

New York CAN Youth



Fact Sheet

Youth who develop in a positive direction, cognitively, emotionally and socially, are more likely to achieve their full potential as adults. They will become the next generation of leaders, hard workers, good parents and active citizens. Children and youth who fail along one or more of these dimensions are likely to fall short of reaching their full potential.

New York provides important funding for youth development opportunities, delinquency prevention services and after school programs. New York also runs a number of programs that focus on discrete problems of troubled youth: a foster care system for kids with family problems, a juvenile justice system for kids who break the law, an educational system that strives to prepare kids for the future. New York's systems are fragmented; often children and youth have difficulty accessing the services and supports they need.

Key Facts*

- 3 out of 10 children and youth or over 3,000 children entering runaway and homeless youth programs report having already been served in another setting such as foster care, mental health, or juvenile justice; 61% of them received such services within 30 days of admission to a runaway or homeless program.
- 31,591 youth arrests were made in 2001 (the last year for which New York City data were available), a 33% decline from 1995. There was an 8% decline in the rest of state from 2001-2004.
- 4,300 juveniles resided in juvenile detention and correctional facilities in 2003. 63% were convicted of non-violent, low-level crimes. 60% are identified as needing substance abuse treatment and 46% need mental health services.
- The cost for a 12 month placement in an Office of Children and Family Services facility is \$150,000. (New York City Independent Budget Office) 75% are re-arrested within three years of release.
- 1 out of 11 youth (9%), or 87,000 between the ages of 16 and 19 were considered "disconnected youth," defined as not employed and not enrolled in school.

What's Needed:

Children and youth need opportunities to explore a variety of interests, have positive relationships with adults, and find meaningful ways to participate in their communities. While New York currently invests in programs which provide such opportunities, more is needed to support local community efforts. New York also needs alternatives to out-of-home placements for troubled youth including community-based, coordinated services that offer substance abuse treatment, mental health services, and family therapy. Youth in placement need services across systems to achieve more successful outcomes and avoid disconnectedness.

*For source information, refer to *Growing Up In New York, Charting the Next Generation of Workers, Citizens, and Leaders*. SCAA 2006.

For more information go to www.newyorkcan.org or contact the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy at 518-463-1896.