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Inside the Juvenile Justice System

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Inside the Juvenile Justice System
A Literature Review on Adolescent Facilities and Best Practices

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Abstract:

The United States of America is known for freedom and integrity and being a nation that stands for justice and equality for all. Within the United States there are systems in place to better the people and communities in order to provide safety and order. However, just as any nation, there is a struggle with violent behavior and tendencies among adults and adolescents. Within the last three decades, the United States has created a correctional system that specifically targets adolescents, and that acknowledges the differences between adult and juvenile development and deviant behavior. Within this literature review, academic databases were searched in order to find information showing the differences between the adolescent brain and the adult brain, which supports the importance of varying treatment for juvenile delinquents. Furthermore, research supporting the dangers (and the ultimate removal) of solitary confinement in juvenile facilities is examined, as well as, the use of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and alternate methods of rehabilitation, such as animal therapy and Mindfulness Meditation.

Agency Profile:

The Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) of San Francisco seeks to serve and educate the city's struggling and troubled adolescents. Three hundred hours were spent collecting information regarding the purpose of the Juvenile Justice Center and the overall correctional systems within the country. In San Francisco, this is where adolescents aged 12-18 are taken into custody who have committed a misdemeanor or felony. Focused on rehabilitation and education, the JJC concentrates its resources on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and other forms of adolescent appropriate programs. This is done with the hope of fully equipping each adolescent with the tools needed to leave the facility and have a bright future. Chief Allen Nance is the Chief Probation Officer and deals with all major decisions made at the JJC. Juvenile hall is seen as a short-term youth detention facility, currently able to hold 132 youth. The youth that are staying

at juvenile hall fall into three different categories; youth in custody awaiting investigation, youth in custody per court order waiting future hearings or youth awaiting placement per court order. Within juvenile hall, they will receive educational, medical and mental health services. The mission of the JJC is to “serve the needs of youth and families, who are brought to our attention with care and compassion; to identify and respond to the individual risks and needs presented by each youth, to engage fiscally sound and culturally competent strategies that promote the best interests of the youth...” (www.sfgov.org). By teaching discipline, structure and responsibility, the JJC seeks to rehabilitate and reduce recidivism within the juvenile correctional system.

Gap Analysis:

In 2013, there were 54,148 juveniles spending time within juvenile justice facilities across the country (Office of Justice Programs). Although the percentage of adolescent crime is decreasing, there are still thousands of incarcerated youth in the United States. The juvenile justice system is important because it plays a necessary role in American society, caring for and helping some of the most vulnerable members of society. While the adolescents housed within the facilities have all committed a crime, most of them have also suffered trauma or come from unstable homes and communities. Acknowledging these factors is an important step for adolescent facilities so they can provide appropriate treatment instead of solely punishment-based treatment. Juvenile facilities are short-term housing for adolescents as they await trial or sentencing. It is vital that while the adolescents wait they are given specific treatment and care that will equip them to live healthy lives once put back into their communities. While the juvenile justice system is far from perfect, much needed changes and steps forward have happened over the last decade. By learning specifically about the population at hand and what

targeted forms of therapies and alternative methods are available, more adolescents will receive care and ultimately recidivism will decline.

Goals & Objectives:

Understanding the adolescent brain is vital in order to create facilities to serve and support them. This literature review includes an examination on the history of the juvenile justice system in general and how the system in the United States in specific was created. Furthermore, there are three main sections that look into different practices that take place within juvenile facilities in America. During the time spent at the JJC it was visible that each one played, or currently plays, a role within the hall and affects the adolescents. By the completion of reading this literature review the reader should have a clear understanding of how the juvenile justice system started, the past use of solitary confinement and the dangers associated with it, as well as, the understanding of different therapies and methods used for juveniles in these facilities. Understanding the importance of each method of treatment and how to tailor-make programs designed for adolescents, is the beginning of a stronger and more effective juvenile justice system in America.

Introduction:

In the 18th and 19th century there was no difference between adult correctional facilities and youth facilities (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice). All ages, genders and races were confined in prison cells in the same building. Deviant behavior and mental illness were being categorized as the same and penitentiaries around the country were being filled with those who fit the profile of dangerous, regardless of actual criminal behavior or sickness. There were no other options than to group all of these people together, neglecting the real problems but with the hope that getting them out of the general population would be enough. Being placed in these

penitentiaries came with great risk, especially for youth being housed inside them. Thomas Eddy and John Griscom organized a movement called the Prevention of Pauperism, which fought against the idea that adolescent perpetrators should be imprisoned with adult offenders (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice). They knew that adults and youth were categorically different and it was not only detrimental for the adolescents psychologically, but also dangerous. They wanted to create a new system specifically for deviant youth that focused on youth behavior and development, which led to the creation of the New York House of Refuge in 1825 (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice). This was the first place in America for youth that were acting in a dangerous or violent manner, to be corrected and ultimately rehabilitated. This created a movement, specifically on the East Coast of the country, and within three years Boston, Philadelphia and other cities opened youth specific facilities. However, this model worked for only so long before overcrowding issues surfaced and health conditions declined (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice). The public demanded once again that the idea of a juvenile facility be remolded into a different form of corrections. Thus began the idea of reform schools, used to train and rehabilitate troubled youth. This is the model that is still used today throughout America. This model uses what is called the congregate institutional model, where large numbers of adolescents are in highly structured, educational environments that focus on reform and rehabilitation (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice). While the American juvenile justice system is far from perfect, it has come along way since the 19th Century and now values the importance of adolescents having their own correctional facilities focused on providing the support and direction they need to live a crime free adult life.

Right now in the United States the specific rules and regulations of the juvenile justice system differ by state and community. All states now have a “Juvenile Code” that they adhere to

when juveniles are found in trouble (Ramirez, 2008). Juvenile correction in America now focuses on rehabilitation and has an emphasis on returning the adolescent to the community they came from and teaching them how to be better equipped to live once released from the state's custody (Ramirez, 2008). There are many factors that play a role in deviant behavior among adolescents. Poverty, gangs, substance abuse, unstable home life and neglect are a few that effect the adolescent brain and can lead to deviant behavior and potentially detainment (Ramirez, 2008). Each year more than 600,000 juveniles cycle through the juvenile correctional system, 70% being held for non-violent crimes (National Juvenile Detention Association and Youth Law Center, 1998).

When looking at the juvenile justice system and hoping to create better and more effective disciplinary policies, it is vital to understand the brain development of this age group. Adolescents differ from adults and children in three main ways (which is what created the need for different treatment and deeper understanding of this target demographics development). First, adolescents have less capacity for self-regulation in emotionally charged situations. Second, they have heightened sensitivity to external factors (i.e. peer pressure). Third, adolescents are less future-oriented than adults, which means their decisions are more focused on the present (Bonnie, 2013).

In the book *Reforming Juvenile Justice: A developmental approach* (Bonnie, 2013), accountability is considered a major factor in the way juvenile justice will be transformed. It is necessary for juveniles to take responsibility for their actions without harsh treatment once inside the system. Creating an environment that is safe and consistent can allow them to embrace accountability. Harsh treatment inside the juvenile justice system creates an "us vs. them" mentality, which can lead to further misconduct both inside the system and once they are

released. Bonnie (2013) states that creating a facility that teaches accountability for their actions but provides different outlets that include the community (such as making amends, restorative justice involving victims) are all things that are developmentally appropriate for teaching accountability.

Bonnie (2013) has found that there are three main conditions that support healthy adolescent development, which remove the stigma of containment and confinement within the juvenile justice system. The involvement of a parent, activities based on critical thinking and decision-making, and peer groups are all vital tools in the modern day juvenile corrections system (Bonnie, 2013). Integrating these three types of activities shows great promise in transforming the juvenile justice system. By integrating adolescent-focused rehabilitation tools such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and animal therapy, and reducing the adult-focused correctional tools such as solitary confinement, the juvenile justice system can be a strong link in the rehabilitation of troubled adolescents.

Methods:

A literature review was conducted of different articles published within the last 10-15 years, with the exception of one article published in 1991. The oldest article was found acceptable because the criminal justice system has been around for a long time and older information is just as important, especially since many correctional institutions adhere to old practices.

An online search of different databases such as Scopus, The University of Chicago Press, The National Institute of Justice, The National Library of Medicine, National Criminal Justice Reference Service, SAGE Journals, Journal of Juvenile Justice, as well as Google Scholar as a search engine. Terms used to generate results were “juvenile justice system”, “deviant behavior”,

“criminal” “justice system”, “trauma in adolescents”, “cognitive behavioral therapy”, “mindfulness” and “animal therapy”. The articles used focused on the American Juvenile Justice System, however there are a few mentions of state-specific correctional facilities as examples. The final articles on the juvenile justice system focused on the history of juvenile corrections in America, solitary confinement, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and alternative forms of rehabilitation. All articles were grouped in a summarizing matrix that can be found before each section.

Synthesis:

Title/ Author/ Year	Study Location	Design/ Statistics	Intervention/ Outcome Measure	Results
Solitary Confinement of Juvenile Offenders American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2012	United States	Studying how adolescents react to isolation	Study adolescents who have spent time in solitary	Solitary should be removed from all juvenile facilities
The Effects of Solitary Confinement on Prison Inmates: A Brief History and Review of the Literature, Smith, 2006	United States	Effects of Solitary confinement on inmates	How does solitary confinement effect inmates?	Solitary negatively affects inmates
Obama Bans Solitary Confinement for Juveniles Eilperin, 2016	United States	Solitary negatively affects adolescents	Juvenile corrections reform	The removal of isolation as a form of punishment
Psychiatric Effects of Solitary Confinement, Grassian, 2006	United States	Psychiatrics effects of solitary	Experimental research on sensory deprivation	Solitary confinement causes psychiatric issues
Isolation and restraint in juvenile correctional facilities Mitchell, 1990	United states	Mental health concerns on solitary	Study of how isolation and restraint effects juvenile offenders	Negative impact; findings on staff abusing this form of punishment
Negative Effects of Isolating Juveniles in Correctional Facilities, Simkins, 2012	New Jersey	Examined negative effects of isolation	Pilot program intended to offer more legal support to those in corrections and reducing the use of isolation	It was a success, providing legal aid, changing procedures and limiting isolation
Solitary Confinement of Juvenile Offenders American Psychological Association	United States	Negative impact of solitary	Support youth and reduce solitary	Aims to work state by state to see a reduction of the use of isolation
Solitary Confinement to End for Youngest at Rikers Island, Schwirtz, 2014	New York	Rikers abolishes solitary	They found solitary leads to violent behaviors in adolescents in Rikers	Alternate therapy to be provided
No Child Left Alone Castillo, L, 2015	Iowa	Supreme court case showing the negative effects of isolation	Want to produce rehabilitation instead of correction	Solitary infringes on the 8th Amendment
Alone and Afraid ACLU, 2013	United States	Negative effects of solitary on adolescents	Human rights report for children suffering the consequences from solitary	Aims to ban solitary for children in US
Why Solitary Confinement Hurts Juveniles More Than Adults, Kirchner, L, 2014	United States	Adolescent brain damage because of solitary	Solitary affects developing brain more than an adult brain	Remove solitary as standard practice in youth facilities

Solitary confinement is an example of a practice that has been implemented within juvenile facilities across the country, and is defined as when the criminal is placed in a locked room or cell with no contact with others as punishment (AACAP, 2012). The use of solitary

confinement in prisons is not a new idea; this form of punishment has been used since the first half of the nineteenth century (Smith, 2006). While this form of punishment is not new, it has often been debated if it is a humane tactic to use with prisoners in the United States. In the 1950's, people started questioning this form of punishment after prisoners of war (POWs) came home from Korea (Smith, 2006). Some started asking if using this form of punishment caused psychological damage that would further complicate the release of said prisoner. Studies show that prisoners who spend time in solitary confinement suffer mental disturbances and severe psychological issues (Grassian, 2006). A confused state, paranoia, hallucinations, intense anger and impulsive acts of violence have all been found among prisoners who had spent time in isolation (Grassian, 2006). Those who had no previous history of mental illness or psychological issues were found to be unable to regain mental clarity or strong mental health after they were released from solitary (Grassian, 2006). Solitary confinement clearly has long-term consequences, especially when it comes to releasing the prisoner once their time is served. The debate argues that more harm is being caused and the prisoner who spends time in isolation as punishment will leave with possibly more psychological damage than before entering the system.

Currently, in the United States, there are three main reasons why solitary confinement, or isolation, is used. It is used as a disciplinary punishment for inmates who cannot control themselves in general population or are a flight risk, is chosen by some inmates to avoid harassment by other inmates, and can be used to prevent inmates from tampering with witnesses who may also be inside the prison (Smith, 2006). While solitary confinement is seen as an important punishment tactic within adult prisons, researchers don't deem it necessary for adolescent correction. Solitary confinement was only recently banned toward juveniles from federal correctional facilities by the Obama administration. Until it was banned it was considered

an appropriate form of punishment for adolescents in many correctional institutions around the country.

As mentioned earlier, when creating adolescent focused correctional systems it is imperative to understand the biological and psychological differences between an underdeveloped adolescent brain and an adult brain. The adolescent brain is not fully developed and will respond differently than an adult brain. If the literature states that solitary confinement is borderline inhumane for an adult brain it is important to ask, “how does it affect a developing brain?” Solitary confinement has been shown to yield catastrophic consequences within juvenile facilities- resulting in 62% of suicides among adolescents in a juvenile facility being those who spent time in isolation (Simkins, 2012). However, the research on psychological effects of isolation among adolescents is almost non-existent compared to the research done on adult prisoners (Simkins, 2012). In the American juvenile justice system a common practice was to leave adolescents within solitary confinement with no contact with the outside world for weeks, months, or sometimes years. In New York's infamous prison, Rikers Island, this was the norm up until 2014, for adolescents who were misbehaving or causing problems (Schwartz, 2014).

There is a lack of academic studies about the outcomes of solitary confinement on the adolescent brain, but amongst those written, it is unanimous that it does more harm than good. In 2012 the United Supreme Court ruled in *Miller v. Alabama*, a case that aimed to end the mandatory law of life without parole on juvenile offenders in the state of Iowa (Castillo, 2015). Within this case the court used scientific research that the mental capacity of juveniles differ than adults and younger people have more of an ability to be rehabilitated and change (Castillo, 2015). Within this case they stated that the use of juvenile solitary confinement causes strong psychological damage and does substantial harm for later rehabilitation among adolescents

(Castillo, 2015). They found that because the adolescent brain is still developing (the frontal lobe, which is responsible for judgment, impulsivity and emotions is the most malleable at this time) locking them in solitary is incredibly detrimental and negatively affects rehabilitation and future adult success (Castillo, 2015).

Another fact worth noting, (from the Journal of Juvenile Justice) is that the typical juvenile offender has had adverse childhood experiences, which should be treated sensitively and require special attention (Baglivio, 2014). While not all adolescents spending time in a correctional setting have experienced early trauma, many have and it is so important to note. The American Civil Liberties Union states that adolescents are different from adults, which makes solitary confinement more of a serious form of punishment that affects the developmental process and growth of their brain. It is obvious that removing solitary confinement within juvenile correctional facilities is not only important but also necessary to obtain the overall goal of juvenile rehabilitation and future success.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy:

Title/ Author/ Year	Study Location	Design/ Statistics	Intervention/ Outcome Measure	Results
Preventing Future Crime With Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Clark, P, 2010	United States	Testing CBT on criminal justice system	CBT reduces recidivism	CBT is an effective therapy on juvenile offenders
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Beck, A,	United States	Overview on CBT	Effective settings for CBT	CBT is an incredible resource for criminal setting
Cognitive Behavioral Treatment OJJDP, 2010	United States	The use of CBT and its outcomes/ effects	Distinctive features of CBT and where to implement them	Effective in violent people/behavioral problems
The Efficacy of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Hofmann, S, 2013	United States	Studying the use of CBT criminal behavior	269 meta- analyses to examine CBT	4 separate meta-analytic studies showed effectiveness of CBT on criminal behaviors
Mental Health Care in Juvenile Detention Facilities: A Review Desai, R, 2006	United States	Mental health care within Juvenile Corrections	History and current practices	The importance of mental health care including CBT within JJC
The Effect of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy on Behaviors of Juvenile Delinquents Resident in Correctional Institutions in Alexandria, Fikr, F, 2012	Alexandria	Identify the effect of of CBT on juvenile delinquents	Used questionnaires to study CBT within the correctional institutions of Alexandria	CBT is effective from of therapy for delinquents who have suffered trauma

Understanding the Links Between Adolescent Trauma and Substance Abuse, NCTSN, 2008	United States	Looking at trauma among adolescents	Treatment for trauma such as CBT	Trauma affects adolescents and CBT is an effective form of rehabilitation
Single Parent Families Cause Juvenile Crime, Maginnis, 1997	United States	Violent crimes associated with single parent homes	Early years affects adolescent behavior	Home life affects adolescent aggressive or deviant behavior
The Dangers of Detention, Barry Holman, 2011	United States	Dangers of juvenile facilities	Understanding how trauma effects adolescents and how corrections often times makes it worse	Rehabilitation needs to be the primary goal of juvenile justice

There are many forms of therapy and practices that are being integrated within the juvenile justice system. In recent years, juvenile facilities have faced increasing pressure to start offering more mental health services for youth in custody (Desai, 2006). Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the main form of therapy provided within juvenile facilities. According to the National Institute of Justice, CBT reduces recidivism when implemented in juvenile correctional facilities (Clark, 2010). Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a therapy that encourages the individual to become conscious of their own thoughts and behaviors in order to make positive changes (Clark, 2010). CBT states that people’s thoughts and behaviors normally stem from assumptions or past experiences, and by taking control of them one is able to take control of their lives (Beck, 2006). It is a problem-based approach that seeks to change thought processes in order to change emotions and ultimately change actions (Development Service Group, 2010). By teaching the individual to change negative or dangerous thoughts with more positive or realistic ones, they are able to change their actions. CBT is an evidenced-based form of psychotherapy and by focusing on how to change the situation at hand it is found most successful in the juvenile justice system. CBT is a diverse type of therapy that adapts to many different settings and demographics but has been found particularly helpful when dealing with criminal or violent offenders (Brown, 2007). Criminal minds tend to have a distorted view of reality and CBT aims to correct that dysfunctional thinking and provide alternative, healthier thinking.

After shifting the focus from punishment-based practices in juvenile faculties, integrating Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a step forward towards rehabilitation and recovery for

adolescents. As previously mentioned, earlier forms of corrections such as solitary confinement, show detrimental effects to the adolescent developing brain, while CBT offers a form of correction that aims to help and reshape negative or criminal thinking. Practices such as solitary confinement as a form of punishment within juvenile facilities miss the mark on the underlying reason as to why the youth may be acting in a negative way. It is vital to understand the foundation of how and why the adolescent came to the correctional facility before being able to help them. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is an important step at showing that adolescents in the criminal justice system are dealing with underlying emotional and psychological issues and need specialized care before dealing with their negative or criminal behaviors.

Whether poor behavior is being shown within the facility or one is simply addressing the behavior that got the youth there, both are often caused by the experience of childhood trauma (Mahoney, 2004). The role that trauma plays in behavioral issues associated with adolescents is well documented and often times is directly related to ending up in a juvenile correctional setting. A study focusing on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among adolescents in the juvenile justice system found that over 90% reported experiencing at least one traumatic event in their life before committing a crime (Albert, 2007). Trauma, such as sexual and/or physical abuse, witnessing a violent crime and neglect are all forms of trauma that are represented within the juvenile justice system and play a notable role in adolescent deviant behavior.

Girls serving time in juvenile correctional settings are more likely to have higher rates of PTSD symptoms than boys, and are more likely to have reported sexual or physical abuse (Ford, 2007). When trauma is prevalent in the early years of brain development it is possible to see a connection to personality issues such as the inability to self regulate, anger, impulse control and anxiety (Ford, 2007). Another key component to understanding adolescents in the juvenile

justice system is knowing their family structure. Children from single parent homes are more likely to have behavioral problems and turn to drugs and gangs, which ultimately ends in being sent to a juvenile facility (Maginnis, 1997). With more and more children coming into juvenile facilities with underlying mental health issues it is vital for protocols to be set in place to care for and rehabilitate in order to correct the deviant behavior problems. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy aims to detect the emotional issues that may be effecting negative decision-making in the hopes that when the adolescent is released they will live a full and healthy life outside of the system.

There are three main forms of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy used within correctional settings targeting adolescents. The first is Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), which is a short-term, clinical-based treatment directed towards adolescents experiencing PTSD after traumatic experiences (Ford, 2007). This form of CBT uses self-management skills as well as exposure therapy, which triggers the adolescent to remember the trauma they suffered. While this form of therapy is found very valuable, because of the sensitive nature of invoking memories it is not the best to be implemented within a juvenile justice system, and is more recommended for those in a stable and safe environment (Ford, 2007). The second form of CBT is called Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR). This is a controversial technique that once again uses traumatic memories to focus on personal strengths and uses distracting behaviors such as eye movements to redirect and eventually overcome the trauma (Ford, 2012). This has been found to be most successful with girls who have experienced sexual abuse and is often integrated within a standard CBT setting. The last form of CBT is called Skills Training in Affective and Interpersonal Regulation (STAIR). This is a 16-session program targeting emotion management and interpersonal skills (Ford, 2007). Targeting trauma

within the juvenile justice system through CBT and mental health services is the first step in total rehabilitation.

Other issues that effect the mental health of juveniles include the very act of being detained. Researchers have found that at least a third of detention centers are suffering from overcrowding which leads to violence, lack of proper treatment and isolation (Holman, 2011). With the number of adolescents with mental health issues landing in the juvenile justice system, cognitive behavioral therapy has been found to have the best results in changing the way the juvenile delinquent thinks, which ultimately changes the way they behave (Fikry, 2012). By being taught problem solving skills, anger control, social skills, coping skills, and assertiveness there is a reduction in aggressive behavior and once released the juvenile is less likely to return to the system (Fikry, 2012). Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is an effective tool used in adolescent rehabilitation. By addressing the underlying trauma and mental health issues adolescents in the system are suffering from, implementing specific forms of therapy such as CBT is effective in reducing recidivism and rehabilitating youth to live full and healthy lives.

Alternative Therapy:

Title/ Author/ Year	Study Location	Design/ Statistics	Intervention/ Outcome Measure	Results
A History of Prison Inmate-Animal Interaction Programs Strimple, 20016	United States	Studing the use of of animals within prisons	Looking at recidivism rates based on animal therapy in prisons	Inamtes benefit from animals
Humanizing Prisons with Animlas, Deaton, 2005	United States	Using animals to address the needs of offenders	Looks at alternative therapies within prisons using animals	These programs are very successful
The Experiences of Offenders in a Prison Canine Program, Turner, 2007	United States	Experiences of prisoners who have been exposed to canine prison program	Looking at prisoners perspective of the program	Prisoners found the program effective
Prison Pups, Britton, 2005	United States	Programs in prisons in US using dogs	Interviews from prisoners and data	Break down fear and mistrust; change behavior positively
PAWS, Texas Juvenile Justice Department	Texas, US	A program designed for the hardest of female offender	Paired with a dog and have to train care for	The program is a huge success
Miami- Dade Therapy Dog Collins, 2013	Florida, US	A program for the Miama correctional facility	Aims to help youth in detention center	Already finding huge success rate, hoping to expand

In addition to standard forms of therapy within juvenile justice systems (such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), there are many new forms of therapy becoming used more and more frequently. The use of dogs in a therapeutic context within the juvenile justice system is being implemented in facilities around the United States. This is a relatively new practice, so there are not too many statistics on how effective it is, however the immediate findings are impressive. Animals used in therapy settings are not a new idea. For example, horses have long been used for therapy treatment, as well as the use of dogs in nursing homes and for those with anxiety (Strimple, 2016). Introducing dogs into the juvenile justice system to provide support, teach responsibility and compassion is a revolutionary idea and there is hope that more States will start picking up this form of rehabilitation.

While the juvenile justice system aims to change the individuals behavior for the better, using alternative approaches such as animal therapy is highly effective and not only helps the adolescents but also the community (Deaton, 2005). Evidence shows that humans and animals have a special bond and to use them in rehabilitation settings can decrease depression, lower blood pressure and have many other positive effects (Turner, 2007). A prison in Oklahoma developed a therapeutic program that brought dogs in for depressed inmates, and not only did the depression rates lower, overall violent crimes and aggression within the prison decreased (Haynes, 1991). Another example is the Kit Carson Correctional Center in Colorado, which has a service dog-training program. The inmates are paired with a dog and have the opportunity to go through training with the animal; they have seen a decrease in anxiety within the inmates and overall better behavior (Osborne & Bair, 2003).

There are at least 20 U.S states, plus Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Italy that are turning to dog therapy within prisons to help rehabilitate the population (Britton, 2008). PAWS

is a program implemented within the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, which is where (for a minimum of twelve weeks) dogs from shelters are paired with youth serving time. The adolescents are responsible for their dog at all times: they need to groom, feed and train them. PAWS is implemented within the Ron Jackson State Juvenile Correctional facility, which houses some of the most serious female offenders in Texas. This program is designed for the youth to connect with the animal and learn responsibilities, and it forces positive social and community engagements (TJJID.gov). At the Miami- Dade Regional Juvenile Detention Center in Florida, they have found the benefits of introducing their own form of dog therapy within the juvenile facility. According to Wansley Walters, the corrections secretary of the Florida Detention Center, they observed the amount of adolescents coming into the facility after suffering trauma or those who had trouble interacting with people. Offering pet therapy provided support for the youth to cope with their emotions, experience unconditional love while healing the adolescent from the inside out. The program, called Canine Comfort aims to teach and heal the most troubled of adolescents, and it is working.

Another form of alternative therapy that is becoming more popular in the juvenile justice system is Mindfulness Meditation. Due to the trauma they have experienced, many youth have trouble with self-regulation and barriers, which often leads to criminal behavior (Evans-Chase, 2013). A study done on using Mindfulness Meditation within a juvenile justice system yielded positive outcomes by helping the youth learn to control their emotional responses (Evans-Chase, 2013). There are three main components of Mindfulness Meditation. The first part is present awareness, which is when the adolescent participating is focusing on being present in the moment. The second is non-judgmental awareness, which challenges the individual to not judge

any emotions or thoughts they may be experiencing. The third is acceptance, which refers to accepting the thoughts and emotions they are experiencing (Evans- Chase, 2013).

Mindfulness can be done within the facility, does not require any additional resources other than someone trained in the technique, and can provide a calm meditative experience for those taking part. It offers an escape from the craziness the adolescent may have experienced in their past or even an escape from within the juvenile facility. A common feeling that adolescents experience within the facility is anxiety, since they are away from their community and family and in a new surrounding that may feel unsafe; many of the adolescents may have never felt safe in their whole life. Mindfulness Meditation offers them the opportunity to find and explore peace within their own self, which will help them later in life to have more control of their emotions and thoughts. Mindfulness has been found to have positive effects on behavior and affects the mind and overall stress the person is feeling (Broderick, 2007). In a criminal justice setting those who used Mindfulness Mediation saw a decrease in anger and stress (Derezotes, 2000).

Limitations:

Throughout this literature review there were a few limitations that were evident. The biggest is in regards to the adolescent population. Studies done on adolescents are somewhat controversial and have only recently become more acceptable. The information based on the difference between adolescent brains and adult brains is also a very new concept. While there has always been an acknowledgment that adolescents need to receive different treatment than adults, it wasn't until fairly recently that the science behind it was discovered. Many of the articles cited within this paper had a mentioned that majority of the studies done have been on adults. While more and more research is being done on adolescents, it is still limited. The use of dog therapy among juveniles is a very new practice and while there are some articles written on the concept it

will be years before we are able to see the long-term effects of introducing dog therapy into juvenile facilities. Another limitation found was the lack of information directly from juvenile facilities, because this is a sensitive demographic and the juvenile justice system is a politically charged topic, there was a shortage of direct information from specific correctional facilities.

Conclusion/ Recommendations:

The juvenile justice system in America has come along way since its inception. From similar treatment plans for adults and adolescents, to now more specific and individualized rehabilitation plans for youth, America has made strides to provide the proper care and attention juveniles need. As technology continues to move forward and science improves, more information can be gathered about the necessary tactics to be used in the treatment of deviant adolescent behavior. While there has been much progress, it is not yet enough. It is vital to continue to fight for the rights of adolescents serving time within juvenile facilities and make sure every facility is up to standard and offering adolescent-focused treatment plans. Alternative practices such as dog therapy and Mindfulness Meditation are the way of the future. New ideas have to be constantly brought to the attention of policy makers and stakeholders in order to bring lasting change. Community-based programs need to be more common within juvenile facilities that reintroduce juveniles back into their community. Art programs, education, music and skill based programs all need to become the norm within these facilities. As mentioned, youth facilities are not meant to be long-term housing. However, while the youth are there, it is the juvenile justice correctional department's responsibility to produce lasting change and support (so that the youth leave better then when they arrived). Working with adolescents is an incredible opportunity, to rehabilitate the individual with targeted therapy and programs that focus on changing the way they think so they can live a full life outside of the correctional institute. As

seen from the literature, adolescents are resilient and by creating strong and efficient systems to support and rehabilitate, it is providing them a hope for the future.

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