



Futures in the Balance

Lifelong Consequences of
Juvenile Court Involvement



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Hello!

DefendYouthRights.org
@GaultCenter





AASA & Gault Center Partnership

- Myths & Facts About the Impacts of Juvenile Court
- Reforms that Keep Youth in School
- Disrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline
- Examples of how Juvenile Court Hurts Youth & Communities
- Futures in the Balance one-minute explainer video



Juvenile Court Cases

2022 Juvenile Court Statistics

National Center for Juvenile Justice

www.ncjj.org

500,000+

In 2022, juvenile courts across the country handled an estimated 549,500 delinquency cases.

More than 60%

Of juvenile court cases are for non-person offenses (i.e. property, drug, and public order)

37%

Of juvenile court cases involve Black youth, who comprise just 14% of the U.S. population under 18

School-to-Prison Pipeline



229,470

Referrals to law enforcement

54,321

School-related arrests

29.5%

Of school-related arrests were of students with disabilities, who comprise 15.9% of overall enrollment

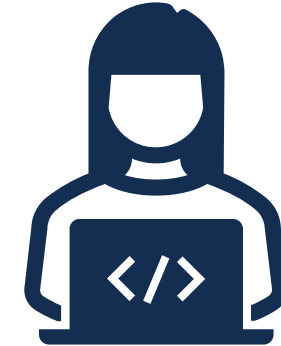
31.6%

Of school-related arrests were of Black students, who comprise 15.1% of overall enrollment

Collateral Consequences of Juvenile Court Involvement



School & Higher Ed



Employment



Housing



Military Service



Credit Report



Immigration



Harms of Detention & Incarceration

Detention & commitment

- Youth are detained in about 1 in 4 juvenile court cases
- Youth are committed to out-of-home placement in 25-30% of juvenile court cases

Victimization

- 56% of youth reported experiencing violent victimization while incarcerated (i.e. robbery, physical assault, or sexual assault)
- 9.5% experience sexual assault



Health & mental health

- More likely to develop depression
- Worse general health outcomes
- More likely to have functional limitations, depressive symptoms, and suicidal thoughts into adulthood

Increased system involvement

- Youth detained pretrial: 8.5% more likely to be found guilty, 2 times more likely to reoffend
- Incarcerated youth more likely to be arrested as adults

Impacts on Education

While detained

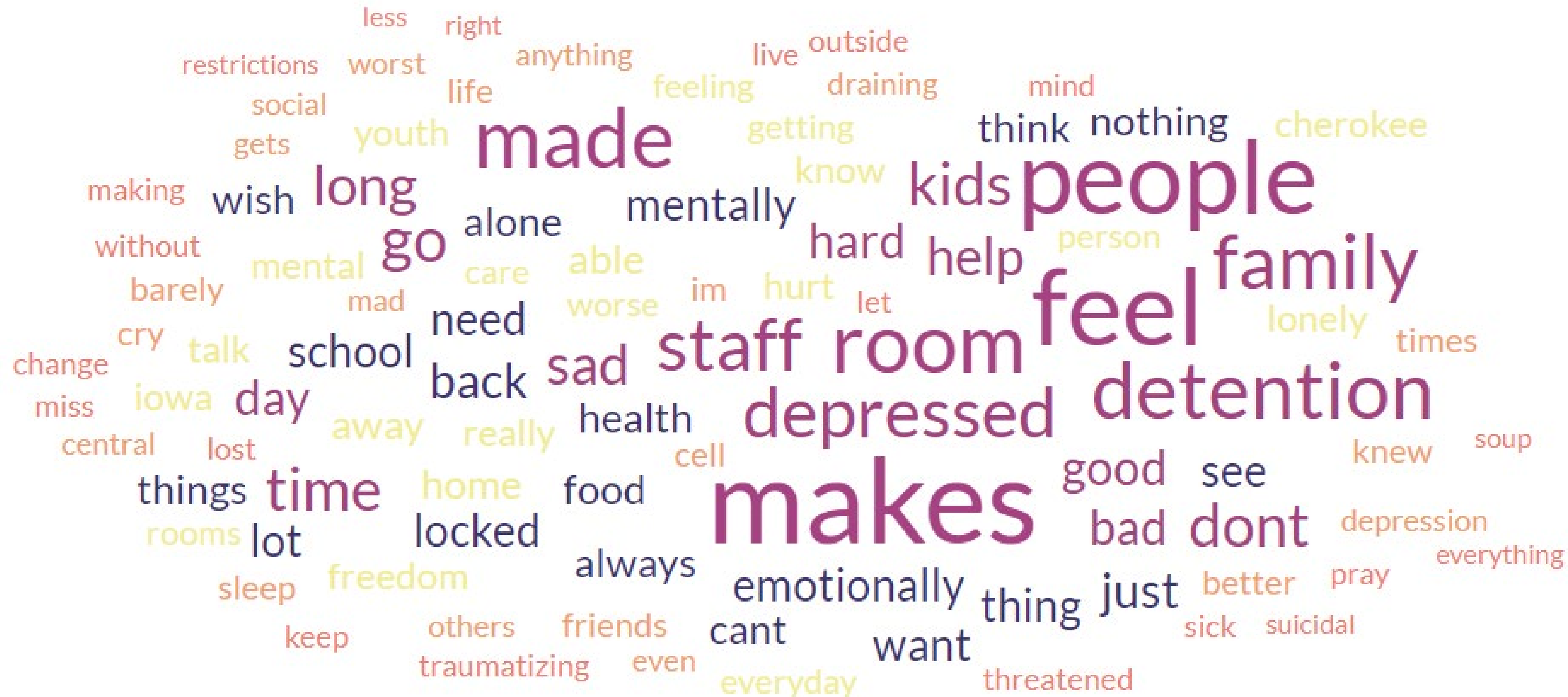
- Receive fewer hours of education instruction
- Have less access to special education services

60% of detained youth do not return to school or drop out within five months



One study in Chicago, IL found:

- 73% of youth who were arrested dropped out of high school
- Every youth who was arrested and spent time in detention eventually dropped out of high school





Disparate Impacts

Black youth

- 2.3x more likely to be arrested
- 60% more likely to be detained
- 4.7x more likely to be committed

Native youth

- 1.7x more likely to be arrested
- 4.7x more likely to be detained
- 3.7x more likely to be committed

Hispanic youth

- In 2022, detained at the highest rate of any racial/ethnic group
- 16% more likely to be committed

LGBTQ youth

- Make up 5-7% of the youth population but account for 13-15% of youth in the juvenile legal system

Youth with disabilities

- 65-70% of youth involved in the juvenile legal system have a disability
- Almost 3x more likely to be arrested than non-disabled youth
- Estimated to make up 30-60% of incarcerated youth

Poverty

- Nearly 60% on public assistance or from families with annual income <\$20k
- Another 20% from families with incomes <\$30k

What is the purpose of the juvenile legal system?

- Rehabilitation
- Focus on youth as individuals
- Address underlying causes of behavior
- Connect young people to services & treatment
- Keep children out of the adult criminal system
- Accountability
- Public safety



What are the **outcomes** of the juvenile legal system?

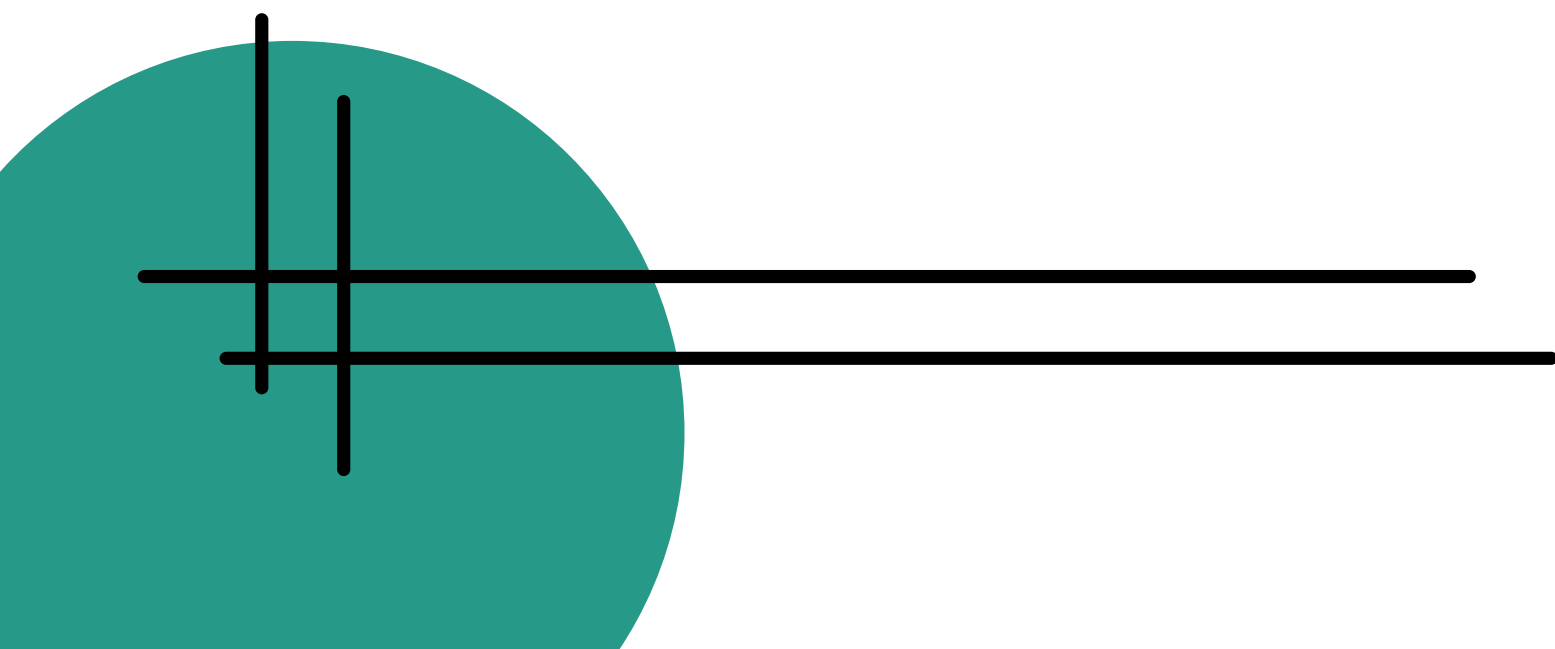
- Removal from family, community, school
- Increased likelihood of school drop -out
- Victimization & trauma
- Increased depressive symptoms
- Barriers to education, housing, employment
- Increased likelihood of future arrest
- Racialized harm
- Mistreatment based on sexual orientation, gender identity & expression
- Exacerbation & creation of disabilities
- Surveillance based on poverty
- Criminalization of normative adolescent behavior
- Disruption of positive youth development

What is the purpose of the juvenile legal system?

“The best way to deduce the system’s purpose is to watch for a while to see how the system behaves.”

“Purposes are deduced from behavior, not from rhetoric or stated goals.”

DONELLA MEADOWS, THINKING IN SYSTEMS: A PRIMER (2008)





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There is “no point in claiming that the purpose of a system is to do what it constantly fails to do.”

Stafford Beer

Purpose

Of a

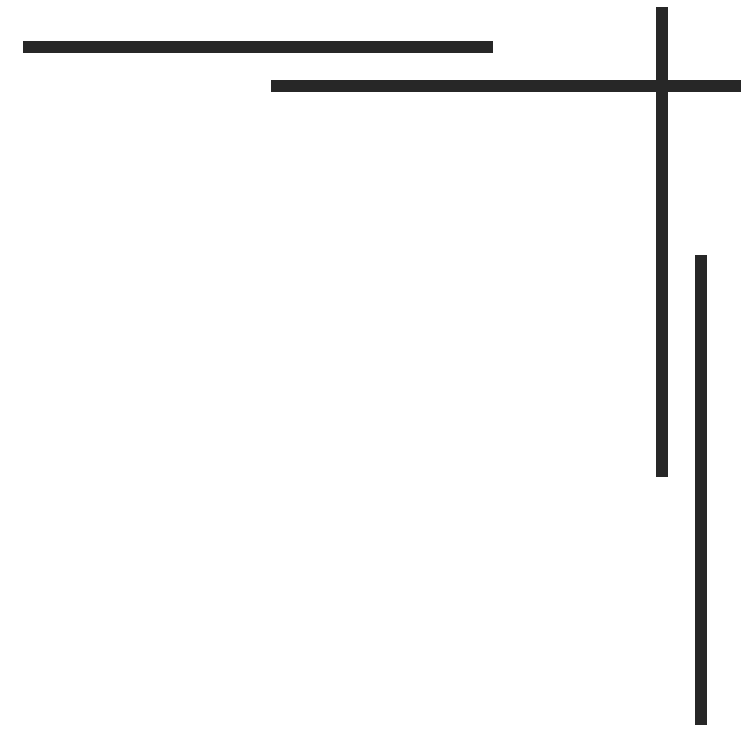
System

Is

What

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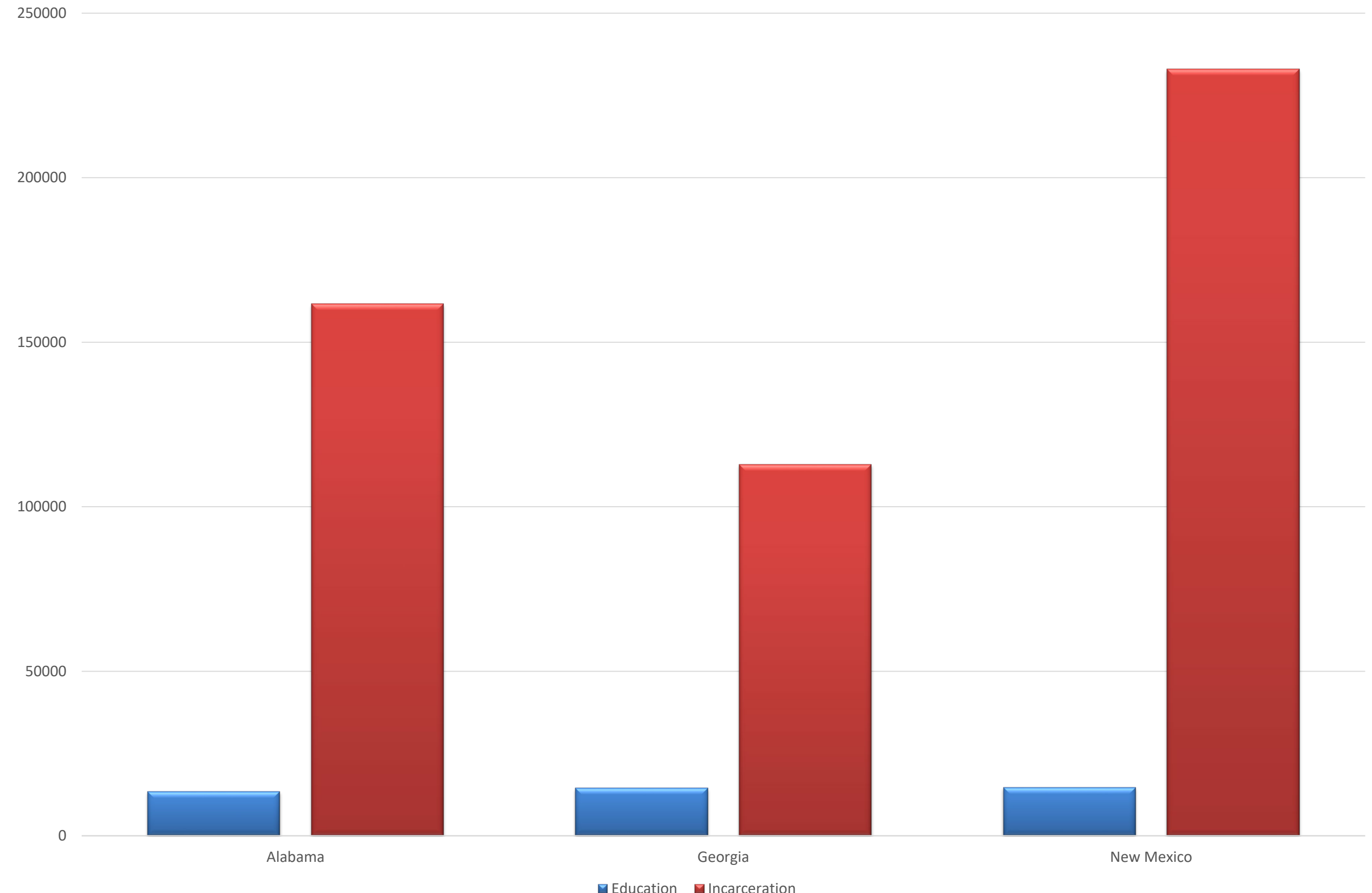
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What else does the juvenile legal system do?

Drains
resources from
services that
support
positive youth
development





Thank You

