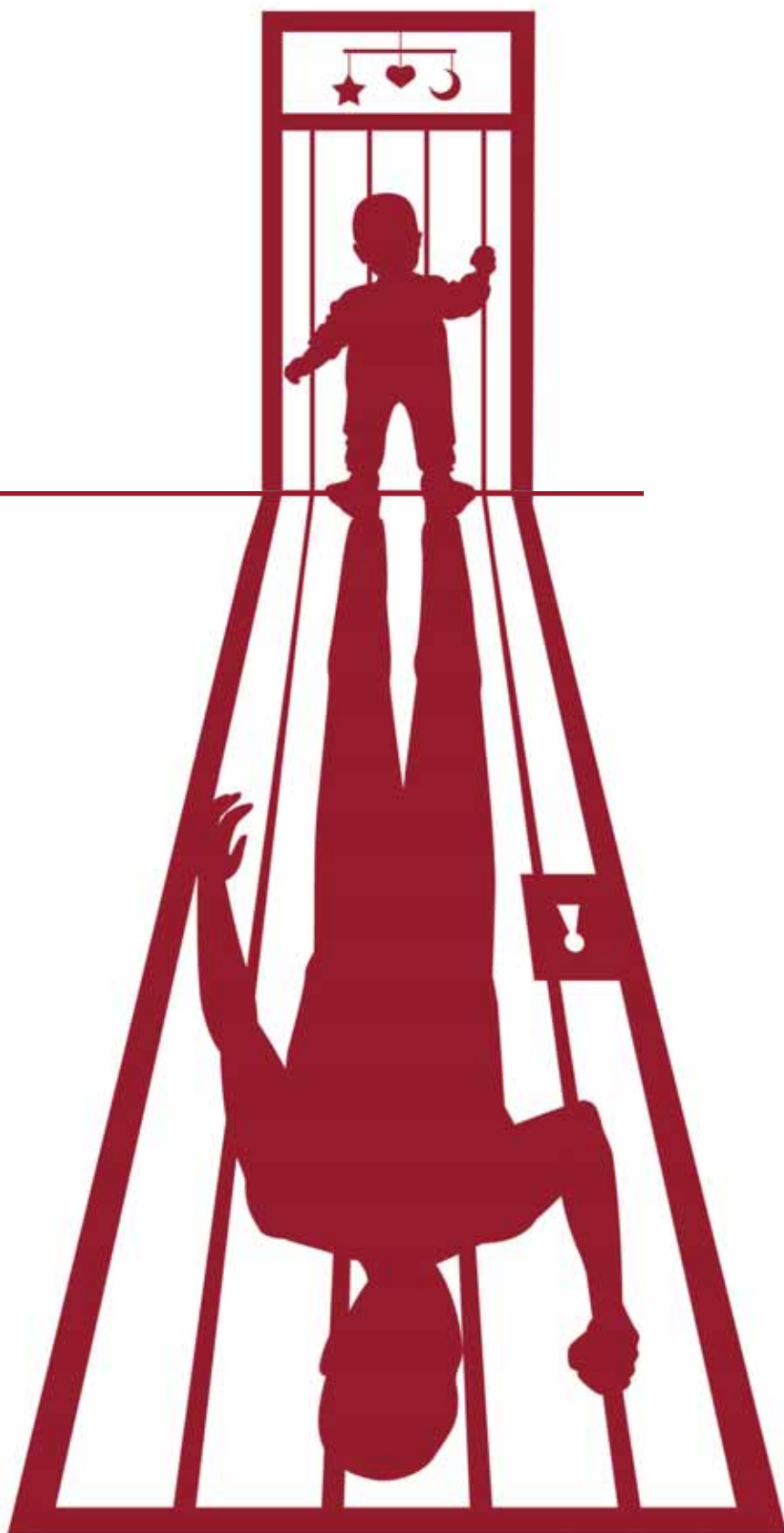
- If we are not supporting a child we brought into the world as a father or mother with attention, time, love, discipline, money and the teaching of values, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution to the family breakdown today that is leaving so many children at risk.
- If we are abusing tobacco, alcohol, cocaine or other drugs while telling our children not to, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution in our overly addicted society.
- If we have guns in our home and rely on them to feel safe and powerful, and don't stand up to those who market guns to our children and to those who kill our children, or glamorize violence as fun, entertaining or normal, then we are part of the problem rather than the solution in the chronic war of American against American and family member against family member that is tearing us apart.
- If we tell our daughters not to engage in premature and irresponsible sex and not to have children before they are prepared to parent and support them, and do not tell our sons the same thing, we are a part of the problem rather than the solution to teen pregnancy and out-of-wedlock births so many decry.
- If we profess to be people of faith but believe that the Sermon on the Mount, the Ten Commandments, the Koran, or whatever religious or core beliefs we hold, pertain only to one-day practice but not to Monday through Saturday home, professional and political life, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution to the spiritual famine and breakdown in community plaguing America today.
- If we tell, snicker, or wink at racial, gender, religious or ethnic jokes or engage in or acquiesce in any practices intended to diminish rather than enhance other human beings, then we are contributing to the proliferating voices of racial and ethnic division and intolerance staining our land again. Let's not repeat the worst lessons of our past but prepare our children for the future in a globalizing world that is majority non-White and poor.
- If we think being American is about how much we can get rather than about how much we can give and share to help all our children get a healthy, fair and safe start in life, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution.

Are We Part of the Problem or Solution?

- If we think it's somebody else's responsibility to teach our children values, respect, good manners, work and healthy habits, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution to parental neglect today.
- If we or our organizations are spending more money on alcohol and entertainment than on scholarships, books, tutoring, rites of passage and mentoring programs for youths, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution to ensuring positive visions and alternatives for children in our increasingly coarse culture.
- If we'd rather talk the talk than walk the walk to the voting booths, school board meetings, political forums, and congregation and community meetings to organize community and political support for effective programs for our children, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution.
- If our children of any color think that being smart and studying hard is acting White rather than acting Black or Latino and don't know about the many great Black and Latino as well as White achievers who overcame every obstacle to succeed, then we are a part of the problem rather than a part of the solution to poor self image and racial stereotyping.
- If we are not voting and holding political leaders accountable for investing relative pennies in children's health care, early Head Start and education, and permanent families for abused and neglected children, while investing pounds in the military budget and protecting welfare for rich farmers, corporate executives and powerful special interests, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution to the growing gap between rich and poor.
- If we think corrupt and unaccountable political, corporate and media leaders of any race who neglect and prey on our children and communities for self interest should not be held accountable, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution to pervasive cynicism and apathy.
- And if we think we have ours and don't owe any time or money or effort to help children left behind, out of sight and out of mind in prison, then we are a part of the problem rather than the solution to the fraying social fabric and violence and inequality that drives the Pipeline that threatens all Americans and the very meaning and soul of America.

Part I

Chapter 1



An Overview of Key Factors Contributing to America's Cradle to Prison Pipeline® Crisis

“Tell them we need hope.”

– a Katrina child's plea to America

“It is easier to build strong children than to fix broken men.”

– attributed to Frederick Douglass

Children Born into the Pipeline

Baby Eric

Eric came into the world on April 26, 2004, in Cincinnati, Ohio, and already is in the Pipeline to Prison before taking a single step or uttering a word. In early May, when he was two weeks old, he was a tiny brown bundle lying across the lap of his 19-year-old mother in the Wynton Terrace housing project on the north side of the city. She was staying temporarily in a unit rented by one of her sisters because the electricity and gas had been turned off in her aunt's house, where she had gone with Eric and his brother, 19-month-old Tae, when she left the hospital. She doesn't have a phone or child care or access to a car so “it's kind of hard to do anything.” The closest store is ten blocks away. She said she would like to finish high school and get a job. She liked school but “I had a lot of problems. I was running away all the time. I wasn't getting along with anybody,” she explained, describing ongoing fights between her and her siblings and her mother, who once called the police to take her to juvenile detention. She lived with the boys' 26-year-old father until he punched her in the stomach when she was eight months pregnant with Eric. She called the police and he went to jail. “He didn't get as much time as I thought because his lawyers said he had some kind of mental illness.” He does not have a job and has been in jail before.

At two weeks old, Eric should have all possible futures open to him in America, a culture that believes life outcome is determined by the individual alone. In reality, this infant boy already is not in the trajectory that leads to college or work; he's at the beginning of the pathway to prison—or, if not incarceration, a life on the margins. If Eric is imprisoned 18 years from now, no one is likely to look at the risks he faced in his early years or the disadvantages of his childhood circumstances. He will be another bad youth to be punished for his criminal acts. It will be too late then to think

of what could have been done back when Eric lacked stimulation and proper nurturing at two weeks old or when he began having behavioral or emotional problems at school or when he fell behind, got suspended and dropped out, or when he received little positive attention or guidance from the adults in his community. It will be too late then to realize that interventions known to make a difference might well have neutralized the risks and put him on the path to a productive life.

Meet Eric and others in Cass's and Curry's case studies in Part II.

Frankie

I watched the flow of children through my courtroom. But it took some time for me to actually understand the interplay (complicity, if you will) of two primary feeders into the Pipeline: the juvenile justice system and the child welfare system. Let me tell you about Frankie who first came before me at the age of 10 (now presumed to have the capacity to commit a crime). He was charged with Assault 4 (a misdemeanor). Frankie was born into the child welfare system. Removed from his mother at birth, Frankie spent his first eight years moving from foster home to foster home, getting angrier and more depressed. His angry outbursts landed him in a "therapeutic foster home" placement for kids with behavioral problems. Of course once he was placed, he continued to demonstrate his behavioral issues. He hit staff. The police were called. He was arrested and charges were filed. It is clear that the therapeutic foster home is using the courts to "enforce the rules" and provide much needed respite care. But this created a criminal record for Frankie. Over the next five years, this pattern repeats itself several times. I last saw Frankie six months ago. He presented on two counts of Robbery 2 (felony charges). His lengthy criminal history (created from his behavior in placement) counts to increase his score for the purpose of sentencing. Frankie was facing 206–258 weeks in juvenile state "prison." By the time he is released, Frankie will be almost 18. He has literally been moved through the Pipeline from the cradle—next stop, the adult prison system.

—Chief Judge Patricia Clark of the Juvenile
Division of King County Superior Court, Seattle, Washington

The United States of America does not value and protect all of its children equally or ensure them the basic hope, health care, safety, education and family supports all children need to envisage and achieve a productive future.

- **A child is abused or neglected every 36 seconds, over 880,000 a year.** This is more than the combined populations of Cleveland and Cincinnati. A child dies from abuse or neglect every six hours, about 1,460 a year.
- **A child is born into poverty every 36 seconds.** Our 13 million "other America" poor children far exceed the combined populations of Haiti and Liberia. Our 5.6 million children living in extreme poverty equals the combined population of seven U.S. states: Wyoming, Vermont, North Dakota, Alaska, South Dakota, Delaware and Montana plus the District of Columbia—the cap-

ital of the “free” world. Children who live in households with annual incomes less than \$15,000 are 22 times more likely to be neglected or abused than those with incomes of \$30,000 or more.

- ***A baby is born without health insurance every 47 seconds; 90 percent of the nine million uninsured children live in working families*** and a majority in two parent families. Forty American states each have fewer than nine million people.
- ***A child or teen is killed by a firearm about every three hours—almost eight a day.*** Every four days 32 children and teens die from guns in an invisible, relentless stream of violence equivalent to the tragic Virginia Tech massacre but without the outcry. Over 200 million guns saturate our nation’s communities and homes, leaving none of us safe.
- ***Every minute a baby is born to a teen mother.*** Children having children would fill up the city of Atlanta each year.
- ***Every two minutes a baby is born at low birthweight.*** The U.S. ranks 24th among industrialized nations in infant mortality and 22nd in low birthweight babies. Yet our political leaders in both parties continue to refuse to ensure *all* pregnant women prenatal and postpartum care to help assure all children a healthy start in life.

These statistics reflect children of every race, place and family type. There are more White poor children and victims of gun violence than Black or Latino children. But minority children fare far worse and are at greatest risk of being sucked into the Cradle to Prison Pipeline. ***The most dangerous place for a child to try to grow up in America is at the intersection of race and poverty.***

Pervasive Poverty and Racial Disparities

Poor children of color are the canaries in America’s deep mines of child neglect and racial and economic injustice. At critical points in their development, from birth through adulthood, millions of these children confront a multitude of disadvantages and risks including poverty and its many stresses: single, teen or unstable families; no or poor health care; lack of early education and enrichment; child abuse and neglect; failing schools that don’t teach them to read, write or compute; grade retention, suspension and expulsion; questionable special education placements or dropping out; unaddressed mental health problems; absent fathers or incarcerated parents; violent neighborhoods; and disproportionate involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. These accumulated and convergent risks form a Cradle to Prison Pipeline,

A Black boy born in 2001 has a 1 in 3 chance of going to prison in his lifetime; a Latino boy a 1 in 6 chance; and a White boy a 1 in 17 chance.

trapping these children in a trajectory that leads to marginalized lives, imprisonment and often premature death.

- Black babies are almost four times as likely as White babies to have their mothers die in childbirth and are more than twice as likely as White babies to be born at very low birthweight and to die before their first birthday.
- Black children are more than three times as likely as White children to be born into poverty and to be poor, and are more than four times as likely to live in extreme poverty. One in 3 Latino babies and 2 in 4 Black babies are born into poverty; 1 in 4 Latino children and 1 in 3 Black children are poor. Between 2000–2006, poor Latino children increased by more than 500,000 (to 4.1 million) and poor Black children increased 132,000 (to 3.8 million).
- Latino children are three times as likely and Black children are 70 percent more likely to be uninsured than White children.
- Nine in 10 uninsured Latino children and 3 in 4 uninsured Black children have a working parent. Almost three-quarters of Latino children and more than half of Black children have a parent who works full-time throughout the year.
- Twice as many Black children are in foster care as we would expect given their representation among all children. They represent 16 percent of the general population but 32 percent of the foster care population.
- Children who age out of foster care are less likely to graduate from high school or college, experience more serious mental health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder, than children generally; are less likely to receive adequate health and mental health care; are more likely to experience homelessness; and to be involved in the criminal justice system.
- A Black boy born in 2001 has a 1 in 3 chance of going to prison in his lifetime; a Black girl has a 1 in 17 chance. A Latino boy born in 2001 has a 1 in 6 chance of going to prison in his lifetime; a Latino girl has a 1 in 45 chance.
- About 580,000 Black males are serving sentences in state or federal prison, while fewer than 40,000 Black males earn a bachelor's degree each year. One in 3 Black men, 20–29 years old, is under correctional supervision or control.
- Black juveniles are about four times as likely as their White peers to be incarcerated. Black youths are almost five times as likely to be incarcerated as White youths for drug offenses.
- According to a Harvard Civil Rights Project and Urban Institute report, only 50 percent of Black and 53 percent of Latino students graduated from high school on time with a regular diploma in 2001.
- When Black children do graduate from high school, they have a greater chance of being unemployed and a lower chance of going directly to full-time college than White high school graduates.

- *Only 14 percent of Black, 17 percent of Latino and 42 percent of White 4th graders are reading at grade level; and only 11 percent of Black, 15 percent of Latino, and 41 percent of White 8th graders perform at grade level in math.*
- Homicide is the leading cause of death among Black males 15–34. Black males ages 15–19 are almost four times as likely as their White peers to die from a firearms injury and are six times as likely to be homicide victims. Young White males are twice as likely to commit gun suicide as young Black males.
- Of the 1.5 million children with an incarcerated parent in 1999, Black children were nearly nine times as likely to have an incarcerated parent as White children; Latino children were three times as likely as White children to have an incarcerated parent.
- A child with an incarcerated parent is six to nine times as likely as a child whose parent was not incarcerated to become incarcerated him/herself.

A Need for a Comprehensive Continuum of Support from Birth to Adulthood

Children and families do not come in pieces or neat packages that fit one or another “program” or “strategy.” They are a complex amalgam of biological potential and environmental realities, of culture and family and community role models, of assets and risks. Analyzing causes and effects, and understanding the links among all these factors, requires separating them into subject areas, systems or knowledge areas. That is how data are gathered and kept, professionals are trained, programs are funded, budgets are made and services administered. But we must not lose sight of the whole child.

Like an insurance company’s actuarial chart, it is possible to predict from “risk factors” the likelihood of a child ending up stuck in the Cradle to Prison Pipeline. Much research and Cass’s and Curry’s case studies show major risk factors to be:

- ☐ poverty, especially extreme poverty;
- ☐ family composition where single parents, teenage parents, alcohol- or substance-abusing parents, a parent in prison, a parent abandoning the home—all predict increased delinquency;
- ☐ lack of health care, from prenatal care for pregnant women to preventive screening for children and youth of all ages to detect illnesses that block learning, hearing, seeing or concentrating;
- ☐ babies born at low birthweight, which is a risk factor for later physical, developmental and learning problems;
- ☐ abuse or neglect during childhood that goes unnoticed or untreated and fueled by poverty;

- ❑ foster care placements when families break down (especially in families not related to the children) risk abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, low self-esteem, anger and poor social relationships;
- ❑ poor school quality where not reading at grade level, failing or acting out are met with police intervention, and suspensions or expulsions leading to dropping out altogether;
- ❑ few timely and quality mental health program interventions in communities to provide care in a timely manner to prevent or interrupt negative behavior or remediate problems causing children to get into trouble;
- ❑ the juvenile justice system which cements many children's sense of hopelessness and offers too few positive programs, too late, to change the Pipeline's trajectory; and
- ❑ throughout all these major risk factors is the disparate treatment of children of color.

Research also shows that if a child has one or a few of these risk factors, while potentially harmful, there's a good chance that the child's resiliency and some intervention by a teacher, a counselor, a mentor, a relative, a pastor or some other adult offering encouragement, assistance and guidance can save that child from falling into or staying in the Pipeline. CDF's *Beat the Odds* celebrations of and scholarships for children overcoming unbelievable obstacles attest to the power of one caring adult in a child's life. *But a young child exposed to six or more of these risk factors is ten times as likely to commit a violent act by age 18 as one who experiences only one or a few risk factors. In a hospital nursery, behind the glass of newborns in 2001, that one in three Black boy babies and one in six Latino boy babies will end up in the Pipeline and in prison is a national tragedy. Unless it is addressed head on, it will disempower the Black and Latino communities and undermine family stability and child socialization. The challenge for each of us and for the nation is to prevent it—for preventable it is.*

Case Study Findings in Ohio and Mississippi: A Guide for Action

Julia Cass's and Connie Curry's investigations of children in the Pipeline in Ohio and Mississippi in 2003 and 2004 and our research underscore the critical need to devote attention and shift resources from locking up children and youth to getting them on the right track and helping them stay there. They found:

- Many of the young men and women in the juvenile justice system never were in the pipeline to college. They were not derailed from the right track; they never got on it.
- Intervention is important in early childhood while the brain is still growing and behavioral patterns are being formed. A lot of a child's future life story is written by the third or fourth grade.
- Many Black and Latino children are behind when they enter kindergarten.
- Mental health and emotional problems are a major gateway to the Prison Pipeline. When school, family or community resources aren't there to help, these children are dumped into the juvenile justice system.

- Children who have not learned self-control by the age of eight are at high risk of delinquency and incarceration. Teachers know who they are, but there is no structure for getting help. These children are more likely to be suspended.
- Children know by about the third grade whether they are part of the mainstream or of another, more marginal world. Those who are routinely disciplined or struggle with schoolwork mentally drop out at this point. They actually leave school in the ninth grade, the major exit ramp from the path to college. The ninth grade is also the school year when many youth commit their first criminal offenses.
- The behavior teachers see as disruptive and disrespectful may be difficult to manage but knowing the children makes their behavior understandable and reveals other ways to work with them.
- Truancy—being out of school—is the number one predictor of delinquency. When teenagers drop out of school, they put themselves at the bottom of the economic ladder, probably for life, and are much more likely to be detained and incarcerated, especially if they hang out on risk saturated street corners.
- Zero tolerance school discipline policies don't improve school achievement or teach a lesson to the offender; they contribute to the Pipeline to Prison by pushing students out of school.
- School systems are criminalizing school misbehavior, with police officers stationed at schools arresting students for behavior that used to be handled in the principal's office.
- America's deeply ingrained philosophy that just getting tough is the way to stop misbehavior rarely works, especially with children. The political pendulum swings from more to less punishment but the paradigm itself is worn out and a new one has not taken its place.
- Despite the image of super predators and dangerous hallways, most students suspended from school and most juveniles in detention did not commit violent offenses or put the safety of others at risk.
- Anger runs like a river through the stories of virtually all the children profiled and of many of their parents.
- Teenagers will seek respect wherever they can find it.
- Young people may be serviced and diagnosed but they also need real relationships, not just required ones. Thousands of children grow up without a single adult, apart from a mother or grandmother, taking a sustained interest in guiding them and sharing their joys and sorrows.
- The juvenile justice system is clogged with cases that don't belong there. Judges and veteran public defenders say that perhaps 30 percent of cases that now are brought to court used to be resolved within families, neighborhoods or schools.

- Youth prisons don't have to be abusive to be effective. Community- and family-based programs are more effective in changing a juvenile's course.
- The deeper a youth gets into the Prison Pipeline, the harder it is to get out. Not only do they have fewer choices, they don't see the choices that do exist.
- Even with sincere resolve to change and stay out of trouble, it is difficult to separate from an existing network and identity. Youth coming back from incarceration need a lot of support.
- Racial disproportion runs through every system—the children behind in kindergarten, those who are suspended and expelled, those who drop out and don't graduate, and those who go to juvenile detention and adult prison. It is possible to identify decision points when disparate treatment takes place.

An Ounce of Prevention Is Most Cost-Effective in Long Run

Education costs less than ignorance, preventive health care far less than emergency rooms, preventive family services less than out-of-home care, and Head Start much less than prisons.

- The average annual per child cost of a mentoring program is \$1,000.
- The cost of providing a year of employment training for unemployed youths is \$2,492.
- The annual per child cost of a high quality after-school program is \$2,700.
- The average cost of ensuring that a low-income family has affordable housing is \$6,830.
- The average annual per child cost of Head Start is \$7,028.
- The annual per child cost for a high quality comprehensive full-day, full-year early childhood education program is \$13,000.
- The average annual per prisoner cost is \$22,650. States spend on average almost three times as much per prisoner as per public school pupil.

It's time for America to do the right and cost-effective thing by investing in children now. That will happen only when advocates for children stand up together and make it happen.

2015 Millennium Development Goals: A Policy Agenda for Dismantling the Pipeline

Millions of our children are bleeding from many wounds that we have the means but not the love and will as a nation to prevent and heal. Our Creator did not make two classes of children. It is our responsibility and within our power to make our nation see and protect all our children as the sacred gifts they are and not just as fodder for war, the prison industry or as a consumer market. We adults must regain our moral bearing and teach our children that the most important things in life are not things but

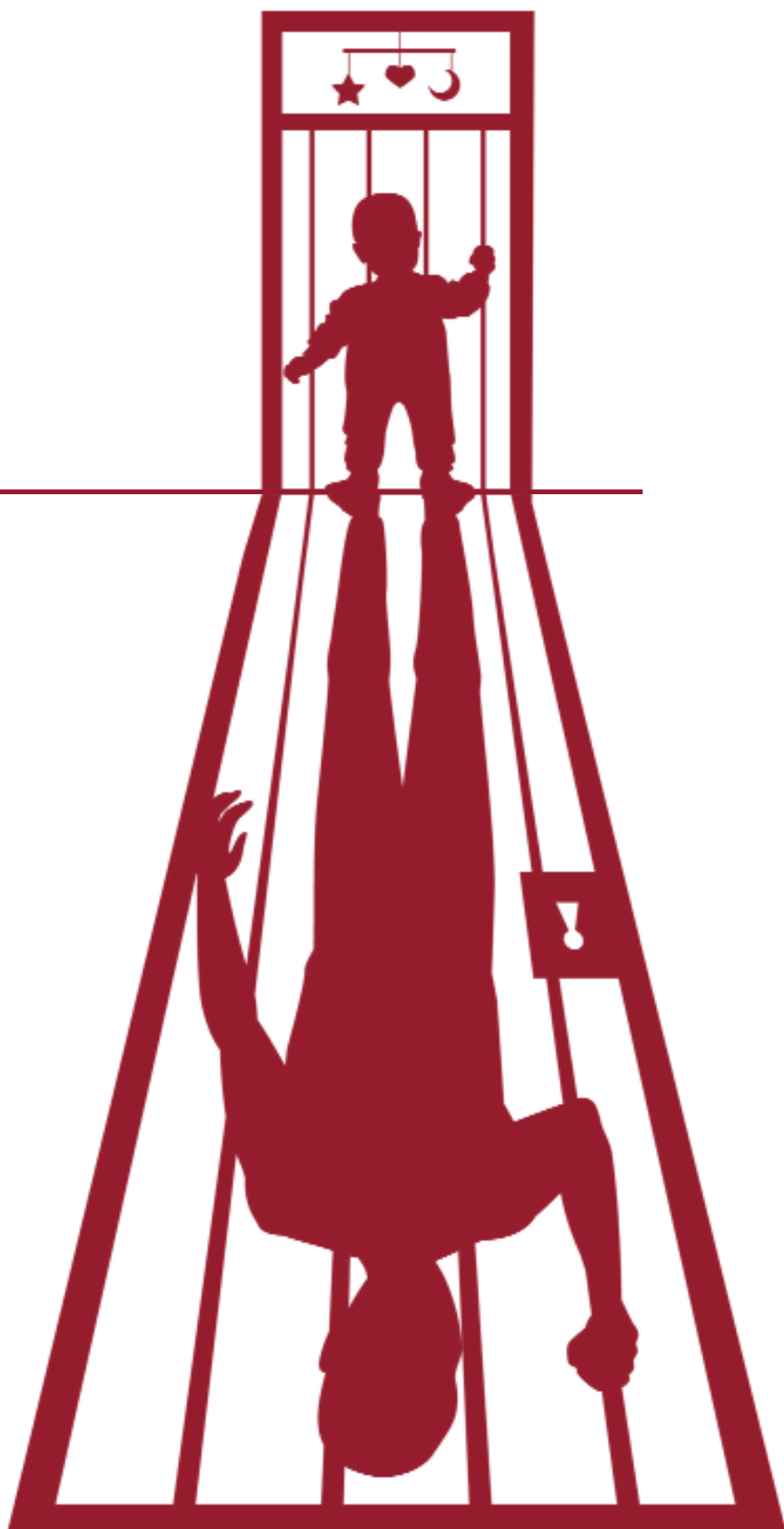
love, justice, respect, service and integrity. We must challenge ourselves, our families, religious, cultural, media and government leaders, and citizens to make our children's health, safety, education, family and community life our overarching national purpose. Nations of the world have agreed on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to, among other things, reduce child and maternal mortality and end extreme global poverty by 2015. We hope the United States will lead in assuring their achievement and set and honor similar goals in our nation for our own poor, uninsured and poorly educated children. **Every citizen must demand that our leaders commit, as a condition of our vote, to:**

- Ensure every child and pregnant woman in America health insurance for all medically necessary services now.
- Lift every child from poverty by 2015; half by 2010.
- Get every child ready for school through full funding of quality Early Head Start and Head Start, child care and new investments in quality preschool education for all.
- Protect all children from neglect, abuse and other violence and ensure them the permanent families they need when their families break down.
- Make sure every child can read by fourth grade and can graduate from school able to succeed at work and in life.
- Provide every child safe, quality after-school and summer programs so they can learn, serve, work and stay out of trouble.
- End child hunger through adequate child and family nutrition investments.
- Ensure every child a place called home and every family decent affordable housing.
- Ensure families the supports needed to be successful in the workplace, including health care, child care, education and training.
- Create jobs with a living wage.

All of these achievable goals will be costly but we *can* afford it. We do not have a money problem in America, we have a values problem. Repealing and not extending the tax cuts for the top one percent of the wealthiest taxpayers could provide \$57 billion of the entire estimated \$75 billion policy agenda listed above. The war in Iraq already has cost over \$450 billion through 2007.

Part I

Chapter 2



Faces of Children at Risk of or in the Pipeline

Unless otherwise noted, photographs are by Steve Liss, a 30-year veteran photographer for *Time* Magazine. We recommend his moving book, *No Place for Children: Voices from Juvenile Detention* (University of Texas Press, 2005).



Poverty

Poverty is the largest driving force behind the *Cradle to Prison Pipeline* crisis, exacerbated by race. Although a majority of poor children live in working families playing by the rules, they cannot earn enough to escape poverty. A minimum wage job pays only 58.9 percent of the federal poverty level for a family of four. Livable wages and increases in income supplements like the Earned Income and Child Tax Credits and work supports like child care and health care can close the poverty gap.

Child poverty in America continues to grow. In 2006, 17.4 percent of children in America, 13 million children (one in six), were poor. Today there are 1.2 million more children living in poverty than there were in 2000, an increase of 11 percent. Children under the age of five remain more likely to be poor than older children, with 4.2 million living in poverty, one out of every five.

More than half of all poor children live in 10 states:

Ten states with the greatest number of poor children, 2005-2006

	Number	Percent
California	1,697,024	18.1%
Texas	1,527,262	23.9
New York	888,344	20.0
Florida	689,315	17.5
Illinois	543,373	17.1
Ohio	508,703	18.7
Georgia	484,525	20.2
Pennsylvania	464,686	16.9
Michigan	445,142	18.3
North Carolina	429,169	20.2

Ten states (and the District of Columbia) with the highest child poverty rates, 2005-2006

	Number	Percent
District of Columbia	36,678	32.6%
Mississippi	220,420	29.5
Louisiana	298,228	27.8
New Mexico	127,823	25.6
West Virginia	96,386	25.2
Oklahoma	212,672	24.3
Arkansas	164,545	24.3
Texas	1,527,262	23.9
Alabama	253,108	23.0
Kentucky	223,296	22.8
Tennessee	322,483	22.7





There are more poor White (4.2 million) than Black (3.8 million) or Latino children (4.1 million) although Black and Latino children are disproportionately poor. Poverty afflicts rural, urban and suburban areas. U.S. child poverty rates exceed those of all other (and less) wealthy industrialized nations and are a national disgrace. We need leaders and citizens who will commit to ending child poverty by 2015 in the richest nation on earth.

Child poverty is not inevitable. It's a national choice that we can change with political and moral leadership.

In the richest nation on earth, 35.3 percent of Black children, 28.0 percent of Latino children and 10.8 percent of White, non-Latino children live in poverty. Almost half of Louisiana's and Mississippi's Black children are poor.

Number and Rate of Children Living in Poverty in 2006

Ranked by number poor:			Ranked by poverty rate:		
State	Number	Rate	State	Number	Rate
Black Children			Black Children		
United States	3,776,153	35.3%	United States	3,776,153	35.3%
Georgia	276,929	33.6	Louisiana	201,830	48.4
Texas	275,457	34.8	Mississippi	160,287	47.6
Florida	266,813	32.0	Oklahoma	35,312	46.1
New York	259,728	32.0	Minnesota	36,453	45.3
Illinois	220,177	38.8	Wisconsin	50,369	44.9
Louisiana	201,830	48.4	Kentucky	38,829	44.5
North Carolina	189,568	36.1	Missouri	84,620	43.0
California	178,111	28.5	Arkansas	56,589	42.6
Michigan	171,849	40.7	Ohio	168,021	42.0
Ohio	168,021	42.0	District of Columbia	33,088	41.7
Latino Children (may be of any race)			Latino Children (may be of any race)		
United States	4,112,200	28.0%	United States	4,112,200	28.0%
California	1,133,514	26.3	Montana	3,150	42.3
Texas	972,344	36.1	Kentucky	10,622	40.1
New York	299,317	34.0	Tennessee	25,546	39.8
Florida	193,806	22.3	Oklahoma	34,521	37.5
Arizona	185,672	29.3	Pennsylvania	66,609	37.1
Illinois	148,831	22.2	Massachusetts	58,420	35.7
Colorado	95,628	23.7	Rhode Island	14,827	35.5
New Jersey	87,013	26.6	Arkansas	17,541	34.8
New Mexico	79,405	31.9	Wisconsin	31,157	34.7
Georgia	70,939	39.2	Texas	972,344	33.7
White, non-Latino Children			White, non-Latino Children		
United States	4,506,802	10.8%	United States	4,506,802	10.8%
Ohio	287,316	13.6	West Virginia	86,170	24.4
New York	269,581	11.4	Kentucky	162,406	19.6
California	241,847	8.3	Oklahoma	99,078	18.1
Texas	240,752	9.9	Arkansas	81,785	17.7
Pennsylvania	223,096	10.8	Maine	41,895	16.5
Michigan	206,928	11.9	Tennessee	161,671	16.1
Florida	204,570	10.3	Mississippi	53,416	14.1
Indiana	165,054	13.6	Indiana	165,054	13.6
Kentucky	162,406	19.6	Louisiana	80,406	13.6
Tennessee	161,671	16.1	Ohio	287,316	13.6

Source: 2006 American Community Survey

Note: Poverty measures in the American Community Survey are derived from 12 monthly samples and are not comparable to the calendar year estimates from the March ASEC. Calculations by CDF.





Child poverty is costly. Every year that 13 million children live in poverty costs the nation \$500 billion in lost productivity. Child poverty could be eliminated for \$55 billion a year and could be paid for by the tax cuts currently received by the top one percent of taxpayers. The \$100 billion a year we are spending on the Iraq war could lift every child in America from poverty twice over.

Race

Racial disparity runs through every major system impacting children's life chances: limited access to health care; lack of early Head Start and quality preschool experiences; children waiting in foster care for permanent families; and failing schools with harsh discipline policies that suspend, expel and discourage children who drop out and don't graduate and push more children into juvenile detention and adult prison. We must identify key decision points where disparate treatment of poor children of color can and must be systematically addressed and monitored.





Photo © David Rae Morris

A black boy born in 2001 has a 1 in 3 chance of going to prison in his lifetime; a Latino boy a 1 in 6 chance; and a White boy a 1 in 17 chance. Black juveniles are about four times as likely as their White peers to be incarcerated. Black youths are almost five times and Latino youths are more than twice as likely to be incarcerated as White youths for drug offenses. Today, 580,000 Black males are serving sentences in state or federal prison, while fewer than 40,000 Black males earn a bachelor's degree each year.

Black children are twice as likely as White children to be put in programs for mental retardation; almost twice as likely to be retained in a grade; three times as likely to be suspended; and 50 percent more likely to drop out of school. Although Black children constitute 16 percent of the child and youth population, they constitute 32 percent of those in foster care. Minority youth make up 39 percent of the juvenile population but are 60 percent of committed juveniles.





Single Parents

Black babies are almost twice as likely as White babies to be born to teen parents and grow up in single parent households. Single mother households are almost six times as likely to be poor as two parent households. Latino children are 40 percent more likely than White children to grow up in single parent homes; 56 percent of Black children, 29 percent of Latino children, and 21 percent of White children live in single parent households.

Each year over 400,000 babies are born to teen mothers. Teen birth rates dropped significantly between 1991 and 2004 although out of wedlock rates have increased. Today, 35.8 percent of all babies, 68.8 percent of Black babies, 46.4 percent of Latino babies, 62.3 percent of American Indian babies, and 30.5 percent of White babies are born to unmarried mothers.





Although many single parents are successfully raising children, children need the emotional and financial support and guidance of fathers as well as mothers. Teen pregnancy prevention and parenting preparation and support measures should be addressed to males and females. Poverty and basic skills levels are the largest predictors of who will become a teen parent and hope is the best contraceptive. Young people need both the capacity and the motivation to resist self limiting actions. They need to have a sense of a positive future they can attain and the supports to strive for it.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Need Support

There are 2.5 million grandparents raising their grandchildren; 963,000 of these children have no parent in the household. They need support. Strengthening kinship networks is crucial to keeping children out of the child welfare system and the juvenile and criminal justice systems.





Unmet Health and Mental Health Needs

If your family has money, you get psychiatric intervention.... If they don't, you get the prison psychologist.

– Ed Latessa, University of Cincinnati criminologist

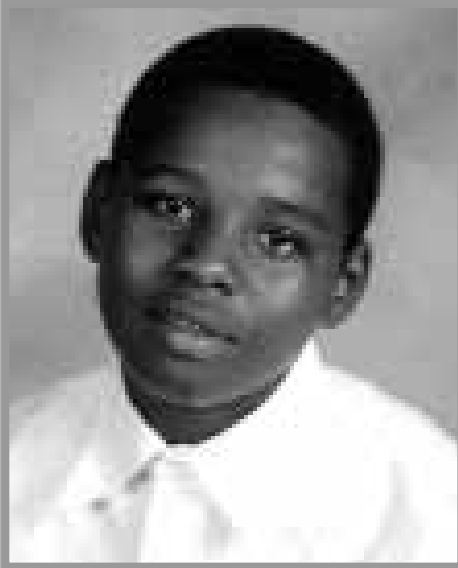
The future of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast does not depend on structures. Our future depends on our children. If we do not provide the safe, nurturing, predictable and enriched experiences these children need, and if we do not arm our caregivers, educators and mental health providers with the tools they need to understand, engage, educate and heal traumatized children, all these new buildings will be filled with struggling children growing into adulthood expressing only a fraction of their true potential.

**– Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D., Senior Fellow,
The Child Trauma Academy, Houston, Texas**

In 2006, the number of uninsured children from birth through age 18 rose for the second year in a row. Another 707,000 children have become uninsured, bringing the total to more than 9.4 million uninsured children in America. This increase is more than double the jump from 2004 to 2005. It is a national disgrace that the richest nation on earth has actually increased the number of uninsured children, preventing them from getting the critical health coverage they need to grow and thrive.

Tavis Smiley's Covenant with Black America makes health security the first covenant. We applaud Rep. Bobby Scott from Virginia for introducing and the entire Congressional Black Caucus, as well as other Congresspeople (64 total), for co-sponsoring the *All Healthy Children Act* (H.R. 1688) and Senator Bernie Sanders from Vermont for introducing the Senate bill as S. 1564. This pending child health bill is the only bill that would cover *all* nine million uninsured children and pregnant women now, ensure a national health safety net with comprehensive benefits including mental and dental health coverage, and greatly simplify enrollment and retention procedures. It would cost about three months of the Iraq war or one half of the tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires.

More than 1,200 organizations, faith leaders and public officials across the country have endorsed CDF's Healthy Child Campaign. We must finish the job and hold our elected officials accountable in 2008 if they do not stand up for the health of *all* our children *now*.

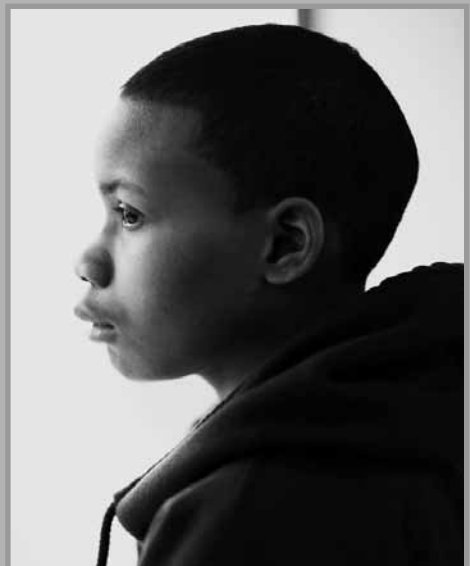


**Deamonte Driver,
12 years old, from Maryland –
Died 2/25/07**

when bacteria from an abscessed tooth infected his brain, when a routine \$80 tooth extraction would have saved him.

**Devante Johnson,
14 years old, from Texas –
Died 3/1/07**

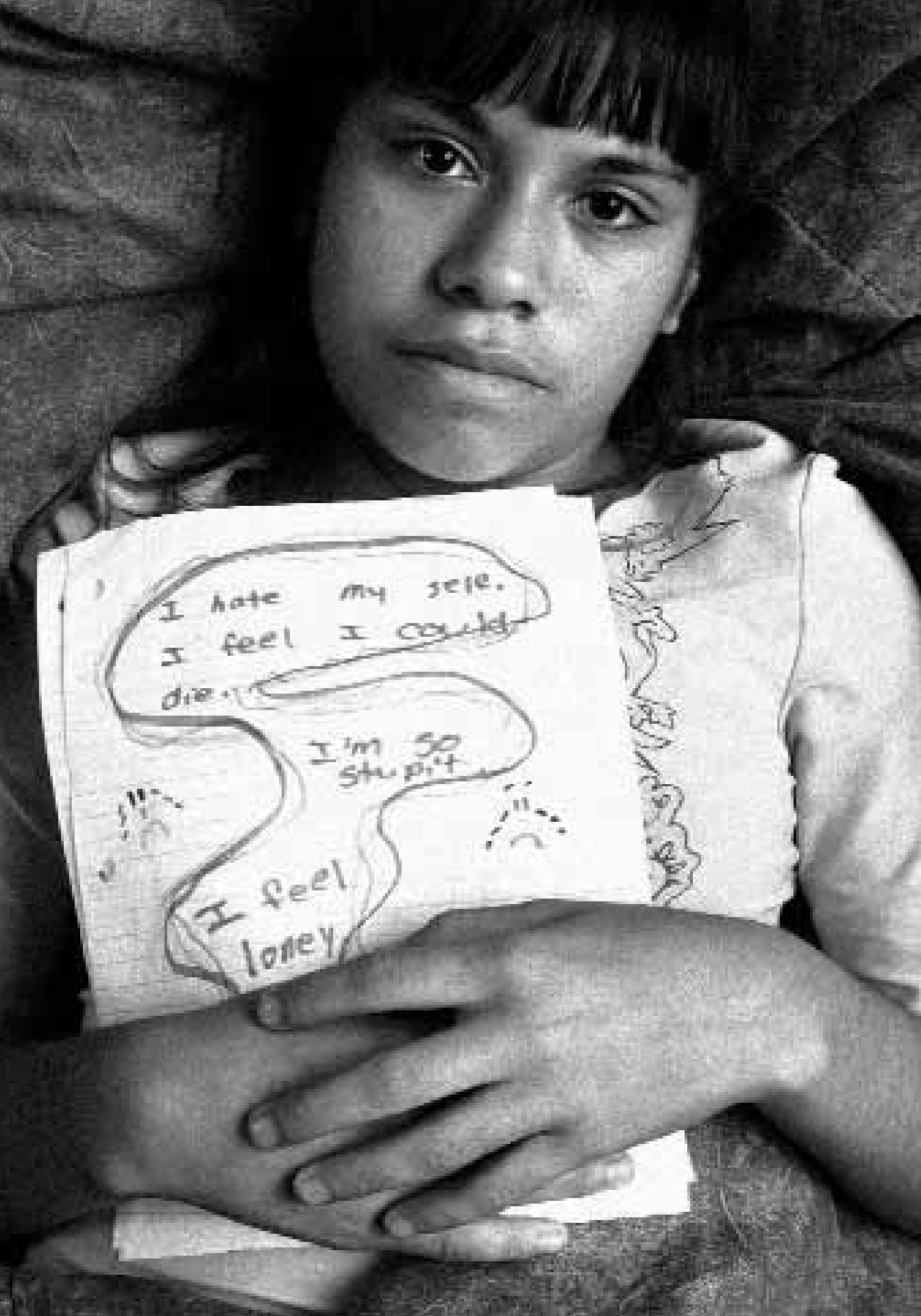
from kidney cancer after being wrongfully denied health coverage and the treatment he desperately needed.





A Congressional study found 15,000 children in juvenile detention facilities, some as young as 7 years old, solely because community mental health services were unavailable. Many parents are forced to declare themselves neglectful and abusive to get their children admitted to institutions in hopes of getting treatment. Too often, once in care, their children experience neglect and sometimes abuse. Youth in a Mississippi detention center were found by the Justice Department and courts to suffer sexual abuse by guards, cruel shackling, harassment and inhumane demands to eat their own vomit. Human rights abuses pervade too many child and youth detention facilities and group homes across America.

Our nation refuses to provide children and youths or adults access to crucial mental health coverage and services to detect and treat early on their problems before they drop out of school or become a threat to others. Lack of access to mental health services for parents and children pushes thousands of poor children into the Cradle to Prison Pipeline every year. Studies have reported that as many as three-fourths of incarcerated youths have mental health disorders and about 1 in 5 has a severe disorder. Latino children have the highest percentage of unmet mental health needs.



I hate my self.
I feel I could
die.

I'm so
stupid

I feel
loney

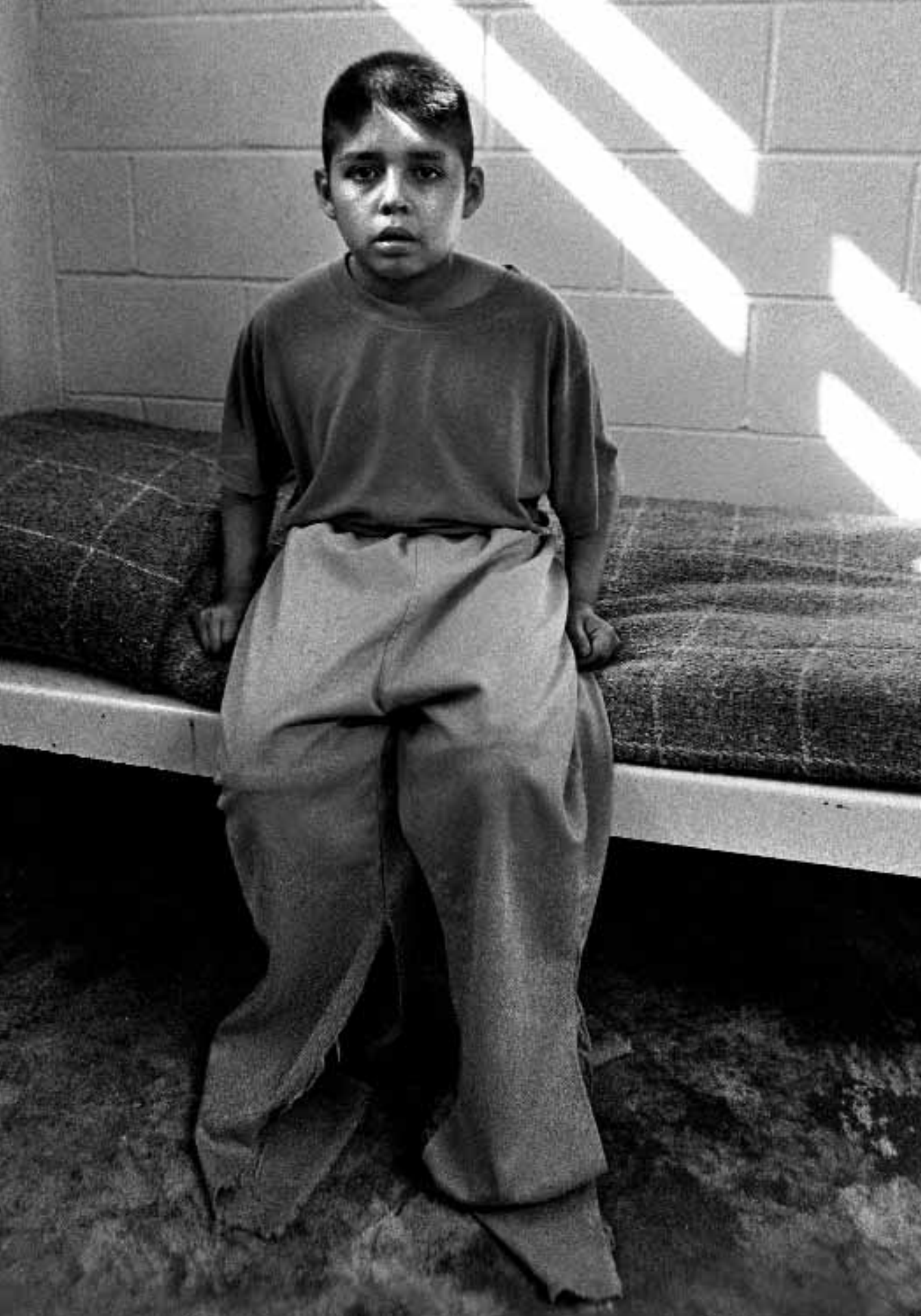


Every child's life is of equal value and every child should have a national health and mental health safety net now as seniors do. Children's chances to survive, thrive and grow should not depend on the compassion of a Governor or wealth of a state or the fickleness of political winds. A compassionate and sensible society must ensure thresholds of decency and protection for every child.

And Katrina's children are still waiting for relief from their post-traumatic stress disorders.



Photo © T.C. Perkins, Jr.



Criminalizing Children at Younger Ages

Schools use detention centers as their discipline. I get calls every week, if not every day, from parents about their children being taken out of school in handcuffs by police.

**–Margaret Burley, Ohio Coalition for the
Education of Children with Disabilities**

I sat at a desk and I had kids I couldn't even see...They weren't tall enough. I wondered, "What in the world could you have done?"

**–Mark Reed, Juvenile Court Administrator,
Hamilton County, Ohio**

A 5-year-old girl in St. Petersburg, Florida, was arrested and handcuffed by three police officers after she had stopped her temper tantrum and before her mother could arrive at school to consult with teachers. A 10-year-old girl was arrested in Philadelphia for having scissors in her backpack, which she had brought for use in class.

Have we adults lost our common sense, arresting and handcuffing 5-, 6-, 8- and 10-year-old children on school grounds and criminalizing children at younger and younger ages for offenses that used to be handled by schools or in communities?

One-size-fits-all zero tolerance school discipline policies need to be re-examined and changed. While it is important that schools be safe and orderly learning environments, the majority of suspensions, expulsions and arrests are for nonviolent offenses. Community and faith leaders need to meet with school officials to develop more child-appropriate discipline policies and procedures. Putting troubled children without treatment out of school just creates more troubled children.





Homelessness

An estimated 1.7 million children run away or are cast out of their homes every year; more than 3 out of 4 of them return home within a week. On any given night, 200,000 children are homeless, 1 in every 4 of the homeless population. Shelters are no place for children, who need a stable, safe place called home.

Many children and teens aging out of the child welfare system or leaving juvenile or adult detention often lack the most basic or adequate community transition supports. Targeted actions to meet the needs of young children at risk of entering the system and of older youth aging out of the system are crucial.





Girls in the Pipeline

Boys are five times as likely to be incarcerated as girls. But in 2003 almost 15,000 girls were incarcerated, 1 of every 7 juveniles in residential placement. While programs targeted to males are crucial and need to be expanded, attention and targeted services also must be provided to girls.

A Black girl has a 1 in 17 chance of going to prison in her lifetime; a Latino girl a 1 in 45 chance.





Substance Abuse

Drugs, tobacco and alcohol lead our children down the wrong path. Disconnected youth, lacking a decent education or high school degree, or job training skills, and social support systems or mentors, often resort to self-destructive acts. They thrive in the underground economy, denied a chance for honest work, a useful education or hope. In 2003, 74 percent of adult males arrested tested positive for drugs or alcohol.

Alcohol and other substance abuse treatment for youth and for parents and adults is in too short supply.





Juvenile Detention

A jail or detention cell after a child or youth gets into trouble is the only universally guaranteed child policy in America. It's time to guarantee every child in the richest nation on earth the health and mental health, early childhood experience, quality education, safe and stable housing and safe neighborhoods, and quality out-of-school time care they need to stay out of trouble and avoid imprisonment.

Reliance on punishment and incarceration too often as a first rather than last resort has given the U.S. the largest prison population in the world. In 2006, the United States' inmate population of 2,312,414 exceeded China's, whose population is more than four times as large. We need a paradigm change.





States spend on average nearly three times as much per prisoner as per public school pupil. In some states, the growth in prison costs exceeds the growth in higher education spending. It costs more to detain a child than to provide him a Head Start. What a wrongheaded investment policy.

At mid-year 2006, 837,000 African American men were incarcerated—many of them fathers. Zero tolerance drug laws, unequally applied, combined with poor skills and education, and lack of jobs, often exclude them from contributing to our economy. Reconnecting disconnected youth through education, job training and community support is essential. The increased incarceration of young men of color, disruption of family ties, and loss of ability to find work and vote after prison threaten to disempower minority communities and reverse the gains of the Civil Rights Movement.





Child Gun Deaths

A child or teen is killed by gunfire about every three hours—nearly eight a day. Over 101,000 children and teens have died from gunfire since 1979 with four to five times as many child gun injuries. In 2004, 2,845 children and teens died from guns—more than the number of American military deaths between 2003–2006 in Iraq and Afghanistan.

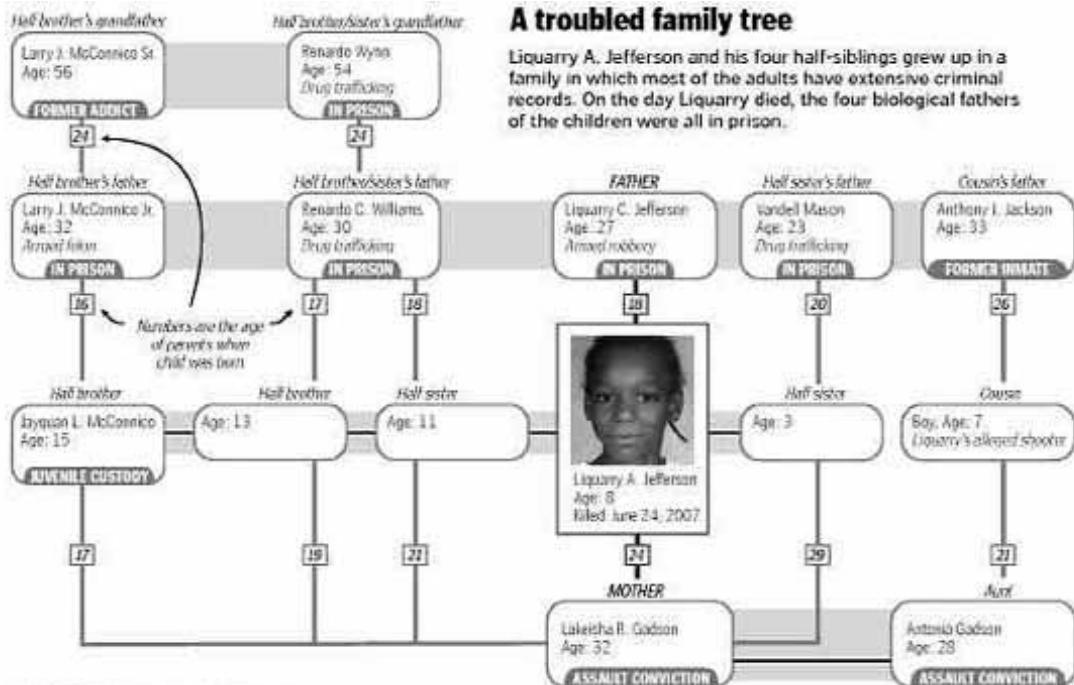
Black males ages 15–19 are about eight times as likely to be gun homicide victims as White males; White males ages 15–19 are twice as likely as Black males to commit suicide with a firearm.

Renewing the assault weapons ban, controlling illegal gun trafficking, funding more community policing and positive community alternatives to the streets for children, teaching nonviolent conflict resolution skills and values in our homes, congregations and schools, and avoiding and opposing violent Internet and video games and messages are all needed steps to controlling the epidemic violence that terrorizes children and adults all across America in the war zones of our cities and rural areas.

Intergenerational Transmission of Violence

The *Boston Globe* recently chronicled the tragic life and death of 8-year-old Liquarry A. Jefferson, killed June 24, 2007—shot to death accidentally by his 7-year-old cousin. Both boys lived in Grove Hill, a violence saturated neighborhood and in a family in which most of the adults have extensive criminal records. On the day Liquarry died, the four biological fathers of Liquarry and his four half siblings were all in prison. The bad news about Liquarry's premature gun death, the article noted, is that "crime in many neighborhoods runs in families, where elders bequeath gang membership, drug abuse, joblessness and brutality to their offspring like a toxic inheritance. In Grove Hill, police estimate that 2.4 percent of the area's 19,000 residents cause most of the serious crime. Many of those people, police say, are related."

While this points to the need for intensive, targeted community law enforcement and social services action in crime saturated neighborhoods and families, the *good news* is that over 97 percent of the children and families are not serious criminals and can be helped to escape the Pipeline with one or more interventions. An unusual initiative underwritten by the Boston Foundation launched in 2003, called the Comprehensive Community Safety Initiative, targeted high crime families "not just with patrol cars, but with social services that might help the next generation break with tradition." But the larger need is to ensure a healthy, safe and fair start for the overwhelming majority of children struggling to grow up in poor neighborhoods everywhere.



A REIGN OF TERROR IN GROVE HALL



- 1 **Oct. 31, 1990:** Kimberly Rae Harbour gang-raped and killed. **Larry McConico Jr.**, 15, the father of Lakeisha Gadson's first child is a witness for the prosecution. He later refused to testify at the suspect's trial and was sentenced to three months in prison for contempt.
- 2 **Jan. 10, 1993:** **Larricia McConico**, 19-year-old sister of Larry McConico, 17, is shot to death.
- 3 **Feb. 15, 1993:** **Larry McConico**, 17, beats and kicks **Antonio Gadson**, 13, the sister of 18-year-old **Lakeisha Gadson**. He gets probation and a suspended sentence.
- 4 **May 22, 1996:** **Lakeisha Gadson**, 20, files a restraining order against **Renardo Williams**, 19, the father of her second son and first daughter, after he beat her.
- 5 **Feb. 20, 1997:** Garrett Marshall beaten and stabbed to death in a friend's apartment over a drug dispute with two 17-year-old men, one is **Liquarry C. Jefferson**, father of **Liquarry A. Jefferson**. Jefferson is imprisoned for manslaughter.
- 6 **June 28, 1998:** **Lakeisha Gadson**, 23, gets probation for assaulting a former girlfriend of **Liquarry C. Jefferson**.
- 7 **Aug. 12, 1998:** **Liquarry C. Jefferson**, 18, beats **Lakeisha Gadson**, 24, with a barbell and belt while she is pregnant with his son.
- 8 **Sept. 28, 2001:** **Lakeisha**, 27, and **Antonio Gadson**, 19, are charged with armed robbery after they were part of a group that beat the staff of a Burger King with broom handles after they had to wait in line for additional food.
- 9 **Aug. 5, 2003:** **Lakeisha Gadson** gets six-month suspended sentence for assaulting police officers who asked her to leave the front steps of her apartment building.
- 10 **Sept. 14, 2003:** **Vondell Mason**, the father of **Liquarry Jefferson's** youngest half sibling, arrested for selling crack cocaine near a school.
- 11 **March 15, 2004:** **Lakeisha Gadson**, 29, her sister **Antonio**, 25, and her 12-year-old son **Jayquan McConico** allegedly beat and stab a woman after an incident involving teasing of the victim's disabled son.
- 12 **April 19, 2004:** **Jayquan McConico**, 12, oldest brother of **Liquarry A. Jefferson**, shot in the leg in drive-by shooting. The boys' aunt, **Antonio Gadson**, is grazed.
- 13 **Aug. 2, 2004:** **William Bendolph** and his stepson shot to death. **Renardo Williams**, 27, the father of two of **Liquarry A. Jefferson's** half siblings, tried and acquitted of the killings.
- 14 **June 24, 2007:** Eight-year-old **Liquarry A. Jefferson** accidentally shot to death by his 7-year-old cousin.

SOURCES: Court records, police records, interviews

AARON APENDO, KATHLEEN HENRIKUS, SCOTT ALLEN/GLOBE STAFF



Community Supports, Role Models and Mentors

Too many children have too few positive alternatives to the streets or positive mentors and role models after school and in summers when parents work. The drug dealers and gang leaders are available and busy seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Families and community institutions must compete with them. The cultural messages that glamorize and normalize gun violence and prison, abusive treatment of women and disrespectful racial and gender stereotypes are relentless. Counter messages and values must be transmitted by anchor institutions in our society so that children have a positive vision of who they are and can become, and grow up with respect for others and for life because they are respected and their lives are valued. Families, faith leaders, women leaders, civil rights leaders, early childhood teachers and educators at all levels must raise their voices against demeaning and destructive cultural messages from within and without our communities and must stop patronizing those who undermine our children's healthy and safe development and perpetuate racial stereotypes and underachievement.

Equally important, we need to open up our congregational, school and community center doors to the children of our community and engage them in purposeful and enriching activities. In summer 2007, 124 CDF Freedom Schools® sites operated by college mentor-teachers served nearly 8,500 children ages 5–16. Vacation Bible Schools need to become *CDF Freedom Schools* sites in every neighborhood where children need quality summer programs and after-school programs throughout the year that foster a love of learning and an ethic of service and achievement.





All children need mothers and fathers and strong positive male and female role models and mentors of all colors and backgrounds in their homes, schools, child serving institutions and public life. They need permanent family connections. They need to see sound examples of who and what they can become from the adults they see in daily life and at important stages in their development. That so few Black and Latino male teachers are in our schools and that so many teachers do not live in the communities of the children they serve needs to be addressed in our diverse society. In the entire state of South Carolina, there are fewer than 200 Black male elementary school teachers.

Continuing and expanded efforts encouraging talented and committed young people to enter teaching and to work with children and youth are crucial—as is stressing the importance of parenting and family.



Photo © T.C. Perkins, Jr.

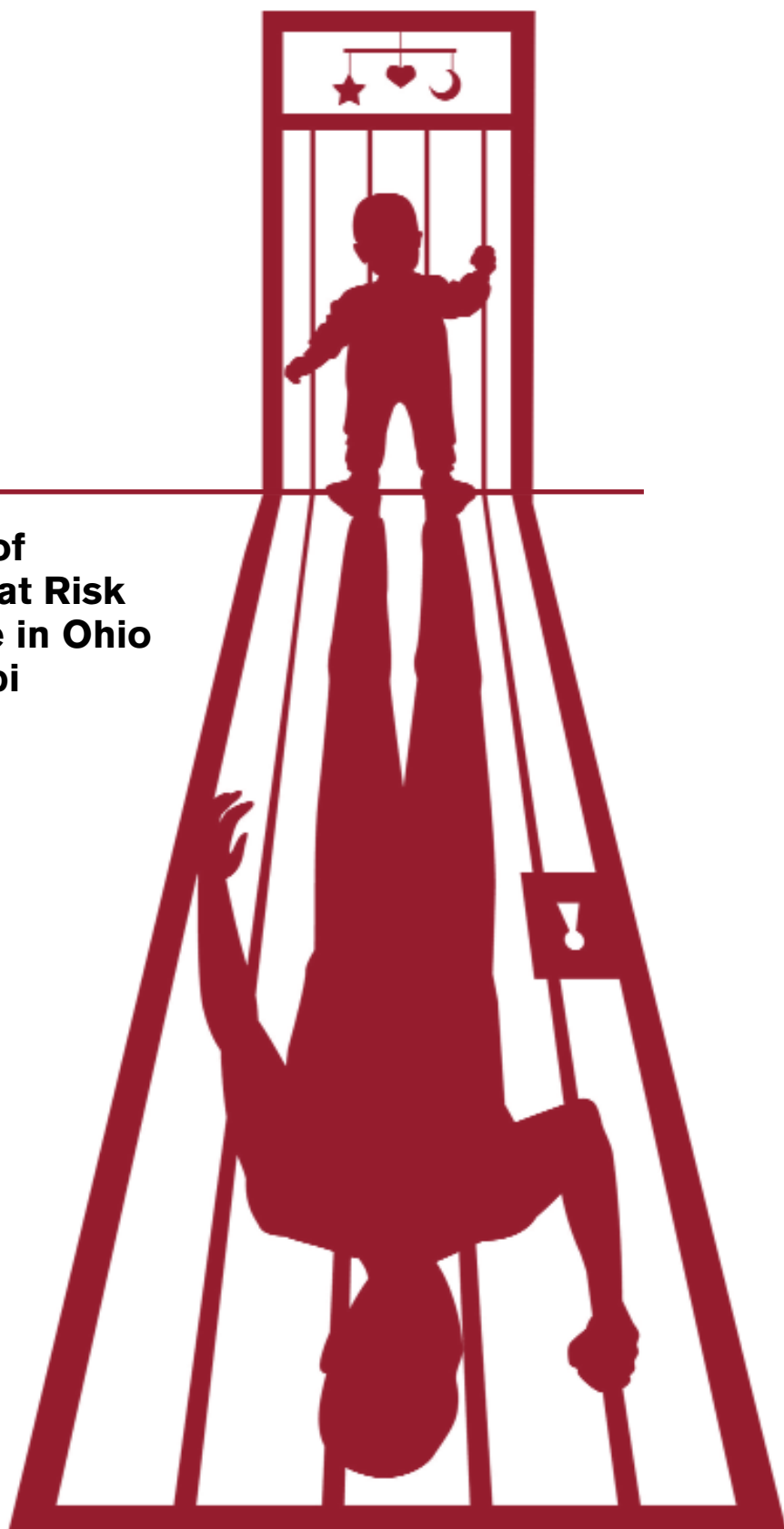


Children need to be empowered and trained to make a difference and to know the difference between service and justice. *CDF Freedom Schools* children in Ohio and all across the country stood up for health coverage for all nine million children in America by visiting the local offices of their members of Congress. In past years, Freedom Schools children have protested gun violence against children in their communities.

Part II

Case Studies of Children in or at Risk of the Pipeline in Ohio and Mississippi

by Julia Cass and
Connie Curry



Early Childhood

The Pipeline Begins: Brain Development and the Earliest Years

Researchers in Life Course criminology are moving away from what John Wright, a professor in the Division of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati, calls “old clichés that poverty predicts crime or economic cycles predict crime.” These researchers draw data from neurology, psychiatry, developmental psychology, sociology, and criminology in an effort to understand more precisely the factors from the beginning of life that predict later incarceration.

Asked to describe a life course that could lead to chronic delinquency and eventual confinement in prison, Wright began with a child, not yet born, whose mother, a product of the pipeline herself, uses drugs, alcohol or tobacco during the pregnancy, explaining that these substances act as poisons to the development of the central nervous system and can retard brain growth. When the child is born, he or she is less likely than other children to be supported, guided, and nurtured if the mother remains addicted, does not get treatment, and other adults are not available to offer support and protection. “Add to this that this child is born into a neighborhood of concentrated poverty, where there also may be environmental dangers like lead paint poisoning, which is another predictor of later criminal behavior,” Wright said. (He and a doctor at Children’s Hospital of Cincinnati found that 39 to 49 percent of children in Over the Rhine, a poor neighborhood in the city, are lead poisoned.)¹

Wright has found that if these children do not get the early intervention, permanence, and stability they need, they are more likely to act out and fail in school from day one because they lack the skills they need to succeed. “Think about what school requires: discipline, the ability to acquire and process information and regurgitate it, self-control, the ability to move from one social clique to another, and follow directions from an authority figure. These are complex skills.” Research in neurology, he says, has shown that skills like delayed gratification and self-control are affected by the

If we could reduce the abuse and neglect in this generation of kids, it would have huge payoffs for our society, not just in terms of mental and physical health but in the area of crime.

– Dr. Frank Putnam
Scientific Director, Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children

injection of drugs and neurotoxins in the fetus and other environmental factors such as growing up in a chaotic or abusive household where self-control and other social skills are not taught.

A child who lacks basic social skills and self-control, he says, “will be ostracized because children are very perceptive about whom they like and don’t like, and this may make him more aggressive.” Such a child is therefore at greater risk of being disciplined, and having repeated, negative interactions with teachers and schools. In terms of risks for later delinquency and incarceration, Wright says, the key developmental factor in childhood is the development of self-control. “Most kids have this skill at a fairly early age; those who don’t—name the problems. Failure to navigate the social landscape in elementary school places a kid at really high risk of bad outcomes later in life—chronic unemployment, relationship problems, incarceration.”

In addition to behavioral problems, he will likely be behind cognitively by the age of five and steadily lose ground after that. This makes it difficult for him to get on to the path leading to college and is a predictor of later incarceration; two-thirds of men and women in prison in 2003 had less than a regular high school diploma, more than twice the rate found in the general adult population. The proportion of prisoners with a diagnosed learning disability is about three times that of the general adult population.²

Every researcher of early childhood emphasizes the importance of early childhood nurturing and stimulation for putting a child on a positive path toward adulthood because they literally help the brain grow, especially between birth and age seven, and even beyond.

“A study on vocabulary and expression noted that parents in a higher economic status tend to use a lot of words, and what you see on growth curves of their children is an exponential growth in what are considered the vocabulary centers of the brain,” explained Wright. “The brains of children born to parents who don’t have great vocabularies or who don’t talk much to them grow, but at a slower rate.” He said it is hard to make up for this deficit after brain growth slows. “This may explain the fourth grade plunge, when schools start to see substantial failures.”

According to Dr. Frank Putnam, a psychiatrist who studies the biological and psychological effects of stress and trauma on child development, enriched early environments are critical not just for learning language but for the capacity to deal with new things and change. He is the scientific director of the Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children in Cincinnati, which evaluates children for child abuse and neglect and assesses prevention programs in the city that send nurses and social workers into the homes of at-risk first-time mothers. Before coming to the Mayerson Center, which is associated with Children’s Hospital of Cincinnati, he spent 20 years in developmental traumatology at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in Washington, D.C.

“The abused kids we studied at NIMH had smaller brains, even when you control for body size, because they don’t have rich connections among the nerve cells,” he said. That is why, he explains, “intervention from ages zero to three is so crucial.”³

Dr. Putnam emphasized that it is well known that being traumatized as a child increases the risk for committing violent crime or being the victim of violent crime. If you go into a women's prison, he noted, you will find over 90 percent of the women there have been victims of abuse and neglect. "If we could reduce the abuse and neglect in this generation of kids, it would have huge payoffs for our society, not just in terms of mental and physical health but in the area of crime."⁴

Neglect is damaging as well, he cautioned. "You see these kids; no adult is reading with them, working with them. They are parked in front of the TV, left to their own devices. That's not the kind of neglect that gets seen by child protective services but it is one that will cost them IQ points."

The importance of stimulation in the first years of life is dramatically underlined in the U.S. Department of Education's study of 22,000 kindergartners in the kindergarten class of 1998–99, which found that Black and Hispanic children were substantially behind their White counterparts in cognitive skills and knowledge *when they entered kindergarten*.

In reading readiness, 15 percent of Black children and Hispanic children were in the top quartile compared with 30 percent of White children. In math, 10 percent of Blacks and 14 percent of Hispanics, compared with 32 percent of Whites, scored in the top range. In general knowledge, 6 percent of Blacks, 12 percent of Hispanics and 34 percent of Whites were in the top quartile. Associated with high scores were the mother's college attendance and graduation, English spoken at home, a two-parent family, and not on public welfare.⁵

Bianca and Her Baby: Starting on the Right Track

The new mother asks Susan Taylor, a home visitor for the Every Child Succeeds™ program, whether she thinks the landlord of an apartment they visited will wait until she gets her first paycheck. She is especially anxious because few landlords will rent to 17-year-olds.

"He said he would," Taylor assures her. "Let's take this one step at a time."

Taylor has been visiting Bianca (not her real name) once a week since Bianca, a slender, pretty young woman, was seven months pregnant. She now has a two-month-old baby girl, and Taylor will continue to visit weekly until the baby is three years old. Taylor, a Black single mother with a two-year-old daughter, visits 30 first-time new mothers who live in the northwest part of Cincinnati, gently showing them parenting skills, plugging them into community services, and helping them deal with what she calls "stressors" in their lives. For Bianca, the stressor is living with her mother.

When Taylor arrived at the second floor apartment of a duplex home in early June, she complimented Bianca on how good the baby looked and picked her up from the new mother's lap. She held her close to her chest and said to Bianca, "If you hold her like this, she feels safer."

Mothers get into the Every Child Succeeds™ program through public service ads, referrals from doctors or child welfare workers, and through word of mouth. They must be first-time mothers, single, poor (up to 300 percent of poverty level for a family of two) and have had little or late prenatal care. “Most of our mothers have these risk factors and more—poor social supports, history of mental illness, drug and alcohol use, lots of stressors and crises. They don’t come from an environment where good parenting is the norm,” said Dr. Judith Van Ginkel, the director of the Cincinnati area program. “Sixty percent have a significant history of abuse and neglect themselves, which puts them and their children at a lot of risk. This doesn’t necessarily mean that they will abuse their children but they may associate with men who are abusers.”⁶

Dr. Putnam, who conducts research for the program, added that a third of the mothers, who are screened for depression when they join the program, score in the clinical range. “In the first year, another 15 percent become depressed.” For this reason, Every Child Succeeds™ has developed a pilot program that brings treatment for depression into the homes of these mothers. “This should be replicated everywhere because we know a mother’s depression in the first year profoundly affects attachment and bonding and causes significant problems for these children as they grow up—conduct problems, school performance, anger. Put together a clinically depressed young mother with a baby and virtually no resources and it is a prescription for tragedy.”

Bianca was referred to Every Child Succeeds™ by a caseworker for Children’s Protective Services. According to her and to Taylor, Bianca’s mother got angry about Bianca’s boyfriend, who has been in jail for several months, and “she put me out. That was when I was pregnant. Then she decided she wanted me back home.”

Her mother and a sister came to get her. “I didn’t want to come home and they dragged me. I’m stubborn.” They took her to the Hamilton County Juvenile Court Youth Center, the county’s detention center, as a runaway. “When I got there, my Mom hit me. The lady behind the desk at 2020 (what the youth center is called locally because 2020 is its address) said to her, ‘Ma’am you’re gonna have to stop.’ And she smacked me. My eye got black and my lip was busted, plus I had marks on my neck and scratches where they dragged me. They called the police on my mom. They accused her of child abuse and called 241-KIDS (the phone number for Children’s Protective Services). When they found out I was pregnant, they referred me to Susan.”

The tension continued between mother and daughter and, when the baby was two weeks old, Bianca and her daughter disappeared. “I finally found them at the baby’s father’s mother’s house,” Taylor said. “She and her mother had gotten into another argument over the father calling the house.”

Many of Taylor’s mothers have problems with their mothers, she said. “Sometimes (the older mothers) are so fed up by their daughters’ behavior or so angry that they got pregnant, which many of them have done, that they won’t help them. I had to show Bianca how to change diapers. Her mother wouldn’t show her. Her mother said, ‘This is *your* baby.’” Taylor tries to break the cycle of poor parenting. “When my mothers talk about what their mothers did that they didn’t like, I tell them, ‘Remember that and do it differently with your children.’”

Dr. Van Ginkel says that Every Child Succeeds™ does not ask the young mothers why they had babies, but from her experience, “with the young and poor women we serve, it often gives them a way to feel sort of special for a short period of time. People make a fuss over them and the baby.” She added that research shows that women who have been abused as children have a higher rate of early pregnancy.

Bianca lived in a number of different neighborhoods growing up but never in public housing, and she went to Montessori schools for a while, suggesting that her mother made an effort to give her a good start in education. She said she got a lot of As and Bs “when I didn’t get in trouble. I got suspended many times but I always kept my grades up.”

Asked why she was suspended, she said, “Fighting. Somebody look at me wrong. I don’t get my way. I had a real bad attitude problem.” At some point, she was sent to Project Succeed, a program for Cincinnati students who are considered unmanageable in their schools. She took classes and met once a week with a psychologist who, she says, “Talked to me and wrote down what I said for an hour so she could get a check.”

As she spoke, the baby, still held by Taylor, began to squawk and Bianca got up and went over to her. “Do you want a bottle?” she asked.

“You are picking up on cues,” Taylor commented. “That’s good.”

Taylor’s current priority for Bianca is finding her a place of her own. She doesn’t want Bianca to take off again, and independent living would make her eligible for more assistance. As it stood, Bianca was a minor living with her mother, whose income made Bianca ineligible for vouchers for discounted day care and other services. When school starts in the fall, she will be unable either to work or go to school because the girl who takes care of the baby now is also a high school student and Bianca can’t afford to pay anyone more. “It is imperative that we get her out by then,” Taylor said.

Her first step was finding an organization that provides funds for housing for underage mothers and children. But to qualify, the mothers must be employed. Bianca once had a job at a fast food restaurant, so Susan drove her there to put in an application. Not yet 18, Bianca needed a work permit from school. She lacks five credits for graduation and is trying to keep up through the city’s computer-based “virtual high school.” Taylor drove her to the school to get the permit, and then back to the restaurant to give it to them.

Once Bianca had the job, she and Taylor went apartment hunting. Taylor had identified some buildings and landlords that

Bianca’s infant daughter is not alone in having a father in jail; one and a half million American children have a parent or parents in prison.

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**–Susan Taylor
Home Visitor, Every Child
Succeeds™ Program**

would allow a 17-year-old to sign a short-term lease. When Bianca brought the baby out to Taylor’s car, Taylor recounted later, she asked her, “Where’s the car seat?” Bianca said she didn’t have one. She then borrowed one from her sister, who was visiting. Later, Taylor found a car seat at the agency where she works and gave it to Bianca. This was just one of the extra benefits Taylor often finds herself providing. Every month, Taylor gives her mothers a parenting aid bag that contains information, books, and toys geared to each child’s age.

Looking back on that first day Bianca borrowed a car seat, Taylor says Bianca got out of the car, picked it up, and jerked it. “I asked, ‘Remember when you were a child asleep and somebody dropped something on the bed?’ She said, ‘Yeah, I hated that.’ I explained that her daughter is a little thing and easily scared. She said, ‘She’ll get over it,’ and I said that was true but at what cost? ‘Think about how what you do affects her.’”

Bianca’s boyfriend called and she spoke softly to him for a few minutes. She said they will get married when he gets out of jail. She would not say why he is there. “My plans for him are: Go back to school. It’s just one year. I don’t care if you’re 19.” She said he has been to jail before but he’s not the type that gets in trouble all the time. (Her infant daughter is not alone in having a father in jail; one and a half million American children have a parent or parents in prison.)⁷

Bianca says she’s too smart to stay at a fast food restaurant for long. (It is an hour round-trip bus ride.) After she graduates from high school, she would like to go to mortuary school to become a coroner or become a certified nurses’ assistant.

“If you work at a nursing home, they will pay for your training and the fee for the test,” Taylor tells her.

When Bianca turns 18, she will be eligible for public housing based on her earned income, food stamps, and cash assistance. “The mothers I visit are not aware of the programs and community services out there that can help them,” Taylor said. “I wouldn’t know myself if I weren’t doing this job.” Bianca is planning to return to school in August and cut back her hours at work, which she will be able to do with some cash assistance.

About her hopes for her daughter, Bianca said, “She’s going to a Montessori school or a private school. She’s going to go to the best schools.”

“Start her at a good day care center,” advised Taylor, describing the one her daughter attends that has “lots of interaction and structured learning things that are fun. She’s two and she already can count to

15, knows her ABCs, and colors. Don't put her in a place where they plunk them in front of the TV to watch *Barney*."

This good center costs \$175 a week for toddlers, nearly a budget breaker for Taylor and certainly for Bianca. "When you move and get the vouchers, we'll look into a good place," Taylor said.

Bianca smiled. "That's good!"

Dr. Putnam said that the median reduction in child abuse and neglect that resulted from home visitation programs was almost 40 percent, citing an analysis of these programs by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.⁸ The Every Child Succeeds™ program in greater Cincinnati, which serves about 1,700 mothers at any given time, covers less than 20 percent of the need, as defined by census data on first-time single mothers in poverty, because of limited funding. For this reason, explained Dr. Van Ginkel, the project limits itself to first-time mothers, reasoning that the benefits will transfer to later children.⁹

After more than an hour's visit, Taylor handed the baby back to Bianca, who followed her downstairs. They were still talking when Taylor got in her car to go visit another young mother. When asked what Taylor has done for her, Bianca said, "She got me a good pediatrician. She got me a car seat. She's helping me move out. She took me to get a job. She helps me set goals for the future. She does a lot."



Mental and Emotional Problems

Early Intakes to the Pipeline

In addition to measuring levels of knowledge and cognitive development, the Department of Education's study of American kindergartners sought to gauge the development of "prosocial" behavior, defined as the ability to form friendships, accept peer ideas, and comfort others. In terms of the Cradle to Prison Pipeline, comforting others, a measure of empathy, is an important ability; lack of empathy is a common characteristic of chronic offenders. The study found that Black and Hispanic kindergartners lagged somewhat behind their White counterparts in these social skills.¹⁰

It is worth noting that problem behavior was relatively infrequent; teachers reported that only 10 to 11 percent of kindergartners argue or fight with teachers often to very often or get angry easily often to very often.¹¹ These are the children Wright and Dr. Putnam consider at high risk for school failure and delinquency.

"Enough is known of certain developmental trajectories that will lead some children to prison or the morgue," Wright says. "Knowing that, what will we do? When you have a clear picture that this child has significant developmental delays or problems with self-control, this is the time to dump services onto him and his family."

In reality, though, it is often the child who gets dumped. Shannon Starkey, senior director of services at the Children's Home of Cincinnati, which has a school for children with mental and behavioral problems, says the Home is considering starting an early childhood day treatment program because of the number of children who are being kicked out—she calls it "dis-enrolled"—from day care.

"We frequently get calls from day care centers saying, 'We don't know what to do with this child,'" Starkey said. "They've got two kids acting out and then others—

"I tell him, 'Don't hit back. Tell the teacher.' He says, 'I tried to tell the teacher but she didn't listen to me.' He gets so angry he starts crying and gets so upset it's hard to understand him, and the teachers won't try to figure out what the problem is because they've got other students to take care of."

– Ana Cohen, Mother

I call them the bubble of risk—act out too, and the parents of the behaving children complain.”

In Hamilton County, Ohio, which includes Cincinnati, kindergartners were expelled or suspended from school for at least a day more than 200 times in the 2002–2003 school year, according to an analysis of school disciplinary data by the *Cincinnati Enquirer*.¹²

There are many reasons children misbehave in kindergarten or elementary school. They may come from disorganized households where punishment and reward are often unconnected to behavior. They may have witnessed a shooting in their neighborhood that day. They may be tired from being kept awake all night. Their parents may be poor models of behavior. They might be so far behind they don't feel part of the group. They might be bright and bored. The teaching style in the classroom may not suit that child's learning style.

They also may have mental health disorders or emotional or learning disabilities—Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), a mood disorder such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, dyslexia or mental retardation. Mental and emotional disorders are a major gateway to the Prison Pipeline. In a nationally representative sample of 95 private and public juvenile facilities, 70 percent of the juveniles reported mental health problems during screening and 57 percent reported having prior mental health treatment. Random samples of youth admitted to various states' juvenile facilities found similar percentages: 57 percent had a history of mental illness in Maryland; 72 percent met the criteria for at least one mental health disorder diagnosis in South Carolina.¹³ Children with serious behavioral problems at a young age often are diagnosed as having a “conduct disorder,” said Dr. Michael Sorter, associate professor of child and adolescent psychiatry at Cincinnati's Children's Hospital. This is a descriptive diagnosis for children with a “persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated.” The causes of conduct disorder can be physiological—children with organic conditions that impair impulse control, or environmental—children raised under violent conditions who imitate the behavior of others in their world.¹⁴

“Preschool behavior problems are a strong risk factor for anti-social disruptive disorders at pre-adolescence,” Dr. Sorter said. “This is a pattern of behavior that becomes evident before the age of eight.” He said that studies reported in psychiatric literature find that a very small proportion, about one percent, of well-behaved 8- to 10-year-olds go on to become chronic, recidivistic delinquents while more than a quarter, about 27 percent, of the behaviorally disturbed children do. The good news, he added, is that 73 percent do not.¹⁵

According to studies by Dr. Dorothy Otnow Lewis, a psychiatrist considered an expert on juvenile violence, the childhood factors most highly correlated with growing up to be a repeat violent offender are a “combination of severe neuropsychiatric impairment and a violent, abusive upbringing.”¹⁶

One organic cause of conduct disorder is closed head injury. Children in alcoholic households are at great risk here because they may get slung around, in addition to suffering damage in the womb. “We did a study here that followed the offspring of mothers who drank heavily during pregnancy,” said Dr. Sorter. “These children did not have the physical symptoms of fetal alcohol syndrome but 80 percent of them were in special ed by the second grade.”

Another disorder overrepresented in the juvenile justice system is oppositional defiant disorder. “This is when I say ‘Go left’ and you say ‘Why can’t I go right?’ and you get caught up in the opposition,” Dr. Sorter explained. Some children grow out of this as they mature, but others go into a rage when someone tries to limit their boundaries. “This will keep you in trouble with peers, adults, authority, everybody,” said Hunter Hurst, director of the Pittsburgh-based National Center for Juvenile Justice. “If you don’t do something about the disorder early on, it will get overlaid with enough ‘justice’ that ‘justice’ becomes primary and then good luck in getting the treatment.”

Treatment is often difficult to obtain in any case. Cincinnati’s Children’s Hospital has the busiest psychiatric emergency room of any hospital in the nation. Some 1,698 children were hospitalized there for psychiatric emergencies in 2002.¹⁷ As Dr. Mike Sherburn, senior clinical director of child psychiatry at the hospital, told the *Enquirer*, “When they’ve hit that crisis stage, they’ve got to go somewhere, and we’re it.”¹⁸

Dr. Sorter says the numbers are high because parents in the greater Cincinnati area have few options. A severe shortage of psychiatrists in Cincinnati and across Ohio means children routinely wait three months or longer just for an office visit, he noted. And local day treatment programs and mental health clinics have been cut back with state and local funding shortages.

In Mississippi, the lack of resources for children with mental or emotional problems is even more acute. At the time of CDF’s study, the average daily number of children and adults on a waiting list for admission to a psychiatric hospital was 117.¹⁹ In 1999, the state legislature approved the construction of seven community crisis centers that would provide emergency psychiatric care for children and adults seven days a week, 24 hours a day.²⁰ All were built but only one was opened—at half-capacity. The other six were never staffed and remain vacant. In May 2004, the legislature appropriated money for the remaining six centers to open and run at half-capacity, but a proposed six cent raise in the cigarette tax to fully fund the centers did not pass.²¹

In school, many children with mental health disorders, learning disabilities, and developmental disabilities are eligible for specially designed instruction, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Judging from interviews with parents and others in Ohio, it appears that a parent must be vigilant to make sure the requirements of the law are upheld. Among them are restrictions on school suspensions for these children, especially when the bad behavior is related to their disability. Margaret Burley, who heads the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities, says parents often don’t know their

rights under IDEA. “We try to assist them but there are 250,000 children in Ohio who have IEPs, and we have 12 advocates.”²²

“Schools use detention centers as their discipline,” said Burley. “I get calls every week, if not every day, from parents about their children being taken out of school in handcuffs by police.”

Christopher: Kicked Out of School at Age Five

Christopher Rogers was featured on the front page of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, as well as by local television stations, because he was removed from three schools and frequently suspended from a fourth for throwing tantrums, hitting teachers, and fighting with other children. It was his first year of school.²³

Christopher, six years old, lived with his mother, Ana Cohen, in a Section 8 housing complex of small brick buildings with patches of green grass between them on the west side of Cincinnati. Their apartment was small and dark, with boxes stacked on the floor because Ana had just moved there. Her mother, Michelle Thomas-Mitchell, lived elsewhere but was very involved in Christopher’s life and came over to Ana’s apartment for the interview.

Christopher was behind when he got to kindergarten. “When he was two, he had problems with hearing and speech,” said Cohen. “He had an ear infection, tubes in his ears, and his speech was delayed because of all the months he couldn’t hear.” He also had seizures between the ages of one and three.

When he went to preschool, she said, he had a “transition period,” then settled in all right. But she thinks that the particular program he attended “didn’t prepare him enough for actual school.” After spending two years in preschool, he knew 10 letters of the alphabet and shapes and colors. “Most of the kids in his kindergarten knew how to write their names. He didn’t. And they knew their numbers and he didn’t.”

His disciplinary problems began in July 2003 at a year-round charter school in the Over the Rhine neighborhood. Cohen chose this school because the hours, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., would provide supervision while she attended classes in graphic design. She also thought Christopher would enjoy the martial arts and music programs, and she hoped that the dozen Black male staff workers would be positive role models.²⁴

Almost from the start, he had problems. He was sent to the principal’s office several times for refusing to sit down in class, Cohen said. There, on one occasion, he took off his socks and shoes and laughed while being disciplined. Later, he hit a girl he said was picking at his hair while they were standing in line. After more fights and other trouble, he was suspended several times and then put on probation. “I came to the office to sign papers for the probation period. The same day they called and asked me to come get him. They said he was too immature and needed a more structured setting,” recalled Cohen.

Christopher lasted two weeks at a second charter school. “They wanted to send him home for the least little thing,” Thomas-Mitchell said. “Ana or I were constantly running up to the school. Some days she’d drop him off at eight and by nine they’d be calling me to come get him.”

At his next school, a Catholic school, Christopher hit another student and had tantrums on the floor. "They would physically remove him from the classroom and he would sit with the principal," Cohen said. Christopher was there not much more than a week when the principal suggested that Cohen send him to a public school, explaining that he would be able to receive services there for a severe behavioral handicap, if he was identified as having such.

By then, it was October. At the neighborhood elementary school, Christopher's initial teacher told him she was going to call his mother when he wouldn't sit still in class. As she walked towards a phone, he grabbed her ankles and she fell. He was sent home. The next day, Cohen came in for a conference and Christopher was able to return to school, but the teacher insisted he be placed in another class. "She was a new teacher, young, 23, no kids of her own, and she was afraid of him," said Thomas-Mitchell. She shook her head. "He's just a little boy. I'm going to the bus stop to get him and you can meet him and see for yourself. "

She left, and Cohen said that Christopher continued to get in trouble in the other kindergarten class, and she and her mother continued to get calls to come get him. "He gets frustrated very easily and he has trouble controlling his emotions," she explained. "Every five minutes, he's calling the teachers names and they get tired of that. Maybe that's because he's an only child. Sometimes other kids hit him or tease him and he hits back. I tell him, 'Don't hit back. Tell the teacher.' He says, 'I tried to tell the teacher but she didn't listen to me.' He gets so angry he starts crying and gets so upset it's hard to understand him, and the teachers won't try to figure out what the problem is because they've got other students to take care of."

The suspensions did not help Christopher control his behavior. Dr. Sorter, of Children's Hospital, says kindergarten students with behavioral problems very often cannot make the connection between suspensions and their own misbehavior. Cohen then asked the school to test Christopher for special education. He was found eligible for services and received a completed IEP in February.

At about the same time, the family doctor referred Christopher to the Division of Developmental Disorders at Children's Hospital. The psychiatrist said Christopher has attention deficit disorder and prescribed medication. Cohen said it helped at first but she thinks the dose isn't strong enough. "But I haven't been able to get in touch with the psychiatrist and I don't want to increase the dose on my own."

With his IEP in place, Christopher was no longer being sent home but he often spent time in in-school suspension (ISS). "He's always the youngest person there.

"Schools use detention centers as their discipline. I get calls every week, if not every day, from parents about their children being taken out of school in handcuffs by police."

**– Margaret Burley
Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities**

The older ones have a packet of work to do but Christopher is too young to work on his own."

The door opened and Christopher came in, followed by his grandmother. He looked warily at the visitor. "Who she?" he asked. Christopher is a small, medium-brown boy with short, wiry hair and he wore a backpack almost as big as he is. He walked over to his mother, and she looked through the bag for a note from the school to find out what had gone on with Christopher that day. She pulled out a construction paper hat with stars shooting out of it that he'd made in art class. "That's my alien hat!" Christopher exclaimed. She noted the word "Nico" written across the band. "That my alien name!" he said. "Nico!"

She found no note and asked Christopher what he did that day. He said, "Breakfast and lunch and art and ISS."

"What happened?" she asked.

"I was at the door to go to lunch and a boy got on my back and grabbed on my shirt and I started shaking my shoulders and he started crying and said I pushed him."

"Did he fall down?"

"He did it on purpose. He pushed himself and said I pushed him."

It was unclear from Christopher's account exactly what had happened, whether an adult was present or whether the other boy was disciplined. But he spent part of the afternoon in in-school suspension.

"Did Mr. C. help you with your work?" Cohen asked, referring to an aide the school had recently assigned to keep an eye on Christopher.

"I didn't have any work. I sat there coloring on a girl's paper."

A few minutes later, he got his skateboard and disappeared down the hallway. Then came a crash. He had run into a mirror at the end of the hallway and was trying to pick up the pieces.

"Don't pick it up," his mother said. "Come here."

He came over, sat in a small chair near her, hung his head, and began to cry.

"You want to say something?" his grandmother asked.

He looked up. "I'm soooory."

"We have told you I don't know how many times not to skateboard in the house."

Not long after that late April interview, Christopher was transferred to a special class at the Children's Home designed for children with behavioral or emotional problems. The class has a waiting list because sending a student there costs the school district \$20,000 a year²⁵ compared with the usual \$11,000.²⁶

Thomas-Mitchell believes the media attention helped. "We were fortunate," she said. Contacted when the school year ended, she said Christopher was doing better but is still behind academically since he missed at least 30 days of class at his first four schools. "It's been a rough first year of school for that little boy."

School Discipline

Zero Tolerance: Unintended Consequences

A new, tougher disciplinary code was established by the Cincinnati Public School system as part of its new teachers' contract in 1991. Asked why, Tom Mooney, then president of the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers, responded, "I'll give you a short answer: chaos." Mooney, who now is president of the Ohio Federation of Teachers, said that a rising tide of disruptions and assaults on teachers was not being addressed by school administrators, who "tended to sweep problems under the rug" to protect themselves.

Susan Taylor, who, at the time of CDF's study, was president of the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers (and no relation to the home visitor for Every Child Succeeds™), said she was teaching in a high school at that time. "I remember being so demoralized walking down the hallways and seeing garbage and students cutting classes and slamming doors and running and looking into my classroom while I was trying to teach."

Like a criminal code, Cincinnati's Code of Conduct sets up categories of offenses and the mandatory or possible punishments for them. An expulsion puts a student out of school for no more than 80 school days except when students bring a gun to school (a mandatory one-year expulsion) or a knife (up to a year). An out-of-school suspension excludes a child for 10 days or less. A removal takes children out of school without prior notice if "their presence poses an immediate danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process." Those morning calls to Christopher's mother and grandmother in Chapter 2 were removals. Lesser punishments include in-school suspension, after-school detention, and Saturday school.

Until January 2004, when the school system set up an "expulsion school," students put out of school had nowhere to go. The Code of Conduct calls for:

Mandatory expulsion for such offenses as bringing alcohol or drugs to school, physical assault, dangerous weapons, defensive weapons, tampering with the fire alarm system, sexual assault, robbery or starting a fire.

Mandatory suspension and possible expulsion for fighting, profanity towards staff, stealing, violent disorderly conduct, gang activity, destruction of property, and sexual misconduct.

Possible suspension and/or expulsion for students who are insubordinate and don't obey instructions (called unruly conduct), misbehave in a way that causes disruption or obstructs the educational process (disorderly conduct), cheat, or possess tobacco or an electronic device.²⁷

Cincinnati, the third largest city in Ohio, had the highest rate of school disciplinary actions in the state—107.8 per one hundred students, compared with 17.8 for Cleveland and 93 for Columbus—and a far higher expulsion rate.²⁸ During the 1990s, when school shootings in Columbine, Colorado, and a few other communities took place, zero tolerance sanctions took hold in many school districts around the nation, nearly doubling the number of students suspended annually since 1974, from 1.7 million to 3.1 million, with Black students 2.6 times as likely to be suspended as White students.²⁹ Latino and Native American students are also more likely to be suspended than White students. Asians are less likely to be suspended.³⁰

Ironically, these measures, intended to make schools safer, prevent or reduce crimes on school grounds, and improve the atmosphere and academic achievement of schools, often have the unintended consequence of helping push children into the trajectory to delinquency.

While no direct, causal link has been established between school removal and incarceration, a correlation has been found in studies conducted by Dr. Russell Skiba, director of the Initiative for Equity and Opportunity at the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy at Indiana University. Skiba and colleagues found that states with higher rates of out-of-school suspensions also have higher rates of juvenile incarceration and that racial disproportion in out-of-school-suspension is associated with a similar disproportion in juvenile incarceration.³¹

In a follow-up study, the CEEP researchers also sought to test whether suspensions were effective. Did they teach the suspended students a lesson and send a message to others that poor behavior would not be tolerated? Did they boost academic achievement? Would zero tolerance result in less racial disparity in discipline? In all cases, the evidence failed to support zero tolerance assumptions. Higher rates of suspension were associated with less satisfactory school climate and a lower rate of school completion; schools with higher rates of suspension and expulsion showed lower rates of academic achievement, and African American students continued to be disciplined more harshly than White students for the same infractions.³²

Measures intended to make schools safer, prevent or reduce crimes on school grounds, and improve the atmosphere and academic achievement of schools seem to be having the unintended consequence of helping push children into the trajectory to delinquency.

Despite the public image of dangerous, drug-filled hallways, the vast majority of out-of-school suspensions in Cincinnati and elsewhere were not for the most severe offenses, such as drug use or violence, but for behavior that affects school order and classroom management.³³ Of the approximately 13,200 out-of-school suspensions in the Cincinnati school district in the 2002–2003 school year, more than half (8,262) were for “behavioral problems.” Fighting accounted for 4,435; 53 were for use/possession of a weapon other than a gun or explosive; 19 for use/possession of drugs. (Because the district keeps discipline records by incident, not individual, it cannot be determined how many students these suspensions involved; the district spokesperson believes that less than 10 percent of students were responsible for most of the incidents.)³⁴

Michael Turner, assistant principal of Taft High School, which serves one of the poorest areas of Cincinnati, says that in his 18 years in the district, he can’t remember a time a gun was pulled in school. At Taft, “we have random searches and we find, maybe, a young lady with mace. But no one has pulled out or used a weapon.”

As the high proportion of high school dropouts in prison suggests, staying in school is a major predictor of *not* going to prison and the reasons go beyond gaining the knowledge and skills needed to go to college or get a good job. According to Ed Latessa, the chairman of the Division of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati who has interviewed thousands of delinquents in juvenile jails across the nation, the most important risk factor in determining whether they become chronic offenders and go on to adult prison is what he calls “anti-social values and beliefs and peer associations.”

School is the major pro-social institution in a child’s life. This is where children interact with positive adults, develop skills, and get involved with activities like sports or music that teach the value of practice and delayed gratification. The Surgeon General’s report on Youth Violence, released in 2001, found that “commitment to school” was one of only two protective factors against youth violence. (The other was a basic unwillingness to tolerate violence.)³⁵ Another recent study found that “school connectedness” was linked with reduced incidences of substance abuse, violence, suicide attempts, pregnancy, and emotional distress.³⁶

Dan Joyner, the chief probation officer for Hamilton County, spoke of several “criminal families” in which the parent or parents and many of the children were in constant trouble with the law. When there was a child who was not in trouble, this child almost invariably was involved in school activities. “Recently, I was in the doctor’s office and a guy said to me, ‘You may not remember me but you worked with my brother, Henry.’ This guy, now grown, was one of 18 children of a family known to always be in court—for drug addiction, robbery, murder, you name it. He told me his life story right there in the waiting room. He was involved in sports, and being around the coach and positive peers apparently made a big difference. He stayed in school, graduated, joined the military, and now is employed, married, and living in the suburbs. I asked about Henry, who would now be in his late 40s. ‘He’s still in and out of the system,’ his brother said. ‘Right now, he’s broke and living downtown on the streets.’”

Parents, students, teachers, psychiatrists, and scholars interviewed for this report brought up a number of reasons for the behavioral problems and fighting that lead to so many of the suspensions: mental health problems that make paying attention and controlling anger difficult; acting out rather than exposing ignorance when called on to read out loud or do a math problem on the board; parents teaching their children to stand up for themselves and fight, which may be useful for survival in the neighborhood; students who want to be suspended because they'd rather be watching TV or hanging out; abuse and chaos in the home; poor behavior management by parents; poor classroom management by teachers; poor school management by principals; alienation; boredom.

While there are certainly circumstances where suspension and expulsion are an appropriate response, they do not address the underlying causes of any of these problems. In Cincinnati and probably in most other school districts, students who fight or have behavior problems rarely are given training in conflict resolution, bullying prevention, psychological counseling, extra tutoring, or creative activities that might teach appropriate behavior or increase attachment to school.

Often we ask suspended or expelled students what they did during their time out of school, and they routinely say they watched TV, hung out with friends, or both. Some use the time to commit crimes. Several juvenile court judges reported having cases in which suspended or expelled juveniles committed crimes during the hours they would have been in school. "People think of crime as happening at night, and this is generally true for murder and drugs, but there are also opportunities in the daytime when homes are vacant and cars are sitting there," said Mark Reed, administrator of the juvenile court of Hamilton County.

One mother said she asked her son's high school if he could have after-school tutoring to help him catch up. The school said it didn't have the resources to do that. "But then he got put in after-school detention and all he did was sit there while some aide watched. My point is: 'Give them something to do!'" Her son, who also has been sent to Saturday school, described what goes on there as, "You have to be quiet for two and a half hours."

Many who criticized schools for pushing out, rather than helping out, the children who cause problems, go on to say that the current incentives in national school policy make achievement scores more important than putting resources into helping kids stay in school and preventing delinquency. Furthermore, teachers are taught to teach, and parents of behaving children expect them to do this.

"I know some of these schools have it tough," said Wright, whose wife works in a public school. "There are problems they don't have the resources to handle. You're teaching a class with 30 kids, several are not following instructions, disrupting the class, and you want to teach the 27 who are behaving. It's utilitarian. On the other hand, if people understood the likely outcomes for these children, there would be a moral urgency to do something."

Latosha: “Why I’m Mean”

Leroy Williams, a disabled maintenance worker, handy man, and preacher in his mid-50s, played the role of a services facilitator in a neighborhood in north Cincinnati with many young people in the Pipeline to prison. When families on his block of small homes, many in poor repair, need some sort of community service, whether for housing, food stamps or mental health, Williams (not his real name) helps them make the contact and insist on their rights. He advises parents on how to deal with suspensions and expulsions and is an outspoken critic of the school district’s discipline practices.

Standing on his porch, he points to house after house; each seems to contain a tale of trouble. And tales of trouble proliferate in his own large family, stories that reveal some of the underlying causes of the school misbehavior that put his young family members at risk of a negative life outcome. Most of them are girls, and it is worth noting that school failure is the number one predictor of delinquency in girls. Abuse is the second.³⁷ Almost half the juveniles in the Hamilton County detention center in 2003 were girls.³⁸

Williams’ 14-year-old niece Sharon was expelled for 45 days in December 2003 from Project Succeed, the special program for students with behavior problems that Bianca in Chapter One also attended. She is a nice-looking girl but has a serious, almost scowling expression. Before she arrived at Williams’ house for an interview, he explained that a horrible thing happened to Sharon when she was an infant: Her father shot her mother in the head while she sat in her highchair. She now is being raised by her grandmother.

“She’s doing the best she can,” Williams said of the grandmother. “She just can’t deal with this young people stuff. She is in her own world. She says, ‘It’s messing up my life. I can’t go to bingo when I want to.’” He also learned that the grandmother wasn’t giving Sharon her medication for hyperactivity because it gave her headaches, so Williams called a clinic to make an appointment for his niece.

Sharon had been expelled for a more serious violation than routine misbehavior. She explained, “I was walking into school and a girl ran up on me and hit me and I hit her back. A teacher tried to break us up and he was pushed and hit a window that broke.” The window was a plate glass window that cost \$2,000, and Sharon and the other girl were expelled and charged with destruction of school property. The teacher was not hurt.

Regardless of the severity of the event, “This could have been avoided,” Williams contends. “The teacher knew they were getting in fights. It was a clique thing.”

When Sharon was expelled, Williams wrote a letter to the school board asking, “What are we supposed to do with these children, throw them away?” In his view, “It’s not always the children’s fault. Sometimes it’s the parents’ fault and some of it’s the teacher’s fault. But everybody is failing this child.”

During those 45 days, Williams got Sharon and the other girl together. “I thought if they volunteered together, did something with the time, they’d stop hating each other.” He set them up with a grassroots organization of parents of public school chil-

dren and went to the school to get their homework and take it back so they wouldn't fall too far behind. "The school should have conflict resolution or something for these kids."

Did this mutual volunteering succeed? Sharon shrugged and said, "We don't get along but we're not fighting."

Another of Williams' school battles involves his 13-year-old granddaughter who has a history of detentions and suspensions and is a year behind in school. "She has an attitude and teachers don't like her," Williams said. "There are times she makes *me* mad," he added. But he understands the reasons for her attitude.

Latosha lives across the street with her mother, Williams' daughter, Cassandra, and three younger sisters. Latosha spent a year in foster care after her mother hit her, threw her on the floor and threatened to toss her out the window, then called the police and told them to come before she killed her daughter. Cassandra later regained custody and appears to be trying hard to be a good parent. For a while, though, she had men in the house who Williams believes "put their hands" on the girls.

When Latosha was in the third grade, Williams said, he took her to Children's Hospital when she started crying and couldn't stop. "She broke down." She was in the psychiatric wing for several weeks and now takes an anti-depressant.

Latosha initially comes across as living under a cloud and her conversation is filled with comments about who she doesn't like and what's stupid. She brightened up when she showed off some of her writing that she keeps in a box under the bunk bed she shares with a sister. Some are poems that are very clever put-downs of girls she doesn't like. One story is entitled, "Why I'm Mean."

"When I was two, I saw my dad get arrested and he was placed in jail my whole life," she wrote. "When I was about eight, I got in fights with my mom because she has been going through a lot in her life. So she would wop me with cords for nothing. I told her if she did it again, I would wop her back."

Before she and her sisters were taken to foster care, they were brought to see their mother. "She was in a glass thing," she wrote. "They were telling us to talk to her before we go to the foster home. My sisters started crying and she started crying but I didn't care because she shouldn't have did it."

She wrote of being removed from one foster home that was "nicer than my Mom" because as she put it, "I kissed my foster brother." The second foster home was "mean," and she stole a ring from her foster mother.

*"I don't know why, but I can't think of myself older.
Not to jinx myself, but I think I'm going to have a short life."*

– Latosha, 13 years old

In this placement, she went to a different school. “I got along okay ‘til this ugly girl came to me and told me, ‘That’s why you’re in a foster home. I’m with my real Mom.’ Oh, her real mom came all right when I socked her and made her nose bleed.”

At the end, she wrote, “Writing about my life I just kicked three tons of ornery mess out of my sistum (*sic*) but I have like 100 more. Bye for now.”

Talking back, essentially, disrespecting adults, is what gets Latosha in trouble in school. Her story and Sharon’s raise the question of how many adults in their lives have earned their respect and what role models, if any, they have witnessed dealing with conflict.

Not long before the interview, Latosha had been suspended for an exchange in her classroom that she recounted in detail: Another student had apparently called her mother and the mother came to get her. According to Latosha, the mother said, “Pack your bags,” and made an insulting remark about girls in the class teasing her daughter.

“I raised my hand and told the teacher I had to pee. ‘If I can’t get to the bathroom, I might pee on your stuff.’”

The mother said, “Don’t you see I’m talking. This girl should be smacked.”

“I’ll bring my Mama and she’ll smack you.”

“Bring it on,” the mother said, and gave her address.

“I’m not going to your roach-infested apartment,” Latosha said she retorted. “I was getting so mad. If anybody said more, I would have socked them.”

The teacher told her to sit down and when she refused, she was sent to the principal’s office. “When I told my Mama what happened, she was like, ‘You should of picked up a chair and hit her.’”

She was suspended for five days, but Williams took her out of that school and enrolled her in a charter school, even though just a short time remained before the end of the school year. Suspensions and expulsions engender a sense of grievance not only in students but in their parents, many of whom did not have good experiences in school themselves. When parents believe, rightly or wrongly, that their kids are not being treated fairly—that their child did not start the fight or other kids do worse and don’t get punished—they become alienated from the school. This sends a mixed message about discipline to the child and potentially sets up a non-constructive teacher versus parent conflict.

When his niece was expelled, Williams wrote a letter to the school board asking, “What are we supposed to do with these children, throw them away?”

**– Leroy Williams
Preacher**

"I understand why these parents get so upset with the schools," Williams said. "They aren't helping these children." As an example, he says one problem with Latosha is that the psychiatrist she sees on occasion has encouraged her to express her feelings. But she does not always do so appropriately or in the appropriate context and, he explains, "When she does that in school, she gets in trouble."

Sharon was attending summer school in June, but Williams worries about whether she will be promoted or held back in the fall and whether she will eventually make it through high school. Latosha, too, is at great risk of getting into more trouble and not fulfilling her considerable potential. Neither girl imagines herself going to college or has an image of herself in the future.

"I don't know why, but I can't think of myself older," Latosha said. "Not to jinx myself, but I think I'm going to have a short life."



Racial Disparities in Education

Disproportionate Educational Opportunities

“Our response should be colorblind but for some reason it’s not,” said Alton Frailey, the Black superintendent of schools in Cincinnati, where Black students were expelled at twice the rate of White students and given out-of-school suspensions at triple the rate in the 2002-2003 school year.³⁹

Among the reasons offered by educators and parents:

The kids with the most needs, those who arrive with stimulation or socialization deficits, get the worst schools with the least experienced teachers. The state of Ohio has a 3 to 1 disparity between rich and poor districts in per pupil funding. Black students make up 71 percent of Cincinnati students, and many of them attend the schools within the system that are in “academic emergency” or “academic watch.” Except for those who pass the test to get into the college prep high school or the audition for the high school of performing arts, the majority attend neighborhood K–8 and high schools that are nearly all Black.⁴⁰

The teaching staff is 70 percent White, and many of them do not live in the city or send their children to city schools.⁴¹ Many Black parents believe that these teachers often don’t understand or empathize with their children the way they do with White children.

“We teach our children how to survive. We teach particularly our boys to be strong,” said Chandra Matthews-Smith, the vice president for programs at Beech Acres, a social services agency in Cincinnati. “You are in a classroom with a group of people different from you—African American males who are energetic, who just don’t follow step one, two, three. Sometimes, so much is going on at home or in the neighborhoods and they get to school and there are a million rules. ‘Sit down. I’ll talk to you later.’ They don’t get their needs met. It’s read and recite, read and recite. If an energetic

“Once you get out there on the street and start hanging out, there’s all this different type of trouble you can get into, and you can get into it without even knowing it.”

– Latoris, 19 years old

kid is White, it's 'Oh, he's bright. We need to give him something different to do.' With our boys, it's 'He's not following rules. We've got to watch his behavior.'"

She added, as did others, that Blacks no longer are going into teaching at the same rate as they did in the past. In 1974, 12.5 percent of full-time public school teachers were Black; by 1998, the proportion had dropped to seven percent.⁴² Latinos also do not go into teaching commensurate to their proportion of the student population.⁴³ In the fall of 1999, 15.6 percent of students were Latino, but Latinos represented only 5.2 percent of public school teachers.⁴⁴

The taproot of racial disproportion—in suspensions, dropout rates, incarceration and other negative life outcomes—reaches south and runs deep in Sunflower County in the Mississippi Delta, home of the state's large cotton plantations. The slave system was not designed to produce the independent, self-reliant citizens celebrated in 19th century political thought; it was aimed at controlling every aspect of the lives of their enslaved laborers. Southern slave codes made it a crime to teach a slave to read and write and levied large fines—100 pounds in colonial South Carolina, which was more than the reward offered for killing a runaway slave. Not surprisingly, more than 90 percent of slaves were illiterate.⁴⁵ Illiteracy is one of the most bitter, ongoing effects of slavery in Mississippi and throughout the United States.

Sunflower County has been known over the years in several historical contexts. Indianola, the county seat, is where the White Citizens Council was founded in 1954 in response to the Supreme Court decision to desegregate public schools, the beginning of a movement of "massive resistance" that spread throughout the South. In 1955, Emmett Till, a 14-year-old boy from Chicago visiting relatives in the adjoining county, was kidnapped, brought to a farm in Sunflower County, murdered, and dumped in the Tallahatchie River. Ruleville, a small town in the county, is where civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer picked cotton before she was evicted for registering to vote. Drew is the home of Mae Bertha and Matthew Carter, Black sharecroppers who were among the first to enroll seven of their children in the previously all-White schools in 1965.

It is often said that the largest "plantation" in the state is the Mississippi State Penitentiary located at Parchman, in the heart of Sunflower County. William Faulkner called Parchman "destination doom." One of the Carter grandchildren is now in Parchman Penitentiary.

Drew had a population of about 2,000. When the schools were desegregated by court order in 1970, the dual system was abolished and there are now three schools, an elementary, a middle, and a high school, in the municipal school district. After 1970, most of the White children were taken out of the public schools and now attend the private academies. The five-member school board (majority White) is appointed by the city council and until last year, the White chairman of the board had served for over 30 years. In December 2003, the White school superintendent was replaced by an African American who had been his assistant.⁴⁶

Despite changes, the legacy of inferior education, deliberately restricted opportunity, and low expectations continue to harm poor Black children in Mississippi, as

well as their counterparts whose families moved north to cities like Cincinnati. Bob Moses, a civil rights organizer in Mississippi in the 1960s who now teaches math at an all-Black high school in Jackson, calls this legacy “sharecropper education”—a limited education for people assigned manual work.⁴⁷

“If you think of sharecropper schooling, you went through it, but your options were: You were going to chop and pick cotton or do domestic work,” he says. “Your education wasn’t tied to opportunity. The connection between education and a change for the better in your own life wasn’t made.” Despite the Colin Powells and Condoleezza Rices, he adds, that link still is not clear among many poor Blacks because they do not see anyone they know whose success is tied to education. To get more poor Black children isolated in inner cities or rural pockets like Drew into the pipeline to college, says Moses, means addressing this question: “How do we shift the culture and develop these expectations and beliefs for these kids?”

Elton: “Not College Material”

Hazel Harris was a single mother in Drew who worked as a medical records and front desk clerk at a home health care agency in the nearby town of Cleveland, Mississippi. She moved to Drew from Memphis in 1991 when her first husband died. Since then, she said, in a 2002 interview in her home on a nice street in this small town, her four children and a nephew she is raising have been systematically undervalued and over-punished in their schools. This has hindered rather than helped her efforts to keep them on the path toward higher education.

One son, Elton, ran track at the high school. When the team went to the state championship, he placed first in the 100-yard dash and broke a record in that event and in the long jump. As a result, he became eligible to run in a track meet in Europe, but his mother had no way to sponsor him. She finally raised the money through church and community contacts. She had already gone to the school board and written a letter to the City of Drew. Nobody wanted to contribute. An anonymous donor finally sent \$1,000 and the superintendent donated \$200.

In Europe, Elton came in first in the 100-yard dash and second in the 200-yard race. Although he was the only representative from Mississippi, no one except a few close friends recognized the accomplishment. Right before he graduated, he says, his guidance counselor told him that he and his classmates could not go to four-year colleges because they weren’t “college material.” He went on to Hinds Community College and graduated in 1998. At the time of the study, he worked two jobs and helped support his mother and brothers and sister.

Harris’s daughter was suspended from time to time. She was sent home from high school because her shirt or shorts were considered too short or her pants were too tight. “I told her that if it takes it, you wear long pants, and if they are falling off, make sure you wear a belt—just don’t get suspended!” Harris said. She told the school she wasn’t there to “jump on them or curse them out. But my child’s clothes don’t keep her from learning or being kind to people. I believe you all have a problem.”

The child with the most school problems has been her nephew, Latoris, who has lived on and off with her in Drew. His mother, in Michigan, has served time for drug dealing. Harris said she saw potential in him and was determined to cultivate it. He always liked school, and said he still liked it in an interview in 2002 after he had been suspended a number of times and sent to an alternative school.

"I like most of the teachers and they do try to teach you. Not a day goes by that when I leave school, I haven't learned something new." Sometimes, though, he said, "A few teachers are just looking for a reason to send you home. They will make something simple into a big issue, and the principal doesn't want to hear your side."

In that interview, Latoris, then 19, seemed uncertain as to whether he had a bad attitude and a bad temper. "At first, I didn't think I had a bad attitude, but people told me that so much, sometimes I think it just came down on me. Or maybe you need an attitude on the streets 'cause you don't want nobody to run over you. People also tell me I have a quick temper and I'm this and I'm that and maybe it all comes true."

He spent two months in the North Delta Alternative School after an altercation with a teacher at Drew High School in March 2000, when he was in the ninth grade. As he tells the story, "The teacher thought I was chewing gum and I kept telling him I wasn't but he sent me to detention. I told him I wasn't coming to detention because I had no gum in my mouth. He told me to get out of the classroom. While I'm going to get my books, he grabbed me by the collar and told me to get out. I told him to get his hands off me. Then he grabbed my book bag and threw it outside and told me to follow it. I stopped at the door and when I turned around, my elbow must have hit him in the stomach. He pushed me again and then I went to the office. When I got there, I was told I had to go to the alternative school for two to three weeks about my attitude." Latoris spent the rest of the school year there.

North Delta Alternative School, located in Webb, served children from a seven-county area, including Drew. It and other alternative schools were created in 1995 with the support of Black administrators and policy makers because they realized that a large number of mostly Black students, many in special education, were being kicked out of school and had nowhere to go. In the 2003–2004 school year, every one of North Delta's 85 students was Black, according to its principal, Willena White. Four weeks was the required minimum stay.⁴⁸

Latoris described North Delta as being "like a juvenile hall 'cause you have no privileges. We had four classes, and they teach everybody basically on the same level, ninth, tenth, whatever, out of the same books. Classrooms were mixed together, and we didn't learn anything. You would also get written up and sent home for every little broken rule like if you made a sound or don't raise your hand before you speak. Sometimes I would give up and get sent home for a day or two. Until you come back with a parent, you can't get back in. Don't do that, they call the police and say you aren't at the alternative school."

He described a friend suspended from the school. "He was supposed to bring a parent but his mama was always working and he just never came back and he started

selling drugs and stuff.” He added, “It might seem there’s not a lot of trouble to get into, being so small, but once you get out there on the street and start hanging out, there’s all this different type of trouble you can get into, and you can get into it without even knowing it.”

White, who had been principal of North Delta since 2000, readily conceded that the school had limitations. One problem, she said, is that home school teachers and parents give the image of the school as “a place for bad kids, not a transition place and period for them to get back on track.” Sometimes when alternative school students return to their home school, teachers “expect them to keep misbehaving and that kind of attitude is what defeats our children.”

The school has six teachers, certified in math, science, social studies, language arts, elementary education and special education, and a computer lab technician. “Our biggest need is behavior counselors in regular schools and alternative schools. They are the huge missing piece.” It would help, she said, if schools had a relationship with a mental health center or had more people trained in psychology. “If a child is acting out with other than a behavior problem, how are we to know? Our teachers are not trained in this area. I am not trained. We are looking at problems we can’t solve.”

White said, “Eighty-five percent of my children leave here, don’t make it at the home school, and end up in Parchman or Walnut Grove.” Walnut Grove is a prison for youthful offenders.

Latoris did make it, but not before coming up against another obstacle. When he got back into the high school, he was not able to graduate with his class in 2003 because he had not taken geometry; he said he was not told at the alternative school that this was a requirement. He returned to school the next year just to take geometry and he was finally able to graduate. In spring 2004, he was preparing to take the ACT test in hope of getting into a business college.

Harris cried softly as she told these stories and listened to the children tell theirs. “It seems like when you take one or two steps up, the system knocks you back down. It’s so unfair, because there are enough children already on the streets. Some of us are good parents, and we try to teach our children the right way and how to respect adults and authority, but sometimes it’s hard within the school framework. Even when kids try to be respectful, they don’t get that back from the schools. That’s the reason I always instill in my children, “You are good. God gave you five senses and the ability to be whatever you want to be, and you can ask Him to help you.”

Criminalization of School Behavior

From Schoolhouse to Courthouse

In recent years, many young people's first contact with the law has happened at school. In another aspect of zero tolerance, many schools are criminalizing behavior, such as schoolyard fights, that used to be handled in the principal's office. Today, police officers stationed in schools are taking students directly to local courts and detention centers, sometimes in handcuffs.

"If the rules when I was in grade school were what they are today, I would never have made it to high school," said Judge James A. Ray, a juvenile court judge in Lucas County, Ohio, who also is president of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. "Pauley (a schoolmate) and I fought every week. We were trying to figure out who was in charge of the playground."

A 2003 American Bar Association report on juvenile justice in Ohio noted that while no national data system exists to track the number of school-based arrests, "the responses of attorneys and judges, as well as the comments and observations of investigators for this study, suggest that these numbers are increasing in Ohio."⁴⁹

Like Ohio, Mississippi does not track school-based arrests, but Jennifer Riley-Collins, an attorney with the Mississippi Center for Justice, believes they are common in that state as well.

A report on this trend in the *New York Times* in January 2004 cited an analysis made in the Miami-Dade County, Florida, school system showing that juvenile arrests in its schools had tripled between 1999 and 2001, primarily for "simple assaults"—fights that do not involve weapons or serious injury—and "miscellaneous" charges, including disorderly conduct.⁵⁰

According to the *Times* article and ABA report, most of the students charged in Ohio have mental health or educational disabilities and/or are Black.

"If the rules when I was in grade school were what they are today, I would never have made it to high school."

– Judge James A. Ray
Juvenile Court Judge, Lucas County, Ohio

“What happens is: You can criminalize anything,” said Kim Brooks Tandy, the director of the Juvenile Law Center in Kentucky who was a researcher for the ABA report on Ohio. “You don’t go to school—truancy. You act out—disorderly conduct, malicious mischief. Special ed kids can commit these ‘crimes’ every day with their behavior, especially the ones with emotional or mental health problems. If you want to go after them criminally, you can.”

Turning juvenile courts into an extension of the principal’s office burdens the system with unnecessary cases, Judge Ray said. Toledo, in Lucas County, has a catch-all “Safe School Ordinance” that has been used much more readily since police officers were placed in schools in the mid-1990s. There were 1,727 school-related cases in Lucas County in 2002, up from 1,237 in 2000.⁵¹

“The largest single offense that refers kids to our court is the Safe School Ordinance,” said Judge Ray. “We do have cases where somebody punches out a teacher or damages a teacher’s car that would be crimes if they were adults. But many of them are for misdemeanors or just pain-in-the-ass type behavior. We had a girl who wore a short blouse that showed her belly button, which violated the dress code. She was obnoxious and refused to put on another shirt and she was arrested for that. This is not something we would detain somebody for! Another example: Two grade school boys were brought in for causing disruptions. They were teasing girls who were going into the bathroom, reaching inside the door and putting the lights out. We are criminalizing and demonizing otherwise normal but obnoxious adolescent behavior,” he said.

To explain this trend, Laurence Steinberg, a professor of psychology at Temple University and the director of the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice, said that principals are less able to depend on parents to enforce the discipline schools mete out. “I think in the past the threat of getting in touch with a kid’s parents was enough to get a kid to start behaving,” he told the *New York Times*. “Now kids feel parents will fight on their behalf.”⁵²

He also explained to the *Times* that many large urban school districts have been forced to reduce or eliminate mental health services, and kids who once were referred to specialists within the school district now wind up in court. “The juvenile justice system has become the dumping ground for poor minority kids with mental health and special education problems.”⁵³

Judge Ray said he wouldn’t use the term “dumping ground” because he refuses to place all responsibility on schools. “They are dealing with a product that came to them at age five—the

“The juvenile justice system has become the dumping ground for poor minority kids with mental health and special education problems.”

– Laurence Steinberg
Professor, Temple
University

chaotic homes, the parents who have abdicated their parental responsibilities, lack of structure, lack of sleep. Kids do not do a good job of raising themselves.”

The major problem with bringing kids to court for minor offenses often isn’t the punishment they receive, Judge Ray and others said. In Toledo or Cincinnati, they generally get some sort of slap on the wrist, such as a few days of community service, but they also get a record. If the youth comes before the court again, this original charge likely will increase the penalty and minor charges can add up over time.

The punishment itself can be a problem in rural areas where few alternatives other than incarceration exist. “For Mississippi kids, the story is usually the same,” said Sheila Bedi, an attorney for the Southern Poverty Law Center. “Once they have papers (meaning that they have come to court on any charge), they find it very hard to get out of the system.”

Keisha: Assaulting a Teacher

Latosha’s younger sister, Keisha, sat with her grandfather, Leroy Williams, and her mother, Cassandra, in the molded plastic chairs in the waiting room of the Hamilton County Juvenile Public Defender’s office in downtown Cincinnati. They had arrived early for her appointment with Thomas White, who would be defending her on the charge of assaulting a teacher, a felony.

Keisha, a wisp of a nine-year-old, a fourth grader, was the smallest of the juveniles awaiting their defenders. She practiced counting in Spanish, showing off for her grandfather what she had learned at the charter school she has attended since the alleged assault in her neighborhood public school.

White emerged and called the family into a small, windowless consultation room. As soon as they sat down, Cassandra told White that the teacher, a substitute, choked Keisha. “She did kick and bite her but the woman was choking her. We wanted the school to charge her but they won’t do it.” Her voice rose in anger.

“She may well have done something wrong,” White said of the teacher. “But my job is to defend this little girl.” He asked Keisha what happened, and she gave a long, convoluted account in a high tiny voice. “In the class, I got somebody else’s paper and then when the girl’s paper came back, she got mad. Her name is D. I said I didn’t know it was hers. That’s when we was arguing. D’s sister C came and took D out of the room. She said she can’t fight me because I was littler than her. I was about to go to the assistant principal to tell what happened. The teacher grabbed my arm. She thought I was leaving to finish the fight. She dragged me by where the coat hooks were. She was trying to use the intercom. I scraped my back on one of those hooks. She wouldn’t let me go. I tried to bite her arms to stop her choking me. I kicked her too. That’s when Miss K came and took me to the office.”

Williams said he had witnesses that would support Keisha’s account. He had gotten, in a sense, depositions from some of her classmates. He pulled them out of his pocket to show them to White. They were written on lined paper in fourth grade-style block letters. One read: “Miss C choked (Keisha) and (Keisha) was punching and biting her

and Miss C said, 'Don't you ever fucking bite me,' and she let go and (Keisha) ran out. The End."

He had given copies to school officials because he wanted charges brought against this teacher, he said. A month or so later, he received a letter from the general counsel for the school district saying that the system's Office of Security Services had investigated the "alleged assault" by the substitute teacher. The student witnesses said Keisha was kicking and biting the teacher when the teacher stopped her from leaving the room. The teacher said she had to hold Keisha to protect herself. "All the students interviewed demonstrated what looked more like restraint than a choke-hold," the letter states. "Based on these statements, the case is closed." The teacher, not the school, filed the assault charge against Keisha.

White glanced quickly at the hand-written depositions and said they weren't necessary. "We could call them as witnesses but we don't want to go to trial." He said he was going to file for a competency hearing because "it's not clear that a nine-year-old can meet the constitutional standard to stand trial." He explained that two psychologists would interview her and give their recommendation. "If she's found not competent, she dodges the bullet."

Cassandra fumed. "But then that teacher is going to walk free."

White nodded yes. "You could sue her, though that would be difficult to win."

"Then maybe we should go to trial, put on our witnesses to show the teacher choked her," Cassandra said.

"That would not be in the best interest of (Keisha)," White said. "Even if you win, this will do nothing to the teacher, and there is a good chance you will lose. You do *not* want her adjudicated for a felony. In my experience, the teachers win 90 percent of the time against a student."

Later, White said that the standard used for assault against a teacher is low. "They don't have to show physical harm or medical reports. Frankly, the magistrate is not going to listen to what a nine-year-old and her friends say. If the teacher is presentable and says, 'I was trying to restrain her and she bit and kicked me.' The prosecutor asks, 'Did it hurt?' She says, 'Oh yeah,' and that's enough. She's guilty."

White commented, "Schools, teachers, come on! Manage your own disciplinary problems! Let's not charge nine-year-olds with felonies and bring them into court." He said he has been in the defender's office for four years and bringing students to court "seems to me to be becoming a popular method of dealing with children who are not behaving."

In his experience, charges of assaulting a teacher are not "a 200-pound boy slugging a teacher, what you think of as a felony assault. Often, two kids are fighting, a teacher gets in the middle and is hit."

White said that occasionally prosecutors will reduce a felony charge but they are not allowed to reduce felonies to misdemeanors unless the school is willing, and schools generally take a very tough line.

Asked about the competency issue, he said that he does not believe that nine-year-olds are capable of understanding the charges against them and participating in their own defense. Steinberg, the MacArthur Foundation Research Network director, led a study that tested these elements of legal understanding in children. It found that 30 percent of children under the age of 14 are as impaired in understanding how the legal system works as mentally-ill adults, who have been deemed not competent to stand trial.⁵⁴

White said, however, that the decision in Keisha's case will depend on the psychologists. "There are some that would only find her competent; others only incompetent. I don't know what will happen. This morning I was dealing with a competency hearing of a 14-year-old boy charged with sexual assault. He is mentally retarded, with a 55 IQ, and he failed first, second, and third grades. He was declared competent to stand trial. The psychologist's explanation of why he failed first, second, and third grade was: He didn't take school seriously."

"If she is found competent, she will be found guilty," he predicted.

Downstairs, standing outside the building waiting for their ride home, Cassandra was still fuming. Keisha practiced drill team moves on the sidewalk.



Education Paradigms

Punishment vs. Development

The Cincinnati public school system at the time of our study was revising its Code of Conduct and adopting a different approach for school management and discipline. “We have the highest expulsion rate in the state,” said spokeswoman Janet Walsh. “We recognize that the traditional approach isn’t working.”

Under the new approach, called Positive Behavior Support, school committees identify a small number of school-wide behavioral goals, like calm in the hallways, which will be taught to students so they know what to do, not just what *not* to do. Reinforcement will be positive, not all negative. At the same time, office referrals will be analyzed to determine when and where infractions occur to discover problem areas.

“We’ve got to get away from the crime and punishment type of model,” said Susan Taylor, the Cincinnati teachers’ union president at the time who was on the committee designing the changes. “This is still a rampant mindset among too many teachers and administrators. ‘You do the crime, you do the time. If you do this, it’s Saturday school. Do that, a suspension for three days.’ We’ve got to get where the consequences of misbehavior are instructive.”

In April, as Cincinnati was preparing to train teachers in the new approach, Cleveland appeared poised to move in the opposite direction. School officials there, fed up with students roaming halls, using cell phones, pulling fire alarms, and gathering in the streets at two city high schools, brought in additional police officers and announced more stringent disciplinary measures, including five-day suspensions for students who are chronically tardy or absent.⁵⁵

“Marginalized children get a control and punishment and low expectation reaction that sends a message to the child that he or she is not valued or wanted or smart. This happens at a time when they need confidence and puts them on a downward track from the beginning of school.”

– Dr. James Comer
Professor of Child Psychiatry, Yale Child Study Center

If Cleveland codifies tougher disciplinary sanctions, it is not hard to imagine that a few years from now, it will realize, as Cincinnati has, that it is pushing too many children out of school. It is also conceivable that if Cincinnati's new measures don't work as well as hoped, if funding is cut for some key elements or attention diverted to a new problem, and suddenly some school's management breaks down, there will be cries for toughening discipline again.

"We go through cycles of putting alternatives and new systems into place," said Tom Mooney, the Ohio teachers' union chief at the time who helped design Cincinnati's current disciplinary code. "We have a 3 to 1 disparity (between rich and poor districts) in per pupil funding in Ohio. Our funding is unreliable and unstable so systems are always on a roller coaster. If you make a model that costs money—social services, mental health services—I guarantee you the system can't afford to keep it going for long. Even bare bones ones fade away. New administrators come and go and don't remember why we have that program. And sometimes what is tried just doesn't work. Who knows why? There aren't any simple answers or solutions."⁵⁶

In his book, *Waiting for a Miracle: Why Schools Can't Solve Our Problems and How We Can*, Dr. James P. Comer, the Maurice Falk Professor of Child Psychiatry at the Yale Child Study Center, writes that school policy that focuses almost exclusively on curriculum, control and punishment, instruction, and high stakes accountability based on test scores alone is misguided. If schools are to reach children who are "undeveloped" when they arrive at school, he writes, they must focus on promoting development above all else.⁵⁷

"All children need stimulation, protection, and sustained support to develop and prepare for successful adulthood. Ideally, this happens in the family and community, with the schools providing further opportunities for growth. But if the family and community aren't doing this, the schools need to take responsibility," he said. "School is the only organization where a relationship between meaningful people and children can take place on an ongoing basis and compensate for the difficult conditions that interfered with the growth of many."⁵⁸

In schools centered almost exclusively on instruction—the traditional model—children from marginalized families, who haven't had the same experiences and interactions as mainstream children have, are seen as dumb or bad or unable to handle themselves, said Dr. Comer. "Marginalized children get a control and punishment and low expectation reaction that sends a message to the child that he or she is not valued or wanted or smart. This happens at a time when they need confidence and puts them on a downward track from the beginning of school."⁵⁹

Central Fairmount: A School in "Continuous Improvement"

In Cincinnati, the public school system in 2003 moved up from the lowest state ranking, "academic emergency," to "academic watch" based on improved achievement scores. A number of individual schools improved their ratings but 32 of the system's 79 schools remain in "academic emergency" or "academic watch." Thirty-seven rank in the third category of "continuous improvement." Only 12 made the top two cate-

gories of “excellent” or “effective.”⁶⁰ Michael Ward, the principal of Central Fairmount School, is using everything he knows to turn his school around. A kindergarten through eighth grade school on the western side of Cincinnati, Central Fairmount is located in a neighborhood that once was 90 percent White and now is 80 percent Black. Ward, a 30-year veteran teacher and administrator in the school system, was brought in to lead Central Fairmount three years ago when the school, one of the many in “academic emergency,” was about to undergo a redesign. A redesign means starting from scratch with an entirely new staff.

Ward is a multi-tasker in seemingly constant motion. At the beginning of the visit, he was standing in the wide hallway of the old, traditional school building while the students were doubled over on the floor, heads facing the walls, for a tornado drill. When the drill was over, some students high-fived Ward as they walked past him. He knows their names.

“My goal is: Create an environment in which children feel safe and cared about,” he said as he headed to another part of the building. He hired a racially and gender balanced staff and organized them into teams that have common planning periods and meet with parents together. The school offers a universal breakfast, free adult education, after-school programs with an after-school bus to take kids home, and a Ready to Learn class in anger management. He’s also made space available in the building for community groups. Every day for an hour and half, the school stops for reading. There are no bathroom breaks, no announcements on the public address system.

In Cincinnati, an instructional leadership team at each school decided how to allocate the money budgeted to that school. A music teacher or a library? A full-time social worker or a playground? Computers or an art teacher? Central Fairmount selected a music teacher, a full-time social worker and computers. The school has no art teacher, no library, and no playground except a paved area behind the building with two basketball hoops hung on a brick wall.

We passed the in-school suspension (ISS) room, where six children stood around an aide. One sat at a desk, scribbling on a piece of paper. “Mr. Ward, I need to talk to you,” one girl called out. Ward promised to talk to her later.

Twenty percent of the students at Central Fairmount are in special education, and the school has three severely behaviorally handicapped (SBH) classrooms with 12 students in each. They are small rooms with desks and a blackboard. In the SBH classroom for fourth to eighth graders, all the students had gone to the cafeteria except one girl, who was finishing something on the computer. When she left, the teacher, Jack Black, said she used to rave and threaten others. Now, he’s able to calm her down most of the time.

“For one thing, I know the family,” he said. When the school year starts, he visits the homes of his students and communicates with the parents or guardians regularly. The previous evening, he said, he’d taken a student and his grandmother to dinner because “the grandmother was doing a lot of good things with the boy.”

Black, a former juvenile police officer who “got tired of seeing the same kids out of school every day” and returned to college for a degree in special education, said

his students “always feel they are retarded but they’re not that. They are low-functioning because of behavior, not because of IQ. Some of them take medication. They are grade levels behind but they can move up. I have a boy in the fourth grade who has attended only two and a half years of school. He is very intelligent. I pick him up everyday and bring him to school. One year, two of my students took second and fifth place in the school spelling bee.”

The SBH designation is supposed to be temporary, with the student eventually returning to a regular classroom. Black says he “tries to make sure the teacher is willing to work with them, the child wants to go, and the parents are supportive.” He confesses to worrying when a student leaves to go to another school. “Maybe the teacher will not be as patient or understanding. I feel bad—not to judge other teachers.”

Many of his former students eventually drop out of high school, he said, “but I’ve seen some successes. One boy is now a college freshman. He won a national ROTC scholarship. That is really neat. Some graduate from high school and get jobs. I’ve seen several of my former students working in restaurants and I’m impressed. They had such short fuses in school.” He added softly, “I have two who killed people.”

His approach to discipline is: “Give the parent a call. ‘Michael is not having a good day. Did something happen? If I have to call back, I may have to send him home.’ There are times when you have to send them home.” Having a relationship with parents is crucial for discipline because parents today tend to take the side of their children rather than of the school in disciplinary matters, he said. In the past, it was the other way around.

Principal Ward describes a similar approach to discipline. “I listen to the kids, talk to the parents and try to handle it.” He long ago rejected the idea that suspensions and expulsions teach a lesson. “When you put a child out, this does not improve his behavior. All it does is give the teacher a chance to teach. As far as modifying behavior, they go home and watch “Sponge Bob” all day. When they come back, they’re not changed and they’re behind. In addition, it burdens working parents to send a child home.”

Sometimes, though, he does suspend or expel students. And sometimes it is hard to know what to do. As we neared the cafeteria, a first grade teacher came up and told him that a boy and a girl in her class got in a fight again. “This is happening three to five times a day. Earlier today, he raised his fist at a different student.” She said that her three phone numbers for the girl’s mother weren’t working, and the phone number she had for the boy was disconnected.

“When you put a child out, this does not improve his behavior. All it does is give the teacher a chance to teach. As far as modifying behavior, they go home and watch “Sponge Bob” all day. When they come back, they’re not changed and they’re behind. In addition, it burdens working parents to send a child home.”

**– Michael Ward
Principal, Central
Fairmont School**

“Bring them in,” Ward said, and went into the small office of the assistant principal who normally handles discipline but who was out for two weeks. Ward knows the two because they have been in trouble many times before and often fight each other. He called the school’s social worker and asked her to visit the two mothers and call him back.

They arrived and sat in chairs facing his desk. She is a Black girl wearing a yellow sweat suit; he is a White boy wearing slacks and a shirt. They are both small—they’re first graders—although she is bigger than he is.

“This is my fourth time in ISS!” he announced.

“I missed breakfast,” she said.

“Why?” Ward asked.

“Because I was late.”

Ward asks what happened.

“She hit me first in the eye and I punched her.”

“He hit me.”

The teacher came into the office. She and Ward discussed referring the girl to a community mental health clinic.

“This is a constant problem,” said the teacher.

“What do *you* think?” Ward asked her.

“*Something* needs to be done.”

“They’ve already been in ISS so many times. I hate to put out a first grader.”

The boy and girl, meanwhile, wiggled on their chairs, talking and laughing.

The social worker called with a number for the girl’s mother. Ward wrote it down and called. “She got in another fight today. I don’t want to put her out of school. She’s spending time in ISS and not getting an education.” He asked her to come in and talk to the teacher. “We only have 15 days before the end of the year. I’m going to put her back in ISS for five days, but we need to get her back in class so she’ll be ready for next year.”

“Am I in trouble?” the girl asked.

“I’m going to put you back in ISS for five days. Do you know why?”

“Because I’m fighting.”

“What happened last time?”

“ISS.”

“I’m mad at you. We need to get this straightened out and get you on to second grade.”

The boy drew three days in ISS. Ward put out his little finger to crook with the boy’s little finger. “Are you done with fighting?” he asked.

"No," the boy answered.

Ward asked again, "Are you done with fighting?"

Suddenly he frowned. He's noticed that the boy's little finger was injured.

"How did you get this hurt finger?"

"My mom cracked me with a spoon."

"Why?"

"Because I was bein' bad."

He called the social worker again and told her to check on this. A short time later, the boy's mother called. She said ISS was a good thing for her son.

Ward then headed to the cafeteria to talk to another teacher about another problem. He considers Central Fairmount a work in progress, and so does the state of Ohio. In three years, the school moved up to the status of "continuous improvement" in achievement, halfway between "academic emergency" and "excellent."



Delinquency and Alienation

Dropping Out, Hanging Out

In the third or fourth grade, the sorting begins in earnest between those children in the pipeline to college and those heading in the direction of prison. Dr. Comer says that children begin to understand in about the third grade whether they are part of the American mainstream or part of another, more marginal, world. Underdeveloped from the start of school and not given the support and attention they need in the early grades, the marginal kids begin to mentally drop out around the third or fourth grade, when the academic demands of school begin to outstrip their preschool and early school development.

“These children are still in the north woods, without a map, survival skills or tools,” Dr. Comer writes. “Most will not continue to develop so as to achieve their social and academic potential. Most go on a downhill course and repeat the marginal experience of their parents, despite the fact that almost all parents want their children to succeed in school and in life.”⁶¹

While poor academic performance is not a direct cause of delinquency, studies consistently demonstrate a strong link between marginal literacy skills and the likelihood of involvement in the juvenile justice system. Most incarcerated youth lag two or more years behind their age peers in basic academic skills and have higher rates of grade retention, truancy, and suspension and expulsion. A national study found that more than one-third of youth incarcerated in the juvenile justice system read below the fourth grade level.⁶²

Mississippi State Senator Willie Simmons, who at the time represented Sunflower among other counties in the Delta, said that the state of Mississippi once used elementary school achievement scores to project future prison population. Simmons worked in corrections for 17 years and in 1992 was the deputy commissioner of Mississippi’s Department of Corrections. In that job, he said, he commissioned a study to project what the state’s prison population, then about 10,000, would be in 10 years.⁶³

A national study found that more than one-third of youth incarcerated at a median age of 15.5 read below the fourth grade level.

“The group in Washington that did the study looked at three factors,” he said. “The first was our sentencing laws; the second was the crimes that were being committed. The third factor, the key factor, was the reading and math scores in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.” The projection of 21,000 beds proved to be very accurate, Simmons said.

“My point is: If we can look at those fourth, fifth, and sixth graders and know they are going to Parchman or another institution, why can’t educators look at them and put them on a different track. If we don’t do that, we are going to go broke as a state.”

Already by fourth grade, a substantial number of students have failed a grade and are held back. Grade retention, like suspensions and expulsions, push children out of school. Although eliminating “social promotions” may seem like a good idea, generally, simply repeating a grade does not improve achievement, the National Research Council found in a survey of existing research. In fact, this practice increases the likelihood of dropping out.⁶⁴ A longitudinal study of the Baltimore Public Schools found that:

- Of those students retained more than once, 80 percent dropped out.
- Of those retained in both elementary and middle school, 94 percent dropped out.⁶⁵

The ninth grade is a major exit ramp from the education pipeline. This is the grade from which many students drop out because after years of negative experiences and accumulated deficits, they consider themselves too old, too big, too hopeless, or too alienated to keep going.

In most school districts, ninth grade is the first year of high school, when students move from smaller middle or K-8 schools into a big and often impersonal setting with greater academic demands. Educators cite this as the primary reason the ninth grade has so many retentions and dropouts. Most urban education systems are not organized to provide those students with weak academic skills and poor attendance habits the intensive support and attention they need during the move to high school.

In a study called “Neighborhood High Schools and the Juvenile Justice System: How Neither Helps the Other and How That Could Change,” researchers from Johns Hopkins University and the University of Pennsylvania describe what goes wrong in the mid-Atlantic city they studied:

“Students fall through the cracks in good part because no one is responsible for helping struggling students with the transition from middle school to high school. Middle schools, in this high accountability era, are increasingly consumed with raising their eighth grade test scores by focusing on the students just below the threshold of success in the local accountability system. High-poverty, neighborhood high schools traditionally view the first 30 to 45 days as an organization period where the focus is on balancing the number of students in each classroom, not addressing student needs. The level of institutionalized chaos that is characteristic of many high-poverty, neighborhood high schools is hard to fathom for those who have not experienced it first-hand. It is not uncommon, for example, for hundreds of students to be without courses scheduled for the first two weeks or for students to be assigned to classes for which no permanent teacher exists. This is often the genesis of scores of students

who become hall walkers—spending most of the school day roaming the halls and byways of the school.”⁶⁶

The ninth grade also is a significant entry ramp into the Prison Pipeline. The Johns Hopkins and University of Pennsylvania researchers looked at the students dropped from the rolls of the mid-Atlantic city’s school system when they were incarcerated and found that the majority were ninth graders, most of whom were repeating ninth grade for the second or third time. A study of girls incarcerated in the juvenile justice system in Philadelphia found that the ninth grade is a crucial juncture for girls as well, the time when many drop out or become fatally disillusioned with school.⁶⁷

Two categories of risk come into play with teenage dropouts. They are included in virtually every assessment tool used to gauge the risk of youth entering the juvenile justice system, like the following from the Ohio Department of Youth Services risk assessment form for youth entering its juvenile corrections system:

Peer Relations: Delinquent acquaintances or friends/ No or few positive acquaintances or friends

*Leisure/Recreation: Limited organized activities/ Could make better use of time/ No personal interests*⁶⁸

Hanging out on a street corner in Cincinnati, Ohio, or in Drew, Mississippi, carries enormous risk; from these and similar corners in poor urban neighborhoods and impoverished rural areas around the nation, countless young men and young women are sucked into the Pipeline to Prison. Often these street corners are in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, segregated by class and abandoned by the resourceful and successful.

Wright, the Life Course criminologist, created a risk portrait of a hypothetical boy on the corner: “First of all, by dropping out of school, he will be at the bottom of the economic ladder in terms of jobs and wages, probably for life. Criminologically, he is cut off from pro-social opportunities and friends and is hanging around a lot of older guys who often have come out of prison or are in and out of jail. In Hamilton County, 1,000 high-risk parolees from state prisons returned to the county last year, and these are the networks of information and motivation that facilitate a lot of criminal activities. One guy hears that the people in the apartment down the street are gone away so they go burglar it. A lot is opportunistic and some of it leads to violence, especially when drugs and guns get mixed up in it. Even with boys who are borderline in terms of criminal propensity, these associations can be enough to push them over.” And since urban police forces constantly watch activities on these corners, boys hanging out there are in the police spotlight.

Another part of the risk of corner associations is developing or deepening what criminologists call “anti-social values and beliefs,” which include not accepting responsibility, rationalizing harm, and blaming others or the system, said Ed Latessa, Wright’s colleague at the University of Cincinnati who has interviewed thousands of incarcerated youth and adult prisoners.

“Let’s take a guy with anti-social values and beliefs who steals a car or robs a convenience store and is caught and locked up. He’ll tell me, when I ask why he’s incarcerated, ‘I was prosecuted but the other guy got away,’ or ‘I had a bad lawyer,’ not ‘I’m here because I stole a car or robbed a convenience store,’” Latessa said. “And he doesn’t see how his actions affect his victims. He says, ‘They’ve got a lot of money. They’ll get a new car. I was only going to drive it ‘til it ran out of gas. Insurance will cover it.’ In some cases, he may blame the victim, and say, ‘She wouldn’t give up her purse so I had to hit her.’ It stands to reason that if you don’t think criminal activities are wrong and those around you don’t think they’re wrong, chances are great you will do it when the opportunity arises.”

Much has been written about the lack of positive mentors and activities for young people in inner cities and impoverished rural areas. Certainly some adults in these neighborhoods try valiantly to reach at-risk youth but there aren’t enough of them, and adults who live in better neighborhoods, who make sure their own children keep up with their schoolwork, go to soccer practice, take music lessons, go to art camp, attend church, and get to the library, seldom extend their time and concern to youth in other parts of their communities.

“I sometimes think of the founders of the Boy Scouts in England, who started the organization not for their youth but the youth in the cesspools of the cities,” said Mark Reed, the administrator of the Hamilton County Juvenile Court. “We need to be more aware of the community’s responsibility for all children. Coach a little league baseball team or something. Just a bus driver who is married and goes to work everyday could make a difference. People don’t understand the effect they can have just by being themselves.”

Jamal: The Lost Boy

Go to “Four Way,” an intersection in the Wynton Terrace projects where Baby Eric lives, and you may see Jamal, an 18-year-old, standing around with his friends. Jamal (not his real name) personifies the problems of unmet mental health needs, school failure, a juvenile record, and troublesome peers and leisure activities. His mother does her best. He has been tested, diagnosed, and serviced but he is a boy who never got enough attention from adults, particularly male adults, to learn what he needs to know to grow up to be a productive adult. Most of the influences around him have led him the other way. Now he is a lost boy.

His mother, a large, sweet-natured woman lives in the Walnut Hills area of Cincinnati, on the second floor of a duplex, with her daughter, her daughter’s two babies, an 11-year-old son, a 16-year-old son, and Jamal, when he is not staying with friends in Wynton Terrace. The family lived in the projects for a few years when she had a nervous breakdown and lost her job with the city. An older son, 20, was recently released from a state juvenile correctional facility and lives elsewhere.

Jamal happened to be home when the Children’s Defense Fund consultant visited and, to his mother’s surprise, agreed to talk. He is medium-dark brown, with short hair, and he wore a Celtics t-shirt, baggy pants, and open sneakers. Although pleasant and

polite, he was as closed as a clam. Only rarely did his hard shell open enough to provide a brief glimpse of the soft vulnerable creature inside.

Earlier, his mother had said that Jamal's problems began in early elementary school. He started getting disobedient and aggressive with other kids, misbehaving all around. "It scared me. I saw him get so angry his face changed. I took him to a clinic, and they said he had defiant disorder and he was depressed. It was a lot of words, and they gave him some medications." Part of the problem, she thinks, was learned behavior from watching his older brother who had an extreme hyperactivity disorder. Their father left when Jamal was three and has not been part of his life in any way.

Sitting in the living room, where shelves contain videos but no books, she and her son reviewed his school history. He attended at least eight schools until he dropped out during his third repeat of ninth grade. She had to fill in many of the details because Jamal didn't remember or want to remember much about his school years. He did remember suspensions and said that principals and teachers didn't like him and other students accused him of things he didn't do.

Jamal was held back in the third grade and placed in a class for students with severe behavioral handicaps. In class one year in a school that had a year-round program, with various vacation breaks, his teacher quit and the students in that class went on vacation for a big chunk of that year, his mother recalled.

By the seventh or eighth grade, "I kept suspending myself," he said. "I didn't care too much. I just started goin' with my own crowd."

"My opinion is: Being out of school was better than being in school," she said. "You kept being suspended for the same things. You knew."

"It wasn't nothin' serious. Say a cuss word and get a three-day suspension."

When pressed, he couldn't remember any "best time" in school and could name just one teacher he liked, Miss Saunders. "There was others but I can't remember their names." He couldn't name a book he enjoyed reading, did not attend church, belong to the Boy Scouts, or participate in school sports. He did wrestle one season at a neighborhood center, for a team coached by his uncle. He was there six months, then quit after a match he was sure he would win. Instead, his loose shoelaces distracted him and his opponent pinned him. "I could of beat him but he won. I said, 'Forget it,' and I never went back."

The interviewer talked about the importance of learning to go on after failure, but he didn't understand.

"I failed a lot," he said.

During his years in ninth grade, Jamal was often truant, began smoking marijuana, and built a juvenile record. "Our family was not out of control 'til I had to stop working and we moved to the projects," his mother said. "The first week, somebody held a gun to (her older son's) head. My boys were picked on. They got off the bus and ran home crying. I had to do the down home thing. I said, 'If you don't fight back, I'm going to whop you.' The next day, they took off running, but they had hid a stick. When the kids came after them, they started swinging and the kids went the other way."

The move to the projects brought another trauma she confessed when Jamal wasn't in the room. A man in the area gave alcohol and money to the boys, sexually abused them, and videotaped it. When she learned about it, she called the police. She has never looked at the videos and her boys don't talk about it, she said. "I was going to court about child support. I just had a breakdown." She burst into tears. "I wasn't a good mother at that point."

Jamal's juvenile record is two and a half pages long: two assaults, curfew violations, driving without a license, unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, theft, criminal trespass, failure to stay after an accident, disorderly conduct, domestic violence, and parole violations. His first criminal charge, assault, came, he said, when 13 kids jumped on him, he got angry, went inside, and got a knife. When the boys tried to jump him again, "First person came at me, I cut him."

"I can understand him going off like that," his mother said, "but the judge said it was premeditated because he went back in the house and came out again. It was the wrong thing to do."

The domestic violence charge came when Jamal and his older brother got in a fight that their mother couldn't stop so she called the police. Jamal spent months in and out of the Hamilton County detention center and a juvenile community corrections center. Although these institutions have education programs, the course work isn't what Jamal remembers. "People talk about, 'This is how he got caught. This is how he got caught.' It's a crime school."

In February 2004, he stopped going to school. "I'm 18 in the ninth grade. It's not worth it." He says he now is looking for a job. His mother has driven him to grocery stores and fast food restaurants that she heard were hiring. He filled out applications but no one has called.

As Wright pointed out, street corners are good networks for crime but not for jobs; only one of Jamal's friends, who are all high school dropouts, has a job. Asked how one gets a job, Jamal responded, "Luck." He doesn't expect to find one. This is a realistic appraisal given the shortage of jobs, but high school dropouts like Jamal sometimes have an additional problem. Spending weeks out of school for suspensions or truancy, they have lost the habit of showing up. Jamal's older brother lost several jobs because he would come in late or get in arguments with the manager.

"Ain't no way to make money," Jamal said. "No choice but to sell drugs."

"You have a choice," his mother said. "You don't have to sell drugs."

Jamal spent months in and out of the Hamilton County detention center and a juvenile community corrections center. Although these institutions have education programs, the course work isn't what Jamal remembers. "People talk about, 'This is how he got caught. This is how he got caught.' It's a crime school."

- Jamal, 18 years old

“Either that or rob.”

The police seem to believe Jamal is selling drugs or doing something else illegal. Several times, they have picked him up from around the Four Way. A week before the interview, he said, the police followed him when he was bicycling around Wynton Terrace and stopped and searched him. Finding nothing, they gave him a ticket for riding a bicycle without a light. Now that he is 18, an offense could send him to adult prison.

His mother mentioned the Job Corps and a boy he knows who got a certificate in food service and now has a job. She thinks he should go to the program in Dayton where he wouldn't be hanging out with his friends.

“I'd be stuck all the way out of town and I wouldn't know nobody. I'd be broke and I'd have nothing to do.”

“They give you a place to stay and stipend for food and clothing and a lump sum when you finish,” said his mother.

“I know somebody who went there and he said it was crap.”

This conversation underlined a characteristic of lost boys like Jamal—their narrow world view. There are programs, though insufficient, for jobs or recreation, but these boys don't see them. They have traveled so far out of the mainstream and so far into the Pipeline to Prison that all they see are the pipeline walls. They don't see the ways out.

What boys like Jamal need are “long-term real relationships,” said Hurst, the director at the time of the National Center for Juvenile Justice. “I interned with a psychiatrist once, and for children with some sort of conduct disorder who have trouble connecting actions and consequences, a low frustration tolerance, and a pattern of self-destructive behavior and decisions, the remedy is a long-term real relationship with a person or people of acceptable character.” He said that the “most honest” program of this nature he knows—a mentoring program in Arkansas for parents who had abused their children—does not ask the mentors to take on more than one family at a time and their involvement lasts until the children get to the age of reason and responsibility, “which sometimes seems to take forever.”⁶⁹

What would Jamal really like to do if he could snap his fingers and do and be whatever he wanted?

Jamal shook his head and finally said, “I don't know.”

Is there something you enjoy doing?

*There are programs,
though insufficient,
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but these boys don't
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traveled so far out of
the mainstream
and so far into the
Pipeline to Prison
that all they see
are the Pipeline
walls. They don't see
the ways out.*

"Building stuff. A guy who does dry wall showed me a little bit of that. I didn't get paid."

He also likes music. He can play the beat machine. He and some friends put together rap sounds on a machine. "Some guy was going to make a CD of us but he died."

Do you have anything going for you?

"I ain't got nothing going for me. Talk to girls. Other than that, ain't nothing out there for me."

Are you worried about ending up in prison?

"Sometimes I think about it. I don't care no more."



Impact of Drugs

Substance Abuse and Crime

Hunter Hurst, of the National Center for Juvenile Justice, said that while many offenders use drugs, drugs do not cause crime. “Researchers have forever wanted to do research on drugs predicting crime,” he said. “Everyone from federal judges on down will tell you they do, but from a research standpoint, it’s more true that if you are an offender, you will be a drug user.” He said that about 80 percent of juvenile offenders have substance abuse disorders but only 20 percent of drug users commit offenses.⁷⁰

Of course, drug use itself is a crime that has drawn harsher and harsher penalties in the last two decades. Since 1980, annual drug arrests have tripled.⁷¹ Juvenile drug arrests have increased 75 percent. In Ohio, for example, juvenile arrests for drug abuse violations in 2000 numbered 5,715, second only to theft.⁷² Juvenile drug arrests in Cincinnati in 2003 also came in second to theft, with arrests for possession outnumbering those for trafficking by a margin of 9 to 1.⁷³

Much has been written on the causes of drug abuse, and the stories of young people like Jamal and others underline some of them: It is something to do. It is something their friends do. It provides a way to escape the unpleasantness of reality and feel powerful and important. Once addicted, especially to cocaine, it is hard to escape. Wright, the life course criminologist, says that studies indicate that cocaine can damage the structure of the brain. “You think it’s hard to lose weight,” he commented. “Try changing the structure of your brain.” There is no question of the damage substance abuse does to families—witness the number of children in this report whose mothers were addicted to drugs—and to teenagers in derailing them from productive activities and companions.

In selling drugs, another, often economic, dynamic comes into play. It is telling that the writer William Finnegan began his *New Yorker* magazine profile of a young,

“The possibility of becoming a statistic in the prison system is great here, because why? No jobs! No opportunity for a job.”

– Douglas Sproat
Former Warden of youthful offender prison in Mississippi

Black drug dealer in New Haven, Connecticut, by describing the city's many businesses and factories that moved away or closed down in the last quarter of the 20th century. Several previous generations of Black men had come to New Haven and elsewhere in the North for jobs in factories and, for a while, their labor was needed. But when the economy changed and jobs became scarce for unskilled and semi-skilled workers, the unemployment rate for Black men soared and now doubles the rate for White men.⁷⁴

The Mississippi Delta never had much employment except agricultural work, which now is done by machines, and some garment factories. Today those factories are gone and just a few industries like catfish and chicken processing plants remain.

"The possibility of becoming a statistic in the prison system is great here, because why? No jobs! No opportunity for a job," says Douglas Sproat, the former warden of the youthful offender prison in Walnut Grove in Leake County, northeast of Jackson.

Sproat describes the cost-benefit analysis some inmates make about dealing drugs. America puts a high value on money and material things, he said, and when he suggests they get a job upon release, "They say, 'How do you think I afford the threads that I have?' and 'I'm a status symbol in the community because I've got money in my pocket all the time, and you tell me that I'm supposed to work for minimum wage?... I pushed drugs for seven years. I got caught once. The price to pay is not—not anywhere near—what it would take for me to stop.'"

Lorenzo: "No Lifestyle to Live"

Lorenzo White is reputed to have been one of the most notorious drug dealers in the Mississippi Delta. He was 29 years old at the time but looked 22 or 23, very slight of build and sweet-faced. While in middle school in Drew, Lorenzo's class was taken on a field trip to Parchman Penitentiary seven miles away in an effort to scare the students straight. It didn't work with Lorenzo, who now is incarcerated at Parchman on drug charges, or with other young men in his hometown. "Seems like half of Drew's young Black men are in Parchman," he said. Lorenzo's story is especially sad because his paternal grandmother, Mae Bertha Carter, was one of the heroes of the Civil Rights Movement in the Delta, taking great risks to enroll her children in the segregated White public school.

Lorenzo's mother, Doris, was 15 when he was born. His father did not live in Drew and was not around for his childhood. Doris already had a two-year-old son and, three years after Lorenzo, she had a daughter. They all lived with Doris's mother, Minnie White, who worked as a housekeeper for local White people and somehow was able to take care of her own children and the three grandchildren.

According to Yolanda, Doris' sister, Doris had relatives in New York and moved there to find a job. The three kids went with her, but it was hard for them, and they wanted to come back to the Delta to stay with their grandmother, Minnie White. Mae Bertha Carter lived next door. Both women tried to steer Lorenzo in the right direction, but a feeling of abandonment seems to have pervaded the souls of all three children. Yolanda told the story of Doris promising to send Lorenzo the very latest in tennis

shoes and of Lorenzo sitting by the mail box, day after day, waiting for shoes that never came.

He considered himself rebellious against authority from elementary school on, and although his teachers recognized that he was very smart, he was not fond of school. His brother Rodney made straight As in high school and was rarely in trouble, but Rodney took to the streets after graduation and in 2003 shot his girlfriend and then himself. Lorenzo's sister moved to Oklahoma and was killed in a car accident.

After an altercation with a teacher in the 11th grade, Lorenzo refused to go to the alternative school. "That means for bad kids," he said. In spite of the warnings of both grandmothers, he joined the street life and became known as a drug dealer. There is some evidence that part of his motivation was to help his grandmother and all of the children and young people living with her. Yolanda said her son once needed some special basketball shoes to play in a tournament, and she didn't have money to buy them. She got a call from the coach at one point saying that Lorenzo had been in and had left money for the shoes as well as money for his cousin's travel to the tournament.

Lorenzo was interviewed twice, initially in July 2002 and again in June 2004. In both conversations, he struggled to explain himself, revealing the difficulty of escaping from the Pipeline and an overwhelming desire to be important and successful.

"After I got expelled, it had a big effect on me, because then I hung out on the streets for that year," he said during the first interview in the Sunflower County Jail where he was awaiting trial for drug possession. "I wasn't going to school, no jobs, so I didn't have nothing to do but sit up there, sell drugs, and drink alcohol. I was smoking marijuana on the street. I started smoking marijuana when I was, like, 16 years old. On the street, I was drinking, like, a six-pack of beer a day. Me and my friends, we might go get a case a day and drink. Smokin' weed. Selling dope. Once you're on the streets it's peer pressure. Watching each other do it. Following behind them. Ride around in the car, get high, drink beer, go play cards. If you're in school—skip school."

Speaking of Drew, Lorenzo said, "Part of the problem is the kids have no place to go after school—no recreation place, no basketball court, no swimming pool in Drew any more. When I was on the streets, kids came up saying they want to be like me, and want to have a car like I had, make money like I had made. They weren't good ideals, and I be telling them, 'You don't want to live that lifestyle.' But you got to show kids better than you can tell them, and I had wanted to live that lifestyle, too. I grew up, seems like, with no lifestyle to live."

In Lorenzo's experience, money is the motivation for selling drugs in the Delta "cause you're driving fast nice cars that people like doctors and lawyers drive. Being cool, hanging out with friends on the streets—you can get some respect. It's hard to leave a job where you make \$100,000 a year. Same with drugs and fast money. Like on the street, you make \$100,000 a year, it's hard to leave the environment."

Lorenzo continued trying to explain. “Sex and drugs, and teenage pregnancy, and then these kids figure they can’t take care of their kids if they are in school. They go out and try to get a job to take care of their kids, and there ain’t no jobs there to get, not in the Delta. Not around here.”

Like others in this report, Lorenzo talked about attitude and anger. “Seems like parents ain’t teaching children about anger. This anger business gets you in a world of trouble before you know it. People ain’t treating you right or something like that—you might get up in the morning on the wrong side of the bed, and people say something to you, your attitude just comes out. You might think life ain’t treating you right. You might couldn’t get no money that morning from your momma or somebody. Couldn’t get breakfast, your girlfriend might get into it with you, you just have a problem. Anger. Or depressed all the time. When I was going to Drew High, I was depressed all the time—about the education, where I was going to be in life when I grew up.”

Lorenzo said he wanted his grandmother, Mae Bertha Carter, “to see me as somebody successful, like her kids was successful in life. She was a great lady. She wanted everybody, White and Black, to have an education—the best education they could have. She talked to me all the time, but I didn’t listen. If I’d have listened, right now I wouldn’t be in the trouble I’m in.”

It seems to be a theme in the stories of the young men that their mothers or grandmothers do not carry enough weight in a materialistic world with more temptations than opportunities. The women pull in one direction but the street and money pull more powerfully in the other direction, aided by popular music that glamorizes gangsters, violence, and casual sex.

In this first interview, Lorenzo expressed regret for his bad decisions. He said he had taken classes at a community college for a year but didn’t return the next year because he got in trouble for selling drugs. “I could probably have gotten a job like working in Auto Zone, or like I went to school for agricultural mechanics for working on tractors and stuff like that. I might have been working at John Deere, being a manager or something like that. But I wanted to go and make money on the streets and have something—like cars and houses.”

He resolved to “re-invent himself”—“get rid of that anger and read the Bible and stuff.” His dreams were quintessentially American. “When I leave out of this jail, I want to be outside of Mississippi, go back to school, get an education, be a doctor or a lawyer. I got two kids I need to take care of, and I want my kids to grow up to know me as somebody instead of nobody. I dream of coming back to Mississippi to help people when I get old, but I don’t want to come back ‘til I get old where I buy me a house where I can live peacefully.”

Instead, he is still in Mississippi—in Parchman. He did leave the state for a short time. Connie Curry, who wrote a book about Mrs. Carter, talked to Lorenzo’s lawyers about having him assigned to a drug rehab program in Atlanta. When Lorenzo came

“[Mae Bertha Carter] wanted everybody, White and Black, to have an education—the best education they could have. She talked to me all the time, but I didn’t listen. If I’d have listened, right now I wouldn’t be in the trouble I’m in.”

**– Lorenzo
Grandson of
Mae Bertha Carter**

before the judge in January 2001, he was sentenced to this two-year program. But he left after one month, saying he didn’t fit into the Atlanta program and thought he could “beat the system.” He went to Memphis to see his daughter, couldn’t find work and returned to Mississippi. He was arrested after being stopped at a routine roadblock, where police determined that he was wanted for skipping out on the program. When he went to trial, the angered judge sentenced him to 25 years, without parole. He is appealing.

In June, Lorenzo was working in the processing department at Parchman where inmates bag and freeze the pecans, carrots, and vegetables raised on the prison farm. He said conditions had improved from the days of violence and dogs and disappearances of inmates, partially because of legal scrutiny and lawsuits. He had his own room in a special building and said he spent most of his time reading and studying. He was staying away from the younger guys who, in his opinion, “say and do stupid things.” Some join gangs for protection but he said he was not scared of gangs on the street and isn’t afraid of them in prison. “I may not be big, but they all know who I am, and that I am smart. Everybody knows me—I have a reputation of being good people, even from some of the police. I get along with everybody.”

His mentors are the older guys who have been there 25 years or more, although he said the minds of some of them are gone. The older ones teach him things, he said, suggesting that Lorenzo is now learning how to spend his life in prison.

Later that month, Lorenzo was transferred to a private prison run by the Corrections Corporation of America in Greenwood, where he can learn a trade like carpentry or plumbing.

Again, he says he plans to leave the Delta when he gets out.

The Juvenile Justice System

Clogged with Cases

Only about one-quarter of juveniles in detention nationwide who have been adjudicated have committed a violent offense.⁷⁵ The percentage of serious offenders is even smaller at the doorway to the juvenile justice system, the courtroom where the police, parents, and schools bring youth by the thousands every year, clogging the courts with cases that used to be handled in families, schools, and neighborhoods. Some arise from school-based arrests; others from parents who file charges against their children or other children.

“In the courtroom in 2020, I sat at a desk and I had kids I couldn’t even see,” said Mark Reed, the Hamilton County, Ohio, juvenile court administrator who formerly served as a juvenile magistrate. “They weren’t tall enough. I wondered, ‘What in the world could you have done?’”

Terry Weber, the chief at the time of the Hamilton County juvenile defenders, estimated that 30 percent of the cases that come to court were resolved elsewhere when he was young. “One kid kicks the crap out of another kid. That used to be handled in the school or neighborhood.”

According to Kim Brooks Tandy, the lawyer who directed the Children’s Law Center in Kentucky, “domestic violence” is often the entry charge for girls, who frequently are victims of domestic abuse and violence themselves. “A girl fights with her sister. One punches the other and the parents call the police. Both are taken to the detention center. The second time around, it’s a felony.”

A Cincinnati youth crisis center run by Lighthouse Youth Services often gets phone calls from the detention center about young people dropped off there, said Bob Mecum, the director of the agency. “You would not believe the number of parents who take their 10-year-olds to juvenile detention because they don’t know how to handle them.” Lighthouse picks up these kids, who have committed no crime, and calls the parents to see what can be done.

*“In the courtroom in 2020, I sat at a desk and I had kids
I couldn’t even see... They weren’t tall enough.
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– Mark Reed
Juvenile Court Administrator

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In Mecum's view, some parents and foster parents who criminalize their children's behavior are acting selfishly and irresponsibly, but others just don't know what to do about their children's misbehavior, especially children who are mentally or emotionally disturbed, and hope the judges can somehow change them or they can get mental health treatment.

In its 2003 report on juvenile justice in Ohio, the American Bar Association attributed the "heavy reliance on the juvenile justice system for treatment or punishment" in Ohio to "the lack of resources to treat children with mental illness, public schools in academic emergency, a mortality rate from child abuse higher than the national average, and a high poverty rate." Ohio's juvenile incarceration rate at the time ranked fifth in the nation.

"Increasingly, it is not so much the criminality of the behavior but the lack of alternatives for children with severe emotional and behavioral problems, children who have been expelled from school, and children whose families cannot provide adequate care that brings them into the juvenile justice system," the report stated.⁷⁶

A U.S. Senate committee hearing in Washington, on July 7, 2004, heard evidence of this problem on a national scale. Congressional investigators reported that 15,000 children with psychiatric disorders were improperly incarcerated in 2003 because no mental health services were available. A nationwide survey of juvenile justice centers, presented at the hearing, found that children as young as seven were incarcerated because of lack of access to mental health care. More than 340 detention centers, two-thirds of those that responded to the survey, said youths with mental health disorders were being locked up because there was no place else for them to go while awaiting treatment. Seventy-one centers in 33 states said they were holding mentally ill youngsters with no charges.⁷⁷

"We are in a much better position to diagnose and treat mental illness than we were just 15 years ago," Dr. Steven S. Sharfstein, president of the American Psychiatric Association, testified. "Many kids who get in trouble should be in treatment. But because of the lack of money and the lack of services, they end up in the criminal justice system."⁷⁸

The ABA report, titled "Justice Cut Short," devotes pages to the inadequacy of counsel for indigents at all stages of the juvenile justice process in Ohio. Many poor youth in Ohio had no attorney at all, waiving their right to have one without even the most basic understanding of what they were giving up. They included one in five sentenced to community corrections and 15 percent of those incarcerated in state juvenile corrections facilities in Ohio.⁷⁹

In addition, the report stated, court-appointed attorneys or public defenders often meet with their clients for the first time the day of their hearings and, therefore, don't know them well enough to argue meaningfully on their behalf for the least restrictive outcome.

Jennifer Riley-Collins, an attorney at the time with the Mississippi Center for Justice, said that many youth defenders in Mississippi represent juveniles on a part-time basis, as court-appointed attorneys, as part of a general law practice. Riley-Collins, who was conducting a statewide assessment of 18 youth courts, said attorneys there often do not spend much time with their young clients. "I've seen some court-appointed representatives not even going back into the detention facility to see who they will be representing that morning," she said.

With a few exceptions, a juvenile judge or magistrate has broad discretion in ordering the "disposition," or sentence. In cities in Ohio, dispositions range from fines, restitution, community service, parole or intensive parole, electronic monitoring, placement in a "staff secure" but not locked community corrections facility or confinement in a locked state corrections facility. Parole may require attendance not only at school but at counseling sessions or drug treatment programs.

Ohio's nine juvenile correctional facilities run by the state Department of Youth Services were the most confining for juveniles tried as juveniles; only juveniles convicted of felonies were sent there. The 40 detention centers were run by county courts. Most of the youth confined there were awaiting trial or sentencing, but judges can order a confinement of up to 90 days as a sentence. Hybrids between the two are the 12 community correctional facilities, run by the counties but financed by the state. Additional options are residential schools, which are not locked facilities. Ohio juveniles tried as adults are held in a separate unit at an adult prison.⁸⁰

Mississippi judges have similar discretion but fewer alternatives to incarceration. Just 23 of the state's 82 counties have Adolescent Offender Programs, which include after-school programs, individual counseling, family counseling and drug abuse treatment. Started by the state's Department of Youth Services in 1994, all are non-residential and community-based.⁸¹

Sheila Bedi, the attorney for the Southern Poverty Law Center, said that judges use these alternatives when they are available. "As a matter of fact, in January of 2004, a group of judges came to the Juvenile Justice Committee of the Mississippi

"Increasingly, it is not so much the criminality of the behavior but the lack of alternatives for children with severe emotional and behavior problems, children who have been expelled from school, and children whose families cannot provide adequate care that brings them into the juvenile justice system."

– American Bar Association 2003 report on juvenile justice in Ohio

state legislature and said, 'If you gave us more alternatives, we wouldn't have all these children in the training schools.'

In most counties in Mississippi, the choices for disposition of juveniles come down to just three: Do nothing, lock them up, or put them on probation, although Riley-Collins believes judges could be more creative in coming up with alternatives on their own.

"How about figuring out some community service?" she asked. "Or a big brother/big sister mentoring program? Or 'read a book and provide me with a book report.' There's one judge that does that. Or 'write a letter of apology.' It's like when you have a child at home you don't want to punish but you know you need to. You come up with something."

Mississippi had two training schools: Columbia, in Columbia, and Oakley, in Raymond. Some 97 percent of juveniles incarcerated there committed minor offenses.⁸² Youth who commit felonies generally are tried as adults and sent to the Walnut Grove Youth Correctional Institution.

With so few alternatives, judges in Mississippi lock up young people on some charges that likely would draw community service, electronic monitoring or other alternative sanctions in cities in Ohio. Of the 347 youth incarcerated in Mississippi's two training schools on March 15, 2004, 12 were there for running away, nine for truancy, nine for possession of alcohol or public drunkenness, eight for trespassing, seven for shoplifting, one for breaking the curfew, one for defrauding a cab driver, 20 for contempt of court, and 45 for disorderly conduct.⁸³

The most common charge against juveniles incarcerated in Mississippi's training schools was violation of parole.⁸⁴ Often the violation involved was for not attending school, which was almost routinely set as a condition in every state. Defense attorneys in Mississippi and Ohio contended that parole was over-used as a sanction and could trap kids in the system.

"You get a kid identified as having emotional problems or a history of abuse or a disorganized family," said Tandy, the Kentucky attorney. "They get on probation and there are 1,500 conditions they will never comply with. They violate probation and are put into or sent back to detention."

Judge Ray, of Toledo, agrees. "The deeper you get into the justice system, the harder it is to get out. Probation is designed in most cases to identify inappropriate behavior. In some ways, we are watching for something to go wrong." Ray said that the Lucas County Juvenile Court does not put juveniles on probation for truancy anymore. While truancy is the top predictor of delinquent behavior, he said, "We could not document that school attendance was improved on probation. What often happened was that truants on probation would be truant again, and would face a harsher sanction for violating a court order. A lot of research says that is counterproductive. Overreacting to that kind of behavior may increase delinquency, rather than decrease it," he explained.

In Mississippi, where probation officers often double as youth court counselors, “parents sometimes think they are there to help the child, and the parent becomes the informant,” said Riley-Collins. “‘He’s not coming home at 9:30 like he’s supposed to.’ If a curfew was a condition of parole, the youth court officer may bring that child back to court on a violation of a court order and the judge may send him to one of the training schools.”

Marcus: A Day in Court

The waiting area for juvenile court on the ninth floor of the Franklin County courthouse in Columbus was standing room only by 9:30 a.m. Attorneys said that on some days, especially Mondays, they could barely walk through the room. It was a long space with row upon row of black plastic chairs; along one wall were six courtrooms, each with a printout of its morning cases tacked up near the doorway.

Mornings, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., were devoted to guilty pleas and violations of probation or other court orders. Since only about 10 percent of juvenile cases go to trial, mornings are when the immediate fate of hundreds of Columbus area juveniles is decided. Perhaps 300 people were in the room—juveniles, mostly male, with their mothers, along with court officers, probation officers, and lawyers calling out the names of their clients.

“Jerome Batson! Jerome Batson! Are you here?”

“Dawan Smith! Dawan Smith!”

Above this din, a court officer shouted the names of the juveniles and lawyers who were next up before one of the six magistrates.

Michael Hayes, an attorney in private practice, was appointed by the court to represent a 16-year-old boy charged with violation of probation for running away from home while on electronic monitoring. To get more information, he went downstairs to pick up the “discovery” files in the case.

Another attorney, meanwhile, came up to a mother and son. “Here’s what we’ll do,” he said. “He can plead to attempted assault. We’ll have another hearing in September and if he gets in no more trouble, the charges will be dismissed.”

The mother frowned. “That’s not what I want. That boy has jumped on my son six times.”

“But he’s charged with assault,” the lawyer said.

“No, he isn’t.”

“Are you the mother of Gregory?”

“No,” she said and named her son. Realizing that he had approached the mother of his client’s victim, the attorney apologized and retreated.

Nearby, a teenager with a pale face, pimples, and dark hair, looked at the floor while his mother and grandmother had a conversation suggestive of the way delinquent and criminal activity sometimes passes from one generation to the next. “This is his

seventh time here and it is going to be the last,” the mother declared, giving her son a determined look. Her mother—the boy’s grandmother—laughed.

“What?” the daughter asked.

“I was just thinking of all you put me through. What goes around comes around.”

Hayes returned with the file and walked along the rows of seats, calling his client’s name. A tired-looking woman wearing glasses and her hair pulled back looked up and waved. Her son sat next to her, a lanky boy, wearing jeans, a T-shirt from his school, and a sport-type jacket. He wore a black electronic monitoring band around one ankle. Like virtually all the other juveniles there, he sat in silence and stared forward blankly, as if a curtain had dropped down over his eyes.

Each courtroom has two small rooms near its entrance where lawyers can confer with their young clients. Hayes invited the boy and his mother into one of them. Other lawyers were doing the same with their clients, while others talked to their clients in the waiting area.

Hayes quickly read through the file. Marcus (not his real name) has a record of chronic truancy, receiving stolen goods, aggravated endangerment, and theft. He was placed on electronic monitoring after pleading guilty to stealing a purple Dodge minivan parked by a Dollar store with the keys in the ignition. The next day, he drove it to school, where the school’s police officer, noticing a car parked without a permit, found out it had been reported stolen. Marcus was identified as the student who parked the car and readily admitted what he had done. When he ran away from home, where he had been ordered to stay on an electronic monitor, he spent two weeks in the county detention center.

“Why did you steal the car?” Hayes asked.

“Show off. Transportation. Tired of walking.”

“How do you feel about it now?”

“Stupid. I wish I never took it. I’m tired of coming down here and my mom is too.”

His mother says he ran away from home because “he didn’t want restrictions on him. He went to his sister’s house and the police came and got him and put him in jail.”

“Maybe that woke him up,” Hayes commented. Marcus nodded yes.

Hayes asked about Marcus’ friends. His mother says she likes only one of them. His other friends smoke marijuana.

“Do you?” he asked Marcus.

“Not anymore.”

“Well, you better not. They may test you for it. You’ve got to stay in school, obey the rules at home, and no drugs.”

He asked how Marcus was doing at school. “Better than I used to,” Marcus said. “They moved me to a different school. The special ed school I used to go to, every time I went there I got in a fight. Walk the hall, get in a fight. Go to the bathroom, get in a fight and get put in the locked-in room. I used to kick and scream to get out.”

Later, his mother explained that Marcus began going to a school for kids with behavior and learning problems when he was in the first grade. He was hyperactive—often got up out of his seat and moved around. He was put on medication but it made him mean and aggressive, she said, so she discontinued it. She thought he needed a smaller classroom, so she requested special education. “I wanted it for academic reasons but he was in for behavior and he became like them—fighting and angry. His behavior wasn’t that bad at home. It was one nightmare after another. They had a lock-up in the school. They were training them to be in jail.”

Eventually, problems in that school were exposed in the local newspaper and on television, she noted. At a previous hearing on another charge, she said, she brought the newspaper clippings to show the magistrate. The magistrate’s “whole attitude to him just shifted and compassion jumped in.”

In the little conference room, Hayes said his main goal was to keep Marcus from being sent to a county or state facility. “I’m going to talk to his probation officer. If she thinks he’s doing well, we might be able to get him off the monitor. But we’ve got [he named the magistrate] and she’s tough.”

Hayes went off to look for the probation officer, who would testify in Marcus’ hearing. Outside the courtroom, he stopped to greet an attorney for Franklin County Children’s Services. In addition to “delinquency” cases, juvenile magistrates also make decisions in child abuse and custody cases. The attorney had two cases that morning. One was a termination of parental rights. “I guess it’s uncontested because the parent didn’t show up,” she said, adding, “Crack mom.”

She said Franklin County has 300 to 400 such cases at a time, many of them involving mothers who are addicted to drugs. “I know some of the kids,” she said, explaining that they have a multitude of behavioral problems. “I’d hate to see them when they get to be teenagers.”

Asked about her other case, she shook her head slowly from side to side. “Just when you think you’ve heard everything bad that can happen, you hear something worse. This is a case of a father, brother, and uncle sexually abusing children—and the mother held them down.”

The magistrates’ courtrooms contain a table on one side for the juvenile, the defense attorney, and the parent or guardian and a table on the other side for the prosecutor and a probation officer, if the juvenile was on probation or the probation department was asked to make a report. The magistrate sits behind a desk on a stage so that he or she looks down on the others. Judging from several hours spent in one magistrate’s courtroom, the hearings go quickly—10 to 20 minutes a piece. The probation officers did most of the talking, the defense attorneys raised a few points, and the magistrate asked questions and then delivered her decisions in a stern voice, facing the juvenile.

The probation officers covered much the same ground with each juvenile: the delinquent history, whether the youth was attending school, obeying the rules of the home, or had gotten additional charges. If drug testing or treatment had been ordered, the probation officer told the magistrate the results.

In the case of a young man brought in for violating intensive probation, the probation officer told the magistrate that the boy had not called the probation officer in three weeks, and the officer could not contact the family.

The magistrate turned to the defense table and the boy's mother said, "I called to say we got put out of the apartment and we had to stay with different relatives."

The probation officer went on, "Also he's been put out of drug treatment for not cooperating."

The magistrate asked about his record. "Attempted burglary, breaking and entering, lots of disorderly conduct," the probation officer responded.

The defense attorney spoke up. "You've heard the bad news. The good news is: There are no new offenses."

The magistrate told the young man the possible penalties for this violation, beginning with a fine and ending with 90 days in detention. "I'm going to put you on electronic monitoring. And you better beg to get back in that treatment program and see your probation officer once a week." He groaned, and she added, "If there are any more violations, I will bring you back and lock you up."

The juveniles who had been held in detention awaiting their hearings arrived through a back door wearing green sweatshirts, tan pants, and handcuffs and leg chains. One boy, who was sentenced to 60 days in the detention center for assault, turned around as he was being led out. "Bye, Mom," he said.

The only youth accompanied by a father was a Korean boy charged with carrying a concealed weapon at school. The defense attorney explained that it was a small knife in a case on his keychain that the boy had received as a gift. He had been home schooled before that and didn't realize that this would be considered a weapon. He was expelled for 45 days. The lawyer said the boy's only prior record was for breaking and entering. "But this was to get his own CD player back when his friend wasn't home. He just got a slap on the wrist for that."

The boy, dressed in a well-pressed shirt and slacks, sat quietly next to his father, who told the magistrate that his son was "very respectful" at home.

"I'll dismiss it, and I hope you don't get in trouble again," she said.

Outside the courtroom, a woman was yelling, "Lock him up! We're not coming back to this damn place! Lock him up!" Her son was represented by Marla Barrick, a Franklin County public defender. "This is a 17-year-old with an IQ of 63," Barrick explained. She said she had expected to be handling a plea on unauthorized use of a car—a friend had taken it and told him he could use it—but when she got to court, she learned that his mother had told the police he attacked her, and he was charged with domestic violence.

"I checked and Children's Services was involved with the family," Barrick said. "The boy was not in school. His parents didn't enroll him, and he has been supporting them by working at a pizza place. The father is an alcoholic. The mother is mad at him because he has a girlfriend and he wants to live with her. He's a good kid. He

says he wants to enroll himself in school. I got a continuance, and that's when the mother started yelling."

Meanwhile, Marcus' case was not called until almost 1 p.m. The probation officer said he was attending school and his mother said he was behaving well at home. Hayes asked that he be removed from electronic monitoring, and the magistrate agreed. He would remain on probation until the end of the summer.

Outside the courtroom, Marcus smiled and said he wanted to go to the YMCA, where he sometimes played basketball. Remarkably, this 16-year-old, who was still in the ninth grade and already fairly deep into the Pipeline to Prison or to a marginal adulthood, had hopes of getting into college. He said it would be paid for since his father, who lives in Michigan, is a disabled veteran. It was impossible not to hope, but also to doubt, that he will make it.

Disparities in the Juvenile Justice System

James Bell, director of the San Francisco-based W. Haywood Burns Institute for Juvenile Justice, Fairness, and Equity, tells a story about hosting a group of Romanian diplomats interested in the workings of local juvenile justice systems. As he was taking them to a different court after several days of visits, the diplomats asked him, "Are we going to the White court today?"⁸⁵

The Romanians' impression is understandable. Dark faces predominate in the crowded waiting room of the juvenile court in Columbus, Ohio. The white faces stand out like dots against a black background. African American youth between ages 10 and 17 constitute about 16 percent of the population nationwide yet account for 27 percent of juvenile arrests, 36 percent of juveniles detained, and 37 percent of juveniles committed to secure institutions. Overall, minorities account for 60 percent of juveniles committed to secure facilities, 50 percent more than their proportion in the juvenile population.⁸⁶

Without a doubt, risk-saturated African Americans like Jamal are more likely to commit crimes than White youth growing up with more attention, more stimulation, better schooling, and more opportunities.

Part of the disproportion, however, arises from living in poor neighborhoods and in urban areas. Interestingly, property crimes in affluent neighborhoods are less likely to be prosecuted than those in poor neighborhoods because the owners have insurance to cover the loss and consider their time too valuable to keep showing up in court, Hurst said. In addition, urban areas, whether Black or White, have far more crime reported and more arrests so that

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states like Minnesota, where most African Americans live in cities, have a greater racial disproportion than Alabama, where the Black population is more evenly distributed between urban and rural areas.⁸⁷

In addition, disparate treatment plays a role in every decision point in the justice system from arrest through incarceration. For example, national data show that Black and White teens report using drugs at a similar rate but Blacks are arrested at a much higher rate for drug offenses and are incarcerated at an even greater disproportion.⁸⁸ And the penalties for possessing or selling crack cocaine, more prevalent in Black communities, are much harsher than those for the powder cocaine more popular with White drug users.⁸⁹

In April 2004, *NBC Dateline* aired a show about racial profiling, focused on Cincinnati, which illustrated the way policing policies in the war on drugs can push more Blacks than Whites into the justice system. The police officer who the NBC reporter accompanied one night saw a young Black man in a baggy sweatshirt turn and walk away, which made the officer suspicious. He did what the Cincinnati Police Department calls “a stop and talk”—ask a few questions and see if the suspect consents to a search. “How much money you got?” he asked. “You got a job? Where do you work? Spread your legs.”

The officer said that he targeted this young man because he “thought he had a warrant for marijuana based on the fact he turned away and the fact he lived in Over the Rhine.” He found no drugs or outstanding warrants and let him go. The officer did not consider his action racial profiling but “good proactive police work. The community wants it. They want me to take drugs off the street, and this is how we do it,” he said.

Weber, the Hamilton County juvenile defender at the time, provided another example of disparate treatment at the arrest stage: “A store calls the police about a juvenile shoplifter. The offender, Black or White, may be charged but if he lives in Indian Hill (a wealthy White neighborhood) the police probably will take him home while the Black kid from Over the Rhine goes to 2020,” Weber said. Even if the police officer attempts to take the Over the Rhine juvenile home, the single mother may be working and not home. This decision is important because juveniles who are detained prior to adjudication are much more likely to be incarcerated than youth who have not been detained, regardless of the charges against them.⁹⁰

One Ohio juvenile defender uses the phrase, “I’m a Colt’s fan, your honor,” to describe the advantages that youth from families with resources have in juvenile court. This quote comes from a movie, when a guilty man without much going for him is asked by a Baltimore judge if he has anything to say. “I’m a Colt’s fan, your honor,” he says and the judge gives him a break. “Kids from families with resources can tell the judge what he wants to hear,” the defender explains. “We’re sending him to counseling, your honor. We’ve put him in drug treatment, your honor. He has a job after school. He’s grounded for a month. We’re going to send him to military school.”

Jennifer Kinsley, a former juvenile defender who at the time represented juveniles (and others) in private practice in Cincinnati, said, “Oh absolutely,” when asked if she

had seen disparate treatment between her two classes and races of clients for similar offenses. “The kids I represent now get much better treatment. When I was a public defender, a magistrate once called my client ‘a little shit.’ That doesn’t happen now. They are more respectful when they see a private attorney and a White father and mother and a kid who is better dressed. With a public defender-type child, you’re sometimes lucky to have the mother there, and my families now are more pro-active about finding alternatives for their children. Judges and probation officers factor in the positive influence of a stable family on addressing a juvenile’s problems. That is true, but my point of view is: These are factors beyond the kid’s control.”

Riley-Collins, of the Mississippi Center for Justice at the time, reported similar disparate treatment in court by race and also by social class in that state. “I remember two different sets of White youth—kids who lived near the golf course and kids who came from a trailer park—who had been charged with similar crimes: loitering and public intoxication. All were first-time offenders. The golf course kids came into the courtroom with their parents. One parent was a doctor who played golf with the judge. They obviously were friendly. These kids were admonished and sent home: ‘I don’t want to see you in the courtroom again,’ the judge told them. ‘You should not have your mothers and fathers down here.’ The trailer park children were threatened with training school and put on probation.”

Similar problems account in part for the overrepresentation of youth with mental and emotional disabilities in the juvenile justice system. Attitude is important to the police, magistrate and other decision makers, and “These kids have deficits in social skills,” said Tandy, who has represented special needs youth in court. They may behave in ways that are viewed as remorseless or disrespectful.

In general, youth with mental health, emotional or learning disabilities are susceptible to involvement in the juvenile justice system because they are prone to make poor decisions that lead to involvement in crime, have weak or no avoidance techniques so they get caught more often, have social skills deficits that result in harsher treatment once in the justice system or have learning difficulties that almost ensure recidivism, according to a training curriculum of the American Bar Association’s Juvenile Justice Center.⁹¹

Being Black and having disabilities is double jeopardy. According to Daniel Losen, who at the time was a legal and policy research associate at the Civil Rights Project at Harvard, Black youth with disabilities are more than four times as likely as Whites with disabilities to be in a correctional institution,⁹² and the former National Mental Health Association, now called Mental Health America, reported that youth of color have often not received services or have been poorly serviced by the mental health system prior to their entry into the juvenile justice system.⁹³

“If your family has money, you get psychiatric intervention,” said Latessa, the University of Cincinnati criminologist. “If they don’t, you get the prison psychologist.”

Looking at the many factors that result in so many children of color spending their youths locked up in correctional facilities may produce a sense of hopelessness. The

W. Haywood Burns Institute, which works to reduce racial disparity in juvenile detention, does not concern itself with the “why” but with the “how” of disparate treatment, examining, step by step, the process that takes an offender from the scene of the crime to the detention center in 10 target cities.

“When you say, ‘It is caused by poverty,’ or ‘It is caused by racism,’ you are saying the problem is intractable. And then you go home,” says Bell, the Institute’s director. “But in fact, the juvenile justice system is just a series of decisions that are made—and we are examining them to see where they have a disproportional impact on kids of color, in ways that have nothing to do with public safety.”⁹⁴

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– James Bell
Director, W. Haywood Burns Institute

Juvenile Incarceration

Behind the Barbed Wire

A 2003 U.S. Department of Justice investigation into conditions at the Oakley and Columbia Training Schools in Mississippi found that juveniles were being hog-tied with chains, physically assaulted by guards, sprayed with chemicals during military exercises, forced to eat their own vomit, stripped naked, and put in dark, solitary confinement cells.⁹⁵

“We’ve been dealing with scores of institutions across the country although none—none nearly as bad as the two facilities here in Mississippi,” said Brad Schlozman, deputy assistant attorney general in the U.S. Department of Justice’s civil rights division, during a town hall meeting in Jackson in July 2004.⁹⁶

As part of a court order, Sheila Bedi visits juveniles at Oakley once a week. She works for the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, which now represents incarcerated children in a decades-old case that resulted in a court order requiring numerous improvements at the Oakley Training School. She lives in Mississippi and works with the Mississippi Center for Justice on conditions at both training schools.

“They’re not hog-tying anyone anymore but we still have reports of staff getting violent with children, hitting children, choking children,” she said. “And there still are gross educational deficiencies and no mental health treatment. Suicidal children are being held in isolation, not being seen by doctors. Children come in on psychotropic meds that are immediately discontinued. If they act out, they get more time tacked onto their sentences.”

Recently, Bedi said, a staph infection common to prisons and hospitals broke out at Oakley and the 13 youths who had it were isolated in the prison part of the institution, locked in the cells without a staff member assigned to watch them. The

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infection produces enlarged boils and is related to poor hygiene, but the juveniles were not let out to take showers every day. “One of the children asked a guard, ‘What’s going on with me? Am I going to die?’ The guard said, ‘I don’t know. Maybe.’”

Similarly shocking revelations had emerged in Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, and South Dakota.⁹⁷

In Bedi’s view, abuses happen—and may be almost inevitable—when “your whole point is order” and correctional officers are taught to respond aggressively. This can escalate, rather than defuse, conflicts with juveniles who can’t control their anger. Blocking access to lawyers and other advocates facilitates abuse by hiding it from view.

A 2004 request by the Children’s Defense Fund for interviews with juveniles in Oakley was denied. Scheduled interviews with juveniles at the Ohio Valley River Correctional Institution in Franklin Furnace, Ohio, were abruptly cancelled following a brief tour of the facility. This youth prison, built in 1996 in the “campus style” of many new correctional facilities, looks like a junior college, with connected brick cottages and an education and administration building facing a central grassy area.

Incarcerated there in early June 2004, were 240 boys between the ages of 13 and 21, with an average age of 17.5, who were convicted of a wide range of felony offenses. Most were two or more years behind in school and many had mental health problems.⁹⁸ Some 70 of the 240 boys were on some kind of psychotropic medication, the nurse said. And this institution had a general population; one of Ohio’s nine correctional facilities, all operated by the state Department of Youth Services, was exclusively for youth with mental health problems.

Giving a tour, Aldine Gaspers, the warden, began at one of the living units—a large hexagonal space with two-person cells along the walls that contain a bunk bed and a rack for clothes. A correctional officer stood at a computer in the center of the room from which he could watch the video monitors and unlock the cell doors.

The education building looks like any other school. Several classes are special education, said Patrick Buchanan, the education director, adding that his assistant used to teach a severely behaviorally handicapped class in the nearby town of Ironton. He says that of the seven or eight kids he taught, all but one he’s seen in DYS, Department of Youth Services. In addition to regular school classes, Ohio River Valley has vocational programs in masonry, horticulture, and computers as well as substance abuse treatment, anger management, a fatherhood group, and a grief group.

“Many of our youth have been abused and never grieved their own loss of innocence and childhood,” Gaspers said. “They need to understand their own grief and their victims’ grief.” A program called “Thinking for a Change” tries to create awareness of consequences, address rationalizations for criminal behavior, and produce a sense of responsibility.

The interviews with youth at this facility had been requested to learn their trajectories into incarceration. The Children's Defense Fund promised not to use names, and a staff member was going to sit in on the conversations. Department of Youth Services officials were nervous because the Ohio Public Defenders office, which had conducted interviews in Ohio's juvenile correctional facilities for a report on legal representation, afterwards asked the Children's Law Center to investigate conditions at the institution for girls because girls reported being slapped and shoved by guards, put in straight-jackets, touched sexually, and discouraged or threatened if they filed grievances.⁹⁹ Questions asked during the tour, such as the number of juveniles on psychiatric medication, raised the suspicion that the Children's Defense Fund interviewer had a hidden agenda. She was asked to leave the institution.

Thomas: The Abuse Continues

In 2001, Thomas, a Mississippi boy who was adopted and had been beaten and abandoned as a young child and then labeled as a troublemaker in school, was sent to the Columbia Training School for two months and two days for "attempting to put another student in fear of bodily harm." Several times, the school system brought him to youth court for truancy, infuriating his adoptive mother because suspensions were the reason he wasn't in school. He was placed on probation on one occasion. Thomas has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) but this did not minimize disciplinary actions against him.

In February 2004, Thomas was charged with stealing a cell phone, which belonged to the school district, from a school bus. It is not entirely clear what evidence was presented to the judge, but apparently the bus driver sent an unsigned letter to the court stating that other children said it was Thomas. He was sent to Columbia for two months and two weeks.

The family's 14-year-old son, Walter, was charged with possessing the cell phone after it was stolen. A police officer testified that she took the phone from him. Previously, he and another boy were charged with calling in a bomb threat that evacuated the school. Other students said that one of the two did it and the other one knew about it. The judge sent both boys to Columbia. Walter (not his real name), who attends the high school, makes good grades and is on the football team, says he had nothing to do with the bomb threat or the cell phone theft. Like Thomas, he was given a sentence of two months and two weeks in Columbia.

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**– Aldine Gaspers
Warden, Ohio River Valley
Correctional Institution**

In Columbia, Thomas got in an altercation with a guard. It started, he said, when another boy “pushed me and I pushed him back. We were going to the classroom. After that, I was mad ‘cause he pushed me for no reason.” In the hallway, a guard “asked me what happened. I was telling him. He said I wasn’t telling him what he wanted to know and he grabbed me by my arm and pushed me down the hall and into a room.” Another guard arrived and asked what happened. The first guard “said I said something smart and he pushed me again. After that, I was balling my fist because I was mad. He pushed me one more time. The other guard thought I was about to swing. He pushed me against the wall, hands behind my back, and his arm around my neck. He grabbed me by my neck and the first one put some handcuffs on me.”

Thomas was taken to disciplinary lock-up for four days, he said. “After that, I had to go to some kind of court thing. They gave me three extra weeks saying I had assaulted the two officers.”

When his adoptive mother came for a visit, she saw red marks and scratches around Thomas’ neck and bruises on his wrists. She was furious and called the president of the local NAACP chapter, who told her to contact Sheila Bedi. She went to Columbia to see Thomas but was refused entry. She filed a lawsuit in federal court for access and the court ordered the training school to let her in. “We interviewed (Thomas) and arranged to go back there every week.” Before a second visit, she said, both Thomas and Walter were released, without explanation, before they had completed their sentences.

With just a few weeks remaining in the school year, Walter nonetheless passed the final exams. “He scored higher than some children who were there all semester,” his mother said. Walter, whose favorite subject is math, said that the schooling at Columbia is mediocre. “They didn’t teach me anything there, but what they were teaching in the school here I already knew. So I wasn’t behind.” He is concerned, though, that his time in Columbia might derail his plan to join his 18-year-old brother at Alcorn State University, where he wants to study engineering.

He also finds himself with a shorter temper, quicker to anger, he said. “People holler and curse at you. You want to retaliate but you know you will get in trouble. So it builds up.”

Thomas will be repeating the ninth grade next year, in part, because the records of his education at Columbia were not sent to his school district.

“I’m not a child psychologist, but I feel they need some counseling to deal with what they went through there,” said their mother.

She gave Thomas a pep talk about showing the people who don’t think he will amount to anything. “Prove them a liar.” Thomas listened but appeared unconvinced.

What are his plans for the future?

He looked down and after a long pause answered, “I don’t know.”

Rehabilitation: What Works?

While conditions certainly matter, correctional facilities do not have to be abusive to be effective. Even with hardened public attitudes towards juvenile offenders—Barry Feld, a University of Minnesota juvenile justice expert, calls them “the Willie Hortons of the 90s”—the philosophy remains that young people, or at least some of them, can be rehabilitated, and juvenile facilities generally offer more therapeutic programs than adult prisons do.

The question is: Do they work? Do they help juveniles get off the prison track?

Mark Lipsey of Vanderbilt University reviewed the findings of 401 scientific evaluations of juvenile justice intervention programs in the late 1990s and found that juvenile justice programs do reduce the recidivism of delinquent youth—but only by six percent. Looking further, though, he discovered that programs with certain characteristics worked much better than that, lowering recidivism by 20-25 percent, while others made no difference or even exacerbated future offending.¹⁰⁰

One problem, experts say, is that many programs for delinquent juveniles aren't what Judge Ray calls “research-based and outcome-oriented.” Many institutions do what they have traditionally done or what they believe works, without any research findings to validate their effectiveness. For example, military-type drills are required at Oakley and Columbia because they are believed to instill discipline. However, evaluations of the popular juvenile boot camps in the mid-1990s found that the recidivism rate for these institutions was higher than those associated with traditional juvenile corrections, and the U. S. Department of Justice, which had initially championed boot camps, reported that “the efficacy of these programs is questionable at best.”¹⁰¹

The programs Lipsey and other researchers have found to be most effective are those that are community- and family-based.¹⁰²

At the time of our study, the state of Missouri was considered to have the best juvenile correctional system in the nation. It closed its youth prisons in 1983 and divided the state into five regions so that confined juveniles would remain within driving distance of their homes. Each region had two facilities, housing no more than 40 youths each. One served as a day treatment clinic to prevent the escalation of criminal behavior; the other was a lock-up for more serious offenders. Instead of punishment, the state focused on intensive individual and family counseling, academic and vocational education, and behavior modification. The guards—college educated “youth specialists”—did not wear uniforms, and there was no pepper spray, no solitary confinement, no barbed wire.¹⁰³

Comparing recidivism rates is tricky, but Missouri clearly was a standout among states, according to Barry Krisberg, president of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency. A 2003 study found that of the 1,400 teenagers released in 1999, only eight percent wound up in adult prison.¹⁰⁴

One of the most effective types of therapeutic programs focuses on thinking; it was called cognitive skills training or cognitive behavior modification.¹⁰⁵ Latessa, the

chairman of the Division of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati and a national expert on these programs, said he comes at the problem of juvenile offenders from the opposite end as his colleague, Wright, the life course researcher. “John’s looking at the early predictors and pathways and the development of anti-social behavior early on. He’s looking at prevention. I’m looking at intervention: After they are in the system, how do we fix them?”

He describes the kinds of values and thinking that lead to continued criminal behavior. Some involve setting yourself or your group apart: “Society’s rules are not meant for me.” “We have our own set of rules.” This could apply to Enron executives as well as to the Bloods and the Crips. Offenders very often avoid taking responsibility by minimizing the harm they do to their victims—“They have other TVs”—and by seeing themselves as victims. “My parents were alcoholics.” “Joe did it too and he didn’t get caught.” “The police were out to get me.” “It’s racism.”

“A lot of the talk is system bashing,” Latessa said. “Everybody does it. I’m not saying the system is fair. It does discriminate. But my work is to reduce *your* risk of re-offending, not to change the system. Whatever happened in your childhood happened. Whatever other people do, they do. It’s your behavior that matters if you want your life to change.”

Mecum, the director of the Lighthouse agency that ran a Department of Youth Services (DYS) facility primarily for sex offenders, said it uses cognitive behavioral therapy. Since Lighthouse also operated residential facilities for foster children and other troubled youth, Mecum said he understands root causes, but “these kids are moving down the Pipeline rapidly and the stakes are high. Our approach is: Regardless of your disadvantages, it is not okay to hurt people. This offends the community, and the community is afraid of you.”

Some problems involve skills more than values. Tough-on-crime advocates often say that longer and harsher sentences will make offenders “think twice” before they commit crimes. In fact, “many offenders, especially juvenile offenders, don’t think once,” Latessa said. “They don’t see or consider the likely consequences—like Marcus stealing a car and then parking it in a school lot that requires permits, or Lorenzo skipping out on the rehabilitation program in Atlanta and returning to Mississippi.”

Cognitive skills programs take apart the thinking process leading to a decision to break the law and use exercises to build the skills needed to stop and think the next time: Is it worth it? Latessa

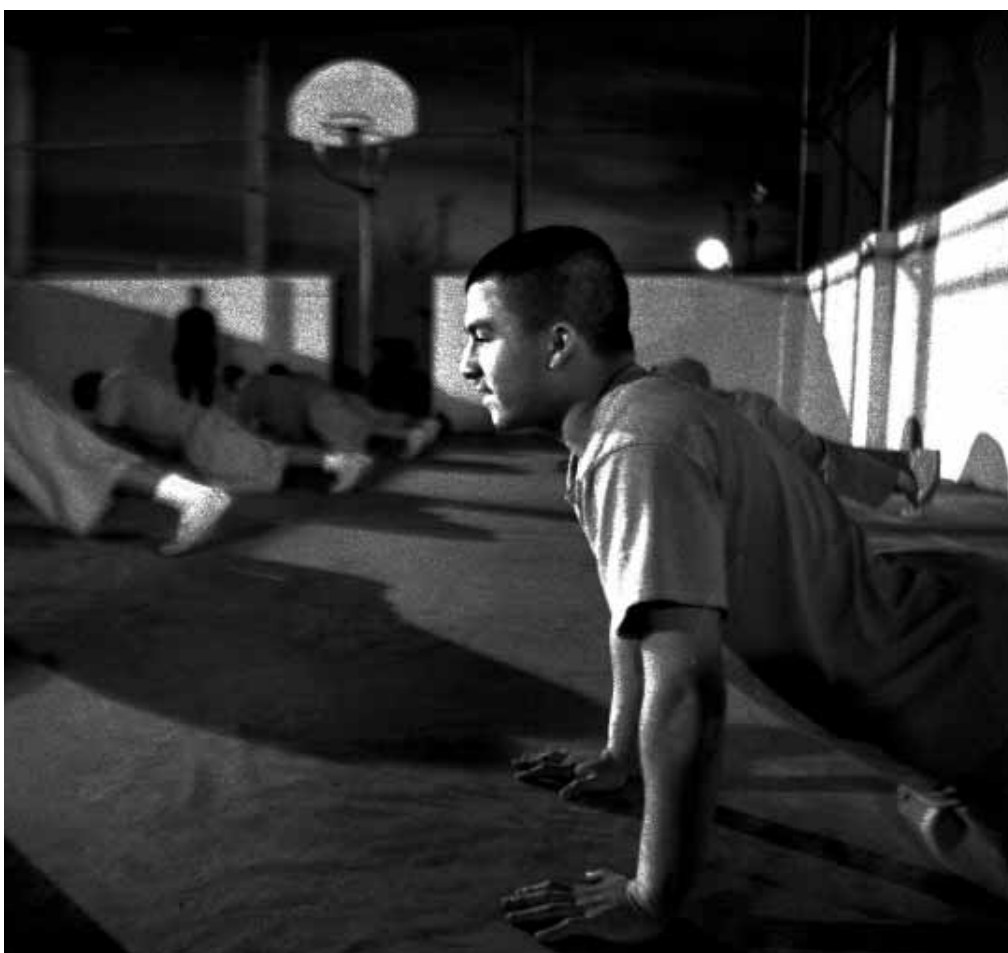
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**– Ed Latessa
University of Cincinnati
criminologist**

thinks it would be “great” to use the dead time of in-school suspension or Saturday school to teach thinking skills. Followers need a different kind of training—assertiveness training to say “no” to being drawn into activities they know are wrong.

Cognitive programs work much better in the community because the juveniles can go out and apply the skills in their real lives, come back, and discuss what happened, said Latessa. “Family-based interventions are the most effective, where all are involved.”

“It’s hard to intervene effectively in an institution because it’s an artificial setting,” he explained. “All the risks are managed. When you leave and go back to your former world, they hit you in face.”



End of the Pipeline

Clifton: Getting Stuck

Chris Myers, director of the Sunflower County Freedom Project for young people, was sent to the Mississippi Delta 10 years ago by Teach for America. Asked about young men in the Pipeline to Prison, he immediately responded, “Clifton Carter.”

“Clifton Carter was and is my favorite student,” he wrote in an email message. “He seemed to latch on to me from the first day I began teaching. He was 10, I was 21, and I was his new fifth grade teacher. His dad was never around, his mom was in and out of his life, and he lived with his grandma in a house with countless people roaming about. Despite the circumstances, he managed to be a curious, bright child, though he often got into trouble because he rarely could control his energy. I taught him in fifth and sixth grades, and then he went off to middle school and started having serious problems.”

By the time Clifton was 15, he had failed ninth grade and “seemed to be going nowhere,” Myers wrote. He had become so fond of Clifton that he talked with Clifton’s grandmother and she agreed to let Clifton live with Myers in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where Myers was in graduate school at the time. Clifton enrolled at Chapel Hill High School but within six months, he went back home and “things went downhill from there,” according to Myers. In June 2000, Clifton and a friend, who had been robbing houses together, attempted another robbery and the victim was shot to death. Clifton, then 16, was tried as an adult, convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison.

“It breaks my heart to think about what has happened to Cliff and about what Cliff has done to wind up where he is now,” Myers concluded. “He’s finally starting to see things more clearly and to his credit, he really has made a strong effort to educate himself while in prison. I hope you will get a chance to meet him.”

*“I learned in here—too late—that you don’t have to be violent
or mean to get respect. You can have a lot up here
in your head, and that will do.”*

– Clifton, 18 years old

At 20, Clifton was imprisoned in the Walnut Grove Correctional Institution, which houses juveniles convicted of felonies. Brought into a glassed-in interview room, he was tall, neatly groomed, and had a kind, serious face and large expressive eyes. In the adjoining room, two defense trainers were giving lessons to correctional officers. Their shouts and the crashing of baseball bats could be heard as Clifton talked about the life course that brought him to this locked room and a future behind bars.

Clifton and his four sisters were raised by their grandmother in the tiny town of Sunflower. “My mother was using at the time and drinking some. I was 10 when I met my father. I didn’t ask him where he had been. He told me. He explained he didn’t want me as part of his life because he was a drug dealer. He wanted me to be able to make choices about how I would live.”

Clifton believes he started on the wrong path when his grandfather died. “I was eight, and there was nobody to guide us, nobody to control us, to give us whippings when we deserved them. Then my cousin Michael left. He was a good bit older and he was like a father to me. There were cousins and sisters and we were all at my grandmother’s. Grandmother tried, but I started getting in lots of trouble for talking back at school. I still went to school everyday in spite of the trouble.”

Clifton said his real problems began in the ninth grade when the Sunflower kids had to go to school in Ruleville. “I started skipping school a lot and the older guys were passing the trouble down. There were the Ruleville gangs and the Sunflower gangs and the rivalry was fierce and I had started smoking marijuana at 12. So much of it was about reputation and proving yourself—that you and your gang were tougher.” He failed the ninth grade.

When he moved in with Myers in Chapel Hill, he started off quite well, appearing to enjoy the classes at Chapel Hill High School and hoping to join the football team. But since he was repeating the ninth grade, he was not allowed to play sports and soon found the classes more difficult than exciting. After a while, he began smoking marijuana and skipping school to hang out with dropouts or soon-to-be dropouts. By February, Myers and Clifton’s grandmother decided that he was no longer getting anything beneficial from Chapel Hill High and should come home.

Chapel Hill High represented a possible exit from the Pipeline to Prison and proved to be Clifton’s last chance. What happened? “I didn’t fit in,” Clifton says. Dr. Comer, the Yale University child psychiatrist, explains that “Children who are not doing well in school, or whose families are not well connected to the mainstream, view themselves as different from those in it—their teachers and fellow students with higher levels of achievement. When called on to achieve, they are being asked, in a very real sense, to be different from their parents and their own network culture. This produces identity problems that have to be worked through if they are to move into mainstream culture.”¹⁰⁶ Clifton, whose intelligence undoubtedly made being behind very frustrating, clung to the familiar.

When he came back to Mississippi, he went to live with a cousin in Indianola. “I was 16 and got into robbing houses. It was like, ‘I will just do it this one time. If I can do it this one time and get away with it, I won’t do it again,’ but you always do. Then

one night in June 2000, my friend Bobby and I were out in the streets and the same idea came to us at the same time. I won't get into the details, but during a robbery, Leon Brown, a gambler, was shot and killed."

Pressed several times, Clifton said, "I don't want to talk about it," and would not explain why.

He was arrested a short time later. "Bobby told my cousin about it, and she called the police and they came and got me from a friend's house. The Indianola police called my mother since I was a juvenile. They made me write a statement and appointed two White public defenders. I was charged with capital murder and Bobby was charged with conspiracy and as an accessory to murder.

"The lawyers told me they had an overload of cases, and when we had a conference with my mother, my sister Jennifer, and two cousins, the lawyers told me that all I could do was plead out or I would get the death penalty. There were no other options because the D.A. had five witnesses and Bobby had written a statement naming me as the shooter. They never did produce a gun, but they told me I had no case, so I signed a confession and took the plea because I didn't want to die."

He spent the first eight months in maximum security at Parchman and said he used that time to "learn about being locked up. I knew I was going to be in for a long time. Then they sent me to another unit and I started spending a lot of time reading, because that was my weakest subject. That really helped and that is also when I started writing—writing poems—that's how I expressed myself. In the beginning, it was so hard and I thought, 'Well, it can only get better,' and I try to smile. If you don't, people may think you are a threat."

Clifton now is in the general population at Walnut Grove. "It is okay but you have to be careful, because both guards and inmates think everyone is trying to gain something or put something over on everyone else. And there are gangs in here, just like the ones on the outside, and that means you have someone on your side, but it doesn't work just one way. It means that you owe them."

By his own and Chris Myers' accounts, Clifton has latched onto every training and education program in the prison. He learned to cut hair, his job at Walnut Grove, and is trying to learn to be a carpenter's assistant. He passed the GED test and "almost made a good score on the ACT. I will be taking it again soon."

He has also been working on an appeal charging inadequate representation. "I got letters from the lawyer saying that everything in my letters was false and the D.A. said she doesn't believe any of the things I said. The only thing I can prove is that the lawyers told my mother that if I went to court, I would receive the death penalty. They should have given me other options."

As he spoke, a group of inmates marched by the window in a column. Clifton pointed to them and said, "That's where the racism starts. See how most of them are White? They are here for just six months and if they complete the program, they are out on probation."

Clifton says he hasn't had many disciplinary write-ups at Walnut Grove. He tries to associate with everyone and not make trouble. "I don't want to get close to anyone. I am young myself but these younger guys here can be trouble—feel like they need to prove themselves—just like in gangs." When he starts feeling depressed, he says, he writes about things that make him feel good. "I write about my sadness and seems like when I get it all out, I am all right." This is a poem he wrote:

Can't Take Everything

*You could take my eyes, so I couldn't see.
You could shackle me in chains and throw away the key.
You could take my feet so I couldn't walk.
You could fill my mouth, so I couldn't talk.
You could take my ears, so I couldn't hear.
You could take my heart, and replace it with fear.
You could take my life and place it in a grave oh so cold.
No matter what you take, you can never take my soul.*

Next year, when he is 21, Clifton will be transferred to Parchman or another adult penitentiary. "I came in under the law saying that felons had to serve 85 percent of their sentences before parole so I guess I will be there until I am 65."

He does dream of getting out, of studying astronomy because he reads about space and the stars and moon. He's going to take a correspondence course in physiology and Spanish. Chris Myers is helping him set this up. If released, he'd like to get a "simple job. Start small and believe me, I have got patience. I don't blame my family for any of this. I knew what was going on and chose it anyway. Why? Because I wanted recognition and control and I learned in here—too late—that you don't have to be violent or mean to get respect. You can have a lot up here in your head and that will do. I don't act crazy in here, I encourage other guys to read. They see me writing, and they think, 'He's in for life and he's trying.'"

Jewel: Looking Forward to Her Future

Jewel, at the time, was an 18-year-old girl whose early childhood memories included walking the streets in the early morning looking for food, and waking up in a strange man's house after her mother, a drug addict, had left. When she and her siblings were taken away from her mother, they were split up. She went to a Catholic group home. Although she says it "wasn't that bad," she followed the predictable trajectory—and her mother's example—into a lifestyle of drugs and hustling and bad company. As Wright put it, "It is naive to believe that simply by changing environments, all the memories, all the learned behavior, won't matter anymore. These kids take their problems with them, and the foster care system varies tremendously in quality."

At 12, she went to live with her father and his girlfriend in Covington. She said he worked hard and provided for her. "The only part was, he wasn't loving. I guess I needed that. Me not having that, I felt I could do whatever. I was really alone. I felt alone."

She "always struggled in school," she said. "In some parts, I do have strengths but in other parts, I don't. It got harder and harder as the years went past." She was held back in the ninth grade. At about that time, she began running away from home and skipping school. "I would leave, be gone two or three days, home a week and then back out again."

She hung out with a group older than she was on "street corners, certain blocks. They were grown and I was trying to do what they did. They were people I could talk to. Even though they did bad things, they were there and I looked up to them. I felt like somebody was always there for me." What were they doing? "Drugs, hustling to get money, gang activities."

She said this life was "fun in the sense of I was able to do whatever I wanted to do. I could stay out as long as I wanted to. I had freedom. Nobody was telling me to do this or that. There was really no authority there." Her father, she says, didn't know what to do and let her do what she wanted.

The others had long since dropped out of school, but Jewel kept returning from time to time. "Sometimes, honestly, I would go to school because I was tired of walking the streets all day. Sometimes I could sit down and do the work. But I felt I was different from everybody. Some other kids were doing the same thing I was but not as severe." She did, though, have a teacher who believed in her and sometimes came to court to support her when she got in trouble.

The law first "got interested in me," as Jewel put it, for the so-called status charges of runaway and truancy, the typical first offenses for girls. Later, she was charged with possession of marijuana and assaults for "hitting people," including a teacher. This happened, she said, at a basketball game. A boy hit her and she told a teacher about it. "She didn't punish the boy so, I don't really know, one thing led to another. I started yelling and the teacher started yelling. I went towards her, and she pushed me down. I kept trying to get back up to get at her and when I did, I hit her. They grabbed me and took me to the principal's office. My father came and then the police." She pled guilty and went to the Campbell County Detention Center for a month.

Jewel said her anger was "really scary in a way. If you tried to stop me I would not stop till I felt like stopping." She now believes her anger wasn't so much against the teacher as against everything around her. "It was just...anger out of nowhere. Anytime I had a chance to blow up, I would blow up and I would feel better afterwards. Then again, I would have to face the consequences and it was more and more piling up and more anger."

At the detention center, she felt as if her life had shut down, yet she was "learning some things. Some people, mostly Black male and female authorities, would tell me what was wrong. At least they talked to me, and it did some good. That was just like the first step."

When she was released and went back to her father's house, she spent two or three days staying home "trying to listen and do right," but after a week, she went out to the streets again. "I didn't have goals," she says. "My thinking was: 'This is the only thing I have. What else am I supposed to do?'"

The judge had told her that if he saw her again, he would give her more time. "But I didn't care. I was going to do what I wanted." The next time she came before him, at 16, she was sentenced to a year and six months in the Kentucky equivalent of Ohio's juvenile correctional facilities, also located in a rural area. "That is when I started goals. What did I want to do for my future? That's when I started to find out about my talents. I always knew I could sing, but poetry? First, I wrote down what I was feeling. That was the way the people there helped me, to talk about and write down my feelings, and then I started with poetry." Staff at the institution published some of her poetry on the Internet.

Interestingly, Wright says that research into resiliency—why some kids in terrible circumstances manage to come out all right—shows that one factor is being able to verbalize feelings. "I'm not talking about touchy feely stuff. This is a real survival skill."

Jewel's excitement was palpable as she described her breakthrough into possibility. "That's when it came to me, 'You can do anything! I want to be a poet but then again, what about electrical engineering? Wow! I can be anything!' That's when I started to think I wanted to get a job and go to school. I wanted to do the best for myself. I didn't have to go back there on the streets. I could show people. Almost all my life, people didn't expect me to be anything. I'd be like the rest of my mother's family, which is known in Covington."

Once again, she resolved to change her life. When she got back home, she went to school, took the required drug tests and did all right for awhile. "But it was like: 'Where can I go from here? Where can I start?' And I went right back into it, started smoking weed again, running away, hustling. I didn't have a job. I was so scared out there now, since I was getting older. I was more afraid to die." Jewel decided to turn herself in.

This is an image that comes to mind about Jewel. She is walking on a road, a pathway, the one that ends in prison, hand in hand with others going in the same direction. At a way station along the way, people tell her there is a cut-off ahead to another path, one that leads to a brighter place. She doesn't like the road she's on so she listens, and when she sees the cut-off, she detaches herself from her companions and takes her first steps on the other path. She doesn't get very far. Her companions reach out to pull her back. She is alone and uncertain on this new path and no one there is reaching out to pull her forward.

Re-entry, in a word, is difficult for those who have been in the Pipeline to Prison for a long time and this is all they know. Usually, they are released on probation or parole, but it appears that this often does not provide enough support. And sometimes, the tolerance for failure is very limited.

Sproat, the former warden at the Walnut Grove prison in Mississippi, used to be an administrator for the Job Corps and said it was hard to persuade principals to allow offenders back into their schools after release from a training school. “Our staff would meet with the principal and even put themselves on the line by saying, ‘Look, if you give him a chance, or you give her a chance, to get back in the school system, the first time that they get in trouble, if you’ll call me, I’ll come and get them.’”

“So this kid gets back into the mainstream of the local school system,” instead of an alternative school. “When somebody’s purse comes up missing or something at the school is damaged, they think, ‘Well, we just got so-and-so who was released from the training school.’ He’s the first one that they bring in and question.” Sproat said it was hard for these juveniles to accept being singled out if they had nothing to do with what happened, even though he and others tried to tell them to “Keep a cool head. If you had nothing to do with it, it is not a problem.”

Their ingrained defense mechanism, Sproat says, is to get angry at the principal. “So what does the principal say? ‘Wait a minute, you’ve been incarcerated for three months, six months, at the training school and it didn’t do a bit of good. You’ve got an attitude problem. We don’t need you in this school system.’ And what does the kid say? ‘Well, then you can kiss my you-know-what!’ and the principal says, ‘You’re out of here!’ and the kid is back at square one.”

The study, cited earlier, of a cohort of ninth graders who were dropped from the rolls of their high schools in a mid-Atlantic city when they became incarcerated, found that most went to a different school when they returned to the school system. They arrived at any time of year, depending on when their sentences ended, with virtually no transition and few graduated.¹⁰⁷

Jewel was sent to a juvenile residential treatment center. “That’s when I started working really seriously on how I was going to put my dreams in action.” The most important decision she made was not to return to Covington this time. “I wasn’t strong enough yet to handle that,” she decided. She was almost 18 by then, and could legally live on her own, although she didn’t know where or how.

At that point, Angela, one of her younger sisters came to see her. This sister, who had been very badly burned by fireworks when their mother left the children alone, had been placed in a foster home when she got out of the hospital. The director of an agency for troubled youth was Angela’s volunteer mentor. The foster parents, used to caring for medically fragile children, couldn’t handle the girl when she got well, and the foster mother telephoned the mentor at 3:00 a.m. and said they were going to put the girl in an institution.

“I said, ‘Well, no. Let me come get her,’” the mentor recalled. She and her husband were not licensed as foster parents at that time but quickly became licensed, took the girl in and later adopted her. Of Jewel’s siblings, this girl, now 17, has done the best; she will graduate from high school next year and plans to attend Kentucky State University. (Another sister, the eldest, has three children and has been in and out of prison, as has their mother. A brother just spent his 16th birthday in a juvenile correctional facility.)

Jewel had visited her sister from time to time, when the sister's adoptive family would pick her up at her father's house. "She was living there and doing good, and I wanted the same thing she had," Jewel said. "Really, I was jealous. When I told her I didn't want to go home, she said, 'Why don't you come live with us?' I said, 'They won't let me live with ya'll! But she asked and they said yes.'"

Jewel moved in June 2003 to the family's nice, comfortable home in suburban Cincinnati. The interview took place around the dining room table. Her new guardian said she was always fond of Jewel but "couldn't keep up with her. It was hard not to bond. I could not let her go into a bad situation."

Her guardian had not previously heard Jewel talk about her experiences to others. When Jewel said, "Now that I'm here, I have people who love me. That's what I was looking for," tears welled up in her eyes. "When I think of the pipeline, I think about the adults in their lives or lack of," her guardian said. "We want to talk about the pipeline to prison *after* our kids are already there. We need to take initiative at the grassroots level to see the strengths in our kids, to nurture that, and commit ourselves to helping them grow. Sometimes we forget, as we design systems, the crucial importance of caring, competent adults."

Jewel attends high school. She is not in a class for those with severe behavioral handicaps, as she was before when she was angry and acting out, and she is working hard and doing well. She is a junior and this year is going to a vocational program where she will begin studies to become a registered nurse that she can continue in college afterwards. She won't graduate until she is 20 but "the good news is: it doesn't matter," her guardian said. "She's going to accomplish her goals and do something with her life."

Jewel says she now has "more like a normal life. I'm ready to take driver's training. I have a job on weekends. I'm starting to bring boys home." "Decent boys," her guardian interjects, who can hold a conversation and are in school. She knows that Jewel will have some "falls and bumps but we are laying the foundation for her to make it out there. She is becoming a new (Jewel)."

Says Jewel: "I feel good. I feel like there is going to be a future for me. I can't wait to see what it is."

"We want to talk about the Pipeline to Prison after our kids are already there. We need to take initiative at the grassroots level to see the strengths in our kids, to nurture that, and commit ourselves to helping them grow."

– Jewel's Guardian

Epilogue

In June 2004, three weeks after the interview with baby Eric's mother, Children's Protective Services charged her with child abuse. Her aunt said that Eric had bruises, but she does not believe his mother was the one who hurt him. "People were always grabbing on him and telling her she's babying him," the aunt said.

Eric and his brother, Tae, were taken away. "Nobody in our family could take them," the aunt said, "so they're going to be put in foster care."

Every American must stand up and do everything in his/her power to pass on to our children and grandchildren a nation and a world that are better and fairer than the one we inherited. There is no more important work at this time in our history. Engaging and energizing the adults our children so desperately need, and developing and implementing comprehensive program and policy solutions that keep our children on the road to successful adulthood is the only way we will create a world that is safe, free, and filled with the opportunities too many children only dream about.

This is the path that will allow *all* our children to reach their full potential and become the people they were born to be. It is their birthright. And it is our common responsibility to deliver it.



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⁸³ Mississippi Department of Youth Services, Division of Youth Services, statistics as of March 15, 2004.

⁸⁴ Mississippi Department of Youth Services, Division of Youth Services, statistics as of March 15, 2004.

⁸⁵ Ford Foundation Report interview with James Bell, attorney, Youth Law Center, Spring 2003, at http://www.fordfound.org/publications/ff_report/view_ff_report_detail.cfm?report_index=398.

⁸⁶ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Annual Estimates of the Population, 2003, at <http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/NC-EST2006-asrh.html>; U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States 2003* (October 2004), Table 43; and U.S. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement Databook, at <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/cjrp/>. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

⁸⁷ Interview with Hunter Hurst, Director, National Center for Juvenile Justice.

⁸⁸ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Statistics, 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Table 1.74B, "Illicit Drug Use in Lifetime, Past Year, and Past Month among Persons Aged 12 to 17, by Racial/Ethnic Subgroups: Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2002-2003 and 2004-2005"; National Center for Juvenile Justice, "Juvenile Arrest Rates by Offense, Sex, and Race" (March 19, 2007), at http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/crime/excel/JAR_20070222.xls; and U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement Databook, "Offense Profile of Committed Residents by Sex and Race/Ethnicity for United States, 2003: Rate per 100,000 juveniles," at http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/cjrp/asp/Offense_Committed.asp?state=0&topic=Offense_Committed&year=2003&percent=rate.

⁸⁹ The Sentencing Project, "Federal Crack Cocaine Sentencing" (July 2007). Under the mandatory minimum sentencing laws established by Congress in 1986, defendants convicted of selling 500 grams of powder cocaine or five grams of crack cocaine receive five-year sentences. For five kilos of powder cocaine and 50 grams of crack, the penalty is ten years. Thus there is a 100:1 ratio. Simple possession of any quantity of powder cocaine by first-time offenders is considered a misdemeanor, punishable by no more than one year in prison. Simple possession of crack cocaine is a felony, carrying a five-year mandatory sentence.

⁹⁰ American Bar Association, Juvenile Justice Center, National Juvenile Defender Center, *Justice Cut Short: An Assessment of Access to Counsel and Quality of Representation in Delinquency Proceedings in Ohio* (March 2003), p. 17, at http://www.njdc.info/pdf/Ohio_Assessment.pdf.

⁹¹ American Bar Association, Juvenile Justice Center, *Understanding Adolescents: A Juvenile Court Training Curriculum*, Module 5, *Special Ed Kids in the Justice System* (2000), p. 12.

⁹² Interview with Dan Losen, Harvard Civil Rights Project. The data used for this calculation were from 2001, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Special Education Programs (OSEP). Raw data at www.ideadata.org.

⁹³ Michael Faenza, Christine Siegfried and Jenifer Wood, *Community Perspectives on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Needs of Youth Involved in the Juvenile Justice System* (National Mental Health Association, n.d.).

⁹⁴ Youth Law Center, *Ford Foundation Report* interview with James Bell, attorney, Spring 2003 issue, at http://www.fordfound.org/publications/ff_report/view_ff_report_detail.cfm?report_index=398.

⁹⁵ Letter dated June 19, 2003, to Mississippi Governor Ronnie Musgrove from Ralph F. Boyd, Jr., Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, at www.usdoj.gov/crt/split/documents/oak_colu_miss_findinglet.pdf.

⁹⁶ John Fuquay, "Juvenile Centers Called 'Worst' in U.S." *Clarion-Ledger*, July 2, 2004.

⁹⁷ Children's Defense Fund research of major U.S. newspaper articles.

⁹⁸ Interview with Aldine Gaspers, Superintendent of the Ohio River Valley Juvenile Correctional Facility.

⁹⁹ Carrie Spencer, "Abuses Alleged at Prison for Girls," *Columbus Dispatch*, July 30, 2004.

¹⁰⁰ Annie E. Casey Foundation, "A Matter of Choice: Forks in the Road for Juvenile Justice," *AdvoCasey*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 2003), p. 16, at [http://www.aecf.org/upload/Publication Files/juvenile justice at crossroads.pdf](http://www.aecf.org/upload/Publication%20Files/juvenile%20justice%20at%20crossroads.pdf)

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¹⁰² Annie E. Casey Foundation, "A Matter of Choice: Forks in the Road for Juvenile Justice," p. 17.

¹⁰³ Jenifer Warren, "Spare the Rod, Save the Child," *Los Angeles Times*, July 1, 2004.

¹⁰⁴ Jenifer Warren, "Spare the Rod, Save the Child."

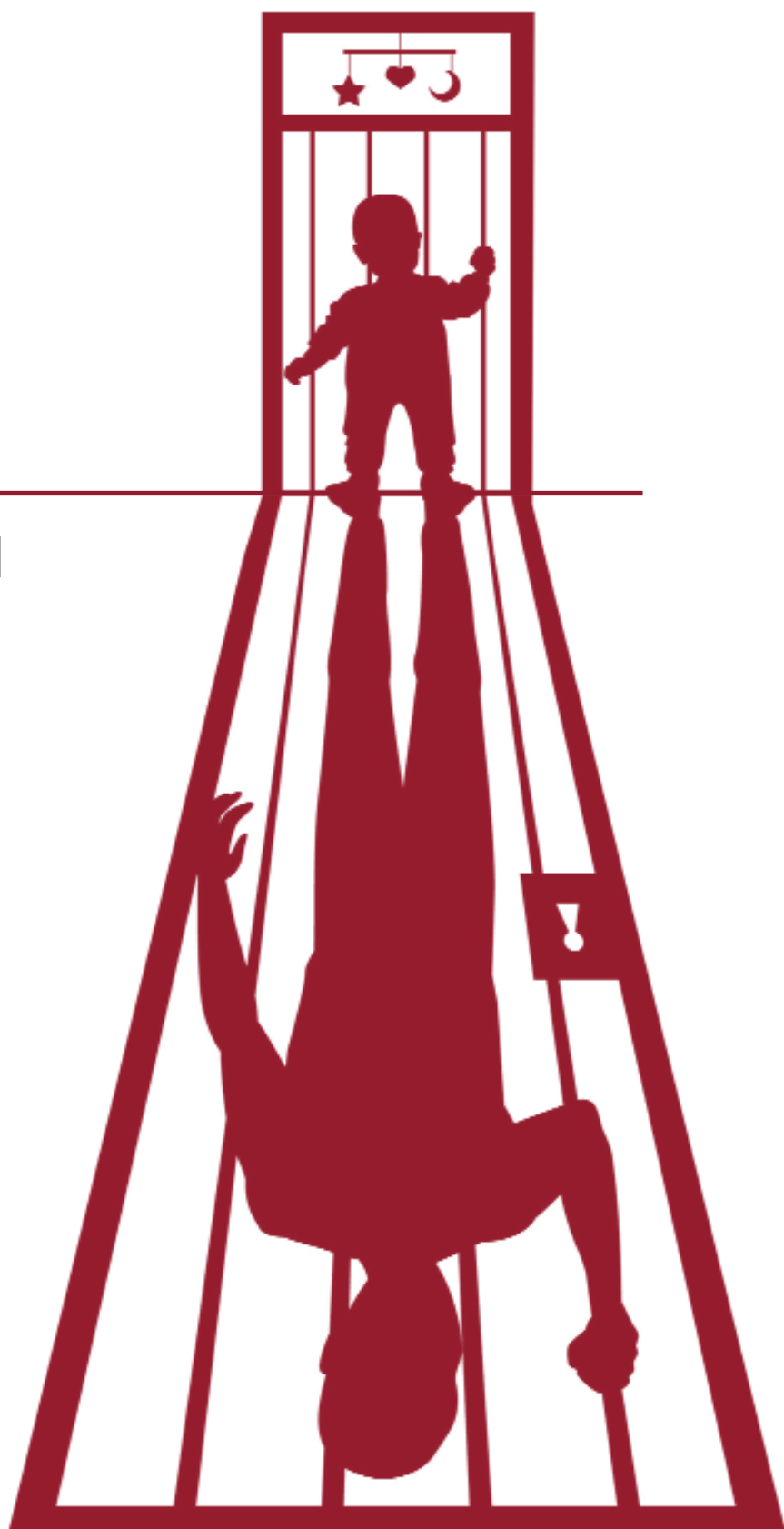
¹⁰⁵ Interview with Hunter Hurst, Director, National Center for Juvenile Justice, and Ed Latessa, Director of Division of Social Justice, University of Cincinnati.

¹⁰⁶ James Comer, *Waiting for a Miracle: Why Schools Can't Solve Our Problems and How We Can*. (New York: Plume, 1997), p. 90.

¹⁰⁷ Robert Balfranz, Kurt Spiridakis, Ruth Neild, et al., "High Poverty Secondary Schools and the Juvenile Justice System: How Neither Helps the Other and How That Could Change," *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2003 Fall (99), pp. 71-89 (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University, 1999). Johanna Wald and Daniel J. Losen, Eds., *Deconstructing the School-to-Prison Pipeline: New Directions for Youth Development #99* (Jossey-Bass, 2003).

Part III

Afterword



The Next Movement: Saving Our Children and Youth and Our Nation's Future and Soul

If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation... want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.... Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.

–Frederick Douglass

Nothing short of a transforming movement bubbling up from every nook and cranny of America demanding that every child be able to live, learn, thrive and reach safe adulthood and their highest potential will transform America's values and priorities. Those Black and Latino citizens waiting for the next Dr. King or Cesar Chavez to come and save us need to recognize they are not coming back. We are it and need to get on with the business of protecting children. And we need to stop waiting on political leaders to take care of children's problems. They will respond to what we demand. The ball is in our court!

Movement building is very, *very* hard. Discouraging. Unpredictable. Requires deep faith and great perseverance. Deep inner reserves. Unwavering commitment to a heartfelt vision. A sense of call worth fighting and risking all for. It requires discipline, focus and long range planning, yet a willingness to turn on a dime and seize the moment, and an ability to live with ambiguity and complexity.

Movement building for children requires openness to many different kinds of people with different needs, approaches, interests and talents without losing sight of the overarching goal: to dismantle the Cradle to Prison Pipeline and to *truly* Leave No Child Behind. It requires zeal and iron will to keep moving ahead when others yell stop and throw up roadblock after roadblock, drag their feet or repeatedly pronounce you politically unrealistic. It requires hanging in until we reach the finish line and have addressed all of the crucial needs of children and their families. We must not be satisfied with a foot of child care, a leg of health care, a thigh of nutrition, a hand of housing, a neck bone of education, a backbone of after-school care, a toe of gun control, a shoulder of parental education and training. We must address the needs of the whole child who does not come in pieces but in families and lives in communities shaped by cultural and national values that must become more just in practice and honored by responsible adults with power.

Movements are not built in a day, year or decade. They are a long time coming. They burst forth from many seeds planted in many places over time and from many grievances that simmer, boil over and erupt, after being ignored or inadequately addressed, into a mighty stream. Many decades before *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Montgomery bus boycott, Charles Houston, Thurgood Marshall and a small band of brilliant Black lawyers quietly began developing legal theories and with courageous Black parents filing test cases to crumble the seemingly impenetrable walls of legal segregation and inequality in public education in America. Black veterans returned home from World War II fighting for a freedom they were denied at home. A. Philip Randolph pushed for nondiscriminatory employment opportunities. Ida Wells and the NAACP campaigned against lynching violence and discrimination against Black citizens. All these and other things heated up the pot for social change. Myles Horton at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee was bringing people of every race and faith together for fellowship, community building and citizenship education. Eleanor Roosevelt, Dr. King, Septima Clark and Mrs. Rosa Parks were among the many leaders, some prominent and some unknown, who gathered there and who helped lead and seed the nonviolent army needed to overturn racial segregation in the south and nation. Other training centers developed as safe havens for people seeking racial and social change to come together to share experiences and strategies and find renewal.

Alex Haley's former farm in Tennessee is CDF's gathering place for spiritual renewal, leadership training and community building for our 21st century movement for children. It is where leaders participating in the Black Community Crusade for Children (BCCC) met and debated and planted a number of seeds that have sprouted including the CDF Freedom Schools® program, the Harlem Children's Zone, annual child gun violence reports, Beat the Odds® celebrations and scholarships for high school youths who are joining with other young leaders to change the odds! Over 12,000 young leaders have been trained to become child advocates and teacher-mentors. And more than 60,000 children have experienced the *CDF Freedom Schools* message that *they* can make a difference and can achieve!

Building a children's movement will require a critical mass of effective servant-leaders of all ages, faiths, races and disciplines playing their role—each of us trying to complement not duplicate or reinvent the wheel; to collaborate not compete; to serve children and not just ourselves, our organizations or our political interests. I hope each and all of us will pray daily to get ourselves out of the way for a bigger good and ask only to be used to do whatever is needed to build a movement to save our children.

Adults must hold ourselves and others accountable and empower our children to stand up to make a difference *with* us. We must not let words and photo-ops be substitutes for action or fig leaves for policies and budget choices that hurt children. People who profess to care for children but who don't do the hard work, or who promote or tolerate policies and budgets that leave millions of children behind must be challenged. The litmus test for political leaders should be whether their votes close the gap between the rich and the poor and ensure all children a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and the chance for a successful

transition to adulthood. Children cannot eat or be housed or educated by promises. Before the coffers of wealthy corporations and individuals, already overflowing with massive federal tax breaks, are extended, children who are hungry, homeless, trying to learn in crumbling schools, and in need of health care and child care should be protected. Every adult must vote and speak truth to power in all political parties and at all levels of government and in every sector of American society until all of our young are able to grow up healthy, nonviolent, respectful, educated and safe.



Appendices



Examples of Promising Approaches to Help Children Avoid and Escape the Pipeline

The Abecedarian Project

The Abecedarian Project was a carefully controlled scientific study of the potential benefits of early childhood education for poor children. It provided high quality, early educational full-day, full-year intervention programs to children from low-income families from infancy through age 5. Low teacher-student ratios enabled students to receive individualized attention. Emotional support and cognitive stimulation were at the core of the educational experience. Children's progress was monitored over time with follow-up studies conducted at ages 12, 15 and 21. These studies consistently found that low-income children who participated in this project had higher scores on reading and math tests, and more advanced language skills than those children who did not participate in the project. Abecedarian children also were more likely to attend four-year colleges and delay parenthood. The program also benefited the mothers of children who participated in the project. They achieved higher educational and employment status than mothers whose children were not in the program. These results were especially pronounced for teen mothers.

For additional information, visit <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~abc/>

Amachi Program

The Amachi Program provides school-based, community-based and church-based mentorship support to the children of incarcerated parents primarily through faith-based congregations in the children's own neighborhoods. Amachi partners with over 75 secular and faith-based institutions to screen mentors, monitor relationships and provide stipends to participating churches and organizations. Faith institutions work with human service providers and public agencies (particularly justice institutions) to identify children of prisoners and match them with caring adults. The Amachi Training Institute provides hands-on training for local organizations mentoring children of incarcerated parents. Currently there are 273 programs in 48 states that use the Amachi model or were inspired by it. They have partnered with more than 6,000 churches and served more than 60,000 children.

For additional information, visit <http://www.amachimentoring.org/index.html>

The Arizona Families F.I.R.S.T. (AFF) program

The Arizona Families F.I.R.S.T. (AFF) program is one of the successful examples of Comprehensive Family Treatment. It is administered by the Department of Economic Security in partnership with the Department of Health Services to promote permanency for children and stability in families, protect the health and safety of abused and/or neglected children, and promote economic security for families. AFF provides an array of structured family-centered interventions to reduce or eliminate abuse of and dependence on alcohol and other drugs, and to address other adverse conditions related to substance abuse. AFF programs also include concrete support services such as child care, transportation and housing. Some residential programs also allow children to remain with their parents during treatment. Evaluations of the AFF programs have shown positive results. Among the 3,931 clients participating in AFF during fiscal year 2006, 98 percent had not experienced a subsequent substantiated report of abuse or neglect after enrollment in the AFF program.

Programs that adopt the Comprehensive Family Treatment approach provide services for parents and their children to help break the cycle of parental alcohol and drug dependence and help families stay together. They are a cost-saving alternative to foster care. Such programs typically provide the following services or referrals for these services: substance abuse treatment, children's early intervention services, family counseling, legal services, medical care, mental health services, nursery and pre-school, parenting skills training, pediatric care, prenatal care, sexual abuse therapy, relapse prevention, transportation, and job/vocational training or GED classes. These services are offered by a number of providers. Evaluations of such programs show positive outcomes for mothers and their children such as a decrease in alcohol abuse and decline of arrests.

For additional information, visit <http://www.azdes.gov/dcyf/first/>

Beech Acres Parenting Center

Beech Acres Parenting Center (Cincinnati, Ohio) offers a variety of services and information to strengthen families for children. These services include parenting education classes, a once-a-year conference on practical parenting called For the Love of Kids, mediation services for families facing the challenges of divorce or conflicts between parents and teens, and a wide range of programs designed for families of children with mental health issues, serious behavior problems, or drug and alcohol addiction.

Three of their programs that specifically focus on children at risk are Therapeutic Mentoring, Treatment Foster Care and the KONNECT project.

Beech Acres' Therapeutic Mentoring Program is a community-based service specifically designed to meet the individual needs of children at risk. Mentors help youth identify and attain their mutually agreed upon treatment goals. Mentors also guide youth through their daily experiences. Through these relationships, youth are

also encouraged to identify their career goals, develop character and engage community resources. Therapeutic Mentoring is complemented by Family Mentoring, which provides assistance to the entire family.

Treatment Foster Care provides temporary or emergency substitute family care for emotionally, sexually or physically abused children. This program enables children to experience safe, loving and nurturing home environments. Foster parents are licensed and trained, and share in the goal of stabilizing children and reunifying families.

The KONNECT project (Konnnecting Our Neighborhoods and Nurturing Each Child Together) offers one-to-one mentorship for children ages 4–15 with one or both parents in state or federal prison. Through quality weekly mentorship, KONNECT aims to improve the child's academic success, self concept, and social interactions and values. It is a partnership between Beech Acres and S.O.A.R. Development Corporation of Word of Deliverance Ministries for the World. Beech Acres provides the mentorship recruiting and training for the program. In 2005, KONNECT had over 50 mentors and mentees.

For additional information, visit www.beechacres.org

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Big Brothers Big Sisters is the oldest and largest youth mentoring program in the United States. Through the program, at-risk youth, ages 6–18, are paired in one-on-one professionally supported mentoring relationships with adult volunteers in a community-based or school-based setting. In both cases, the volunteer and the young person meet for one hour a week to talk, or read together or just do something fun. These intentionally unstructured meetings are meant to cultivate relationships that will help the youth navigate through everyday challenges. Research shows that youth participating in the program are less likely to use illegal drugs, skip school or engage in violent acts. In 2005, more than 84 percent of teachers polled reported Little Brothers and Sisters in school-based mentoring programs improved in at least one academic subject. More than 80 percent of both Bigs and parents said Littles in community-based mentoring improved their self-confidence. In 2005, the organization served 234,000 youth across 50 states including 10,000 children with at least one incarcerated parent.

For additional information, visit

<http://www.bbbs.org/site/c.djKKYPLJvH/b.1539751/k.BDB6/Home.htm>

Black Babies SMILE (Start More Infants Living Equally Healthy)

Black Babies SMILE (BBS) is a maternal and infant health program aimed at reducing the rate of infant mortality among African Americans in Montgomery County, Maryland. Any African American woman living in Montgomery County is eligible to receive the program's free services, including nurse visitation and case man-

agement. The program was created in 1999 in response to increasing concerns about the lack of health care in the African American community. The African American Health Program, which administers BBS, partners with churches, clinicians' offices and early childhood programs to provide maternal and infant health services. BBS offers education and training to women before pregnancy, nurse management during pregnancy, and campaigns to keep infants safe after pregnancy. Nurse management focuses on providing services that are culturally competent, strength-based and comprehensive. Nurses, together with the mothers, create a care plan for the infants to ensure their safety and continued good health.

Currently, Black Babies SMILE serves more than 150 mothers and 90 infants. The average age of the mothers is 27. Over 70 percent of participating mothers are single parents and unemployed. Since the program's inception, no pre-term or low-birthweight babies have been born to mothers enrolled for prenatal care.

For additional information, visit www.onehealthylife.org

Boston Ten Point Coalition

The Coalition is an ecumenical group of Christian clergy and lay leaders working to mobilize the Christian community around issues affecting Black and Latino youth, especially those at risk for violence, drug abuse and other destructive behaviors.

The Coalition aims at making the local church more effective in rebuilding communities. It also seeks to build partnerships with community-based, governmental and private sector institutions, which are also committed to the revitalization of the families and communities. The Ten Point Plan calls upon churches and faith-based agencies in the Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan and Jamaica Plain communities of Boston to work collaboratively to develop a ten point action plan aimed at reducing violence and helping youth to develop more positive and productive life styles.

Among the services provided by the Ten Point Coalition is a community re-entry initiative that provides mentoring and basic services to ex-offenders who were labeled high-impact players and are considered least likely to succeed on their own as they prepare to re-enter community life. Preliminary results demonstrated a 10 percent recidivism rate with ex-offenders who normally exhibit an average 44 percent recidivism rate.

The Second Chance/Adopt a School program is another successful example of the Ten Point Coalition's work. In partnership with the Boston Police Department's Youth Violence Strike Force and Boston School Police, clergy and volunteers from area churches make anti-violence presentations at local schools. Trained volunteers also provide counseling on topics such as peer conflict and gang mediation. Teams make weekly visits to the homes of youth at high risk for criminal behavior before they actually get into trouble.

For additional information, visit www.bostontenpoint.org

CASASTART

CASASTART (Striving Together to Achieve Rewarding Tomorrows) was developed by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. It is a community-based, school-centered program designed to keep high-risk 8- to 13-year-old youths free of substance abuse and criminal involvement. The program coordinates services by bringing together key stakeholders in community schools, law enforcement agencies, social services, and health agencies. CASASTART uses a positive youth development framework and intensive case managers, each of whom serves 15 children and their families. CASASTART is composed of eight components designed to reduce neighborhood, family, peer group and individual risk factors. Program sites are able to adapt the program to fit their specific needs and strengths. The style and level of implementation across the sites is not uniform. Initially the program was first implemented in six cities; CASASTART currently operates in nearly 40 schools around the country.

Assessment of CASASTART programs operating in Austin, Texas; Bridgeport, Connecticut; Memphis, Tennessee; Savannah, Georgia; and Seattle, Washington, demonstrated that one year after program completion, compared with youths in the control group, CASASTART youths were *less* likely to: use gateway and stronger drugs; be involved in drug trafficking; commit violent offenses; and be negatively influenced by peers or to associate with delinquent peers. Children in the program were *more* likely to be promoted to the next grade in school.

For additional information, visit <http://www.casacolumbia.org>

The Comer School Development Program

The Comer School Development Program (SDP) is the organization charged with implementing the Comer Process in school communities. The Comer Process, a school- and system-wide intervention formulated by Dr. James P. Comer, Maurice Falk Professor of Child Psychiatry at the Yale University School of Medicine's Child Study Center, aims to bridge child psychiatry and education.

School Development Programs, also known as Comer Schools, merge child and adolescent development outcomes into the curriculum. Teachers shape classes around ways to advance overall development, not just achieve certain test scores. Another unique feature of Comer Schools is their emphasis on parent involvement in major school decisions. Each school forms management teams composed of administrators, teachers and parents to handle routine tasks and serious concerns. All major school decisions are made by this group. SDP also brings together school personnel, parents and students to take responsibility for children's individual development and, consequently, their readiness to learn. These teams meet to address specific concerns with student behavior. They also discuss how to make the school environment more conducive to learning.

Relationships are key to the students' success. SDP does not just focus on cognitive development, but on all developmental pathways. School districts fully adopting SDP have been able to significantly increase student academic performance in math, reading and writing. Over the past 25 years, SDP has been used in over 1,000 schools. The program is now in place in more than 50 school districts nationwide.

For additional information, visit <http://www.schooldevelopmentprogram.org/>

El Paso County Department of Human Services

The El Paso County Department of Human Services in Colorado ensures that the County's residents are able to live and grow in an environment free of extreme poverty, abuse or neglect. It has a common philosophy that begins with a vision to eliminate poverty and family violence and builds on the community's capacity to serve families before calling upon government; it emphasizes prevention, early intervention, protection and family strengths. Department staff provide integrated services in a culturally respectful, competent manner based on specific principles of service delivery. Each division has its primary function but also links with other divisions for increased effectiveness, efficiency and child and family services. Primary service areas provided through public/private community partnerships include:

Prevention: Supporting economic self-sufficiency and independence, and preventing the need for more intensive services.

Preservation: Assisting families, youth and children in need, maintaining children in their own homes or with relatives and working to keep fathers involved with their children.

Protection: Protecting at-risk or abused and/or neglected children, youth and adults and providing permanency in the form of family reunification, guardianship or adoption.

Administrative Services: Providing services in support of the direct client services and benefit programs.

For additional information, visit <http://dhs.elpasoco.com/>

Every Child Succeeds

Every Child Succeeds (Ohio) is designed to ensure an optimal start for children by providing education, support and counseling services to mothers. To date ECS has served more than 8,500 families with over 177,500 home visits. Based on scientific principles correlating appropriate brain stimulation during the first three years with the achievement of full social, mental and physical development, ECS maximizes the development of high-risk children. The program provides intensive home visitation for first-time, high-risk mothers and their infants for three years. ECS strives to decrease abuse and neglect, reduce unintentional injuries, strengthen the parent-child relationship, improve utilization of diagnostic services, encourage health promotion, link families with primary care services and promote an optimal environment for learning and emotional growth.

While enrolled in this program, home visitors, who are recruited and trained, visit families two to three times per month for the first year. If needed, the program also offers mothers monthly visits during the second and third years. During the visits, home visitors provide information, training on infant health, development, environmental safety and parenting, and access to health and human services. Parents are also given a chance to meet other first-time parents. More than 20 community agencies provide home visitation services through the Every Child Succeeds program.

Preliminary findings include: ECS prenatal referrals have increased from 40 percent when the program began to almost 60 percent at the present time. Ninety-three percent of ECS infants function at developmentally normal levels. Ninety-eight percent of mothers in the ECS program have a medical home. Of mothers with smoking histories, 79 percent quit or drastically reduce tobacco use during pregnancy. Of the 29 percent of mothers who enter ECS with clinically significant levels of depression, half are no longer depressed after nine months in the program; and observational data suggest that the ECS injury prevention component significantly reduces hazards to the child.

For additional information, visit www.everychildsucceeds.org

Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health (FFCMH)

This national family-run organization provides leadership and technical assistance to family-run and other child services and focuses on building and sustaining family-professional partnerships. FFCMH helps to engage families of children with emotional, behavioral and mental challenges at all levels of program planning, implementation and evaluation. The Federation pays particular attention to the development of partnerships between family-run, youth-centered organizations and mental health services and juvenile and criminal justice systems. In addition, the Federation provides advocacy at the national level for the rights of children and youth with emotional, behavioral and mental health challenges and their families. Currently the Federation has chapters or state organizations in 48 states.

For additional information, visit <http://www.ffcmh.org/>

Functional Family Therapy, Multisystemic Therapy and Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care

While there was a general consensus among researchers in 1990 that “nothing worked” for serious juvenile offenders, research over the last 15 years has proven that three treatment models are particularly effective for at-risk youthful offenders and their families: Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC).

All three programs are evaluated as “model programs” by the Blueprints for Violence Prevention Initiative at the University of Colorado. All three programs offer

comprehensive, family-focused interventions aimed at the avoidance of incarceration or other institutionalization of youth.

The effectiveness of Functional Family Therapy was recognized by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Youth Violence. The program targets youth, ages 10 to 18, and their families, whose problems range from acting out to conduct disorder to alcohol/substance abuse. FFT can be provided in a variety of contexts, including schools, child welfare, probation, parole/aftercare, mental health, and as an alternative to incarceration or out-of-home placement. Intervention ranges from, on average, eight to 12 one-hour sessions up to 30 sessions of direct service for more difficult situations.

Multisystemic Therapy provides treatment on a highly individualized basis that addresses the factors in a youth's environment contributing to behavior problems. MST services are delivered in the natural environment (e.g., home, school, community). The treatment plan is designed in collaboration with family members. The typical duration of home-based MST services is approximately four months, with multiple therapist-family contacts occurring each week. Studies show these programs produce long-term reductions in recidivism and decrease psychiatric symptoms and drug use.

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care is an alternative to regular foster care, group or residential treatment, and incarceration for youth who have problems with chronic disruptive behavior. The MTFC treatment model can be implemented by any agency or organization providing services to children with serious behavior problems and their families. The intervention occurs in multiple settings and ranges from behavioral parent training and support, to foster parents, to school-based academic support and medication management. There are three versions of MTFC serving children 3 to 5, 6 to 11 and 12 to 17 years old.

All three programs are highly cost-effective. A cost-benefit analysis by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy found that, for every dollar spent, these three models ultimately save \$6.85 (FFT), \$8.38 (MST) and \$14.07 (MTFC).

For additional information, visit:

FFT: <http://www.fftinc.com/>

MST: <http://www.mstservices.com/>

MTFC: <http://www.mtfc.com/>

The Incredible Years Series

The Incredible Years Series (IYS) are research-based, proven effective approaches for reducing children's aggression and behavior problems and increasing social competence at home and at school. The Incredible Years Training Series offers comprehensive curricula designed to promote social competence and prevent, reduce and treat aggression and related conduct problems in young children (ages 4 to 8

years). The interventions that make up this series—parent training, teacher training and child training programs—are guided by developmental theory concerning the role of multiple interacting risk and protective factors (child, family and school) in the development of conduct problems.

The IYS programs have been highly evaluated by a number of studies, including six randomized control group evaluations of the parenting series by the program developer and the University of Washington, as well as five independent replications by other investigators. These evaluations indicated significant changes, such as increases in parent use of effective limit-setting by replacing spanking and harsh discipline with non-violent discipline techniques and increased monitoring of children, reductions in parental depression and increases in parental self-confidence, increases in positive family communication and problem solving, reduced conduct problems in children's interactions with parents, and increases in their positive effect and compliance to parental commands.

For additional information, visit www.incredibleyears.com

King County System Integration Initiative

The King County System Integration Initiative was initiated in March 2004 to improve the coordination and integration of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems in King County, Washington. Child protection and well-being were seen as a shared responsibility of communities, agencies, individuals, institutions (formal and informal) and families. Similarly, responsibility for guidance and accountability for delinquent youth requires the engagement of many supportive entities. Achievement of desired outcomes for children and youth being served by child welfare and juvenile justice agencies requires concerted effort and communication among many organizations and individuals, and the active engagement and support of their families.

The King County System Integration Initiative aims to reform the culture, policies, practices, programs and protocols that currently make up a sometimes fragmented method of service delivery. With the consultative and facilitative support of the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), it engaged in a comprehensive, strategic planning process to improve the coordination and integration of the juvenile justice, child welfare, and other relevant youth-serving systems. CWLA developed a five-phase strategic planning framework to help guide states and local jurisdictions in efforts to establish a more coordinated, integrated child welfare and juvenile justice system that more effectively impacts outcomes for dual jurisdiction youth and families. In 2007, the King County Systems Integration Initiative continued to progress through the persistent efforts of a dedicated group of youth-serving professionals. The Executive Committee and several subcommittees and task force groups have finalized additional critical components that will reshape the way in which King County reacts to dual jurisdiction youth.

This effort brought together a comprehensive representation of county and state officials and personnel to conduct a thorough examination of data (both existing and that which must be developed to better inform effective services), information sharing processes, information management systems, program and fiscal resources, and applicable federal and state statutes. The initiative developed a set of protocols designed to support coordination and integration of case planning and service delivery for children and young people connected to multiple systems—with a primary focus on child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

For additional information, visit

<http://www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/jjkingcounty.htm>

Life Long Family Connections, Families for Teens and The California Permanency for Youth Project

Youth permanency programs across the country provide long-lasting support to youth leaving foster care. Such programs search for family members or other adults with whom youth feel safe and connected. Often youth get reconnected with extended families, sometimes staff they have known and liked in the past. At other times, new connections are made.

Life Long Family Connections for Adolescents in Massachusetts is a statewide initiative operated by Massachusetts Families for Kids with the state of Massachusetts. The program uses seven approaches to develop lifelong relationships for adolescents in the foster care system. All components are youth-driven, strengths-based and culturally competent. Staff members help youth make connections that will remain intact after they leave care. One key component is the *Speak Out Team*, comprised of teens and young adults who were once adopted or are currently in foster care who talk to policymakers and practitioners about their need for a permanent family, offer support to older youth still in care and help to train staff on permanency planning for older youth.

Families for Teens, operated by the New York City Administration for Children and Families, works to ensure that no child ages out of foster care without a life-long connection to a caring adult committed to functioning in a parental capacity. The city requires that youth be involved in efforts to identify committed adults with whom they would like to be connected with whether through reunification, adoption, guardianship or custody. Special attention has been focused on youth in residential treatment and other congregate care settings.

The California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP) is a project of the Public Health Institute. Its Task Force—a statewide group with broad representation, including public and private organizations, youth and founders—provides technical assistance to 14 counties to develop a youth permanence plan that includes the following target areas: administrative practices, permanency practice, identification of the project target group, staff development, partnerships, involvement of youth in finding their own permanency, and integration with other initiatives.

For additional information, visit

<http://www.csrox.org/programs/family-connections.php>

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/acs/html/home/home.shtml>

<http://www.cpy.org>

Missouri Department of Social Services, Division of Youth Services

The state of Missouri is widely considered to have the best juvenile correctional system in the nation. It closed its youth prisons in 1983 and divided the state into five regions so that confined juveniles would remain within driving distance of their homes. Each region has two facilities, housing no more than 40 youths each. One serves as a day treatment clinic to prevent the escalation of criminal behavior; the other is a lock-up for more serious offenders. Instead of punishment, the state focuses on intensive individual and family counseling, academic and vocational education, and behavior modification.

While many states are adding mental health treatment as an occasional service, Missouri infuses mental health into every aspect of its correctional programs. Comprehensive treatment services include case management, family therapy, residential care, juvenile court diversion, intensive case supervision, school-based day treatment and aftercare.

From the first day of entering a Missouri DYS (Department of Youth Services) facility, youth spend virtually every moment with a team of 10 other teens. They eat together, study together, live together—all under the supervision of two trained youth specialists. Any time a youth is troubled about anything, they can call a meeting of the team to discuss the problem and work out solutions.

DYS youth also show promising educational progress. In 2002, 75 percent of the youth made more progress than a typical public school student and 222 youth earned their GEDs. Moreover, Missouri's success has not come at the expense of the budget. In 2002, DYS spent \$103 per youth, while Louisiana spent \$270 per youth, Maryland spent \$192, and Florida spent \$271. All three states have youth recidivism rates dramatically higher than Missouri's.

The most recent DYS recidivism report, compiled in February 2003, shows that 70 percent of youth released in 1999 avoided recommitment to a correctional program within three years. The state has flatly disproved traditional concerns that public safety will be compromised if services and treatment are emphasized over incarceration.

For additional information, visit <http://www.dss.mo.gov/dys/index.htm>

Nurse-Family Partnership

The Nurse-Family Partnership provides home visits by licensed nurses to first-time mothers (primarily young and single) throughout their pregnancies and during the first two years of the babies' lives. The program primarily targets low-income women and those facing other risk factors, whose children are extremely at risk. The nurses assist families in becoming economically self-sufficient by helping mothers plan future pregnancies, continue their education and find jobs. The client's partners, extended family and friends, are encouraged to participate in the home visits. Nurse-Family Partnership Implementing Agencies provide services at the community, city, county or state level and are administered by a range of public and nonprofit entities including state and county departments of public health, community-based health centers, nursing associations and hospitals. Among the multiple positive program effects found in the first trial of children at age 15 were a 48 percent reduction in child abuse or neglect, and a 90 percent reduction in those identified as needing supervision for incorrigible behavior. A 2005 RAND study reported a net benefit to society of \$34,148 per participant, with the bulk of the savings accruing to government, which equates to a \$5.70 return per dollar invested in the Nurse-Family Partnership. The Nurse Family Partnership is currently established in more than 290 counties in 23 states. Funding for the program comes from a variety of sources, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid and child abuse prevention dollars.

For additional information, visit <http://www.nursefamilypartnership.org>

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

The violence and victimization that occur in schools today negatively affect both individual students and the overall school environment. They decrease student performance, attendance, safety and well-being. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (BPP) seeks to decrease school violence by focusing on school-wide, classroom and individual interventions and involvement of parents. It offers a comprehensive approach designed for use in elementary, middle or junior high schools.

School policies, rules against bullying behaviors, and predetermined consequences are part of the school-wide interventions. The anonymous bully/victim questionnaire provides schools with rich data that show where increased supervision of school violence "hot spots" is needed. School-wide interventions focus on assessment, staff training and the development of coordinated supervision systems. Classroom-level interventions consist of regular class meetings where students and teachers discuss bullying and peer relations.

The program provides guidance for individual interventions for children who bully others, for children who are bullied, and for those who watch the bullying of their peers. The sessions also involve parents of these children. The commitment of school teachers and administrators to implement BPP is a vital part of the success of the program.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in the U.S. also includes a community component that encourages schools to work with community violence prevention programs to take their anti-bullying messages beyond the schoolyard boundaries.

BPP has resulted in substantial reductions in both boys' and girls' reports of bullying, victimization, and overall anti-social behavior (i.e., vandalism, fighting, truancy, etc.). It also has led to significant improvements in classroom order, social relationships and attitudes toward school and academics.

For additional information, visit www.clemson.edu/olweus

Operation Ceasefire

Operation Ceasefire is considered a national model for effective and dramatic youth and gang violence reduction. In one year, after record high levels of youth homicides, the youth homicide rate (ages 15–24) in Boston, Massachusetts, dropped by two-thirds, a phenomenon called “the Boston Miracle.” Similar success has been achieved in other cities (Indianapolis; Minneapolis; Stockton, California; High Point and Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Portland, Oregon; and Rochester, New York).

This happened when a broad coalition of federal, state, and local governmental agencies, nonprofit community service organizations, businesses, religious leaders, parents and resident stakeholders came together and agreed on “Operation Ceasefire,” a coordinated city-wide strategy to deter youth and gang firearm violence. The strategy included regular meetings of law enforcement officers with groups responsible for the violence to reiterate that violence would not be tolerated. This element of the program reversed the street pressure in which groups egged on their members to commit violence. Community and faith leaders sent a loud, clear and consistent moral message to gangs, as fellow community members, that the killing was wrong and must stop. Participants and evaluators reported that the message was effective even with the most hardened offenders. This confirmation made the position of the community clear, validated any subsequent steps by law enforcement, and made it impossible for violent offenders to believe that they had community support. Finally, working with community partners, cities built a network of extensive services, targeted first at the core group of members of violent groups and gangs. These youths and young adults, in effect, “moved to the front of the line” for services. This measure focuses help on any violent offenders who will take it.

For additional information, visit
http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/gun_violence/profile21.html

PACE Center for Girls

PACE Center for Girls (Florida) provides a non-residential delinquency prevention program in 21 locations statewide, targeting the unique needs of females 12–18 who are identified as dependent, truant, runaway, ungovernable, delinquent or in need

of academic skills. PACE accepts referrals from the juvenile justice system, the Department of Children and Families, school personnel, community services agencies, parents, family members and friends as well as self-referrals. Its purpose is to intervene and prevent school withdrawal, juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, substance abuse and welfare dependency.

The success of the PACE program is based on two key factors: a focus on understanding the relationship between victimization and female juvenile crime, and a strength-based approach that focuses on the unique potential of each girl, not on mistakes or poor choices she has made. Components of the PACE program include: academic education, individualized attention, gender-specific life management skills, mental health treatment, parental involvement, community volunteer opportunities and a three-year, comprehensive follow-up program.

In fiscal year 2005–2006, PACE provided quality social and educational services for 2,312 Florida girls and their families. Currently there are 19 PACE centers, three outreach programs and a pre-teen center operating in Florida.

For additional information, visit <http://www.pacecenter.org>

Parent Institute for Quality Education

The Parent Institute for Quality Education (California) offers a free nine-week parent involvement education course to help parents understand how they can become an integral part of their children's education. PIQE is a culturally sensitive parent training program taught by credentialed teachers trained by PIQE. Classes are offered in the parent's primary language so that they can feel comfortable and confident in their interactions with other parents and the instructor. The program's intent is to provide parents with information, knowledge, skills and a personal commitment to improve the conditions surrounding the educational and personal development of their children.

Since the program started in Sherman Elementary School in San Diego, California, in October 1987, more than 375,000 parents from 1,500 elementary, middle and high schools, in districts within San Diego, Los Angeles, Fresno, San Jose, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Monterey, Sacramento, Stanislaus, Alameda, San Francisco and Shasta counties, have graduated from PIQE's parent involvement training classes. In addition, approximately 20,000 parents have participated in PIQE's follow-up "coaches" program, which provides one-on-one information to parents during a four-month period about how to access school services and promote the aims of PIQE for parent involvement.

For additional information, visit <http://www.piqe.org/>

Perry Preschool Project

The Perry Preschool Project (PPP) provides disadvantaged children with the opportunity to receive high-quality early childhood education. Children ages three and four who come from low-income families are eligible for the program. The program lasts for two years and operates for 2.5 hours each day, Monday through Friday. In addition to providing quality education, teachers also make periodic home visits. The project offers a developmentally centered curriculum that engages children as active, self-initiated learners; small classroom settings with 20 children and at least two staff who are trained in early childhood development and education and actively communicate with parents; sensitivity to the specific needs of disadvantaged children and their families, which includes providing meals and recommending other social service agencies; and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of both teachers' activities and children's behaviors and development.

The longitudinal study conducted in 2005 found that adults at age 40 who had participated in the preschool program had higher earnings, were more likely to hold a job, had committed fewer crimes, and were more likely to have graduated from high school than adults who did not have preschool. Overall, the study documented a return to society of more than \$16 for every tax dollar invested in the early care and education program.

For additional information, visit

<http://www.highscope.org/Research/PerryProject/perrymain.htm>

State Reentry Services for Youth

Reintegration back into school and the community is a critical transition for youth who have been adjudicated. Studies have established that lower recidivism rates are directly related to youths' positive level of engagement with their community. Youth returning from incarceration have many needs that must be addressed, including educational, mental health, vocational and recreational. Because there are multiple state agencies involved, the likelihood of information being delayed or even lost is great. Parents and family members must also be integral partners in this process. Many states have developed effective strategies for assisting adjudicated youth.

The West Virginia Division of Corrections designed a reentry program to include academic and vocational education assessment and opportunities, substance abuse treatment, sex offender treatment, crime victim awareness training, cognitive restructuring and life skills planning. The program targets high-risk convicted felons and parolees ages 18–24.

The West Virginia Division of Juvenile Services has a Reentry Court Program currently being implemented in several counties throughout the state. Collaborative partnerships with various local government agencies, community service organizations and faith-based organizations are used to provide institutional and community-based

transition services to offenders ages 14–21 who are returning to the northeastern region of the state.

The New York City school system places students who are in residential/detention placement on a parallel list to facilitate tracking and to ensure that students are not removed from school enrollment during the residential/detention period.

Kentucky requires that each school district have a “bridge coordinator” who facilitates and manages cross-agency and parental involvement in transitioning adjudicated children back into school. The Kentucky Department of Juvenile Justice’s reentry initiative provides institutional and community-based services to male offenders ages 14–16 returning to counties throughout the state. The transitional services include employment training and job placement, educational services, vocational training, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, healthcare services, counseling, family support services, community support services, housing assistance, mentoring, aftercare planning and services, monitoring and supervision, and intensive case management.

For additional information, visit <http://www.reentry.gov/sar/welcome.html> and see “A Summary of Best Practices in School Reentry for Incarcerated Youth Returning Home,” by Virginia’s JustChildren.

Wings of America

Wings of America (WOA) aims to increase the self-esteem, health, wellness and leadership skills of American Indian and Alaskan Native youth. Through youth development programs incorporating running, Wings has found a unique way to help Indian youth overcome their life challenges, and to nurture and maintain their proud heritage. Running has an integral place in the spiritual and ceremonial traditions of American Indian people.

WOA coordinates several programs throughout the year. In addition to sponsoring cross-country teams in events around the country, WOA also coordinates mini-running and fitness camps for youth ages 6–14. The week-long camps incorporate traditional Native American games, fitness and running exercises, substance abuse prevention and nutrition education to teach youth about positive and healthy life choices.

Overall, WOA participants have lower rates of arrests and substance abuse. They also attain higher levels of education and maintain healthier lifestyles. Ninety-nine percent of Wings’ participants graduate from high school. Ninety-four percent of participants enter a 2- or 4-year college.

For additional information, visit www.wingsofamerica.org

Wraparound Milwaukee

Wraparound Milwaukee is a unique type of managed care program operated by the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division. It is designed to provide comprehensive, individualized and cost-effective care to children with complex mental health and emotional needs. Wraparound Milwaukee is one of over 10 “wraparound” programs across the country.

Wraparound Milwaukee serves families living in Milwaukee County who have a child with serious emotional or mental health needs, is referred through the Child Welfare or Juvenile Justice System and is at immediate risk of placement in a residential treatment center, juvenile correctional facility or psychiatric hospital.

The program serves more than 800 youth, the majority of whom are adjudicated delinquent. Seventy percent of Wraparound Milwaukee’s population is male. Sixty-five percent are African American, 28 percent are Caucasian, and 7 percent are Hispanic. Most of the youth live below the poverty line and come from female-led, single parent homes. In 2002, the average age at intake was 13.2.

Wraparound Milwaukee emphasizes the importance of parental choice and family independence. In addition to partnering with families, the program also closely works with several other government agencies including juvenile justice, child welfare and education, allowing families to receive various services and resources at one central location.

Another essential element of the Wraparound program is the Care Coordination program. Each child and family is assigned a care coordinator who meets with the family, completes a strength-based evaluation and develops a care plan. The coordinator also serves as a liaison between the family and the Wraparound Milwaukee Provider Network, completing all formal authorization requests. Care plans are revised every 90 days and include such activities as peer groups, recreation activities, parenting classes and mentoring relationships.

For additional information, visit

<http://www.milwaukeecounty.org/display/router.asp?docid=7851>

Appendices



Selected Research on Risk Factors Contributing to the Cradle to Prison Pipeline

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Indicators	Impact on Poor and Minority Children
<p>Poverty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2005, almost 13 million children, more than one in six, lived in poverty.¹ • Fourth-graders in U.S. public elementary schools with the highest poverty levels have significantly lower reading scores compared to their counterparts in schools with lower poverty levels.² • Being raised in poverty contributes to a greater likelihood of involvement in crime and violence.³ • Low family income has repeatedly been associated with self-reported teen violence and convictions for violent offenses.⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2005, more than one in three Black children—3.8 million—lived in poverty; almost 3 in 10 Hispanic children—4.1 million—and 1 in 10 White, non-Hispanic children—4.3 million—were poor.⁵ • The poverty rate for Black and Hispanic children is far higher than it is for White children. Thirty-four percent of Black children were living in poverty in 2005, as were 28 percent of Hispanic children and 10 percent of White, non-Hispanic children.⁶ • From 2000 to 2005, the number of Black children living in extreme poverty increased by 22 percent from 1.6 million to over 1.9 million. The number of Hispanic children living in extreme poverty increased by 45 percent, from 1.2 million to 1.7 million.⁷ • The income levels for Black and Hispanic families with children were about half the level of White families with children in 2005. The median income for White, non-Hispanic families with children was \$66,235 compared to \$31,705 for Black families and \$36,403 for Hispanic families with children.⁸ • Black and Hispanic workers holding the same educational credentials as White workers experience higher unemployment rates.⁹ • In 2005, 29.2 percent of Black and 23.7 percent of Latino children lived in families that were hungry or at risk of hunger.¹⁰

Selected Research on Risk Factors Contributing to the Cradle to Prison Pipeline (continued)

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Indicators	Impact on Poor and Minority Children
<p>Family and Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being born to a teenage mother is a strong predictor of later delinquency.¹¹ • Economic hardship and stressful life events are associated with a lack of parent-child involvement and attachment.¹² • A lack of parental involvement and interaction with children may increase children's future risk of violence.¹³ • Social disorganization and concentrated poverty within the community lead to residents' decreased willingness to intervene when children are engaging in antisocial/unlawful acts.¹⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Black child is more than twice as likely as a White, non-Hispanic child to live with a single parent, almost three times as likely to live with neither parent, and almost twice as likely to be born to a teenaged mother.¹⁵
<p>Health Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 1 in 12 babies born in the United States—8.1 percent, or over 331,000 babies, in 2004—is low birthweight. This rate has been increasing steadily since 1984.¹⁶ • A child born at low birthweight is about 50 percent more likely to score below average on measures of both reading and mathematics at age 17.¹⁷ • A child born at very low birthweight is more likely to experience educational disadvantages that can persist into early adulthood.¹⁸ • Adolescents with elevated blood lead levels at birth report higher levels of delinquency and anti-social behavior.¹⁹ • A history of lead poisoning has been associated with male adult criminality.²⁰ • Children with disabling asthma have almost twice as many restricted activity days and lost school days as children with impairments due to other types of chronic conditions.²¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black and Hispanic babies are more likely than White babies to be born to mothers who did not receive early prenatal care.²³ • The percentage of Black babies born at low birthweight, putting them at risk for a range of postnatal complications, is almost twice that of White babies.²⁴ • Black children are 69 percent more likely than White children to be uninsured. Latino children are more than three times as likely as White children to be without health insurance.²⁵ • Black and Mexican-American children living in older housing (pre-1946) are more likely to have elevated blood lead levels than White children living in comparable housing—22 and 13 percent as opposed to seven percent.²⁶ • Minority children with asthma were more likely to have inadequate care to control their asthma due to socioeconomic factors as well as disparities in physician

Selected Research on Risk Factors Contributing to the Cradle to Prison Pipeline (continued)

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Indicators	Impact on Poor and Minority Children
<p>Health Care (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 1 in 8 teens ages 12-17 is a current tobacco user; 1 in 6 teens is a current alcohol user, including 1 in 10 who is a binge drinker.²² 	<p>prescribed treatment, preventive treatment, and lack of patient access to quality health care.²⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black children and children from poor families are not only more likely to have asthma than White or Latino children and children from higher income families, they also are more likely to suffer from disabling asthma.²⁸ • Tobacco and alcohol use are most common among White, non-Hispanic teens ages 12-17, and least common among Black teens in the same age group. Alcohol use among Hispanic teens is similar to that among White, non-Hispanic teens.²⁹
<p>Early Childhood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At-risk toddlers not enrolled in a quality child care and development program were more likely to become chronic law breakers as adults than their peers who were in the program.³⁰ • Even mild undernourishment, the kind most frequently found in the United States, impairs cognitive function and can do so throughout the life of a child.³¹ • Children participating in high quality early education had lower rates of juvenile delinquency, fewer arrests, and fewer juvenile court petitions than children who did not participate in the program.³² • At-risk children who participated in a high quality early education program were more likely than their peers who did not participate in the program to own their own homes at age 40; men who participated in the program were more likely to be living with their children.³³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 percent of Latino and 50 percent of Black three- to five-year-olds are read to every day compared to 68 percent of White children.³⁵ • Only one-third of Black and two-fifths of Latino kindergarteners have home computers.³⁶ • In a study of entering kindergarteners in Fall 1998, 15 percent of Black and Hispanic children were in the top quartile on reading readiness, compared to 30 percent of White children. Ten percent of the Black children, 14 percent of the Hispanic children, and 32 percent of the White children were in the top range in math. On a general knowledge test, only 6 percent of Blacks and 12 percent of Hispanics were in the top quartile, compared to 34 percent of Whites.³⁷

Selected Research on Risk Factors Contributing to the Cradle to Prison Pipeline (continued)

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Indicators	Impact on Poor and Minority Children
Early Childhood (continued)	
Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who have graduated from Head Start are less likely to repeat a grade, less likely to need special education, and more likely to graduate from high school than their peers who have not participated in Head Start.³⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low academic achievement and academic failure in the elementary grades increase the risk for later violent behavior.³⁸ • Research shows that repeating a grade can result in negative academic outcomes for those retained compared to those with similar academic problems who are not retained. Among those negative outcomes is a significantly increased dropout rate.³⁹ • Numerous studies demonstrate that students who are suspended or expelled are more likely than their peers to drop out of school altogether.⁴⁰ • One study found that being suspended or expelled is one of the top three school-related reasons for dropping out.⁴¹ • Higher suspension rates are associated with higher rates of juvenile incarceration.⁴² • One study found that more than 30 percent of sophomores who dropped out of school had been suspended, a rate three times that of peers who stayed in school.⁴³ • Two-thirds of adult prisoners in 2003 had less than a regular high school diploma, more than twice the rate found in the general adult population.⁴⁴

Selected Research on Risk Factors Contributing to the Cradle to Prison Pipeline (continued)

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Indicators	Impact on Poor and Minority Children
Education (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black 10-year-olds are almost twice as likely as White, non-Hispanic 10-year-olds to be two or more years behind modal grade level for their age. Black 16-year-olds are more than twice as likely as their White, non-Hispanic peers to be two or more years behind.⁵¹
Child Abuse and Neglect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low family income is the single best predictor of child abuse and neglect. Children who live in families with annual incomes less than \$15,000 are 22 times as likely to be abused or neglected as children living in families with annual incomes of \$30,000 or more.⁵² Abused and neglected children are up to six times as likely to be delinquent and up to three times as likely to be arrested as an adult as children who are not abused or neglected.⁵³ Children involved in the juvenile justice system are more likely to have a history of child abuse and neglect than children outside the system. Abuse rates ranging from 25 percent to 66 percent have been reported in studies of youth in the juvenile justice system.⁵⁴ Children in foster care have higher rates of grade retention, lower scores on standardized tests, and higher absenteeism, tardiness, truancy and dropout rates.⁵⁵ 15-year-old students in out-of-home care are about half as likely as other students to have graduated from high school five years later; significantly higher percentages of those in care have dropped out (55 percent) or been incarcerated (10 percent).⁵⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black children make up 16 percent of the child population, yet they represent 23 percent of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect and 32 percent of children in foster care.⁵⁹ Children of color enter foster care at higher rates, even when their families have the same characteristics as comparable White children and families.⁶⁰ Children of color remain in foster care for longer periods of time—a median stay of 17 months for African American children versus nine months for White children.⁶¹ African American children in foster care have a much lower probability than White children for reunification and adoption. Analyses of national data show that White children are four times as likely as African American children to be reunified and twice as likely to be adopted.⁶²

Selected Research on Risk Factors Contributing to the Cradle to Prison Pipeline (continued)

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Indicators	Impact on Poor and Minority Children
Child Abuse and Neglect (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth in foster care are at a higher risk for homelessness, unemployment, public assistance, and juvenile or adult court involvement after leaving care.⁵⁷ • Young adults who have been in foster care suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at nearly five times the rate of the general population, and higher even than rates reported among American war veterans.⁵⁸ 	
Mental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The U.S. General Accountability Office reported that thousands of families have relinquished custody of their children to the child welfare or juvenile justice systems so they could get treatment.⁶³ • A report by the House Committee on Government Reform found that two-thirds of the youth detention facilities in 47 states held youth waiting for mental health services who had not been charged with a crime. Over a six-month period in 2003, nearly 15,000 incarcerated youth waited for mental health services.⁶⁴ • Recent studies have consistently found 65 to 70 percent of youth in the juvenile justice system have at least one diagnosable mental health disorder; approximately one-fourth have disorders so severe that their ability to function is significantly impaired.⁶⁵ • A national study of children ages 2 to 14 who are involved in the child welfare system, either at home or in foster care, found that nearly half had clinically significant emotional or behavioral problems but only about one-quarter received specialized mental health treatment.⁶⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black and Hispanic children in foster care are less likely than White children in care to receive specialized mental health services.⁶⁷ • Poor families underutilize mental health services, often reflecting lack of access and appropriateness of available services. The 1999 Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health noted that the relationship between the underutilization of mental health services and poverty is especially significant for minority children and families.⁶⁸

Selected Research on Risk Factors Contributing to the Cradle to Prison Pipeline (continued)

Cradle to Prison Pipeline Indicators	Impact on Poor and Minority Children
<p>Juvenile Delinquency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compared to individuals arrested as adults but not arrested as juveniles, those arrested as juveniles were two to six times as likely to be arrested as adults.⁶⁹ • Income has a significant effect on youth participation in serious criminal activity (including using a weapon, robbery, assault, or selling hard drugs). Youth from low-income households have an increased likelihood of participating in serious crimes compared to those from high-income households.⁷⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2005, Black juveniles ages 10-17 were more than twice as likely as White juveniles to be arrested. Black juveniles were almost five times as likely as White juveniles to be arrested for violent offenses, and twice as likely to be arrested for drug offenses.⁷¹ • Although they represent just 39 percent of the U.S. juvenile population, minority youths represent 60 percent of committed juveniles.⁷² • Black juveniles are nearly four times as likely as White juveniles to be in secure residential placement. Hispanic juveniles are almost twice as likely as Whites to be in such placement; American Indian juveniles more than twice as likely.⁷³

¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2005," *Current Population Reports*, P60-231 (August 2006), Table B-2.

² U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data, "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Study," 1999-2000, at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/pirlspub/9.asp?nav=2>.

³ Robert J. Sampson and Janet L. Lauritsen, "Violent Victimization and Offending: Individual-, Situational-, and Community-Level Risk Factors," *Understanding and Preventing Violence*, Vol. 3, *Social Influences*, Albert J. Reiss and Jeffrey A. Roth, eds. (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1994), pp. 1-114.

⁴ Bill Henry, Avshalom Caspi, Terrie E. Moffitt and Phil A. Silva, "Temperamental and Familial Predictors of Violent and Nonviolent Criminal Convictions: Age 3 to Age 18," *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1996), pp. 614-623.

⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2005," *Current Population Reports*, P60-231 (August 2006), Table B-2.

⁶ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2005," *Current Population Reports*, P60-231 (August 2006), Table B-2.

⁷ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Table 2: Age, Sex, Household Relationship, Race and Hispanic Origin by Ratio of Income to Poverty Level: 2000," at http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032001/pov/new02_003.htm; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Table POV01: Age and Sex of All People, Family Members and Unrelated Individuals Iterated by Income-to-Poverty Ratio and Race: 2005, Below 50% of Poverty—Black Alone," at http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032006/pov/new01_50_06.htm; and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Table POV01: Age and Sex of All People, Family

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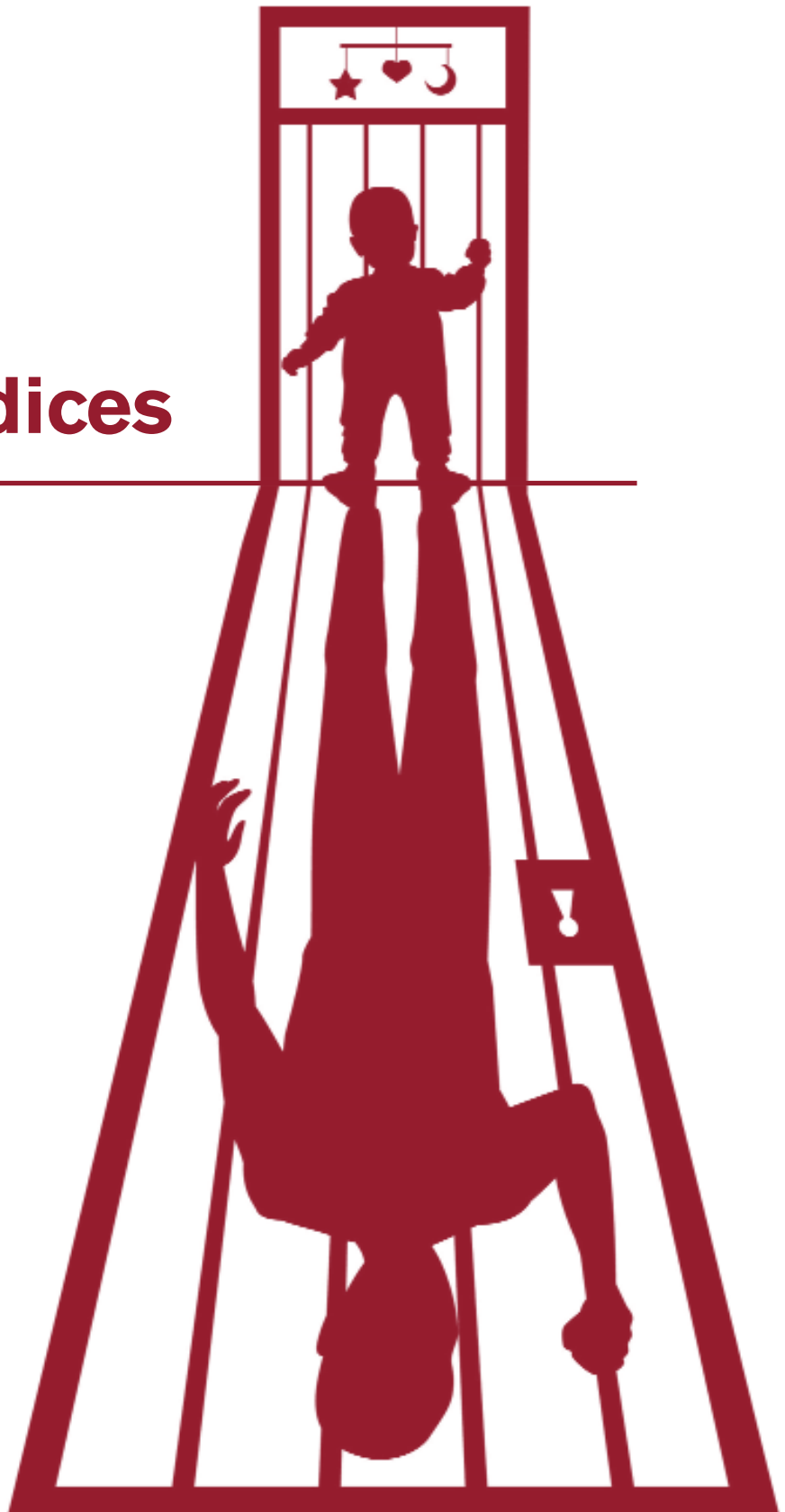
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Appendices



**13 million poor children—1 in 6—were living in the United States in 2006.
Since 2000, the number of poor children has increased by 1.2 million.**

Table 1A: Population and Poverty

	Poor Children					
	All Children, 2006		2005-2006		1999	
			Number	Percent of children in the state	County with highest child poverty rate	Percent of children in the county
	Number	Percent of total population				
Alabama	1,114,301	24.2%	253,108	23.0%	Perry County	49.2%
Alaska	181,434	27.1	26,445	15.1	Wade Hampton Census Area	29.6
Arizona	1,628,198	26.4	311,863	19.5	Apache County	43.0
Arkansas	691,186	24.6	164,545	24.3	Phillips County	45.6
California	9,532,614	26.1	1,697,024	18.1	Tulare County	33.0
Colorado	1,169,301	24.6	180,080	15.7	Costilla County	32.4
Connecticut	818,286	23.3	88,582	11.0	New Haven County	13.3
Delaware	203,366	23.8	31,565	15.8	Sussex County	15.3
District of Columbia	114,881	19.8	36,678	32.6	District of Columbia	31.7
Florida	4,021,555	22.2	689,315	17.5	Hamilton County	36.0
Georgia	2,455,020	26.2	484,525	20.2	Hancock County	45.4
Hawaii	298,081	23.2	33,155	11.4	Hawaii County	21.7
Idaho	394,280	26.9	58,441	15.1	Butte County	28.5
Illinois	3,215,244	25.1	543,373	17.1	Alexander County	39.1
Indiana	1,577,629	25.0	276,950	17.9	Crawford County	25.7
Iowa	710,194	23.8	95,696	13.7	Page County	22.3
Kansas	695,837	25.2	106,645	15.6	Sheridan County	27.9
Kentucky	999,531	23.8	223,296	22.8	Owsley County	56.4
Louisiana	1,090,001	25.4	298,228	27.8	East Carroll Parish	56.8
Maine	280,994	21.3	48,492	17.6	Washington County	23.0
Maryland	1,360,531	24.2	129,551	9.7	Baltimore city	31.0
Massachusetts	1,448,884	22.5	177,620	12.4	Suffolk County	25.2
Michigan	2,478,356	24.5	445,142	18.3	Lake County	29.2
Minnesota	1,257,264	24.3	151,605	12.2	Beltrami County	22.4
Mississippi	759,405	26.1	220,420	29.5	Holmes County	52.4
Missouri	1,416,592	24.2	259,551	18.6	Pemiscot County	43.6
Montana	217,848	23.1	37,134	17.3	Roosevelt County	41.8
Nebraska	445,033	25.2	63,022	14.4	Rock County	36.6
Nevada	634,520	25.4	87,111	13.9	Mineral County	21.9
New Hampshire	297,625	22.6	27,988	9.6	Coos County	11.9
New Jersey	2,089,338	23.9	244,074	11.8	Hudson County	22.4
New Mexico	508,930	26.0	127,823	25.6	Luna County	47.1
New York	4,514,342	23.4	888,344	20.0	Bronx County	41.7
North Carolina	2,155,387	24.3	429,169	20.2	Halifax County	33.3
North Dakota	144,934	22.8	18,234	13.0	Sioux County	45.2
Ohio	2,770,035	24.1	508,703	18.7	Vinton County	28.3
Oklahoma	894,034	25.0	212,672	24.3	Harmon County	38.2
Oregon	856,259	23.1	141,001	16.8	Malheur County	26.0
Pennsylvania	2,804,873	22.5	464,686	16.9	Philadelphia County	31.6
Rhode Island	237,451	22.2	35,456	15.1	Providence County	22.7
South Carolina	1,039,653	24.1	226,292	22.1	Allendale County	48.1
South Dakota	194,681	24.9	31,857	16.8	Buffalo County	61.8
Tennessee	1,442,593	23.9	322,483	22.7	Hancock County	37.7
Texas	6,493,965	27.6	1,527,262	23.9	Starr County	59.5
Utah	791,198	31.0	93,049	11.9	San Juan County	34.9
Vermont	133,389	21.4	17,459	13.2	Orleans County	19.0
Virginia	1,806,847	23.6	216,399	12.2	Clifton Forge city	39.8
Washington	1,526,267	23.9	231,026	15.4	Okanogan County	29.0
West Virginia	389,071	21.4	96,386	25.2	McDowell County	53.0
Wisconsin	1,312,530	23.6	191,952	14.9	Menominee County	39.9
Wyoming	121,794	23.6	14,092	12.0	Fremont County	24.4
United States	73,735,562	24.6	13,285,569	18.3	Buffalo County, South Dakota	61.8

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More than half of all poor children live in ten states.

Table 1B: Child Poverty

Ten states with the greatest number of poor children, 2005-2006

	Number	Percent
California	1,697,024	18.1%
Texas	1,527,262	23.9
New York	888,344	20.0
Florida	689,315	17.5
Illinois	543,373	17.1
Ohio	508,703	18.7
Georgia	484,525	20.2
Pennsylvania	464,686	16.9
Michigan	445,142	18.3
North Carolina	429,169	20.2

Ten states (and the District of Columbia) with the highest child poverty rates, 2005-2006

	Number	Percent
District of Columbia	36,678	32.6%
Mississippi	220,420	29.5
Louisiana	298,228	27.8
New Mexico	127,823	25.6
West Virginia	96,386	25.2
Oklahoma	212,672	24.3
Arkansas	164,545	24.3
Texas	1,527,262	23.9
Alabama	253,108	23.0
Kentucky	223,296	22.8
Tennessee	322,483	22.7

Black and Hispanic babies are more likely than White, non-Hispanic babies to be born to mothers who did not receive early prenatal care.

Table 2: Prenatal Care, 2004
Percent of babies born to mothers who received early prenatal care or late or no prenatal care

	Early Prenatal Care*				Late or No Prenatal Care**			
	Total, all races	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Total, all races	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Alabama	84.0%	90.1%	77.2%	53.4%	3.7%	1.7%	4.5%	21.2%
Alaska	80.7	85.4	85.2	78.1	4.5	3.5	—	5.7
Arizona	76.3	87.2	77.8	67.1	7.5	3.1	6.9	11.1
Arkansas	82.3	85.4	76.1	71.7	4.4	3.2	6.9	8.3
California	87.1	90.7	83.5	85.0	2.6	1.9	3.5	3.1
Colorado	80.2	86.2	72.0	69.7	4.5	2.8	6.8	7.3
Connecticut	87.2	92.3	77.4	75.6	1.9	1.2	4.5	3.1
Delaware	85.1	90.0	81.7	69.5	3.6	2.0	4.3	9.9
District of Columbia	77.8	91.8	72.8	68.6	6.0	2.2	8.0	5.9
Florida								
Georgia	83.9	90.3	79.4	70.6	4.0	2.3	5.0	8.6
Hawaii	81.8	85.2	87.4	80.2	3.7	3.0	—	3.0
Idaho	71.6	74.9	70.6	55.6	5.7	4.5	—	11.0
Illinois	85.5	90.8	74.2	80.3	2.7	1.5	6.3	3.1
Indiana	80.8	84.3	68.5	62.6	4.0	2.9	7.6	8.9
Iowa	88.4	90.0	76.3	76.6	2.2	1.9	5.3	4.4
Kansas	86.5	89.8	78.3	72.7	2.6	1.8	4.8	5.8
Kentucky	74.5	76.0	68.6	56.4	5.4	4.8	8.9	11.0
Louisiana	85.5	91.5	77.4	84.3	2.9	1.4	5.0	3.1
Maine	88.5	88.9	80.2	77.8	1.6	1.6	—	—
Maryland	82.3	90.2	74.7	64.1	3.9	1.9	6.4	7.2
Massachusetts	89.6	92.2	80.4	82.3	2.2	1.5	5.5	3.6
Michigan	85.9	89.8	71.9	78.6	3.0	2.0	7.1	4.4
Minnesota	86.3	90.4	74.0	69.9	2.3	1.4	5.2	5.2
Mississippi	84.4	90.6	77.6	77.6	2.7	1.4	4.0	7.4
Missouri	88.2	90.2	80.4	80.0	2.3	1.8	4.8	3.3
Montana	83.2	86.4	93.6	80.2	2.9	1.9	—	—
Nebraska	82.9	86.0	72.5	70.9	3.3	2.5	5.8	6.5
Nevada	75.0	83.8	68.8	64.6	7.3	4.3	10.6	10.5
New Hampshire								
New Jersey	79.1	88.4	63.3	66.5	4.7	2.3	10.6	6.9
New Mexico	69.4	76.5	66.9	67.6	8.3	5.5	7.1	9.1
New York (excluding New York City)	77.2	82.3	61.3	61.0	4.4	3.1	9.6	7.3
New York City	79.9	88.3	74.1	78.1	4.9	2.1	7.6	5.4
North Carolina	84.0	90.4	76.5	69.9	2.9	1.5	4.7	5.6
North Dakota	85.7	88.7	81.1	78.8	2.8	1.9	—	—
Ohio	87.8	89.9	78.6	79.0	2.4	1.9	4.9	4.2
Oklahoma	78.1	82.3	72.2	64.6	4.7	3.7	6.4	7.2
Oregon	80.5	84.0	73.6	69.3	4.1	3.3	6.8	6.2
Pennsylvania	73.2	78.4	55.9	56.4	6.7	5.1	12.7	10.8
Rhode Island	90.0	92.5	82.4	87.5	1.5	1.0	3.3	2.1
South Carolina	68.0	75.5	60.1	46.8	7.5	5.0	10.0	15.6
South Dakota	77.9	83.4	63.6	63.2	4.0	1.9	—	9.6
Tennessee	69.8	76.8	54.2	40.8	8.2	5.1	14.5	23.8
Texas	81.8	88.2	78.4	77.3	4.5	2.6	5.3	5.9
Utah	80.0	83.7	60.5	64.6	4.5	3.4	17.3	8.5
Vermont	90.0	90.4	71.7	76.8	1.5	1.4	—	—
Virginia	85.6	90.5	79.0	71.8	3.4	1.9	5.0	7.3
Washington	71.4	75.1	66.0	61.0	6.1	4.8	8.8	8.9
West Virginia	86.0	86.4	76.2	77.2	2.1	2.0	5.3	—
Wisconsin	85.3	88.7	76.9	72.0	2.9	2.3	5.1	5.1
Wyoming	85.2	87.0	83.3	79.3	3.1	2.6	—	4.2

*Care begun in the first trimester (first three months) of pregnancy.

**Care begun in the last trimester (last three months) or pregnancy, or not at all.

—Number of births too small to calculate a reliable rate.

Note: Prior to 2003, information on start of prenatal care was obtained from the mother. Starting in 2003, some states began to use medical records for this information. These two methods produce different results, and hence the data from these two systems cannot be combined to produce national estimates of prenatal care. In addition, two states (Florida and New Hampshire) switched systems during 2004; no annual percentages can be calculated for these states. Finally, New York City's vital statistics system is separate from that of the rest of New York State. New York State switched to the new system for 2004; New York City used the old system. No overall percentages can be calculated for New York.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, *National Vital Statistics Reports*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (September 29, 2006), Tables 26a and 26b.

Black babies are about twice as likely as Hispanic or White, non-Hispanic babies to be born at low birthweight. Since 1984, the incidence of low birthweight has increased by 21 percent. The United States now ranks 22nd out of 29 industrialized nations in the world.

Table 3: Low Birthweight,¹ 2004

	Total, all races ²		White non-Hispanic		Black non-Hispanic		Hispanic	
	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank
Alabama	10.4%	48	8.5%	47	15.1%	38	6.8%	23
Alaska	6.0	1	5.1	1	—	—	5.4	2
Arizona	7.2	16	7.3	26	12.0	10	6.8	23
Arkansas	9.3	43	8.1	44	15.5	41	6.0	4
California	6.7	8	6.3	8	12.4	11	6.1	7
Colorado	9.0	39	8.7	49	14.6	35	8.6	42
Connecticut	7.8	19	6.7	14	12.7	12	8.5	41
Delaware	9.0	39	7.4	31	13.8	24	6.2	10
District of Columbia	11.1	50	5.6	2	14.1	31	7.8	36
Florida	8.5	35	7.3	26	13.1	16	7.0	25
Georgia	9.3	43	7.4	31	14.0	28	6.0	4
Hawaii	7.9	21	6.2	6	10.2	1	7.9	37
Idaho	6.8	10	6.6	13	—	—	7.0	25
Illinois	8.4	34	7.3	26	14.6	35	6.7	22
Indiana	8.1	26	7.5	35	13.6	20	6.3	11
Iowa	7.0	13	6.9	15	11.0	5	6.1	7
Kansas	7.3	17	7.0	19	13.7	22	6.3	11
Kentucky	8.8	38	8.4	46	13.3	18	7.2	28
Louisiana	10.9	49	8.0	42	15.2	39	7.7	35
Maine	6.4	4	6.4	11	—	—	—	—
Maryland	9.3	43	7.4	31	13.2	17	7.3	31
Massachusetts	7.8	19	7.2	24	11.8	8	8.6	42
Michigan	8.3	30	7.1	22	14.5	34	6.4	16
Minnesota	6.5	6	6.0	4	10.5	2	6.3	11
Mississippi	11.6	51	8.7	49	15.5	41	7.4	32
Missouri	8.3	30	7.3	26	14.0	28	6.6	20
Montana	7.6	18	7.6	37	—	—	8.6	42
Nebraska	7.0	13	7.0	19	11.8	8	5.9	3
Nevada	8.0	22	7.8	39	13.8	24	6.3	11
New Hampshire	6.8	10	6.9	15	—	—	—	—
New Jersey	8.3	30	7.2	24	13.7	22	7.2	28
New Mexico	8.1	26	8.0	42	14.7	37	8.2	38
New York	8.2	28	6.9	15	13.0	14	7.5	33
North Carolina	9.0	39	7.7	38	14.2	32	6.4	16
North Dakota	6.6	7	6.4	11	—	—	—	—
Ohio	8.5	35	7.5	35	14.0	28	7.0	25
Oklahoma	8.0	22	7.8	39	13.0	14	6.6	20
Oregon	6.0	1	6.0	4	10.6	3	5.2	1
Pennsylvania	8.2	28	7.1	22	13.5	19	9.3	45
Rhode Island	8.0	22	7.3	26	11.0	5	8.3	39
South Carolina	10.2	47	7.9	41	15.3	40	6.3	11
South Dakota	6.9	12	6.9	15	—	—	—	—
Tennessee	9.2	42	8.2	45	13.8	24	6.0	4
Texas	8.0	22	7.4	31	13.9	27	7.2	28
Utah	6.7	8	6.3	8	10.8	4	7.6	34
Vermont	6.4	4	6.3	8	—	—	—	—
Virginia	8.3	30	7.0	19	12.8	13	6.4	16
Washington	6.2	3	5.7	3	11.1	7	6.1	7
West Virginia	9.3	43	9.1	51	14.3	33	—	—
Wisconsin	7.0	13	6.2	6	13.6	20	6.4	16
Wyoming	8.6	37	8.5	47	—	—	8.4	40
United States	8.1		7.2		13.7		6.8	

¹ Birthweight less than 2,500 grams (5 lbs. 8 oz.).

² Includes races other than White and Black.

—Number of low birthweight births too small to calculate a stable rate.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, *National Vital Statistics Reports*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (September 29, 2006), Table 35. Ranks calculated by Children's Defense Fund.

**There were 9.4 million uninsured children and
teens living in the United States in 2006, 700,000 more than in 2005.**

**Table 4A: Uninsured Children
Uninsured children and teens younger than 19, 2004-2006**

	Estimated number	Percent
Alabama	74,000	6.3%
Alaska	19,000	9.8
Arizona	282,000	16.5
Arkansas	71,000	9.7
California	1,330,000	13.2
Colorado	176,000	14.3
Connecticut	63,000	7.2
Delaware	26,000	12.0
District of Columbia	10,000	7.8
Florida	755,000	17.8
Georgia	315,000	12.2
Hawaii	17,000	5.5
Idaho	47,000	11.4
Illinois	354,000	10.4
Indiana	150,000	9.0
Iowa	47,000	6.2
Kansas	51,000	7.0
Kentucky	88,000	8.4
Louisiana	127,000	11.0
Maine	19,000	6.4
Maryland	133,000	9.2
Massachusetts	89,000	5.8
Michigan	147,000	5.6
Minnesota	92,000	6.9
Mississippi	119,000	14.9
Missouri	124,000	8.3
Montana	33,000	14.3
Nebraska	35,000	7.4
Nevada	112,000	16.8
New Hampshire	21,000	6.6
New Jersey	254,000	11.5
New Mexico	95,000	17.7
New York	384,000	8.0
North Carolina	280,000	12.3
North Dakota	15,000	9.5
Ohio	216,000	7.4
Oklahoma	131,000	13.9
Oregon	108,000	12.0
Pennsylvania	242,000	8.1
Rhode Island	16,000	6.3
South Carolina	109,000	9.9
South Dakota	18,000	8.9
Tennessee	129,000	8.5
Texas	1,413,000	20.7
Utah	107,000	12.8
Vermont	9,000	6.3
Virginia	174,000	9.1
Washington	122,000	7.6
West Virginia	35,000	8.5
Wisconsin	81,000	5.8
Wyoming	12,000	9.5
United States, 2006	9.4 million	12.1

Note: The 2006 U.S. percentage and number of uninsured are from the 2007 Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social & Economic Supplement (ASEC) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The estimated percentage of uninsured children in each state is an average of the percentage of uninsured children in that state over three years. Three-year averages are used because of small sample sizes in some states. In March of 2007, the Census Bureau changed the way health coverage was determined and issued revised data for the 2005 and 2006 ASEC. Prior to that revision, errors in weighting were corrected in the 2005 ASEC. The average percentage of uninsured children in this table is based on the revised and corrected 2005 ASEC, the revised 2006 ASEC, and the 2007 ASEC. The estimated number of uninsured in each state is calculated by applying that average percentage to the most recent Census estimates of children younger than 19 in the states.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Revised 2005, Revised 2006, and 2007 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey; and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Estimates of Persons by Race/Ethnicity and State for Single Year of Age as of July 1, 2006. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

Seven out of 8 uninsured children have at least one working parent.

**Table 4B: Uninsured Children
Of the 9 million uninsured children:**

Race/Ethnicity*	Percentage of the uninsured	Uninsured number**	
Hispanic	38.9%	3.4 million	
White	37.5	3.3 million	
Black	16.0	1.4 million	
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.5	389,000	
American Indian	1.6	140,000	
Other (multi-racial)	1.6	136,000	
Total	100.1	8.7 million	

Age	Percentage of the uninsured	Uninsured number	
Birth through age 5	29.1%	2.5 million	
Age 6 through age 12	31.7	2.8 million	
Age 13 through age 18	39.2	3.4 million	
Total	100.0	8.7 million	

Income	Percentage of the uninsured	Uninsured number	Upper limit, annual income for family of 4
100% poverty & below	31.9%	2.8 million	\$ 20,650
Over 100% through 200%	32.5	2.8 million	41,300
Over 200% through 300%	18.3	1.6 million	61,950
Total, 300% and below	82.8	7.2 million	61,950
Over 300% through 400%	7.1	617,000	82,600
Over 400%	10.2	887,000	—
Total	100.0	8.7 million	

Family Structure	Percentage of the uninsured	Uninsured number	
Two parents in household	54.5%	4.8 million	
Single parent household	37.3	3.3 million	
Child has no parent in household	8.2	720,000	
Total	100.0	8.7 million	

Parental Work Status***	Percentage of the uninsured	Uninsured number	
At least one working parent	86.8%	7.0 million	
No working parent	13.2	1.1 million	
Total	100.0	8.0 million***	

Citizenship	Percentage of the uninsured	Uninsured number	
Child is a U.S. citizen	87.4%	7.6 million	
Child is not a U.S. citizen	12.6	1.1 million	
Total	100.0	8.7 million	

Note: Children are ages birth through 18.

* Hispanic children are in a separate category and are not included in the White and Black categories.

** Numbers may not add to total because of rounding.

*** Of children who have at least one parent in the household.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Revised 2006 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) to the Current Population Survey (revised April 2007); and *Federal Register*, Vol 72, No. 15 (January 24, 2007), pp. 3147-3148.
Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

About 7 out of 10 public school fourth graders cannot read or do math at grade level; for Black, American Indian, and Hispanic children, these rates are dramatically higher.

Table 5: Reading and Math Achievement of 4th Graders
Percent of fourth-grade public school students performing below grade level, 2005

	Reading						Math					
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian, Pacific Islander	American Indian, Alaska Native	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian, Pacific Islander	American Indian, Alaska Native
Alabama	78%	68%	92%	—	—	—	79%	70%	93%	—	—	—
Alaska	74	64	76	81%	81%	91%	66	56	80	77%	64%	85%
Arizona	76	63	88	89	64	—	72	57	87	86	57	—
Arkansas	71	63	90	79	—	—	66	58	90	75	—	—
California	78	63	89	90	65	77	72	54	88	86	49	73
Colorado	64	54	82	83	58	—	61	51	82	82	58	—
Connecticut	61	53	88	85	51	—	57	47	89	85	43	—
Delaware	65	54	85	78	45	—	64	50	85	82	30	—
District of Columbia	89	30	92	88	—	—	91	22	95	89	—	—
Florida	70	61	87	75	57	—	64	51	84	72	34	—
Georgia	74	63	88	86	43	—	70	57	88	78	43	—
Hawaii	77	63	79	73	81	—	73	58	84	79	75	—
Idaho	67	63	—	89	—	—	59	56	—	83	—	—
Illinois	70	58	91	86	56	—	68	56	91	86	34	—
Indiana	70	65	88	89	—	—	62	55	87	79	—	—
Iowa	67	64	88	85	60	—	63	60	85	83	—	—
Kansas	67	63	90	86	45	—	53	48	76	70	29	—
Kentucky	70	67	85	—	—	—	73	71	91	—	—	—
Louisiana	80	68	91	—	—	—	76	62	91	—	—	—
Maine	64	65	—	—	—	—	61	61	—	—	—	—
Maryland	68	55	88	79	45	—	62	47	86	74	41	—
Massachusetts	56	49	80	89	53	—	51	43	82	86	36	—
Michigan	69	62	90	—	—	—	63	54	92	—	—	—
Minnesota	62	57	90	82	72	—	53	46	85	85	60	—
Mississippi	82	69	93	—	—	—	81	68	93	—	—	—
Missouri	68	62	86	79	—	—	69	63	91	90	—	—
Montana	64	61	—	64	—	87	61	59	—	70	—	83
Nebraska	67	60	90	88	—	—	64	56	93	90	—	—
Nevada	79	72	90	88	76	—	74	62	90	87	58	—
New Hampshire	61	61	—	—	—	—	53	52	—	83	—	—
New Jersey	62	54	85	81	43	—	54	45	83	75	26	—
New Mexico	79	64	76	86	—	92	81	66	94	87	—	91
New York	66	57	83	83	50	—	64	51	87	83	39	—
North Carolina	70	61	87	83	69	—	60	48	83	74	37	—
North Dakota	65	62	—	—	—	91	59	57	—	—	—	87
Ohio	65	59	90	76	—	—	57	49	84	79	—	—
Oklahoma	74	70	90	83	—	78	72	64	89	84	—	79
Oregon	70	66	85	90	65	—	63	58	88	86	46	—
Pennsylvania	64	58	85	81	53	—	59	50	87	84	—	—
Rhode Island	70	64	85	89	71	—	69	63	91	91	61	—
South Carolina	74	64	89	71	—	—	64	47	87	70	—	—
South Dakota	67	63	—	—	—	86	60	55	—	—	—	87
Tennessee	73	67	89	87	—	—	72	65	91	74	—	—
Texas	71	56	85	81	53	—	60	40	82	72	28	—
Utah	65	62	—	86	70	—	63	59	—	87	67	—
Vermont	62	62	—	—	—	—	57	56	—	—	—	—
Virginia	63	55	85	74	47	—	60	50	86	78	36	—
Washington	65	60	80	86	60	—	58	52	74	83	54	—
West Virginia	74	74	85	—	—	—	74	75	83	—	—	—
Wisconsin	67	62	90	80	66	—	60	52	93	84	71	—
Wyoming	66	62	—	84	—	—	58	55	—	69	—	—
United States	70	61	88	85	60	81	65	53	87	81	46	78

—Data not reported; number of students too small to calculate a reliable rate.

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Assessment of Education Progress, *The Nation's Report Card: Reading 2005* (2005), Figure 11 and Table A-4; and U.S. Department of Education, National Assessment of Education Progress, *The Nation's Report Card: Mathematics 2005* (2005), Figure 11 and Table A-4. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

The suspension rate among Black public school students is three times that for White students; the rates are also higher for American Indian and Hispanic students.

Table 6: Out-of-School Suspensions, by Race/Ethnicity, 2004
Suspensions per 100 students

	Total, all races	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Asian	American Indian, Alaska Native	Hispanic
Alabama	9.6	5.5	17.1	3.5	3.9	3.5
Alaska	6.2	5.2	10.9	4.9	7.6	6.2
Arizona	5.6	4.5	10.6	2.6	9.7	5.9
Arkansas	6.6	5.0	12.6	2.8	6.4	4.2
California	7.4	6.2	16.9	3.3	9.0	7.6
Colorado	6.2	4.6	14.2	3.4	8.9	8.5
Connecticut	6.5	3.2	16.8	2.1	3.5	12.8
Delaware	10.5	7.5	17.1	3.3	5.7	8.8
District of Columbia	3.7	0.3	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.9
Florida	9.2	6.9	16.8	2.9	6.2	6.8
Georgia	9.6	5.2	16.1	3.2	3.0	6.1
Hawaii	3.5	3.4	5.1	3.5	2.7	3.4
Idaho	3.6	3.4	3.4	1.5	4.1	4.8
Illinois	6.2	3.8	14.5	1.8	4.3	5.6
Indiana	8.6	6.6	20.9	2.2	3.9	8.7
Iowa	3.7	3.0	16.1	2.6	4.4	3.6
Kansas	5.8	3.9	17.4	3.1	5.9	8.8
Kentucky	7.0	6.7	10.5	2.4	4.5	4.5
Louisiana	11.9	6.9	17.7	3.7	8.5	6.3
Maine	4.8	4.7	9.0	2.6	5.8	4.1
Maryland	7.2	5.4	10.9	2.0	7.2	4.8
Massachusetts	5.7	4.5	10.7	3.8	4.6	9.1
Michigan	7.7	6.1	15.1	2.9	6.5	8.1
Minnesota	4.0	2.6	16.3	3.3	8.7	6.0
Mississippi	10.1	5.9	13.9	4.8	15.5	4.8
Missouri	6.0	4.1	14.7	2.3	4.7	4.8
Montana	4.6	3.7	4.7	2.5	12.7	5.1
Nebraska	3.8	2.6	13.5	2.1	11.6	4.7
Nevada	6.9	5.6	14.4	4.3	7.7	7.1
New Hampshire	5.9	5.7	9.1	2.2	8.6	11.8
New Jersey	5.6	3.9	11.9	1.5	3.3	6.8
New Mexico	5.3	3.7	7.4	1.7	7.5	5.7
New York	4.0	3.5	7.1	1.0	5.2	3.0
North Carolina	11.1	6.8	20.2	3.5	10.0	7.8
North Dakota	1.7	1.3	4.1	0.5	6.4	3.6
Ohio	6.1	4.1	16.1	2.2	3.0	5.8
Oklahoma	5.8	4.7	15.2	2.3	4.4	6.7
Oregon	5.9	5.7	8.8	2.6	9.5	6.6
Pennsylvania	6.5	3.8	20.6	2.0	3.0	11.6
Rhode Island	10.1	8.8	17.5	5.9	8.6	13.0
South Carolina	11.8	7.4	19.3	2.0	5.3	5.9
South Dakota	2.6	1.7	5.5	2.8	8.4	3.9
Tennessee	8.8	5.8	18.5	3.4	5.4	5.8
Texas	5.2	3.0	11.9	1.9	3.3	5.3
Utah	2.6	2.2	5.5	4.0	7.3	5.0
Vermont	5.2	5.2	5.4	2.7	1.2	4.5
Virginia	7.3	4.9	14.5	2.3	4.6	6.2
Washington	6.0	5.4	11.7	3.7	10.4	6.9
West Virginia	10.7	10.3	19.9	2.1	7.9	7.9
Wisconsin	5.1	3.2	18.4	2.8	9.6	8.1
Wyoming	3.7	3.4	6.2	1.7	7.6	6.0
United States	6.8	4.8	15.0	2.8	7.2	6.5

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2004 Elementary and Secondary Civil Rights Survey.
Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

Black students are more likely than any other students to be in special education programs for children with mental retardation or emotional disturbance.

Table 7: Special Education Enrollment, by Race/Ethnicity, 2004
Percent of students in special education programs

	Mental Retardation						Emotional Disturbance					
	Total, all races	White, non- Hispanic	Black, non- Hispanic	Asian	American Indian, Alaska Native	Hispanic	Total, all races	White, non- Hispanic	Black, non- Hispanic	Asian	American Indian, Alaska Native	Hispanic
Alabama	1.7%	1.1%	2.8%	0.4%	1.4%	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Alaska	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.2	0.5	0.3
Arizona	1.2	1.1	1.9	0.6	1.2	1.2	0.7	0.9	1.3	0.2	0.7	0.3
Arkansas	2.5	2.0	4.7	0.6	1.5	1.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1
California	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.1	0.6	0.2
Colorado	0.5	0.5	1.1	0.3	0.7	0.6	1.0	1.1	1.9	0.3	1.6	0.7
Connecticut	0.6	0.4	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.6	0.1	1.5	1.7
Delaware	2.0	1.4	3.3	1.0	0.3	1.9	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.1	1.1	0.3
District of Columbia	2.0	0.2	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.7	2.2	0.3	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.6
Florida	1.3	0.9	2.7	0.5	0.9	0.9	1.2	1.2	2.0	0.1	0.9	0.6
Georgia	2.0	1.4	3.1	0.5	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.4	1.8	0.3	1.7	0.4
Hawaii	1.0	0.6	0.7	1.1	0.4	1.1	1.2	1.6	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.9
Idaho	0.8	0.7	1.2	0.4	0.9	1.0	0.4	0.5	1.2	0.1	0.3	0.2
Illinois	1.4	1.1	2.9	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.2	2.1	0.4	0.8	0.7
Indiana	3.3	3.1	5.4	0.7	2.8	1.8	1.3	1.3	2.0	0.2	1.2	0.4
Iowa	3.4	3.3	5.2	4.6	2.1	3.4	0.6	0.6	1.3	1.8	0.6	0.3
Kansas	1.1	1.0	2.4	0.5	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.8	1.6	0.2	1.1	0.4
Kentucky	3.7	3.7	4.5	0.7	2.5	1.8	0.9	0.7	2.0	0.2	0.4	0.3
Louisiana	1.7	1.0	2.5	0.5	1.0	0.6	0.7	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
Maine	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.1	1.0	0.5	1.4	1.5	1.5	0.3	1.4	1.2
Maryland	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.7	1.2	0.1	0.8	0.3
Massachusetts	2.0	1.2	5.1	0.9	2.1	4.6	1.0	0.9	2.0	0.2	1.3	1.4
Michigan	1.6	1.3	3.3	0.8	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.5	0.3	1.2	0.7
Minnesota	1.8	1.7	2.8	1.0	2.6	2.3	1.9	1.7	4.0	0.4	5.9	1.2
Mississippi	1.3	0.7	1.8	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.1
Missouri	1.2	1.0	2.2	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.7	1.4	0.1	0.4	0.4
Montana	1.2	1.0	1.2	0.8	2.6	1.5	0.6	0.6	1.3	0.2	0.8	0.7
Nebraska	2.3	2.3	3.3	1.0	3.8	1.9	0.8	0.7	1.9	0.2	2.6	0.2
Nevada	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.5	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.7	1.2	0.2	0.9	0.2
New Hampshire	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.4	2.3	1.2	1.1	1.1	0.8	0.2	0.7	0.5
New Jersey	0.7	0.6	1.5	0.3	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.4	0.1	0.5	0.5
New Mexico	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.2	2.1	1.5	0.9	0.7
New York	0.7	0.5	1.3	0.3	1.3	0.7	1.2	0.9	2.3	0.2	2.4	1.2
North Carolina	2.2	1.3	4.1	0.6	3.7	1.2	0.8	0.6	1.4	0.0	0.8	0.2
North Dakota	1.3	1.2	1.8	0.7	2.3	2.0	1.3	1.2	2.7	0.4	2.4	1.2
Ohio	2.5	2.2	4.0	0.7	2.5	2.2	0.8	0.7	1.6	0.2	0.6	0.6
Oklahoma	1.2	1.1	2.7	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.3	0.3	0.7	0.3
Oregon	0.7	0.7	1.4	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.7	0.2	0.8	0.4
Pennsylvania	1.3	1.2	2.1	0.5	1.3	1.6	1.1	1.0	1.8	0.3	1.1	1.1
Rhode Island	1.0	0.9	1.4	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.8	0.1	1.6	1.1
South Carolina	2.2	1.3	3.7	0.5	0.7	1.0	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.1	0.5	0.2
South Dakota	0.9	0.8	2.2	0.6	1.4	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.1	0.8	0.4
Tennessee	1.4	0.9	2.9	0.3	1.2	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.1
Texas	0.8	0.6	1.5	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.3	0.2	1.5	0.6
Utah	0.7	0.7	1.3	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.5	1.7	0.3	0.7	0.4
Vermont	1.4	1.5	1.2	0.2	2.7	0.2	1.8	1.9	0.5	0.1	1.6	1.4
Virginia	1.5	0.8	3.4	0.5	1.1	0.7	0.9	0.9	1.4	0.2	0.6	0.6
Washington	0.6	0.6	1.0	0.4	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.5	1.3	0.2	0.7	0.2
West Virginia	3.4	3.4	4.2	0.2	1.1	1.8	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.1	0.0	0.4
Wisconsin	1.5	1.3	2.8	1.0	3.8	1.5	1.8	1.7	2.6	0.2	5.3	1.0
Wyoming	1.1	1.1	0.6	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.2	2.4	0.2	2.1	1.3
United States	1.3	1.2	2.6	0.6	1.2	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.5	0.2	1.1	0.5

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2004 Elementary and Secondary School Civil Rights Survey, unpublished tabulations. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.



Black public school students are least likely to be in programs for the gifted and talented, one-third as likely as Asian students; American Indian and Hispanic students are about half as likely as Asian students to be in the programs.

Table 8: Enrollment in Programs for Gifted and Talented Students, by Race/Ethnicity, 2004
Percent of students in programs for gifted and talented

	Total, all races	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Asian	American Indian, Alaska Native	Hispanic
Alabama	4.8%	6.3%	2.4%	9.4%	4.9%	2.3%
Alaska	4.1	5.8	2.1	4.5	1.0	2.3
Arizona	5.9	8.4	3.5	13.9	4.0	3.3
Arkansas	9.9	11.2	7.1	10.6	4.7	5.8
California	8.4	12.0	4.6	14.6	6.5	5.1
Colorado	6.7	7.9	5.2	9.6	4.5	3.9
Connecticut	3.0	3.5	1.7	5.7	1.7	1.4
Delaware	4.6	6.1	2.2	11.5	3.4	1.7
District of Columbia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Florida	4.5	5.7	2.0	8.8	4.6	4.0
Georgia	8.9	13.6	3.7	18.8	7.6	2.6
Hawaii	5.7	7.7	2.9	5.5	4.3	2.6
Idaho	3.9	4.4	1.7	6.9	1.2	0.9
Illinois	5.4	6.7	2.5	13.1	5.4	2.8
Indiana	7.1	7.7	3.8	15.5	6.7	3.8
Iowa	8.5	9.0	4.6	13.5	3.6	3.7
Kansas	3.3	3.9	1.1	5.5	1.5	1.0
Kentucky	13.0	14.2	5.2	20.2	6.6	4.6
Louisiana	3.9	5.5	1.9	11.7	2.6	4.2
Maine	3.0	3.1	1.3	3.8	0.8	1.2
Maryland	13.8	17.0	6.7	33.8	9.8	14.5
Massachusetts	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.9	0.9	0.8
Michigan	3.9	4.1	3.0	10.1	1.4	2.7
Minnesota	8.1	8.3	5.2	13.7	3.8	4.5
Mississippi	6.0	9.1	3.3	10.7	3.7	5.0
Missouri	3.8	4.3	1.7	9.0	2.0	1.4
Montana	5.6	6.0	2.8	9.9	2.9	3.3
Nebraska	11.4	12.8	6.4	17.0	4.6	4.5
Nevada	1.9	2.8	0.8	2.8	1.0	0.8
New Hampshire	2.3	2.3	0.6	5.8	0.9	1.0
New Jersey	6.9	8.4	3.3	12.2	3.3	3.4
New Mexico	10.7	12.6	9.6	13.6	2.2	11.4
New York	2.2	3.4	0.8	1.7	1.4	0.4
North Carolina	10.9	15.7	3.9	16.5	6.3	3.0
North Dakota	3.1	2.8	2.3	8.1	7.0	1.5
Ohio	7.4	7.6	6.5	13.6	5.6	3.5
Oklahoma	14.0	16.6	7.7	23.6	11.3	7.0
Oregon	7.1	8.0	3.6	11.6	3.6	1.8
Pennsylvania	4.8	5.3	2.7	9.5	2.2	1.8
Rhode Island	1.8	2.0	1.5	2.2	0.9	1.2
South Carolina	12.7	17.8	5.9	21.6	8.3	5.1
South Dakota	2.2	2.4	1.2	3.3	1.3	0.6
Tennessee	3.3	2.9	4.5	7.9	2.9	1.6
Texas	8.0	11.2	4.9	16.4	7.1	5.6
Utah	4.6	4.5	5.1	11.7	2.6	4.4
Vermont	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0
Virginia	12.1	14.9	4.6	24.5	8.3	6.7
Washington	3.8	4.2	1.4	5.0	1.6	1.8
West Virginia	2.2	2.2	1.4	9.3	3.9	1.6
Wisconsin	6.8	7.8	2.0	6.7	4.6	2.4
Wyoming	3.2	3.5	1.5	3.6	0.7	1.2
United States	6.7	7.9	3.5	11.9	5.2	4.3

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2004 Elementary and Secondary School Civil Rights Survey, unpublished tabulations. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

**Over 880,000 children were victims of abuse and neglect in 2005.
Almost 2 out of 3 were victims of neglect.**

Table 9: Child Abuse and Neglect, 2005
Child abuse and neglect, total substantiated victims, 2005

	Child victims of abuse and neglect		Type of abuse or neglect (percentage distribution) ²					
	Number	Rate ¹	Neglect	Medical neglect	Physical abuse	Sexual abuse	Psychological maltreatment	Other
Alabama	9,029	8.3	44.5%	NR	40.5%	23.5%	0.7%	NR
Alaska	2,693	14.3	61.8	3.7%	14.6	4.5	29.4	NR
Arizona	6,119	3.9	75.0	NR	21.3	6.2	0.9	NR
Arkansas	8,124	12.0	55.7	3.3	19.3	29.2	1.3	0.0%
California	95,314	9.8	70.8	NR	12.7	7.4	17.9	0.1
Colorado	9,406	8.0	63.2	1.7	17.3	10.1	5.1	8.1
Connecticut	11,419	13.7	74.1	3.1	7.1	4.6	30.5	3.7
Delaware	1,960	10.0	28.0	2.0	27.8	9.3	22.6	10.4
District of Columbia	2,840	25.2	84.2	NR	16.1	5.7	NR	NR
Florida	130,633	32.1	30.2	1.6	12.0	4.0	1.8	69.2
Georgia	47,158	20.0	70.3	5.0	10.4	4.6	21.4	1.1
Hawaii	2,762	9.2	15.0	2.2	11.1	5.6	0.9	89.6
Idaho	1,912	5.1	71.9	1.6	18.0	6.1	0.4	7.4
Illinois	29,325	9.0	66.2	2.7	26.5	18.9	0.1	NR
Indiana	19,062	11.9	70.6	2.5	13.8	21.3	NR	NR
Iowa	14,016	20.9	78.5	1.0	13.4	5.8	0.7	9.9
Kansas	2,775	4.1	21.4	2.9	21.7	23.4	15.4	25.0
Kentucky	19,474	19.9	85.0	NR	12.4	5.1	0.6	NR
Louisiana	12,366	10.8	76.2	NR	27.7	7.2	3.4	0.2
Maine	3,349	12.1	65.9	NR	22.4	12.7	44.9	NR
Maryland	14,603	10.4	61.8	NR	26.7	13.4	0.3	NR
Massachusetts	35,887	24.6	91.1	NR	14.1	2.7	0.2	0.0
Michigan	24,603	9.7	75.1	1.8	17.9	4.8	2.2	2.6
Minnesota	8,499	6.9	76.4	1.6	16.9	10.7	0.8	NR
Mississippi	6,154	8.2	56.6	2.9	21.2	15.0	11.0	0.5
Missouri	8,945	6.5	51.7	3.8	27.5	26.2	6.2	2.1
Montana	2,095	10.2	74.3	2.4	10.7	6.9	20.4	0.4
Nebraska	6,630	15.4	83.1	0.0	14.0	8.9	5.5	NR
Nevada	4,971	8.0	82.8	1.7	17.8	4.3	7.9	NR
New Hampshire	941	3.1	66.4	2.6	20.4	19.7	1.0	NR
New Jersey	9,812	4.5	49.6	9.4	33.4	8.8	1.5	0.1
New Mexico	7,285	14.9	70.4	2.4	14.5	5.3	22.1	0.2
New York	70,878	15.6	91.5	4.1	11.2	3.9	0.7	24.8
North Carolina	33,250	15.5	64.3	1.5	3.5	3.8	0.4	26.6
North Dakota	1,547	11.3	80.1	NR	16.7	7.7	53.3	NR
Ohio	42,483	15.4	55.0	0.0	20.9	18.6	9.9	NR
Oklahoma	13,941	16.3	82.4	3.5	18.3	6.4	22.6	NR
Oregon	12,414	14.6	30.8	2.5	8.6	8.7	2.8	58.9
Pennsylvania	4,353	1.5	3.5	2.0	32.4	62.5	1.1	NR
Rhode Island	3,366	13.7	82.9	2.5	14.2	5.0	0.3	2.4
South Carolina	10,759	10.5	69.8	4.0	30.0	8.4	1.3	0.2
South Dakota	1,442	7.7	87.0	NR	13.0	4.1	3.7	NR
Tennessee	18,376	13.2	53.3	2.0	33.3	20.4	0.5	NR
Texas	61,994	9.8	70.7	4.4	23.4	11.9	1.5	NR
Utah	13,152	17.7	20.7	0.4	14.7	19.3	42.5	19.2
Vermont	1,080	8.1	5.6	1.9	48.4	46.5	1.1	NR
Virginia	6,469	3.5	59.8	2.7	27.4	15.0	1.1	0.0
Washington	7,932	5.3	83.1	NR	16.5	6.0	NR	NR
West Virginia	9,511	24.9	54.9	1.2	27.2	4.7	22.8	7.9
Wisconsin	9,686	7.5	28.4	NR	12.7	37.8	0.3	25.0
Wyoming	853	7.5	71.0	1.6	7.0	7.4	13.2	6.0
United States	883,647	12.0	63.0	2.0	16.5	9.4	6.9	15.6

¹ Number of child victims per 1,000 children.

² Totals may be greater than 100 percent because some victims were subject to multiple types of maltreatment.

NR – no data reported by state.

Note: Because of differences in definitions and reporting requirements, data may not be comparable from state to state.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, *Child Maltreatment 2005* (2007), Tables 3-3 and 3-6. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

506,000 children were in foster care in 2005. The percentage of Black children in care was more than twice their proportion of the child population.

Table 10: Foster Care, FY 2000 – FY 2005
Number of children in care on last day of year

	Children in care, FY 2003, by race/ethnicity (percent)													
	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	Black non- Hispanic	Hispanic	White non- Hispanic	American Indian, Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	Two or more races	Unknown or missing
Alabama	5,621	5,859	5,883	6,079	5,934	6,913	49.9%	1.5%	47.6%	0.2%	<1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Alaska	2,193	1,993	2,072	2,040	1,825	1,791	7.5	2.6	24.7	63.7	0.4	0.0	0.0	1.2
Arizona	6,475	6,050	6,173	7,469	9,119	9,685	8.7	35.9	46.0	2.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	2.0
Arkansas	3,045	2,959	2,971	3,014	3,097	3,230	31.0	3.5	57.5	0.2	<1	<1	<1	0.3
California	112,807	107,168	100,451	97,261	92,344	81,174	29.0	39.4	25.4	0.8	1.3	0.4	0.4	0.5
Colorado	7,533	7,138	9,209	8,754	8,196	8,213	12.0	33.0	50.4	1.3	0.5	<1	<1	0.3
Connecticut	6,996	7,440	6,007	6,742	6,803	7,032	33.4	28.1	33.6	0.1	0.2	<1	<1	1.0
Delaware	1,098	1,023	886	814	849	962	59.7	6.5	33.7	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
District of Columbia	3,054	3,339	3,321	3,092	2,608	2,505	85.1	2.3	0.2	<1	0.2	0.0	0.0	11.6
Florida	36,608	32,477	31,963	30,677	28,864	29,312	42.4	9.0	45.8	0.2	0.2	<1	<1	0.5
Georgia	11,204	13,175	13,149	13,578	14,216	13,965	51.1	4.0	41.3	<1	0.1	<1	<1	0.4
Hawaii	2,401	2,584	2,762	2,886	2,953	2,766	1.1	1.7	9.0	0.4	14.3	29.2	29.2	7.9
Idaho	1,015	1,114	1,246	1,401	1,565	1,818	1.7	14.1	72.5	9.3	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.5
Illinois	29,565	28,202	24,344	21,608	19,931	19,431	67.7	5.6	24.4	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	2.0
Indiana	7,482	8,383	8,478	8,815	9,778	11,257	34.3	5.5	55.6	0.2	<1	<1	<1	0.3
Iowa	5,068	5,202	5,238	5,011	5,384	6,794	12.3	5.0	71.0	2.1	0.8	0.1	0.1	7.7
Kansas	6,569	6,409	6,190	5,781	6,060	5,835	21.3	4.9	65.5	1.0	0.3	<1	<1	4.5
Kentucky	6,017	6,165	6,814	6,895	7,000	7,287	17.5	0.7	74.6	0.2	0.1	<1	<1	3.1
Louisiana	5,406	5,024	4,829	4,541	4,397	4,833	56.7	0.9	40.3	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.6
Maine	3,191	3,226	3,084	2,760	2,584	2,309	1.7	2.7	82.5	1.1	0.4	<1	<1	10.1
Maryland	13,113	12,564	12,026	11,521	11,111	10,867	75.3	1.5	20.3	0.2	0.3	<1	<1	1.4
Massachusetts	11,619	11,568	12,510	12,608	12,562	12,197	18.0	24.7	49.4	0.1	1.8	<1	<1	3.4
Michigan	20,034	20,896	21,251	21,376	21,173	20,498	50.7	4.0	40.6	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Minnesota	8,530	8,167	8,052	6,770	6,540	6,978	21.7	6.9	49.8	12.3	1.5	<1	<1	1.5
Mississippi	3,292	3,443	2,686	2,721	2,989	3,269	50.9	1.0	40.2	<1	0.1	<1	<1	6.8
Missouri	13,181	13,394	13,029	11,900	11,681	11,344	34.2	1.9	62.3	0.3	0.2	<1	<1	0.8
Montana	2,180	2,008	1,912	1,866	2,030	2,222	1.3	5.7	52.4	33.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	4.4
Nebraska	5,674	6,254	5,724	5,148	6,292	6,231	15.4	7.9	65.0	8.8	0.3	<1	<1	1.6
Nevada	1,615	2,959	3,291	3,525	4,050	4,670	23.5	14.7	54.1	0.9	0.6	0.9	0.9	1.6
New Hampshire	1,311	1,288	1,291	1,217	1,236	1,178	3.9	5.0	82.9	0.5	<1	<1	<1	3.9
New Jersey	9,794	10,666	11,442	12,800	12,702	12,042	60.5	6.4	23.7	0.1	0.3	<1	<1	7.2
New Mexico	1,912	1,757	1,885	2,122	2,150	2,316	5.0	52.0	29.8	7.5	<1	0.1	0.1	3.1
New York	47,118	43,365	40,753	37,067	33,445	30,420	47.2	18.9	18.6	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	14.6
North Carolina	10,847	10,130	9,527	9,534	10,077	10,698	43.1	6.1	45.9	2.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
North Dakota	1,129	1,167	1,197	1,238	1,314	1,364	2.5	4.0	60.6	28.1	1.4	0.2	0.2	0.0
Ohio	20,365	21,584	21,038	19,323	18,004	17,442	44.3	2.7	48.3	0.2	0.1	<1	<1	1.0
Oklahoma	8,406	8,674	8,812	9,226	10,572	11,393	17.0	8.8	46.4	12.6	<1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Oregon	9,193	8,966	9,101	9,117	10,048	11,021	7.5	9.9	58.5	8.8	0.7	0.2	0.2	14.0
Pennsylvania	21,631	21,319	21,410	20,845	21,944	21,691	48.5	8.2	39.3	0.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	3.3
Rhode Island	2,302	2,414	2,383	2,357	2,414	2,509	18.5	18.3	54.1	1.1	1.9	0.0	0.0	2.0
South Carolina	4,525	4,774	4,818	4,801	4,635	4,757	54.5	2.2	40.5	0.1	0.2	<1	<1	0.2
South Dakota	1,215	1,367	1,396	1,537	1,582	1,712	1.8	5.8	30.9	55.8	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Tennessee	10,144	9,679	9,359	9,487	9,590	9,017	33.1	2.8	60.4	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	1.5
Texas	18,190	19,739	21,353	21,880	24,529	28,883	25.6	36.8	33.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.7
Utah	1,805	1,957	2,025	2,033	2,108	2,285	3.9	21.4	65.8	6.0	1.1	1.3	1.3	0.4
Vermont	1,389	1,382	1,526	1,409	1,432	1,436	1.6	1.1	96.2	<1	0.2	<1	<1	0.7
Virginia	6,789	6,866	7,109	7,046	6,869	7,022	45.5	4.9	44.4	<1	0.3	<1	<1	0.6
Washington	8,945	9,101	9,669	9,213	9,368	10,068	11.3	12.7	58.3	8.9	0.7	0.3	0.3	1.1
West Virginia	3,388	3,298	3,220	4,069	3,990	4,331	6.6	1.2	79.4	0.0	<1	<1	<1	4.9
Wisconsin	10,504	9,497	8,744	7,824	7,812	8,109	44.0	7.6	40.1	2.4	1.1	<1	<1	1.0
Wyoming	815	965	929	1,055	1,209	1,263	3.6	7.6	82.1	1.9	0.3	0.0	0.0	3.6
United States	544,303	536,138	524,538	511,853	508,965	506,345	35	17	39	2	1	0	0	3

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/statistics/entryexit2005.htm>; and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, *Child Welfare Outcomes 2003: Annual Report* (2006), at <<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cwo03/cwo03.pdf>>. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

One in 14 teens ages 16 to 19 are school dropouts. Dropping out increases the risk of unemployment, arrest and incarceration.

Table 11: Youth at Risk

	Dropouts, ¹ 2004-2005		Youth unemployment rate ² , 2004	Number of juvenile arrests ³ , 2005	Juveniles in juvenile and adult corrections facilities, 2000		Total
	Number	Percent			Juvenile facilities	Adult facilities	
Alabama	21,973	9.5%	15.7%	11,484	1,731	236	1,967
Alaska	4,014	9.3	22.5	4,532	357	37	394
Arizona	28,488	9.2	21.1	50,371	1,872	898	2,770
Arkansas	11,734	7.8	24.1	12,380	898	353	1,251
California	134,361	6.8	20.8	217,158	14,644	1,604	16,248
Colorado	19,005	8.2	20.6	46,030	2,013	159	2,172
Connecticut	6,849	4.0	16.4	20,811	894	452	1,346
Delaware	3,540	9.1	9.9	7,449	91	14	105
District of Columbia	1,281	8.3	30.4	347	46	39	85
Florida	74,528	8.5	15.4	120,082	6,320	1,455	7,775
Georgia	48,857	10.4	16.3	28,429	4,125	910	5,035
Hawaii	1,863	3.1	15.0	8,261	193	10	203
Idaho	7,047	8.5	16.9	9,864	597	72	669
Illinois	44,482	6.8	18.0	37,470	3,903	868	4,771
Indiana	27,472	8.7	14.4	34,293	2,895	571	3,466
Iowa	8,058	5.4	12.2	19,926	1,215	74	1,289
Kansas	8,765	6.2	15.2	6,555	1,159	111	1,270
Kentucky	18,351	9.0	21.7	13,857	1,531	186	1,717
Louisiana	21,258	8.4	21.2	23,806	2,396	632	3,028
Maine	4,465	6.7	13.9	7,112	389	4	393
Maryland	21,287	7.2	14.6	49,297	1,782	295	2,077
Massachusetts	14,292	4.9	13.4	14,841	2,250	195	2,445
Michigan	35,240	6.5	18.9	45,934	4,364	778	5,142
Minnesota	11,358	4.2	12.4	46,818	1,819	112	1,931
Mississippi	14,299	9.0	20.7	11,372	1,431	369	1,800
Missouri	22,961	7.8	17.4	26,874	2,434	372	2,806
Montana	3,535	7.2	11.0	6,493	365	69	434
Nebraska	4,617	5.1	12.6	15,219	1,405	49	1,454
Nevada	12,764	10.7	13.0	15,749	889	218	1,107
New Hampshire	3,761	5.8	12.3	8,417	417	27	444
New Jersey	24,843	5.5	13.8	59,154	2,189	110	2,299
New Mexico	11,394	9.6	18.9	9,696	553	312	865
New York	60,976	6.5	16.3	48,377	6,896	1,739	8,635
North Carolina	37,043	8.9	19.2	47,488	2,172	743	2,915
North Dakota	1,417	4.5	10.9	6,599	285	6	291
Ohio	37,380	6.4	16.3	41,082	3,954	606	4,560
Oklahoma	18,148	9.7	12.2	19,813	1,480	89	1,569
Oregon	12,207	6.8	22.3	28,107	1,497	207	1,704
Pennsylvania	39,345	6.5	18.4	101,608	6,219	440	6,659
Rhode Island	3,544	7.7	14.5	5,286	365	6	371
South Carolina	19,607	9.3	16.8	27,736	1,705	527	2,232
South Dakota	2,801	6.8	10.3	3,096	965	126	1,091
Tennessee	24,309	8.2	14.4	34,316	2,548	142	2,690
Texas	98,338	7.8	18.5	173,568	7,811	3,420	11,231
Utah	10,289	7.1	17.0	26,481	1,202	168	1,370
Vermont	1,505	4.9	11.8	1,599	120	18	138
Virginia	20,985	5.6	10.9	32,980	3,107	405	3,512
Washington	24,110	7.3	21.9	35,315	2,280	198	2,478
West Virginia	7,337	8.8	16.0	3,033	477	25	502
Wisconsin	16,070	5.6	11.9	69,037	1,837	618	2,455
Wyoming	2,148	8.0	11.2	6,548	392	56	448
United States	1,114,301	7.3	17.0	1,582,068	112,479	21,130	133,609

1 Youth ages 16-19 not enrolled in school and not high school graduates.

2 Youth ages 16-19.

3 Data incomplete for the District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois and New York.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2005 American Community Survey, Table C14005; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by sex, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, marital status, and detailed age, 2004 annual averages," at <<http://stats.bls.gov/gps/home.htm>>; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2004 Annual Averages, Table 3, "Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by age, sex, and race," *Employment and Earnings*, January 2005; U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States 2005* (October 2006), Tables 41 and 69; and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, SF1. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

**States spend on average almost 3 times as much per prisoner
as per public school pupil.**

Table 12: Cost Per Prisoner and Cost Per Pupil

	Cost per pupil, 2000-2003	Cost per prisoner, FY 2003	Ratio, per prisoner to per pupil
Alabama	\$ 6,300	\$ 9,320	1.5
Alaska	9,870	36,240	3.7
Arizona	6,282	18,222	2.9
Arkansas	6,482	16,408	2.5
California	7,552	28,914	3.8
Colorado	7,384	23,108	3.1
Connecticut	11,057	27,383	2.5
Delaware	9,693	22,350	2.3
District of Columbia	11,847		
Florida	6,439	20,236	3.1
Georgia	7,774	15,644	2.0
Hawaii	8,100	21,934	2.7
Idaho	6,081	21,763	3.6
Illinois	8,287	23,441	2.8
Indiana	8,057	25,512	3.2
Iowa	7,574	27,205	3.6
Kansas	7,454	24,496	3.3
Kentucky	6,661	21,096	3.2
Louisiana	6,922	9,980	1.4
Maine	9,344	37,687	4.0
Maryland	9,153	23,649	2.6
Massachusetts	10,460	52,637	5.0
Michigan	8,781	28,260	3.2
Minnesota	8,109	29,971	3.7
Mississippi	5,792	10,309	1.8
Missouri	7,495	17,921	2.4
Montana	7,496	17,009	2.3
Nebraska	8,074	19,035	2.4
Nevada	6,092	16,496	2.7
New Hampshire	8,579	27,948	3.3
New Jersey	12,568	32,606	2.6
New Mexico	7,125	33,557	4.7
New York	11,961	27,785	2.3
North Carolina	6,562	23,487	3.6
North Dakota	6,870	27,543	4.0
Ohio	8,632	26,538	3.1
Oklahoma	6,092	8,825	1.4
Oregon	7,491	25,441	3.4
Pennsylvania	8,997	30,451	3.4
Rhode Island	10,349	41,441	4.0
South Carolina	7,040	15,415	2.2
South Dakota	6,547	12,509	1.9
Tennessee	6,118	13,227	2.2
Texas	7,136	16,642	2.3
Utah	4,838	37,567	7.8
Vermont	10,454	42,625	4.1
Virginia	7,822	19,046	2.4
Washington	7,252	31,261	4.3
West Virginia	8,319	36,594	4.4
Wisconsin	9,004	26,846	3.0
Wyoming	8,985	38,967	4.3
United States	8,044	22,523	2.8

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 2005* (July 2006), Table 166; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *State Government Finances: 2003*, at <<http://www.census.gov/govs/www/state.htm>>, extracted May 2006; and U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2003* (May 2004), NCJ 203947, Table 2. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

Minority youth ages 10 to 17 are far more likely to be confined in juvenile or adult correctional facilities than are White, non-Hispanic youth.

Table 13: Disproportionate Minority Confinement, 2000

	Population ages 10-17			Juveniles in juvenile and adult corrections facilities			Ratio, minority percent confined to minority percent of population
	Total	Minority	Minority as percent of total	Total	Minority	Minority as percent of total	
Alabama	512,085	185,134	36.2%	1,967	1,104	56.1%	1.55
Alaska	89,355	35,252	39.5	394	253	64.2	1.63
Arizona	594,692	282,101	47.4	2,770	1,889	68.2	1.44
Arkansas	311,560	85,477	27.4	1,251	638	51.0	1.86
California	4,036,968	2,521,012	62.4	16,248	12,551	77.2	1.24
Colorado	494,862	152,607	30.8	2,172	1,220	56.2	1.82
Connecticut	374,200	108,221	28.9	1,346	954	70.9	2.45
Delaware	87,243	29,700	34.0	105	74	70.5	2.07
District of Columbia	47,071	41,819	88.8	85	84	98.8	1.11
Florida	1,668,799	731,512	43.8	7,775	4,580	58.9	1.34
Georgia	958,500	414,108	43.2	5,035	3,234	64.2	1.49
Hawaii	132,624	113,245	85.4	203	175	86.2	1.01
Idaho	170,631	24,746	14.5	669	133	19.9	1.37
Illinois	1,439,044	547,603	38.1	4,771	2,812	58.9	1.55
Indiana	707,908	117,592	16.6	3,466	1,347	38.9	2.34
Iowa	342,622	31,522	9.2	1,289	355	27.5	2.99
Kansas	328,711	66,607	20.3	1,270	572	45.0	2.22
Kentucky	449,659	56,270	12.5	1,717	557	32.4	2.59
Louisiana	565,627	251,802	44.5	3,028	2,306	76.2	1.71
Maine	147,490	7,240	4.9	393	33	8.4	1.71
Maryland	611,461	261,446	42.8	2,077	1,475	71.0	1.66
Massachusetts	671,935	157,965	23.5	2,445	1,112	45.5	1.94
Michigan	1,178,581	298,752	25.3	5,142	3,051	59.3	2.34
Minnesota	601,406	95,895	15.9	1,931	835	43.2	2.72
Mississippi	353,903	168,845	47.7	1,800	1,243	69.1	1.45
Missouri	658,896	130,062	19.7	2,806	1,150	41.0	2.08
Montana	113,230	16,955	15.0	434	150	34.6	2.31
Nebraska	209,749	32,495	15.5	1,454	606	41.7	2.69
Nevada	216,660	91,677	42.3	1,107	597	53.9	1.27
New Hampshire	145,340	8,367	5.8	444	53	11.9	2.05
New Jersey	919,244	362,564	39.4	2,299	1,768	76.9	1.95
New Mexico	236,775	154,842	65.4	865	675	78.0	1.19
New York	2,098,833	919,817	43.8	8,635	6,155	71.3	1.63
North Carolina	861,985	311,133	36.1	2,915	1,666	57.2	1.58
North Dakota	78,467	9,257	11.8	291	148	50.9	4.31
Ohio	1,317,063	253,443	19.2	4,560	2,129	46.7	2.43
Oklahoma	411,482	137,525	33.4	1,569	744	47.4	1.42
Oregon	389,047	79,409	20.4	1,704	633	37.1	1.82
Pennsylvania	1,366,472	276,433	20.2	6,659	3,857	57.9	2.87
Rhode Island	112,021	28,149	25.1	371	201	54.2	2.16
South Carolina	459,719	193,364	42.1	2,232	1,413	63.3	1.50
South Dakota	97,094	17,220	17.7	1,091	718	65.8	3.72
Tennessee	627,828	161,091	25.7	2,690	1,189	44.2	1.72
Texas	2,607,947	1,430,561	54.9	11,231	7,581	67.5	1.23
Utah	316,287	49,378	15.6	1,370	388	28.3	1.81
Vermont	72,433	3,532	4.9	138	18	13.0	2.65
Virginia	781,196	272,130	34.8	3,512	2,088	59.5	1.71
Washington	693,628	179,700	25.9	2,478	1,189	48.0	1.85
West Virginia	189,438	12,094	6.4	502	84	16.7	2.61
Wisconsin	646,932	113,362	17.5	2,455	1,344	54.7	3.13
Wyoming	63,806	8,638	13.5	448	129	28.8	2.13
United States	32,568,509	12,039,671	37.0	133,609	79,260	59.3	1.60

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, SF1. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

2,825 children and teens were killed by firearms in 2004. Black teens are 8 times as likely as White teens to be victims of firearm homicides; White teens are about twice as likely as Black teens to commit suicide with a firearm.

Table 14A: Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens, by Age, Manner, and Race/Hispanic Origin, 2004

	Under 1	Ages 1-4	Ages 5-9	Ages 10-14	Ages 15-19	Total under age 20
All races	7	51	61	239	2,467	2,825
Accident	1	14	13	35	80	143
Suicide	0	0	0	59	787	846
Homicide	6	36	45	139	1,578	1,804
Undetermined intent	0	1	3	6	22	32
White	4	17	33	149	1,365	1,568
Accident	1	6	6	31	57	101
Suicide	0	0	0	49	676	725
Homicide	3	11	26	66	617	723
Undetermined intent	0	0	1	3	15	19
Black	3	30	25	77	1,014	1,149
Accident	0	7	7	2	19	35
Suicide	0	0	0	8	74	82
Homicide	3	22	16	65	914	1,020
Undetermined intent	0	1	2	2	7	12
American Indian, Alaska Native	0	3	2	8	44	57
Accident	0	1	0	2	4	7
Suicide	0	0	0	1	23	24
Homicide	0	2	2	4	17	25
Undetermined intent	0	0	0	1	0	1
Asian, Pacific Islander	0	1	1	5	44	51
Accident	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suicide	0	0	0	1	14	15
Homicide	0	1	1	4	30	36
Undetermined intent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic*	3	7	13	33	518	574
Accident	0	0	2	3	7	12
Suicide	0	0	0	2	97	99
Homicide	3	7	11	27	412	460
Undetermined intent	0	0	0	1	2	3

*Persons of Hispanic origin can be of any race.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, WISQARS, at <<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars>>, accessed December 2006. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.

Each day, nearly 8 children and teens were killed by firearms in 2004.

Table 14B: Firearm Deaths of Children and Teens, by Manner, 2002-2004

	Total*			Homicide*			Suicide			Accident			Undetermined Intent		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Alabama	68	59	52	36	34	31	22	17	16	10	7	4	0	1	1
Alaska	18	26	22	7	10	7	10	13	15	1	2	0	0	1	0
Arizona	101	64	76	58	38	43	30	21	25	8	3	6	5	2	2
Arkansas	39	27	16	18	11	8	12	9	4	6	5	3	3	2	1
California	406	429	468	337	355	406	54	55	49	13	15	10	2	4	3
Colorado	53	32	48	20	20	23	30	10	24	1	1	1	2	1	0
Connecticut	15	12	11	10	10	9	4	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Delaware	10	10	9	4	6	7	3	3	1	3	0	1	0	1	0
District of Columbia	36	28	40	34	28	39	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Florida	120	109	111	81	81	76	33	23	30	5	3	5	1	2	0
Georgia	104	83	89	65	58	57	28	24	27	9	1	4	2	0	1
Hawaii	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Idaho	19	13	16	3	4	3	12	9	10	4	0	3	0	0	0
Illinois	146	158	143	127	131	123	15	20	17	3	7	3	1	0	0
Indiana	69	54	56	31	32	33	28	15	19	9	6	4	1	1	0
Iowa	17	12	16	6	1	2	9	11	13	2	0	1	0	0	0
Kansas	17	26	26	6	10	13	9	13	12	2	3	1	0	0	0
Kentucky	33	34	40	12	9	18	13	13	20	6	10	2	2	2	0
Louisiana	100	88	88	70	57	54	19	22	25	10	8	8	1	1	1
Maine	3	9	10	0	1	0	3	7	10	0	1	0	0	0	0
Maryland	92	80	71	77	67	61	14	13	9	1	0	1	0	0	0
Massachusetts	25	22	32	22	17	26	1	5	6	2	0	0	0	0	0
Michigan	100	79	104	60	49	57	36	25	34	4	2	8	0	3	5
Minnesota	29	40	39	9	17	15	18	19	24	1	3	0	1	1	0
Mississippi	58	38	43	28	23	23	21	8	15	7	7	4	2	0	1
Missouri	72	53	61	45	32	38	25	18	21	2	1	2	0	2	0
Montana	15	14	12	2	5	1	10	9	10	1	0	1	2	0	0
Nebraska	11	17	15	5	6	4	6	10	9	0	1	2	0	0	0
Nevada	25	27	27	19	13	18	6	12	7	0	1	2	0	1	0
New Hampshire	4	5	4	1	0	1	3	3	3	0	1	0	0	1	0
New Jersey	32	36	48	24	35	41	5	1	7	3	0	0	0	0	0
New Mexico	32	35	28	15	18	11	16	15	17	1	1	0	0	1	0
New York	91	131	89	74	94	69	14	32	16	3	5	4	0	0	0
North Carolina	71	100	70	47	59	40	21	33	22	1	7	5	2	1	3
North Dakota	5	7	10	0	4	1	4	2	6	1	1	1	0	0	2
Ohio	83	75	80	52	49	46	22	21	28	6	5	5	3	0	1
Oklahoma	38	34	29	13	12	13	22	21	13	3	1	3	0	0	0
Oregon	36	15	21	14	7	12	17	7	6	2	0	3	3	1	0
Pennsylvania	113	130	132	73	81	87	35	41	39	4	4	5	1	4	1
Rhode Island	10	6	4	8	4	2	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
South Carolina	40	50	44	26	36	19	9	10	18	4	3	6	1	1	1
South Dakota	7	9	10	0	0	1	4	8	7	2	1	2	1	0	0
Tennessee	79	58	73	47	32	30	22	19	29	8	6	10	2	1	4
Texas	220	244	236	140	146	144	72	85	79	7	10	10	1	3	3
Utah	17	25	15	3	3	4	14	18	11	0	4	0	0	0	0
Vermont	2	4	3	1	1	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
Virginia	72	83	76	50	58	50	17	22	21	4	2	4	1	1	1
Washington	40	48	49	17	17	18	21	25	27	1	3	4	1	3	0
West Virginia	20	14	12	7	7	4	10	6	8	3	1	0	0	0	0
Wisconsin	49	63	43	24	31	14	23	26	27	2	5	1	0	1	1
Wyoming	4	11	8	1	2	2	2	7	4	0	2	2	1	0	0
United States	2,867	2,827	2,825	1,830	1,822	1,804	828	810	846	167	151	143	42	44	32

*Total firearm deaths and homicide firearm deaths exclude firearm deaths by legal (police or corrections) intervention.

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, Table III: Deaths from 358 Selected Causes, 2002-2003; and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, WISQARS, at <<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars/>>, data accessed January 2007. Calculations by Children's Defense Fund.



"If we could reduce the abuse and neglect in this generation of kids, it would have huge payoffs for our society, not just in terms of mental and physical health but in the area of crime."

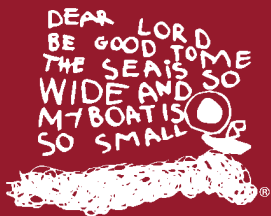
—Frank W. Putnam, M.D., Mayerson Center for
Safe and Healthy Children, Cincinnati

"Schools use detention centers as their discipline. I get calls every week, if not every day, from parents about their children being taken out of school in handcuffs by police."

— Margaret Burley, Ohio Coalition for the
Education of Children with Disabilities

"I sat at a desk and I had kids I couldn't even see...They weren't tall enough. I wondered, 'What in the world could you have done?'"

— Mark Reed, Juvenile Court
Administrator, Hamilton
County, Ohio



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