



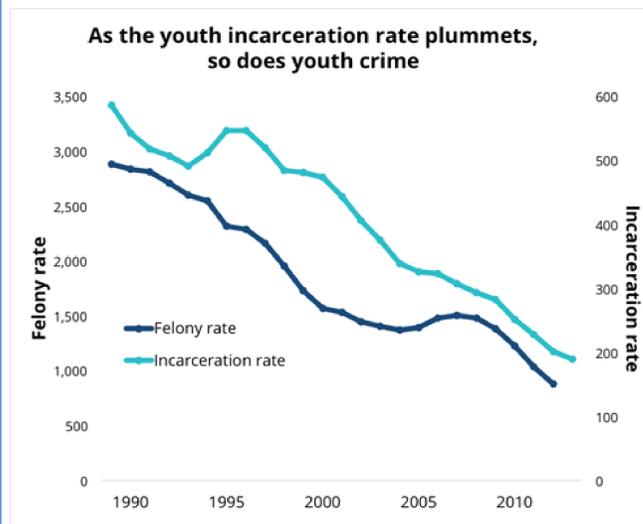
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## Introduction

Since the beginning of the criminal justice system in the United States Juvenile Justice has been a controversial subject in which researchers continually propose new theories and policies on how to handle this group. There are multiple options that an offending minor would have to consider when committing a crime. There are detention centers which are secure residential facilities for young people where delinquents await trial or serve a longer term sentence under supervision in order to be rehabilitated back into society. Another option is being judicially waived to be punished in adult prisons no matter the offender's age. Because there is a large variety of ways to handle juveniles, the purpose of this study is to identify the most beneficial program for these individuals using Social Learning Theory to analyze which method will integrate a young person back into society after a sentence most successfully, specifically preventing recidivism, and why the results are what they are.

## Objective

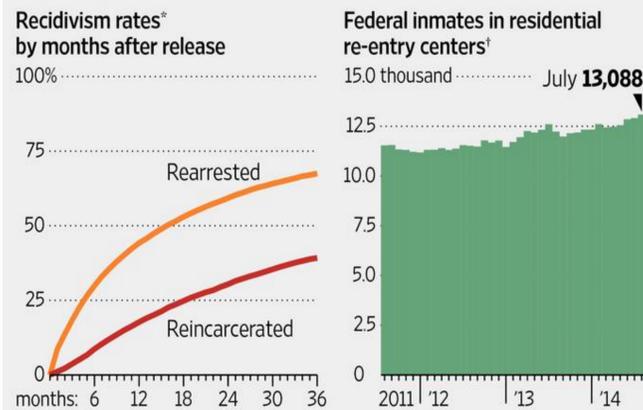
California is a diverse state with an advanced state prison system compared to others. The number of different counties allows for an array of different services provided for juveniles throughout the state as well as a diverse population within prisons. I plan to analyze the recidivism between juveniles in the state juvenile system compared to juveniles who served a sentence in a California adult state prison.



## Recidivism Rates

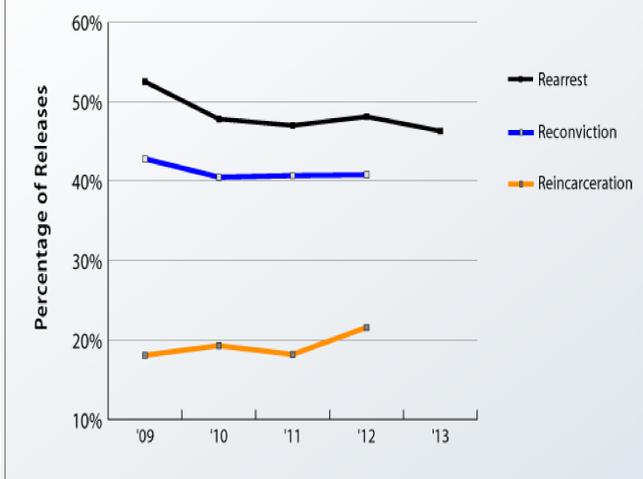
### Back to Prison

Data indicate more than half of prisoners are arrested for a new crime within 16 months of their release. Efforts to combat recidivism have led to growing demand for beds at re-entry centers.



\*Based on prisoners released in 1994 from prisons in 15 states.  
†Includes both residential and home confinement populations.  
Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics (recidivism); Federal Bureau of Prisons (residential re-entry centers)  
The Wall Street Journal

### Recidivism Within 12 Months of Release From a Juvenile Correctional Center



## Methods

Examining the success of a California Juvenile detention system compared to an adult prison system would not only examine the return rate of the offenders but ensue that the variables of the offenders are similar. These variables of the individual would be level of education, socio-economic status, mental disabilities, access to health care. The variables of the offense would be categorized by violent or non-violent crimes, sexual assault, and drug offenses. Within the systems, the programs offered during the juvenile's sentence may or may not have an effect on his or her recidivism.



## Results (Preliminary)

Up to this point the results are derived from secondary, peer-reviewed studies and articles. I can conclude that the experience within the adult prisons can be harsher than those in juvenile centers. The foundation of a juvenile center is to rehabilitate young offenders; the purpose of adult prison is punishing serious offenders.

The programs offered during the sentence are an important factor when analyzing recidivism because juveniles need to be equipped with more skills when leaving a system than entering in order to be a contributing member of society. In prison, juveniles are more likely to be subjects of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse than adults (Young & Gainsborough, 2000). When juveniles are placed with experienced adult prisoners, Social-Learning Theory would argue that juveniles will learn like the figures around them, which is to mature like criminals. This theory would also argue that if surrounded by peers, juveniles will be more inclined to learn from the mentors involved in the programs.

## Conclusion

Crimes committed by juveniles are a critical component to our justice system that is beginning to become impacted. There is a push to incarcerate juveniles because of the growing violent nature within youth today. If society wants to focus on punishing youthful offenders there are rehabilitative programs to be enacted before a minor decides to become an offender. This study will show what the two systems in place now are doing right, doing wrong and what the next innovations need to be.

## References

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