



## The Juvenile Justice System

The Juvenile Justice System interfaces with youth when they violate the laws of local municipalities, states, or the federal government. Youth enter the system for a variety of behavioral reasons, which may include some type of abuse or social pressure. Therefore, to greatly reduce the numbers of youth impacted by this system, juvenile justice officials should do the following:

- **Collaborate** with parent and families, communities, and schools in preventing youth from entering/re-entering the Juvenile Justice System. This collaboration should include working with health, human services organizations, churches, businesses, law enforcement and educational institutions.
- **Work** with above-mentioned organizations to ensure early intervention, in-home intervention, and alternatives to detention/incarceration programs, such as community service, drug and alcohol treatment, including Afro-centric mental health treatment options.
- **Provide** group homes and foster care families with support services (education, health, mental health, recreation, spiritual, socialization activities) as alternatives to detention. This process must include an assertive and aggressive approach which guarantees the accountability of the provision of said services for the needs of the children.
- **Provide** effective training and supervision to ensure that all staff, at all levels, will utilize demonstrated best practices throughout all juvenile justice systems and programs.
- **Work** with established neighborhood councils and other community groups in determining alternatives to detention/incarceration.
- **Provide** and/or expand quality education, recreation, health and mental health treatment and spiritual care to those in detention facilities. Juvenile justice system agencies and programs could also collaborate with other entities providing similar services.

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