

TWO DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO JUVENILE JUSTICE

JOE'S STORY

HI, I'M JOE...

I'm 15, and I go to high school in Arkansas. That is, until I messed up. Somebody pulled out a bottle of alcohol at a friend's house, and I know I shouldn't have, but I joined in and was charged by a judge. Later, I violated my probation by skipping a day of school. I'm worried my dreams of graduating on time and going to college might be over. That all depends on how the juvenile justice system handles my case. Will they use incarceration or community-based alternatives?



COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES



The judge says what I did was wrong, but that I'm not a bad kid. The community-based program helped me, the judge, my parents, and trained professionals work together.



I got to keep up with my education during the program so that I was still on track to graduate high school.



I graduated on time and went to community college! I am about to start my first job. My life would have been so different without that program.



I am less likely to re-offend than kids who were incarcerated, and my community program was far cheaper than incarceration!

INCARCERATION



Some of my friends got lighter sentences for the same thing, but I'm going to be incarcerated. There's a disproportionate share of black kids like me incarcerated, even though all kids make the same kinds of mistakes.



Without good educational support, I fell behind and became one of the two thirds of juvenile offenders who drops out of high school.



I'll make 27% less money over my lifetime than my friends who earned only a high school diploma.



My time in the residential facility cost the state many times more than community based alternatives.