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New Prosecutorial Perspectives:
A Framework for Effective Juvenile Justice

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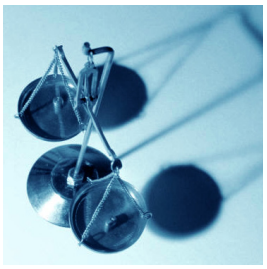

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by **Derek M. Cohen**, Deputy Director, CEJ, and
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Executive Summary

Prosecutors arguably are the most pivotal actors in the criminal justice system. The most potent decision point in the criminal justice process—whether or not to bring formal charges against an individual—belongs solely to them.

This power is even more potent in regards to juveniles involved in the criminal justice system. Youth are not only subject to sovereign law; they must obey rules set forth by schools and parents. They are also subject to criminal laws based solely on their age.

To this end, the Center for Effective Justice's researchers conducted interviews with prosecutors in the juvenile justice community who have advocated for or advanced innovative practices in juvenile prosecution. Current and former district and state attorneys, as well as subordinate juvenile chiefs, from both large and small counties across the country were presented with open-ended, semi-structured questions addressing formal and informal practices.

Key Points

- Prosecutors have adopted a primarily rehabilitation-oriented approach to juvenile justice, while still seeing the need for punishment and incapacitation.
- Novel initiatives, such as pretrial diversion, collaboration with other institutions, and the adoption of risk assessment instruments, have made them more effective in ensuring public safety.
- Prosecutors further illustrate the contribution that mental illness and substance abuse issues play in the juvenile justice system.

These discussions covered a wide range of topics from their thoughts on abstract concepts like culpability to process-specific questions about filing decisions. As the interviews progressed, a common theme emerged: a near-universal focus on rehabilitation. Several discussed the potential large long-term savings that accompany new programs, but only as a secondary benefit to practices that produced better results. They collectively emphasized that juveniles are, in a vast majority of cases that they handle, more amenable to rehabilitation than adults.

This report documents both common themes and interesting responses provided by some of the United States' most innovative juvenile justice system personnel. While not exhaustive of all novel and promising strategies for processing juvenile offenders, this document highlights evidence-supported practices that are being integrated across the country in counties of all sizes.

For professional reasons, a few respondents agreed to participate upon the condition of anonymity. Others favored general attribution, though requested that they not be attributed with a specific response.

The Prosecutorial Process

In its most mechanical form, the prosecutorial process in juvenile justice is not entirely different from its adult counterpart. The accused are brought before a court, given the opportunity to respond to charges and, if necessary, are permitted to present their case. At the end of proceeding, should evidence permit, they are adjudicated and forwarded accordingly.

The Juvenile Offender

Prosecutors involved in the survey shared a common perspective on juveniles: young people are different from adults. Several of them highlighted recent advances in brain development that shed light onto juvenile decision making. "The

'adolescent development approach' plays a much more prominent role in juvenile justice than when I first began," stated Susan Broderick, director of the National Juvenile Justice Prosecution Center at Georgetown's McCourt School of Public Policy and former Manhattan assistant district attorney. "I think it's driving a lot more of the conversation now than before. In reality, the science really confirms what most of us have known for a long time. Adolescents are different than adults. And while recent studies have done a good job explaining adolescent behavior, they are sometimes being exaggerated or misused in an effort to excuse troubled behavior. Police officer, prosecutors, judges and probation officers need to know what the science actually says—and perhaps more importantly—what it doesn't. Consequences still matter, especially in cases where kids are coming from unhealthy or dysfunctional environments where they had no rules or sense of right and wrong. Holding young people accountable is actually a way to increase their self-control and help them prepare for a world in which behavior matters."

Others discussed this idea, highlighting the unique social context that teenagers face. "The basis for the entire system is 'justice.' Children going through puberty undergo metamorphoses—their brain is being rewired," said former Harris County (Houston), Texas, judge and district attorney Patricia Lykos. "Combined with social dynamics in our 'toxic culture,' if you will, and it's easy to see how these kids end up in the justice system."

One prosecutor who wished to remain anonymous highlighted that while the brain development literature is important, policymakers should not let it destroy the idea of criminal culpability. "The [brain] science has really helped us understand how these kids think, but I feel we might be putting a little too much stock in it," he said. "At the end of the day, there still is right and wrong."

Low-level and Status Offenders

The prosecutors uniformly were concerned that status offenders could find themselves involved in the criminal justice system. "These kids don't belong in the system at all," said Judge Benjamin Roe, district judge and former state attorney of Ogle County, Illinois, of status offenders—those whose actions would not be criminal if committed by an adult. "We need to have resources available to help these kids elsewhere; many are mentally ill, and/or were abused. Some even want to be in school, but there is some reason they're not there, such as bullying."

The jailing of misdemeanants and status offenders has been trending downward in recent years. While the jailing of status offenders has fallen off precipitously since the authorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, a 1980 amendment allowed for the jailing of status offenders pursuant to the violation of a valid court order.* In practice, the court would order that a truant or runaway must attend school or return home, and failing to do so would be considered tantamount to contempt. In 2011, an estimated 6,215 juveniles were detained for status offenses nationwide.[1] Given the exceedingly high costs-per-day that accompany youth placed in the juvenile justice system, existing bed space should be reserved only for those who cannot be dealt with in an alternative manner determined to be more effective in reducing the child's likelihood to recidivate.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the court's handling of truancy cases. While policy and practice vary by both state and locality, it is possible for children to be incarcerated for skipping school. "Milwaukee County has an overwhelming truancy problem; some 10,000 every day," Patrick Kenney, former Milwaukee County chief juvenile prosecutor emphasized. "Many of these kids will become chronically truant over the course of the year. Truancy will never be solved by the criminal justice system."

Other prosecutors have concurred with Kenney's point. According to a vast majority of education literature, the proximate causes of truancy (and the methods by which to address it) all lay outside the purview of the criminal justice.[2] A myriad of successful delinquency prevention programs exist that do not overburden the criminal justice system or reduce juveniles' prospects for future success.

For low-level juvenile offenders, many responding prosecutors highlighted specific diversion programs successfully utilized in their jurisdiction; several are covered later in this report. "We deal with a lot of these children in different types of specialty courts—whichever one is most appropriate. Our criminal Class Cs [low-level misdemeanors] are mostly diverted, and we are big believers in these programs," said Jill Mata, former chief juvenile prosecutor for Bexar County (San Antonio), Texas, and currently general counsel of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department.

* While the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (and subsequent reauthorizations) lacked the statutory authority to prevent the incarceration of youth at the state level, compliance to federally-established standards was enforced by withholding funds for juvenile justice-oriented programs.

Views on Juvenile Court & Training for New Juvenile Prosecutors

Another common theme identified by respondents was the recent professionalization of the juvenile court and its actors. "Before Pat took over, the children's court was seen as an inferior posting. He raised the status of the caseload to the status of its peers," said one peer of Patrick Kenney. This sentiment was echoed by other judges and prosecutors, identifying the increases in perceived legitimacy of juvenile justice under them or their predecessors.

"It doesn't work well to stick the least-experienced person there," added Judge Roe. "They have to work well with other agencies; they must have people skills. They also have to possess a certain philosophy."

Some felt that not enough was being done in order to professionalize the juvenile docket and to ensure important advances were being shared with the judges and prosecutors. "There really is not much formalized training going on at all, at least from a state and national level," said Broderick. "We've been trying to get the word out that this is a very serious position." Judge Roe added, "Training is a very important component. Juvenile prosecutors need as much training as those who prosecute capital cases. All those in the courts need to be educated on childhood trauma, brain development, and how they interact."

Structurally, not all jurisdictions can keep individuals in place for extended periods. For example, Wisconsin judges are required to rotate benches every four years as appointed by the chief judge of the district, thereby preventing specialization in one branch of law. However, according to Kenney, "The chief judge has done a wonderful job in appointing people sensitive to the needs of each specific court. We also require that new public and private attorneys attend a multidisciplinary training at the Children's Court Center."

Efficiency

One element of the juvenile justice process uniformly criticized by responding prosecutors was the delay faced in getting a case fully processed. One prosecutor commented, "Sometimes the process overwhelms common sense. The worst thing you can do is delay the assessments and processing. The more delay experienced, the less legitimacy the system has with victim and offenders."

Luckily, there are mechanisms through which to address family, substance abuse, and mental health problems independent of traditional case handling. "Early intervention programs 'front-load' the process whereas the other systems are more like an assembly line," he continued, referencing rote juvenile justice procedure.

This point is well supported by the existing literature. A 2009 study found the median time to disposition was almost 50 days in a large county, 40 days in mid-sized counties, and 34 days in small counties.[3] These delays in formal processing not only mitigate any deterrent value the eventual punishment may have, they also fail to deliver prompt treatment to a child who is in crisis.

Another prosecutor added, "I'd like to see research on the importance of the speed of handling. Sometimes kids don't experience the consequences of their conduct for months! This will not influence anyone, especially a child in crisis."

Collaboration and Challenges

While the prosecutor has a great deal of discretion in the handling of juvenile cases, truly effective outcomes cannot be achieved without collaborating with institutions external to the justice system. Effective cross-boundary programming can allow juvenile offenders to remain integrated in their community, school, and work while avoiding costly incarceration in many instances.

Juvenile Justice Councils

A handful of prosecutors in this survey mentioned that while they see the inherent value in collaboration, other agencies often have little interest in the process. Noted one respondent, "We tried talking with the schools, the [parent-teacher association] groups, the community groups. Most are just not interested in getting involved with offenders. They see it as nothing to be gained." This is representative of much of the "silo-ing," or compartmentalizing of job function and mission, that many prosecutors found hampering their work.

One jurisdiction, Ogle County, Illinois, had a unique approach to addressing the information-sharing problem—one that exists in more informal contexts around the country. Established by statute, the Juvenile Justice Council is made up of members of the state attorney's office, the local school board, various law enforcement entities, and other concerned stakeholders. Meeting semiannually, the council discusses issues in the juvenile justice system and how each member is affected, and it collaboratively finds solutions.

"The Council has been absolutely pivotal in getting the groups talking and fixing problems," said Judge Roe, the former state attorney of Ogle County. "We now have a great relationship between us, the schools, and law enforcement."

Roe cautioned, however, that "oversharing information can be harmful if it has the wrong focus. If individuals are given information that they don't understand, they may react in a way that is harmful to the child." This points to the fact that while sharing can be valuable, it must be reconciled with the confidentiality of juvenile records.

Schools

Partnerships with schools offer unique avenues to engage at-risk children. "I like the idea of a teen court," said Mata. "It teaches personal responsibility. Prosecutors can be involved if they wish, but this is often a pretrial diversion." There is support for her affinity to the program; teen courts routinely hand out firm sentences and, according to an evaluation on teen court projects in four states, cut recidivism by recipients in half.[4]

Prosecutors are also cognizant of the additional pressure that school administrators face. "I have a great deal of sympathy for school officials. There are so much more demands on public education these days," said Judge Lykos. "Kids are wound up and without recess have no means of expelling that energy. But expelling kids isn't the answer; we need to deal with disruptive behavior on campus."

Families

Interestingly, prosecutors identified collaboration with the family as one area for improvement. Procedurally, prosecutors are limited in the interaction they may have with a family before the juvenile is adjudicated. "We don't have much opportunity to enlist the family," said Judge Roe. "However, our probation department is very good about including them in the whole process."

Others enlist the family on a regular basis. "In regards to deferred adjudication, we made family members come in to sign a contract," said Judge Lykos. "This way, they were being held accountable, too."

Studies show family involvement is critical to the rehabilitation process. Offending and delinquency are often intergenerational and tend to concentrate in families.[5] Enlisting the juvenile's parent or parents in the process can not only strengthen the bond with the child, but also impart rudimentary parenting skills to individuals who may not have been exposed to such. A 2003 meta-analysis* on family-based treatments that show that they, on average, outperformed control groups by 16 percent in reducing delinquency of the youth.[6]

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Collaboration is also essential in addressing the problems of juveniles struggling with substance abuse and mental health crises. An individual's substance abuse problems not only contribute to criminal behavior, the underlying dependency issue often acts as a barrier to other forms of rehabilitative treatment.[7] The formal structure of the justice system is not often conducive to combating addiction. Some in-community programs, like multi-systemic therapy, have produced notable results when dealing with substance-abusing juveniles.[8]

The prosecutors generally viewed mental health and substance abuse as inextricably linked in confounding the rehabilitation process. One prosecutor noted, "To be honest, I'm not sure if one causes the other…I can say for certain that if a child is suffering from either it makes our

* A meta-analysis is statistical analysis that enables researchers to compare distinct and disparate studies that measure a similar outcome and estimate an average effect size; that is, an average of the included studies' outcomes. Used here, the authors synthesized 40 studies measuring reductions in various variables related to problem behaviors following family-oriented treatment.

jobs much harder." Judge Roe added, "Mental health and substance abuse are strongly linked. The kids are self-medicating. Treat the substance abuse and you will find a major mental health issue underneath."

Two respondents also noted their concerns about the early first use of drugs and alcohol. "One of the most significant clinical trends of the last century is the lowered age of onset of use. What use to be a rite of passage into early adulthood is now starting with kids as young as 11 and 12" said Broderick. "We know that the earlier a child uses alcohol or drugs, the worse their prospects are for the rest of their life."

Broderick continued: "As important as mental health treatment is, I think we're beginning to over-label offenders, and it's taking away from the effectiveness of the treatment we do have. We're putting too many of the wrong kids in treatment programs not designed for them."

This illustrates the importance of focusing on the most intensive interventions on the seriously mentally ill whose illness is the primary factor driving their deliquency.

"Aftercare is also crucial," Mata added.

Diversion, Probation, and Detention

Even when the most effective informal interventions are used, some juveniles will still run afoul of the law. In these cases, it is critical that the youth is given the least confining sanction justified by their risk level. Over-sentencing (or, similarly, over-treating) not only squanders scarce resources on individuals who gain no benefit from them; it also runs the risk of harming the juvenile. This section discusses alternatives to traditional prosecution that prosecutors have found successful in dealing with youth once the law has been violated.

Deferred Adjudication and Pre-Adjudication Supervision

In 2009, Harris County district attorney (now judge) Patricia Lykos implemented a novel juvenile diversion program. For youths charged with first-time non-violent misdemeanor offenses, filings to the court are delayed and the juvenile is put under either a 90- or 180-day supervision program based on risk. This supervision is not unlike probation; juveniles must satisfactorily attend school, attend a workshop on the consequences of their behavior, and comply with restitution orders consistent with their ability to fulfill. If they are delinquent on any one of these items, petitions to the court are filed. Additionally, those assigned to the 180-day supervision program received counseling, substance abuse treatment, or treatment for whatever needs were identified by the distinct attorney's office.[9]

"The evidence is overwhelming," said Judge Lykos of the differed adjudication program. "We successfully kept 7,707 juveniles from getting a criminal record. We managed to save the system a good deal of money, too." Because no formal charges were filed, youth participating in the program avoided the collateral consequences of juvenile justice system involvement, such as diminished prospects of future employment, exclusion from college admission, and a loss of civil rights.[10]

Specialty Courts

Similar to interventions used in adult adjudication, a panoply of specialty courts exist for juveniles. These specialized dockets pair up prosecutors and judges who are often specially trained in the nuances of the juveniles who come before them. "There are many avenues to employ both pre- and post-adjudication drug courts," said Mata. "Pre-adjudication drug courts allow better use of resources targeted at substance abusers. Post-adjudication drug courts are effective in dealing with substance abusers who are already under supervision, and whose problem may cause them to violate their terms."

Juvenile drug courts, while a fledgling intervention, have already demonstrated promising results. In Colorado's Eighth Judicial District's juvenile drug court, 67 percent of those who entered the program successfully graduated.[12]

Further, Mata's office explores the use of less common specialty court dockets. "We have a family enrichment court that handles kids experiencing family turmoil. We have a 'crossroads court' that handles girls with mental illness. We have a 'crossover court' which follows a wraparound model for kids involved in multiple systems. We even have a 'restore court' intended for victims of human trafficking."

While large, controlled studies of such nuanced courts are difficult to conduct, Mata is confident that this specialized approach is best for the participants. "People need to understand that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' program. Different programs work better for different kids, depending on their situation," she adds.

Missouri-style Group Homes

One promising model of juvenile offender treatment is the "Missouri Approach," or the "Missouri Model," in which group homes are an essential component. Almost a complete about-face from the large, penal-style facility, the Missouri Model suggests youth be housed in small facilities as

close to their communities as possible. Offenders engage in peer-led services and stay in the same small group throughout the day.[12]

One prosecutor familiar with the Missouri Model stated, "Both the staff and the children seem to respond well to it."

Incarcerated Juveniles

Of all the prosecutors interviewed, not one expressed skepticism with incarceration as a whole. One anonymous prosecutor illustrated the dissonance between them and some advocates in the juvenile justice sphere. "The problem is that some [advocates] think that, no matter what, kids do not belong locked up and for most of them this is true. However, what about that one kid who has a long history of violence or has seriously hurt a couple people?" he said. "There will always be the need to lock some kids up, even pretrial, but I think we do way too much of that to the kids who don't need it."

Pretrial detention is generally seen as a valuable tool. When asked why juveniles should be incarcerated before being tried, Judge Lykos answered, "Public safety; plain and simple." Mata added, "Public safety, certainly."

Justice, Accountability, and Accuracy

Many of the prosecutors participating in this survey underscored the importance they ascribe to their work. While some saw affecting a positive change in a juvenile offender's life as an important component to their work, all reported that public safety is one of the primary tenets. As stated by Judge Roe, "We take the charging decision very seriously. I never forget that my primary job is justice."

This section highlights some abstract concepts important to juvenile prosecution, including discussions on risk assessments, jurisdiction, waivers, and treatment fidelity and how they relate to the core function of the prosecutor's work.

The Inclusion of Protective Factors

One assistant juvenile prosecutor wishing to remain anonymous expressed concern with the internal mechanics of how total risk domain scores were aggregated. "They certainly are useful, but I question how much they account for the child's strengths," she said in regard to factors that increase a juvenile's resilience to other risk factors.

The majority of commonly used current generation risk assessment instruments do not directly account for individual strengths. Rather, they include the absence of such factors as contributing to the relevant subdomain.* Some assessments, such as the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment (or CANS), factor resiliency items directly into the risk calculation.[13]

Waivers and Transfers

The two primary ways in which juvenile offenders enter the adult criminal justice system—statutory transfers and discretionary transfers (also called waivers or "direct filing" in some jurisdictions)—proved to be divisive. Most respondents saw the mechanism as a necessary component to assure a long-term period of incapacitation and rehabilitation, while others thought that the process was somewhat overused, specifically in states with statutory transfers. "It's a necessary evil," said one prosecutor who declined attribution, "but mandatory filing in criminal court is taking the decision out of our hands."

Accountability of treatment programs

Judge Lykos made an interesting observation about the general funding model of treatment programs. "Too often, these agencies come around looking for money first and find a program second. We need to hold them accountable. The legislature should monitor [them]."

Judge Lykos' point is well taken. Rehabilitation programs in juvenile justice were some of the most iconic purveyors of "correctional quackery," or programs based on folk wisdom but lacking empirical support. Examples include programs designed to bolster self-esteem and art and drama therapy.[14] While they may make administrators and policymakers feel like they are addressing criminal behavior, such programs do not target known criminogenic risk factors.[15] "We knew the boot camp mentality was wrong," said Judge Roe, "but we couldn't prove it until we saw the data."

Restorative Justice and Victim-oriented Solutions

Victim-offender conferencing, a primary model of restorative justice, was highlighted by the prosecutors as a promising diversionary program. "We use victim–of-

* Many risk assessments calculate a final risk score via aggregating the sum totals of each subdomain. These subdomains consist of areas such as criminal history, family and friends, and vocational achievement. Each subdomain can be differently weighted based on the predictive validity of its contents. To account for strengths in a risk assessment that is not "strength-informed," the absence of the risk factor is often given a neutral score.

fender conferencing heavily in diversion," said Judge Roe. "We're not limited by statute [as to] what can be mediated; state attorneys have final say on what is diverted. Certain offenses, like sex and violent offenses, were not diverted to mediation."

Restorative justice programs take a fundamentally different approach to criminal and juvenile justice. Rather than the state being the central entity in justice proceedings, restorative justice allows the victim to assume this role. Priority is placed on the victim's need to be made whole rather than the state's need to issue punishment. Once a case is determined to be mediated per the laws of the jurisdiction, the victim (or proxy) and offender engage in a dialogue where the offender is faced with the harm they wrought. At the end of the mediation session(s), the parties part ways with a plan in place on how the offender will make the victim whole.[16]

Restorative justice programs allow for the victim to take their rightful place at the center of the justice process. Opportunities for these programs abound in the juvenile justice sphere. Whether in regard to a bullying incident in school, vandalism of a neighbor's property, or shoplifting an item from a local store, restorative justice programs remind offenders that there is a tangible cost to their behavior and sets them on the path to correction. "The victim," answers Broderick, "is very often forgotten in the reform work as well as in the research. We have to be sure to include them in the process."

"The prosecutors seem to be the only one[s] considering the victim," added Judge Roe. "They often get lost in the process; they have to play a part. One of our major responsibilities is victims' rights."

Data Collection and Sharing

One of the most common complaints heard while conducting these interviews was regarding the lack of data sharing. Most prosecutors did not have access to data in other courts, even those that had concurrent jurisdiction. Municipal courts rarely participated in data sharing with county courts and, when coupled with due hesitance in sharing juvenile information, a few prosecutors saw that certain high-frequency delinquents in their jurisdiction had two long, parallel criminal records.

Almost unanimously, the respondents indicated that they wish to see the outcome data from the different interventions and diversions they were using. Many indicated that novel pilot programs had, at one point or another, been launched in their jurisdiction, but that the data sharing from it had been lacking. "Personally, I would love to see outcome data gathered over a long period of time," said Mata. "Generally, we have to rely on research being done in other jurisdictions."

Interestingly, several prosecutors cautioned against the overuse of research at the expense of ongoing evaluations of existing programs. As indicated by Judge Lykos, "We need to know the success rate of *all* programs, not just the new ones. We need to know the effectiveness of those that are in place now." She and others commented on how there seems to be a great deal of willingness to conduct evaluation research on new, untested programs while established and long-term programs were, to paraphrase, "left on autopilot."

"We need to know the success rate of ALL programs, not just the new ones."

Process and outcome evaluations are a critical component to a successful rehabilitation program. Administrators must constantly make adjustments to ensure fidelity to the program's original treatment model and to correct any underperforming component. Failing this, programs that are left in place unmonitored have the potential to solidify poor practices and a counterproductive culture.[17]

Message to Policymakers, Budgeters, and the General Public

Before the interviews were concluded, participants were asked what message they wished to convey to community and political stakeholders who may not have the same information as they do. The answers varied from the general education of the public or calls for more research to suggested structural realignments.

Judge Lykos highlighted the need for reentry support. "There needs to be a transition facility; we can't just transition these kids with no easing in. They have no idea how to get a job or balance a checkbook. They also need to be connected with the right services," she noted. "Mental health is big, too, but we need more accountability about how money is being spent.

Judge Roe relayed a similar viewpoint about adult and juvenile systems: "We must remember that these are two separate systems for a reason. The number one priority must be rehabilitation—always. You almost always have more success treating kids in the community and not behind bars. This even applies to high-risk youth."

"We need to be sure we're treating the right kids," said Broderick. "We're wasting time and resources on 'treating' low-level kids who don't need it. Substance use disorders are also a critical concern. Mental health gets all the attention, but substance misuse by itself is just as important."

Another prosecutor added, "Before we looked at how we were handling these children's' cases, we saw the same kids again and again, no matter what. Now, we still see some repeats, but those are usually the more serious cases."

Conclusion

Formal prosecution and incarceration for juveniles is uniformly more expensive than it is for adults due to, as illustrated in this report, the goal of rehabilitating the youth. Therefore, it is important that juveniles who cross paths with the justice system are handled in the matter that best ensures public safety while imposing the smallest fiscal burden on the taxpayer.

Ensuring the proper mix of these concerns cannot be accomplished unilaterally by policymakers or administrators. As the state's agent in seeking justice, the prosecutor has to be vested with the necessary powers to guarantee that the most appropriate outcome is reached for the case at hand. Prosecutors who do not "buy in" to system reforms can refuse to engage in pretrial diversion, seek carceral sanctions when not compelled by risk of the present case, or add charges to disqualify an otherwise-appropriate use for a specific program.

A common misconception is that, in the role of punisher, prosecutors reject treatment-oriented approaches to juvenile justice in order to deter crime and provide the youthful offenders with their "just deserts." However, prosecutors have shown great innovation and motivation in the handling of juvenile justice case loads. From law enforcement-based diversion to specialty dockets in the juvenile courts, many have led the way in seeing that juvenile and youthful offenders are punished in the way most consistent with the best future outcomes for the students.

"People need to be informed about both what's best for public safety and for the child." Judge Roe added, "It's not about political slogans; it's about doing what's right."

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Susan Broderick is the director of the National Juvenile Justice Prosecution Center (NJJPC) and provides training and technical assistance to prosecutors and other professionals in the juvenile justice system. Prior to this position, she spent the past six years at Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) where her work focused on supporting the active participation of prosecutors in the MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change Initiative.

Broderick started her career as an assistant district attorney in the Manhattan district attorney's office in 1989, and was appointed deputy bureau chief of the Family Violence and Child Abuse Bureau in 2000. In 2003, she joined the staff at the National District Attorneys Association's National Center for the Prosecution of Child Abuse, and served as a senior attorney, and was appointed director of the Juvenile Justice Program in the fall of 2006.

Broderick lectures and conducts trainings throughout the country on the role of the prosecutor, and has published numerous articles on the role of the prosecutor in the prevention, early intervention and re-entry efforts. She serves on the Advisory Board for the Reclaiming Futures Initiative, which is focused on youth with substance use issues, and has served on the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Juvenile Justice Initiative.

About the Texas Public Policy Foundation

The Texas Public Policy Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit, non-partisan research institute. The Foundation's mission is to promote and defend liberty, personal responsibility, and free enterprise in Texas and the nation by educating and affecting policymakers and the Texas public policy debate with academically sound research and outreach.

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