

Criminal law: education for juveniles in prison system

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Education for Juveniles in Prison System There has been a considerable increase of young people who are held in juvenile correctional centers in the recent past, with statistics showing that by 2004, 100000 youth were being incarcerated on a yearly basis in the United States of America (Thielbar, 2011). However, educational facilities in the detention centers are often not enough regardless of the fact that education in these centers has been known to reduce crime and improve the inmates once they are out of detention. Education is known to fit in with the goals of juvenile courts and all the stakeholders need to support it so that the lives of detainees can be improved once they leave detention. Education in juvenile detention requires the internal and external stakeholders to have an understanding of how it will improve the children's status while in the centers and after they leave. Before the 19th century, there was no distinction between detention centers for adults and those for children who committed crime. All the laws applying to the two were similar and children were detained in the same prisons as adults, and they were even sentenced to death penalties for some crimes (Griffin, 2008). Child advocates started rallying for children to be treated differently and they suggested that there would be separate prisons for juveniles, which would act like reform centers where the children would receive proper discipline, education and supervision (Thielbar, 2011). This led to the development of the first juvenile court Cook County, Illinois, which was based on the idea that the state would help in rehabilitating juveniles instead of punishing them as is the cases with adults. Judges were also required not decide on the innocence or guilt of the juvenile offender but to guide the child towards good citizenship (Thielbar, 2011). When juveniles are

convicted with crime, they will still need the opportunity to learn and get educated on how to lead a better life. The fact that they are no longer punished but are rehabilitated bring about the issue of how they will fit into the society if their wrong behaviors are not punished, but the juvenile court system has collaborated with the internal and external stakeholders to ensure that juvenile education systems are effective. The internal stakeholders who are the parents and friends have influenced education for juveniles by ensuring that they support their young ones during their terms. Some parents note that their children are headed in the wrong direction and take them to the centers so that they can be rehabilitated so that they can become better adults. External stake holders who include the police, wardens and prison guards have also influenced education for juveniles in the prison system negatively, when the goals of juvenile courts have not been seriously addressed, whereby the children have been treated as adults. Despite there being laws to protect the rights of juveniles to receive proper education, many correctional institutions do not provide the required education and still others offer very little of the same. Teachers are poorly trained to handle the intricate needs of this group whose needs exceed those of other children. The states are not also been serious enough to impose penalties to institutions which do not comply and as such nothing much has been done to seriously address the situation. The stakeholders in education for juveniles are considered by first finding out the close relatives of the juveniles found committing crime. They will then be educated by the concerned organizations on the need to rehabilitate these children and parents should be supported and shown how to communicate in the effort to

work together to curb juvenile delinquency. The external stakeholders are considered by identifying the well trained ones who know how to deal with the juveniles in the effort of educating them and making them better people and turn away from crime. Motivation for individuals to buy into the idea for educating juveniles will be achieved by starting campaigns that inform people that education for juveniles has been proven to greatly assist in the reduction of crime and also to greatly help to prepare the juveniles to be better reintegrated into the society when they leave the correctional centers (Kupchik, 2007). Therefore, it is imperative for the internal and external stakeholders to greatly enhance their efforts in this regard if juveniles are to be assisted in becoming better members of society after going through the correctional centers or, are to avoid them altogether as internal stakeholders fulfill their mandate. The provision of support in the form of training to the parents of juvenile delinquents to enable them to better communicate and implant positive traits to their children and guide them in their associations. Teachers and social workers should be used to guide the parents in this endeavor, advocating also for the provision of better and more supportive environments and better supervision (Morris and Thompson, 2008). This will include an educational system that will teach them about the alternatives to negative behavior, equipping them for a better future. Proper investment in the training of teachers and provision of proper facilities will boost the morale of both teachers and the juveniles, unlike many cases where it has been done under poor conditions where the result has not been satisfying. Ascertaining these measures are taken, crime rates will decrease, and the juveniles will be assisted to become useful citizens. References Griffin, P.

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