A circular white frame is centered on a light blue background. The frame is surrounded by a detailed botanical illustration. The illustration includes various plants: a large red leaf on the left, a green leaf with a white flower on the top left, a fern frond at the top, a cluster of yellow flowers on the top right, a large green leaf on the right, a red leaf on the bottom right, a purple flower on the bottom right, a green leaf with a white flower on the bottom right, a fern frond at the bottom, and a cluster of small pink flowers on the left. The title text is centered within the white frame.

# Keeping Your Kid Out of the Juvenile Justice System

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# The Case of the Gardener & Her Flower



- Why isn't my flower blooming?
  - Adjust the environment
    - Focus on the soil & roots
    - Focus on increasing sunlight or shade
  - Adjust the resources
    - Add extra nutrients
    - Use a consistent watering routine

*The gardener never blames the flower*



# Agenda

- ✿ Introduction: youth vs. age
- ✿ Risk factors
- ✿ The problem with involvement
- ✿ Strategies prior to involvement
- ✿ Strategies after involvement
- ✿ Questions



“

In youth we learn;  
in age we understand.”

*Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach (1800s)*



# Risk Factors for Juvenile Justice Involvement



- **School problems**
- **Peer group issues**
- **Home instability**
- **Substance use**
- **Community**

# Why Is Juvenile Legal System Involvement Bad?



Education

Family &  
Friends

Employment





# Strategies prior to involvement



# Strategies prior to involvement



## Strategy

### 1 Preparing

Emergencies aren't emergencies if we have planned for them

## Strategy

### 2 Be the Gardener

What barriers are holding your child back & challenge those

## Strategy

### 3 Skill Building

Everyone wants to be good at something

## Strategy

### 4 Village Building

Supporting the youth means assistance from others

## Strategy

### 5 The Future

How does your child envision the future for themselves?





## Strategy 1: Preparation

### **Who are you going to call?**

- ✿ **When there is a mental health emergency?**
- ✿ **When you are overwhelmed/need a break?**
- ✿ **When you need advice?**
- ✿ **When you need a new provider/service?**





# Strategy 2: Be a Gardener & seek justice

Equality



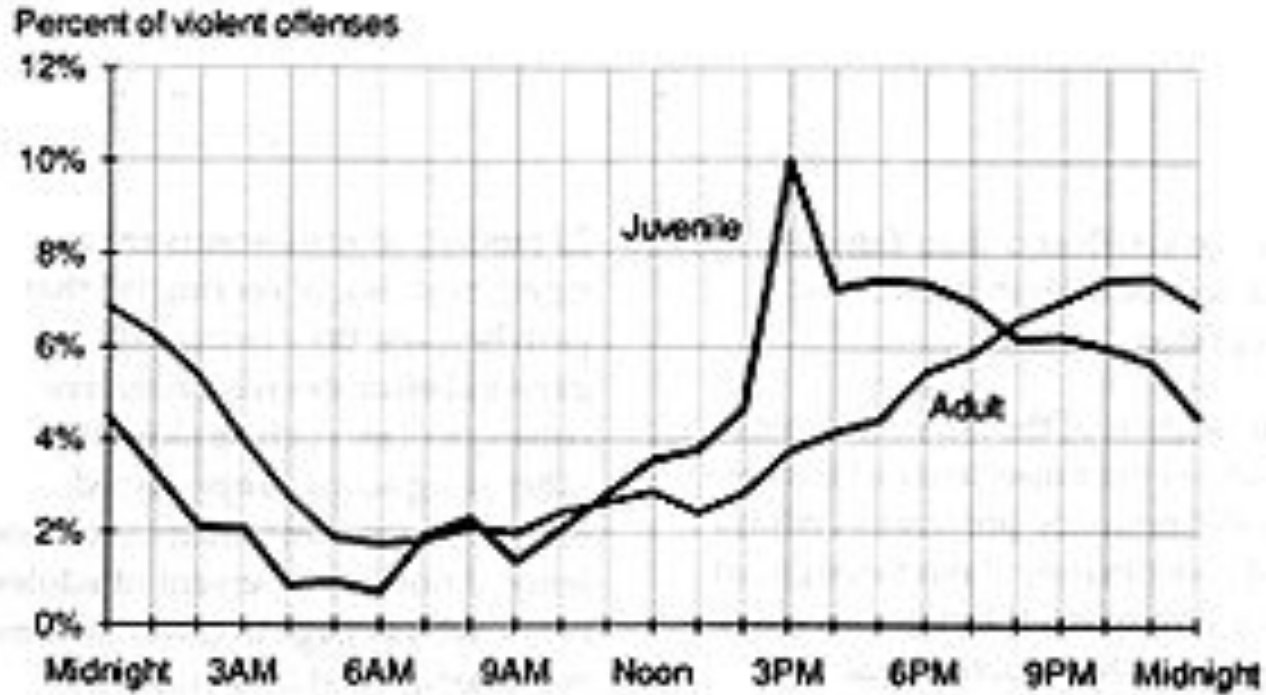
Equity



Justice



### When do juvenile and adult offenders commit violent crimes?



# Strategy 3: Skill Building



# Strategy 4: Village Building

❁ Other youth

❁ Therapeutic  
mentors

❁ Adult role models



“How do you envision  
your future?”



Strategy 5: The Future





# Strategies after involvement





# Strategies after involvement



Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy	Strategy
<b>1</b> Advocate for Diversion	<b>2</b> Be Strengths-Focused	<b>3</b> Build a Community	<b>4</b> Be There	<b>5</b> The Future
Advocate for opportunities for healing and accountability over formal processing	Building on strengths is better than pointing out weaknesses	Multidisciplinary support gets the best outcomes, so ask for it	A large percentage of success is just showing up.	How does your child envision the future for themselves?




# Strategy 1: Diversion

## *Pre-Arraignment Diversion Opportunities*


- ✿ **Clerk magistrate diversion**
- ✿ **Judicial diversion**
- ✿ **ADA-driven diversion**
- ✿ **Informal resolutions (ie: **GC**, restitution, fees)**



# Strategy 2: Be Strengths- Focused



PROBLEM FOCUSED	SOLUTION FOCUSED
bossy	natural leader, visionary
defiant	holds strong beliefs, bold, determined
demanding	knows what they want, outspoken
dramatic	expressive, passionate
fearful	cautious, careful
fussy	has strong preferences
hyperactive	energetic, enthusiastic, on the go
impulsive	spontaneous, instinctive
oppositional	advocates for a different perspective
rebellious	is finding their way
stubborn	persistent, determined, steadfast
talkative	enjoys communicating
tattletale	seeks justice, respects rules
unfocused	multitasks, pays attention to many things
wants attention	advocates for needs, seeks connection



	<b>N</b>
Case dismissed	5 (8%)
Diverted to drug court	5 (8%)
Probation	33 (54%)
Jail sentence < = 30 days	4 (7%)
Jail sentence 31 days–364 days	8 (13%)
Jail sentence 1–2 years	4 (7%)
Jail sentence 3–5 years	1 (2%)
Other <sup>b</sup>	34 (56%)
Unknown	13 (21%)
<hr/>	
<b>Top offense sentenced</b>	
Violent offense	21 (35%)
Sex offense	0 (0%)
Property offense	5 (8%)
Drug offense	16 (27%)
Weapons offense	5 (8%)
Serious driving offense	7 (11%)
Probation or parole violation	2 (3%)
Unknown	2 (3%)
Other	3 (5%)

**Notes:** <sup>a</sup>Excludes sex offenses below; examples are murder, robbery, and assault.  
<sup>b</sup>Examples are rape, sexual assault, sexual conduct with a minor, indecent exposure.  
<sup>c</sup>Examples are burglary, arson, larceny, motor vehicle theft.  
<sup>d</sup>Examples are possession, use, sale or furnishing of a drug or intoxicating substance or drug paraphernalia prohibited by law.  
<sup>e</sup>Examples are possession, carrying, use, sale, or manufacture of weapons prohibited by law.  
<sup>f</sup>Excludes motor vehicle theft; examples are driving under the influence of alcohol, driving with license revoked, driving resulting in an accident/injury, and reckless driving.  
<sup>g</sup>Most common other case outcomes include restitution and court fees.



# Strategy 3: Build a Community



# Strategy 4: Be There

✿ Show up

✿ Be supportive

✿ They can count on  
you





“How do you envision  
your future?”



Strategy 5: The Future



# How we get there

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## Prevention

- With your kids, maximize ways to positively use their free time
- Cultivate your child's network
- Stay connected to them

## Preparation

- Brainstorm in advance who to call, and when
- Keep those names and numbers in several places you will look in an emergency
- Call the right person for the job

## Follow Through

- Show up, every day and in every way
- Words matter, so be strengths-focused
- Envision a future



“ Each of us is more than the worst thing we’ve ever done. ”

*Bryan Stevenson, Just Mercy*



# Questions?

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