

Diversion programs essay



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One of the main reason Diversion programs were created is because many people believe juveniles deserve a second chance. These programs are generally created by state legislature and signed into law. Most states realize the many juveniles charged with low level offenses, and particularly first time offenders do not need to go through a regular court process. (Diversion Programs) This often saves the court system money and saves the juvenile from starting a criminal record.

During the court hearing if juveniles opt to enter the diversion program they are usually diverted into a counseling program, and after a successful completion the court record is erased. The program focuses on counseling, behavior modification, and treatment. Juveniles must agree to attend classes and vocational training, participate in therapy or counseling, perform community service work, make restitution to any victim, and pay fines. (Diversion Programs) Typical diversion programs can last anywhere from six months to one year.

If juveniles fail to complete the program or is discharged due to criminal behavior, the case returns to court for prosecution. Not every juvenile or crime qualifies for the diversion program. The crimes are limited to non-violent and low level such as possession of drugs, driving under the influence and petty theft. The juvenile must not have any prior convictions for the same crime they are charged with now and cannot have recently finished a diversion program for another crime. (Diversion Programs)

I believe the diversion program does work for the juveniles that are truly sorry for the crimes they committed. This program is designed to benefit

those that want to make a change and better their lives. I feel this program could be improved with a few changes. First I would not let someone back into the diversion program if they have been in it before. This program is designed help juveniles that may have made a wrong decision or first time offenders. People that continue to be repeat offenders even if they are just minor crimes are not learning from the program and therefore do not deserve to enroll again.

I would also change the expunged record for anyone that has completed the program and committed another crime. If they commit a crime after completing the program then I believe the previous record should no longer be hidden. Sometimes all it takes is for someone to lend a helping hand to these kids for them to realize they need to make a change in life. I feel programs like the diversion program is beneficial to juveniles and can help them make the right decisions in life.