

Education in the Juvenile Justice System

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Abstract

This presentation examines juvenile correctional facilities and the educational programming that exists within those walls. Discussion centers on issues of race, gender, class, and the marginalization of historically underserved populations, in the juvenile correctional population. This marginalization begins early in the lives of untold numbers of young Black males, as evidenced by their disproportionate representation in the juvenile justice system. According to the National Center for Juvenile Justice “the racial composition of the juvenile population in 1997 was approximately 80% White, 15% Black, 5% other, with juveniles of Hispanic ethnicity being classified as White. However, in contrast to the proportions in the general population, 53% of juvenile arrest for violent crimes involve White youth and 44% involved Black youth. This overrepresentation is

apparent at every step of the judicial system and only intensifies as minorities go through the system.

The presentation includes an analysis of how juvenile correctional facilities are moving toward creating a learning environment that addresses the needs as well as the voices of these students. The discussion concludes with how institutions intend to remove barriers to success for all students, but primarily for those who have been historically marginalized.