

Connecting Juvenile Offenders with Disabilities to Undergraduate Mentors and School Resource Officers

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INDIANA COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATORS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
INDIANAPOLIS, FEBRUARY 2016



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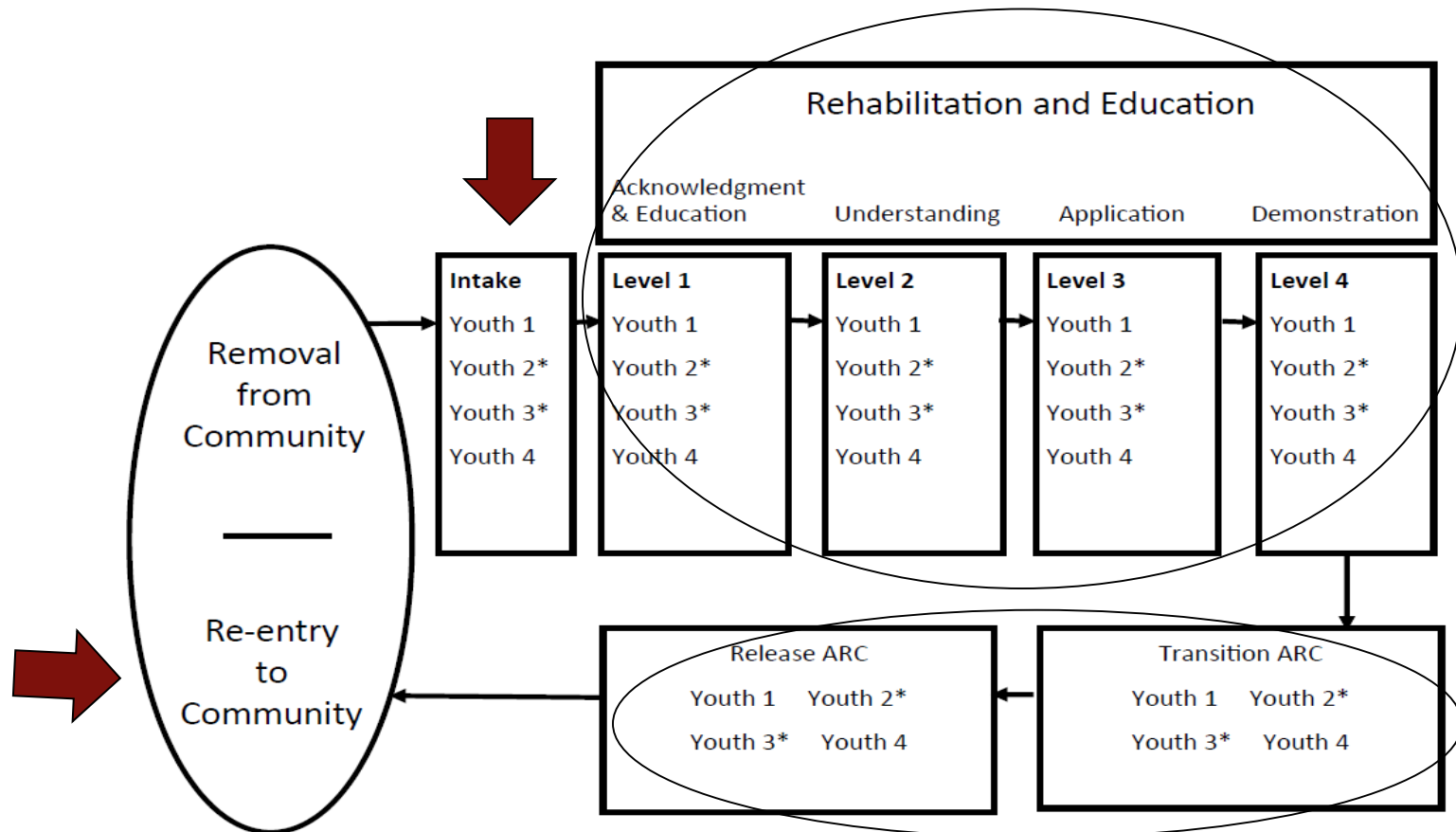


Presentation Goals

- Discuss Transition Best Practice Guidelines
- Provide National & State Level Statistics on Recidivism
- Describe Benefits and Barriers to the Use of Mentors and SROs
- Offer Suggestions for Harnessing Use of Mentors and SROs to Improve Adolescent Community Engagement



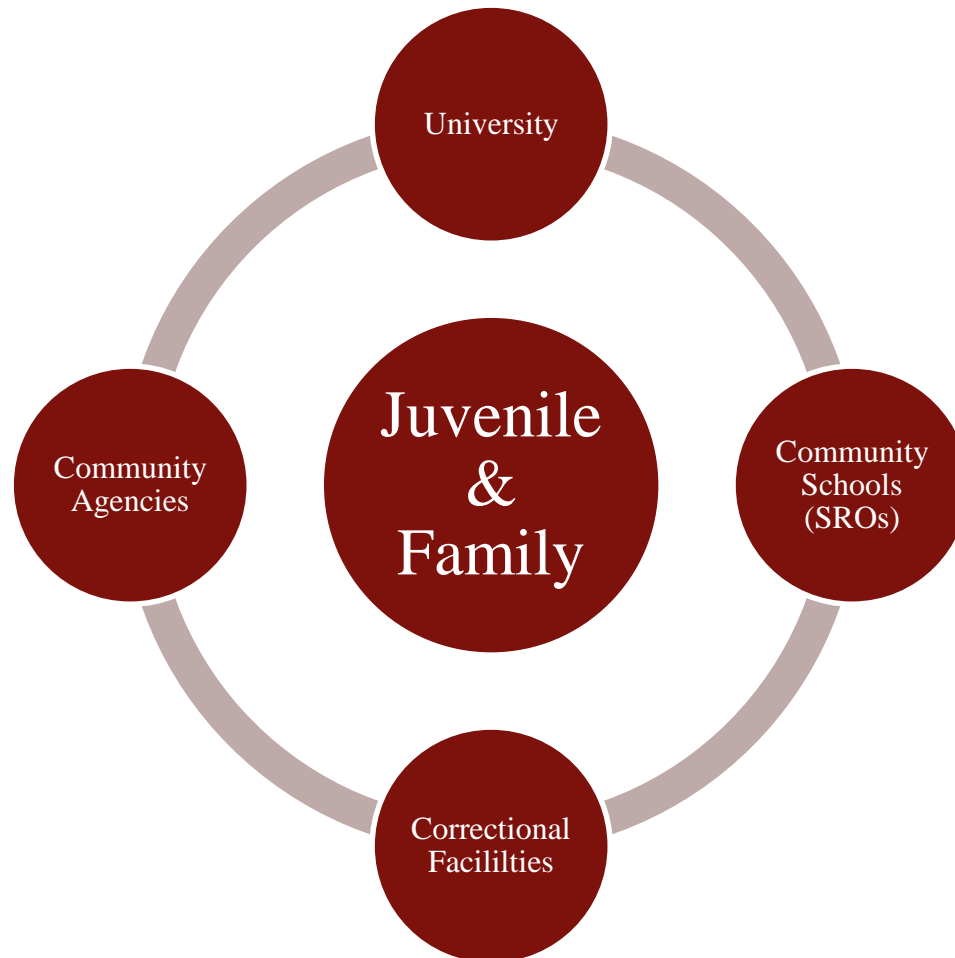
Best Practice Guideline 1: Exit Begins at Entry (Risler & O'Rourke, 2009)





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Best Practice Guideline 2: Multidisciplinary Collaboration (Ochoa, Levy, Spegel, & Ovares, 2015)





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Juvenile Recidivism Rates

National

- 54,148 juveniles in long-term residential confinement in the United States in 2013 compared to 61,000 in 2011 (US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 2015)
- ~55% of all juveniles released from long-term residential confinement recidivated within a year (Davis et al., 2014)

Indiana (Spear, 2015)

- 1,196 released
- 365 returned (160 as a juvenile, 205 as adults)
- 30.5% of juveniles in the state of Indiana returned to confinement in 2013



Characteristics of Juveniles in Confinement & Needs of Juveniles with Disabilities

Significant Academic Deficits

- Age equivalent scores on Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement show juvenile offenders are 4 years below grade level in reading & mathematics compared to same age peers (Foley, 2001)
- 40% to 70% of juveniles in confinement have been retained at least one grade level (Cavendish, 2014)

Disabilities

- Cavendish (2014) reported that about 20% to 90% of juveniles in confinement have a diagnosed disability
- Project SUPPORT (Unruh, Gau, & Waintrup, 2009)



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NCLB & IDEA on Transition & Re-entry **(Ochoa, Levy, Spegel, & Ovares, 2015)**

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act mandates that all correctional facilities:

- Provide educational services to prevent drop-outs & assist with transition back into the community
- Help coordinate tutoring, therapy, drug counseling, or other services for the student as needed
- Hire a transition coordinator to oversee appropriate transition practices for students

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) specifies the requirements correctional facilities must provide in the Individual Education Program (IEP). Requirements include:

- current levels of academic and functional performance
- measurable annual academic and functional goals
- special education and related services to be provided to the student
- secondary transition goals once the student is 16 (to be reviewed annually)



Role of Mentors

- Mentoring juveniles when they transition from custody to their community can reduce the risk of recidivism (Lowe & Nisbett, 2013; Matz, Martin, & DeMichele, 2014; Nellis & Wayman, 2009)
- Mentoring involves an individual who serves as a positive role model for a younger, less experienced, person (Nellis & Wayman, 2009)
- Mentors provide supervision, guidance, skills development, and opportunities to grow in cultural, educational, and career realms (Jones, Clark, & Quiros, 2012)
- The most important role of a mentor is to assist in goal setting and give youngsters hope for the future (Jones, Clark, & Quiros, 2012)



Steps of Mentoring

1. Build relationships between the mentor and mentee
2. Help the mentee and staff to develop and implement a plan for transition
3. Support the mentee within the community, using weekly activities to make connections to other supportive community members, acquire employment-related skills, and seek out employment opportunities/experiences



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Triad Role of School Resource Officers (NASRO, 2010)





SROs & School Discipline

- SROs should not be part of the regular school discipline process
 - What has initiated the call for the SRO
 - Officers should not be a human pass
- Physical contact by an SRO is often classified as a Law Enforcement “Use of Force”
 - When an officer uses force outside their authority, it becomes an unnecessary use of force
- SROs should communicate and train educators in safe ways to use discipline involving physical force



School Resource Officers

- SROs can be part of “safe schools” team to nurture positive learning environment (Finn et al., 2005)
- SROs can provide counsel to staff to avoid using arrest as first option to student misbehavior in school discipline cases
- SROs should be used as guest speakers in classes
- Student Assistance Team Participation
- PBIS Opportunities; positive rewards and discussing consequences
- Staff training – Lockdowns, Crisis planning, Incident Command
- Safety planning of any type



Steps to Connect Mentors, SROs, & Juveniles

Mentors

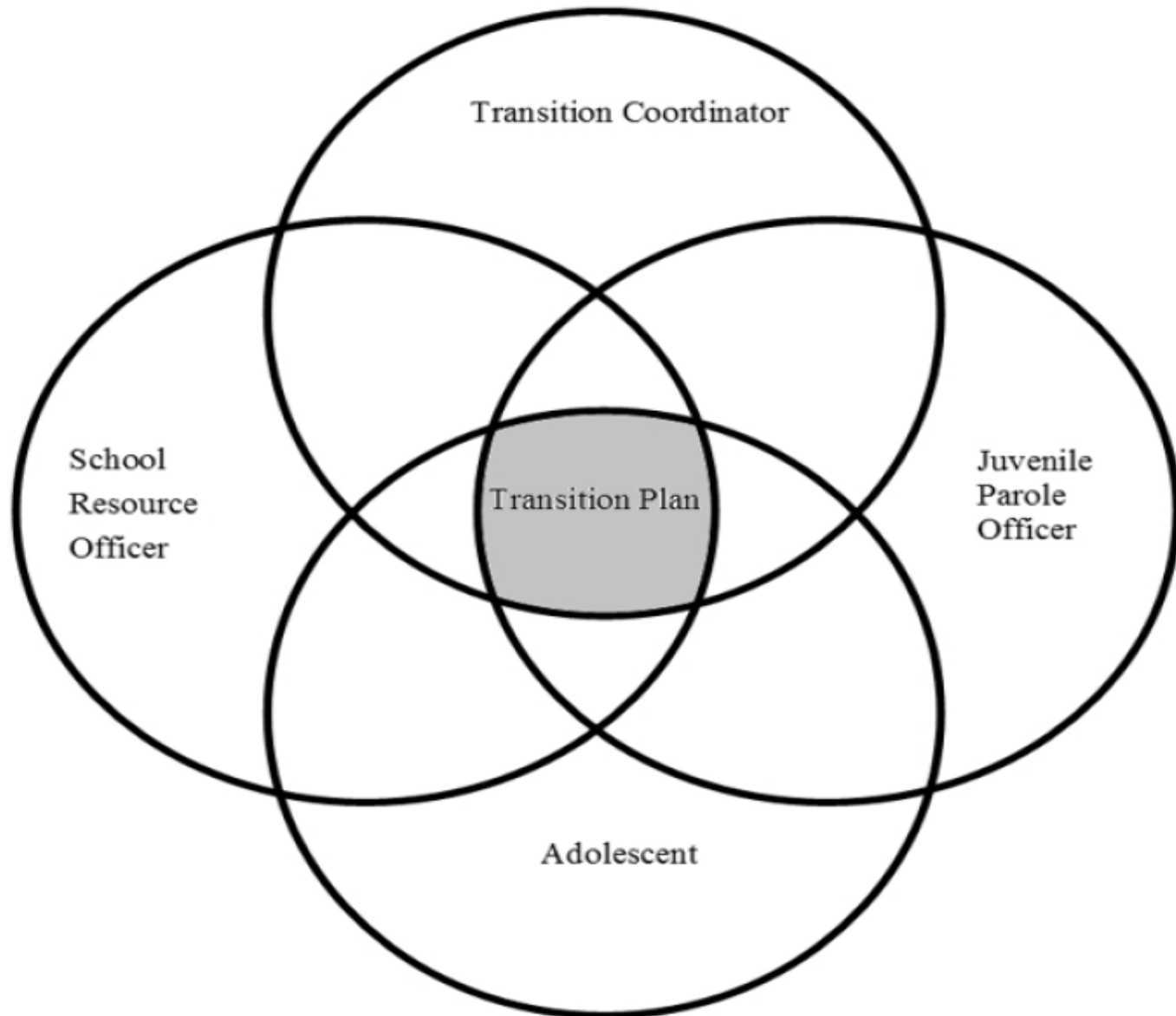
- Build relationship with mentee while in confinement
- Research educational/vocational opportunities available upon release
- Connect youth with supportive individuals in the community
- Practice for Transition ARC and Release ARC interviews

SROs

- Build relationships with youth in schools and act as a mentor to prevent behaviors that lead to confinement or incarceration
- Work with all members of school community to ensure supports are in place upon youth's release from confinement
- Meet with the student to communicate in non-controversial environment



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THANK YOU

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