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Museum Activism and Social Responsibility: Building Museum Education Programs for Juvenile Offenders

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Building Museum Education Programs for Juvenile Offenders**

**Written By:
Elizabeth E. Sirhall**

*A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Museum Professions
Seton Hall University
May 2015*

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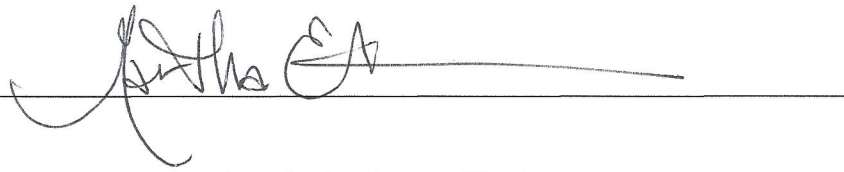
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Building Museum Education Programs for Juvenile Offenders**

Written By:

Elizabeth E. Sirhall

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martha EA', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

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*A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

Museums are important to their communities and serve many significant purposes to society. The traditional viewpoint of a museum's function is that they are there to preserve and interpret collections for the sake of facilitating deeper understanding and education for museum audiences. However, museums are also viewed as institutions that can bring people in the community together, promote social activism, and develop programs aimed towards creating positive changes within communities. In today's world, museums are finding this task increasingly difficult due to financial challenges and struggling to stay socially relevant for diversified audiences. In facing this challenge, it is imperative that museums actively reach out to members of their communities in order to discover ways in which they can engage the needs of their audiences and how they can help make their communities better places.

Developing meaningful programs for children and teens is one way in which museums can help establish greater connections with wider audiences, while also giving something beneficial back to their communities. Children who are economically and socially impoverished, defined as "at-risk youth," are becoming more of a priority within museum education and outreach programs. Museums can go even further in their outreach efforts by developing educational programs specifically designed for adolescents who have already crossed the social line of criminal behavior and have spent time in juvenile detention centers. Not only could this kind of outreach provide museums the chance to establish connections with local justice systems, but it would give youthful offenders the opportunity to visit and engage in museums, while potentially enriching their education and possibly providing them with a means to see and work towards a brighter future.

Through research and case studies, this paper explores the new and creative ways in which museums can create meaningful learning experiences for children and teens who have already gotten in trouble with the law, thereby also helping museums to establish stronger community relationships. By examining what some museums have already done to establish programs for youthful offenders, this paper will also outline what other museums can do to reach out and engage the kids labeled juvenile delinquents within their own communities.

**Museum Advocacy and Social Responsibility: Building Museum Education Programs for
Juvenile Offenders**

Elizabeth E. Sirhall

Table of Contents

Introduction: Museum Programming for Youthful Offenders..... 1.

Chapter 1: Social Relevancy and Social Activism in Museums..... 6.

Chapter 2: Examining the American Juvenile Justice System.....15.

Chapter 3: Who Are Juvenile Offenders? Needs and Identifiers..... 24.

**Chapter4: Benefits of Alternative Sentencing and Museum Programming
for Youthful Offenders 41.**

Chapter 5: Case Studies.....47.

- a. Case Studies Introduction**
- b. The Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute**
- c. The San Diego Museum of Art**

Conclusion: Building Museum Programs for Youthful Offenders.....64.

Bibliography.....67.

Museum Programming for Youthful Offenders:

Introduction

What is a museum? This is a compelling question, because while the word “museum” will most likely evoke the image, in most people’s minds, of a building displaying artworks or other objects pertaining to different areas of study. Exactly what the main purpose of the museum is will probably garner different responses depending on whom you ask. Museums by formal definition are institutions that are “devoted to the conservation, study, exhibition, and educational interpretation of objects having scientific, historical or artistic value.”¹ In recent years however, museums have also come to be recognized as places that serve a more public and community oriented role, and as such many museum mission statements, programs, and exhibitions have been redefined and reorganized in order to better serve the needs of museum audiences. As a result, it has become crucial that museums concern themselves with reaching out and building lasting relationships with their communities.

The increased importance placed on museums to reach out to communities is in part influenced by the ongoing struggle experienced by most museums to find meaning in their social environments while maintaining financial stability in a declining global market. The falling rate of visitation and revenue via cultural tourism is something discussed in James Vaughn’s article in *Forum Journal* for historic sites, and in light of this decline it is his opinion that serving the needs of local communities is the most sustainable goal for historic sites, and indeed for most museums, around the country.² This is because people who live in the same vicinity as a museum can potentially provide more long-lasting and consistent stewardship and financial

¹ “The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language.” 2014, <https://www.ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=Museums>.

² James Vaughan, “America’s Historic Sites at a Crossroads,” *Forum Journal* 22 (2008):5-9.

stability, granted so long as museums are providing them with more meaningful and engaging experiences that serve individuals and communities as a whole.³

Another reason why museums are placing more emphasis on building community relationships is because of the position and responsibility museums have to educate and foster a sense of interconnectedness amongst visitors. The concept of social responsibility is explored in the book *Looking Reality in the Eye*, a collection of essays that address ways in which museums can and should reach out to their communities. The authors of the book explain that there has been a growing awareness in the museum world that the interconnectedness of “families, organizations, the environment, and the whole of humanity” is inexplicably linked to the needs and health of society and our environment.⁴ As social institutions, museums have the ability and potential to create positive and meaningful educational experiences for their visitors, but their unique position in society also means that their exhibitions and programs can effect positive societal changes, such as influencing deeper inter-cultural understanding or by raising awareness of various social and environmental issues.⁵

This idea is further confirmed in Wilkening and Chung’s book *Life Stages of the Museum Visitor*, who found in a study done on museum visitors that 80 percent of people polled believed that strong community institutions like museums, libraries, cultural and historical societies, etc., were the most important factors to a good community.⁶ According to this same study, the majority of people polled felt that museums contributed an important “sense of place” to a community, and that museum education and family programs in particular helped to bring people

³ Vaughn, 6.

⁴ Robert Janes and Gerald T. Conaty, ed. *Looking Reality in the Eye: Museums and Social Responsibility* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 10.

⁵ *Ibid*, 11.

⁶ James Chung and Susie Wilkening, *Life Stages a/the Museum Visitor: Building Engagement Over a Lifetime* (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 2009), 4.

in the community together and increased the overall quality of life.⁷ While educational programming is certainly one way for museums to create more relevant and meaningful experiences for community audiences, museums need to first understand the specific groups of people they need to reach out to, and what their particular needs and interests are.

Many museums are now designing education programs to fit the needs for specific groups of people, such as families with young children, school-aged children, elderly adults, adults with special needs, children with special needs, etc. Museum programming for adolescents is now of particular concern because, as Wilkening and Chung found in a different study, less than a third of adolescents regularly visited museums.⁸ Even less likely to visit museums are teenagers from economically or socially disadvantaged backgrounds, sometimes described as “at-risk youth.”⁹ While more museums are looking to remedy this statistic by developing education programs for at-risk youth, there is another demographic which museums should also consider and be concerned with; juvenile offenders.

“Juvenile offenders” is the term used for groups of adolescents who have already crossed the line from being “at-risk” to those actively engaging in criminal behavior and have gotten in trouble with the law. Often labeled as juvenile delinquents, these youthful offenders have the same socio-economic disadvantages that “at-risk youth” have with the additional challenges brought on by having criminal records. As such, these kids have higher rates of recidivism with crime, in part due to suspended opportunities for education and because of the social stigmatization and marginalization they experience once they go back into society.¹⁰ Due to the ineffectiveness that the punishment model system has on the overall and future well-being of

⁷ Chung and Wilkening, 5.

⁸ Ibid, 71.

⁹ Ibid, 72.

¹⁰ “The Cost of Confinement,” *Justice Policy Institute*, 2009, http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/09_05_rep_costsofconfinement_jj_ps.pdf.

these kids, some juvenile court systems have made efforts to change the way in which they approach the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders. Rather than keeping to the old punishment model of sentencing and incarceration, more courts are now instituting alternative sentencing plans based on education models.¹¹ Examples of the types of programs this initiative provides includes employment counseling, job skills training, anger management, and substance abuse treatment.¹² Collaborations with cultural institutions has also become an area that some juvenile court systems are exploring, in order to provide young offenders with enhancement programs that not only educate, but also inspire, encourage, and motivate.

Museums, as social and cultural institutions, are in a prime position to work with their local county court systems to help develop these kinds of educational and enhancement programs for juvenile offenders. Museums can, by openly welcoming juvenile offenders through their doors, address the needs of struggling adolescents through content and object-based learning, and through the social and personal resources that such institutions can provide. Through careful consideration of child development-- and through collaboration with detention centers, local court judges, court officers, and court liaisons-- art, history, and science museums can develop meaningful and engaging education programs that fit the needs of underserved adolescents, and can thereby assert a more socially responsible role in their communities. This thesis explores current museum programming for juvenile offenders at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, and at the San Diego Museum of Art in San Diego, California. Each case study will present detailed explanations about the museum programs, the collaboration efforts involved with each, how the success (or lack of) with each program was

¹¹ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, "Building Audience: Juvenile Delinquents at the Clark," in *Inspiring Action: Museums and Social Change*, ed. MuseumsEtc (Edinburgh: MuseumsEtc, 2009), 245.

¹² *Ibid*, 246.

measured, and whether or not the adolescents who participated in the programs significantly benefitted from what they learned.

By establishing the need for social activism and community engagement in the museum, identifying the needs and characteristics of juvenile offenders, assembling the benefits of at-risk youth and juvenile offender programming found in museum and other literature, and finally by exploring case-studies of museum programming for juvenile offenders, this thesis argues that the museum setting is particularly well suited for providing juvenile offenders with an engaging educational experience that is practical, can provide them with a creative outlet, and can encourage a sense of purpose and competency that may help them with their future endeavors.

Chapter 1: Social Relevancy and Social Activism in Museums

Before analyzing museum educational programming for youthful offenders, it is necessary to examine its historical and current purpose to society, and determine whether or not programs aimed at promoting social activism and enhancing social responsibility are appropriate and worthwhile endeavors for museums to undertake.

Historically speaking, museums have always had a social aspect to their missions, and have been built with the intention to educate and benefit society in one way or another. One only has to look at the history of museums in order to see how their missions were influenced by a sense of responsibility to “civilize” society. In fact, the idea of museums as agents of well-being goes back to the ancient roots of where early museums began. The first museum-like structures, referred to as mouseions, were essentially temples that were supposed to grace their worshipers with insight and creativity relative to the arts and humanities.¹³ The most famous mouseion, the Great Museum of Alexandria founded in Egypt in the third century B.C., was said to have provided observatories, lectures, and a library that housed a great collection for the purpose that the mouseion would be an institute of advanced study.¹⁴

During the Renaissance period in Europe, long after the fabled mouseions of antiquity ceased to exist, the idea of the “museum” would be used in three different texts describing the perfect society. Based on the theory that universal education leads to a better world, one such text written by Johann Valentin Andreae in 1619, entitled *Christianapolis*, envisioned a utopian society centered around college-like institutions housing vast collections of artifacts and literature.¹⁵ Drawing on the few surviving references of the mouseion of Alexandria, as well as

¹³ Lois Silverman, *The Social Work of Museums* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2010): 6.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 6.

¹⁵ Andrew McClellan, *The Art Museum From Boullee to Bilbao*, (Berkeley: University of California, 2008): 15.

the famous academies of Plato and Aristotle, Andreae's writings fashioned the museum as a compendium of the world and a symbol of a harmonious and well-ordered society.¹⁶

These early representations of museum structures were also influenced by the rise of the curiosity cabinets. Cabinets of curiosity emerged starting in the 1500s as European explorers and scientists traveled the world and brought back natural and man-made items, accumulated from their travels, which they carefully arranged in their homes for private enjoyment and to show off to select visitors.¹⁷ Although these cabinets were not public in nature, they were intended by the collectors to help compartmentalize and interpret the natural world and other cultures for visiting people who would never have the opportunity to travel to the same far-off places on their own.¹⁸ In this sense, even these early museum prototypes served a social role as they existed to foster education and self-awareness for the collectors and their guests through the collection and display of artifacts.

The early imaginings of institutions of learning, coupled with the rise of collecting and displaying art and artifacts in physical spaces like the curiosity cabinets, prepared the way for the actual implementation of the modern museums starting in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This period of time in Europe is often coined as the Age of Enlightenment, and was characterized by a belief that everything in the world could be rationally explained through reason and scientific exploration.¹⁹ Those who promoted the Enlightenment believed that external conflicts arose from old societies because education based on religion and faith cultivated superstition which led to people's intolerance for one another.²⁰ Through education in scientific research and exploration of natural objects, it was thought that all people could become

¹⁶ McClellan, 16.

¹⁷ Dr. Petra Chu, History and Theory of Museums Lecture Series, Seton Hall University, 2013.

¹⁸ Chu, lecture.

¹⁹ McClellan, 18.

²⁰ Ibid 18.

enlightened about how the world works, which would in turn lead to more tolerant, peaceful, and reformed societies.

As a result of this kind of thinking, and compounded with the earlier ideas of museums being epicenters of utopian worlds, museums such as the Ashmolean were developed to promote the significance of inductive reasoning and empirical study in modern science through observation of physical objects, further aiding the education of future generations.²¹ As another example, after the French Revolution the Louvre was established and made to reflect the ideals of a superior and enlightened society by allowing all classes to view the collections inside, thereby inspiring enlightenment in others.²² Therefore, early museums, whether intentional or not, had social roles behind their construction and were built with the intention of benefitting visitors through use and study of the collections housed there. The emphasis on museums benefitting people in society would gradually become more prominent in later centuries.

Beginning in the mid-to late nineteenth century, countries like England and the United States struggled with the aftereffects of industrialization, such as increased poverty, overcrowding and poor sanitation. Within this environment, progressive museum thinkers started to establish theories about the positive effects museums could have upon the general public, and therefore improve the conditions of modern society.²³

One such progressive thinker was Sir Henry Cole, founder of the South Kensington Museum in London, who wrote in 1884 of his wish to “Open all museums of Science and Art after the hours of Divine service; let the working man get his refreshment there in company with his wife

²¹ Chu, lecture.

²² McClellan, 18.

²³ T. Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), quoted in Lois Silverman, *The Social Work of Museums* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2010): 8.

and children ... The Museum will certainly lead him to wisdom and gentleness.”²⁴ Cole’s contemporary Matthew Arnold expressed similar opinions. His writings are described in Andrew McClellan’s book *The Art Museum from Boullée’ to Bilbao*, which explains that “Arnold stressed the value of embracing ‘all our fellow men’ - not least ‘the raw and unkindled masses’ in the ‘sweetness and light’ of high culture ... The purpose of culture and its broad dissemination was to bring about the ‘general expansion of the human family’ and to ‘leave the world better and happier than we found it.’”²⁵ Whereas museums were originally visited more by the wealthy and privileged classes, these nineteenth-century authors deemed museums as educational institutions that could afford a great service to the working classes who did not have the same access to education that the wealthier classes did. In this sense, these writers believed that museums could benefit society by opening doors to the general public who could then find themselves refreshed, educated, and inspired through exposure to art and artifacts.

Many American cities faced similar social challenges as a result of industrialization, to a somewhat greater extent due to the large influx of foreign immigrants who moved to these cities during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. American museums grew along with American cities as urban populations increased, and many immigrant families suffered under the strains of poverty and poor sanitation within a new landscape and society they were not familiar with. In turn, many museums made efforts to establish themselves as public and “civilizing” institutions as a way of providing aid and education to struggling families.²⁶ Incidentally, settlement houses were also established in the U.S. around this same time. These were

²⁴ Henry Cole, *Fifty Years of Public Work of Sir Henry Cole* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1884), quoted in Lois Silverman, *The Social Work of Museums* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2010), 9.

²⁵ Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, Reprint 1994), quoted in Andrew McClellan, *The Art Museum from Boullée to Bilbao* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 24-5.

²⁶ Steven Conn, *Museums and American Intellectual Life, 1876-1926*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 6.

community-based social service organizations in which activists could assist the poor and the newly-arrived immigrant families.²⁷ These settlement houses established their own museums, like the Hull-House Labor Museum, which drew upon some of the same humanitarian ideas from philosophers like Sir Henry Cole.²⁸ The public museums and settlement house museums depended on the idea that the unique environment of the museum could be a powerful social service tool, and actively created educational programs that not only allowed families to learn various craft-making and practical skills to help improve their lives and acclimate to American society, but that also served to help bridge the gap between different social and ethnic classes.²⁹

It was also during the nineteenth century that the idea that museums should address and meet certain needs of a wider public audience was first cultivated. Museum collections were no longer the sole conduit of education to the visitor. Actual programs that provided interpretation and taught certain skills in relation to the collections were being offered by museums to those interested in participating. This change was further developed by the early and mid-twentieth century in America, and aided greatly by the museum visionary John Cotton Dana and the founding of the American Association of Museums.

In 1916, John Cotton Dana expanded upon the ideas of social responsibility to museum visitors, first approached by Cole and Arnold, in his publication for the AAM entitled “Increasing the Usefulness of Museums.” In this publication Dana wrote, “The goodness of the museum is not in direct ratio to the cost of its building and its upkeep thereof, or to the rarity, auction-value, or money cost of its collection. A museum is good only in so far as it is of use... Common sense demands that a publicly supported institution do something for its supporters.”³⁰ Similar to the

²⁷ Silverman, 8.

²⁸ Ibid, 9.

²⁹ Ibid, 9.

³⁰ John Cotton Dana, “Increasing the Usefulness of Museums,” in *The New Museum: Selected Writings by John*

mission behind the settlement-house museums, Dana's idea of a socially responsible museum was one that not only was accessible to all, but actually improved the lives of its visitors as well.

The evolution museums experienced since Dana's publication and throughout the twentieth century is best described by Kenneth Hudson in his article for *Museum International*:

“The most fundamental change that has affected museums during the past half-century... is the now almost universal conviction that they exist in order to serve the public. The old-style museum felt itself under no such obligation. It existed, it had a building, it had collections and a staff to look after them. It was reasonably adequately financed, and its visitors, usually not numerous, came to look, to wonder and to admire what was set before them. They were in no sense partners in the enterprise. The museum's prime responsibility was to its collections, not to its visitors.”³¹

In other words, more museums in the twentieth century placed greater emphasis on visitor engagement and regarded their responsibility towards society just as essential to their missions as their care to the collections. Landmark moments that helped to cement this shift in museum missions was the creation of the Museum Educators professional association within the AAM in the 1970s, and the publication of “Excellence and Equity” by the American Association of Museums in 1992, which clearly outlines the AAM's commitment to public service.³² The introduction of this document describes the three “key ideas” presented within the report;

- “1. The commitment to education as central to the museum's public service must be clearly expressed in every museum's mission and pivotal to every museum's activities.
2. Museums must become more inclusive places that welcome diverse audiences, but first they should reflect our society's pluralism in every aspect of their operations and programs.
3. Dynamic, forceful leadership from individuals, institutions, and organizations within and outside the museum community is the key to fulfilling museums' potential of public service in the coming century.”³³

Cotton Dana, ed. William A. Peniston (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1999), 102.

³¹ Kenneth Hudson, “The Museum Refuses to Stand Still,” *Museum International* 197 (1998): 43.

³² Stephen Weil, “From Being About Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum,” *Making Museums Matter* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2002): 234.

³³ Bonnie Pitman, introduction to “Excellence in Equity,” ed. Ellen Cochran Hirzy (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1991): 3-4.

The text of “Excellence in Equity” goes on to reveal the goal behind these three key ideas; “By making a commitment to equity in public service, museums can be an integral part of the human experience, thus helping to create the sense of inclusive community so often missing in our society.”³⁴ By officially publishing a document in support of community-oriented services, the AAM made social engagement, described as active education, diversity of audiences and opinions, and responsibility to the needs of the community, an expectation and requirement of museum best practices in America.³⁵

Further evidence of the museum field’s transition to public service goals can be found in changes that have occurred within the International Council of Museums (ICOM) over the last few decades. In 1971 at the ninth General Conference of ICOM, a resolution was passed urging museums to reassess the needs of their publics in order to “more firmly establish their educational and cultural role in the service of mankind” particularly designing programs to fit the social environments in which museums operate in.³⁶ Following this resolution, ICOM amended their membership requirement statutes in order to redefine eligible museums as those that have the purpose of serving the community or society in its development.³⁷ Then in 2007 the official ICOM definition of museums was changed so that, unlike previous definitions which focused more on the importance of the object, the importance of the social role of museums was emphasized first;

“A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.”³⁸

³⁴ Ed. Ellen Cochran Hirzy, “Excellence in Equity”(Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1991): 6.

³⁵ Weil, 235.

³⁶ Ibid, 237.

³⁷ Ibid, 236.

³⁸ “Museum Definition,” *International Council of Museums*, 2012, <http://icom.museum/the-vision/museumdefinition/>.

In light of these changes, museums around the country have made great efforts to improve public service goals and education programs in order to meet the needs of museum audiences. Contemporary opinions differ on exactly what roles museums should play within their communities, and just how far museums should go in the way of social activism. Museum professionals still struggle to define their responsibilities to their communities, and many worry that increasing time and resources put towards addressing community needs will mean the neglect of museum collections and academic scholarship.³⁹ Despite these concerns, there is still a major movement within many museums towards undertaking more community oriented and socially active roles. In her article “Being Responsive to Be Responsible” Claudia Ocello clearly states the supportive argument for museum community involvement;

“These museums [are] doing social service work using the museum's resources, [and] that the long-term gains of such social service efforts for both the museums and its audiences outweigh a perceived division of resources ... Museums - if they are willing to accept this challenge and are poised for change - should embrace this expanded vision to become more responsive and relevant to society, consequently encouraging sustainability- both as a way to keep the doors open as well as fulfill their mission.”⁴⁰

History shows that museums have always had socially-enriching and community-benefitting roles behind their conception. This responsibility towards society has grown in prominence within the last century as museum education has become more professionalized in the museum world, and will likely continue to become a higher priority for museums. It stands to reason that when museums assume responsibility toward their communities, and find ways of using their resources to affect positive changes, then it is appropriate for museums to design programming for more underserved audiences, such as juvenile offenders. By addressing the needs of groups of

³⁹ Weil, 230.

⁴⁰ Claudia Ocello, “Being Responsive to Be Responsible,” in *Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics of the Twenty-First Century Museum*, ed. Janet Marstine (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2011): 188.

adolescents who are typically not seen in museums and who are underserved in society, museums can utilize their resources to provide learning opportunities for these teens, thereby benefitting the community, and perhaps instigating social change.

Chapter 2: Examining the American Juvenile Justice System

In order for museums to best understand how they can approach outreach and program initiatives for juvenile offenders, some basic understanding about how the Juvenile Justice System works in the United States is imperative. This section will explore the history of the American juvenile justice system, provide a brief explanation of how the current system works, and outline some contemporary critiques on its effectiveness in regards to supporting and rehabilitating youthful offenders.

It is a troubling fact that since the year 2002, the United States has had the highest rates of criminal incarceration in the world.⁴¹ For as long as the justice system has been in place in this country, imprisonment has been the most used source of justice and punishment. Incarceration is not limited to adults who break the law, but extends to children as young as age ten. Each year, more than a million juveniles are arrested for various offenses ranging from murder to truancy, and there are currently more than 3,000 courts across the U.S. designed to hear juvenile cases.⁴² The process and degree of sentencing and punishment for adolescents differs from those of adult offenders, however many critics condemn the methods taken by some juvenile court systems and argue that the system rarely results in rehabilitation of behavior.

Those who fall under the category of “juvenile offender” are more commonly referred to as “juvenile delinquents.” A juvenile is defined as a person who has not yet reached the age of the majority, and are therefore held to different standards of behavior and rules than those for adults.⁴³ Delinquency refers to criminal law violations that would be considered crimes if committed by adults, but because juvenile delinquents are minors, usually between the ages of 10

⁴¹ “US Has World’s Highest Incarceration Rate,” *Population Reference Bureau*, 2014, <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2012/us-incarceration.aspx>.

⁴² James A. Inciardi, *Criminal Justice*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 2010): 557.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 554.

and 18, they are subject to being adjudicated under an alternative justice system than that for adults.⁴⁴ Along with criminal law violations, such as those listed in the FBI's *Uniform Crime Reports*, juveniles can also be charged with committing a status offence-- an act declared by statute to be a crime because it violates behavior standards of children (i.e. truancy and running away).⁴⁵ One other circumstance in which juveniles can fall within the jurisdiction of the court is if the child is a victim of abuse, neglect, or abandonment by their guardians, in which case the courts have a right to intervene.⁴⁶ Modern juvenile court systems are primarily designed with the intent to protect and rehabilitate juvenile offenders, doing what is in the best interest of the child. Although juvenile court procedures vary from state to state, all juvenile courts share the same general underlying philosophy that was developed in the United States over the last century.⁴⁷

The juvenile justice system evolved under the belief that deviant children ought to be protected and corrected rather than strictly punished. This was not always the case, for before the nineteenth century, children were held to adult standards of behavior, and in the occurrence of a criminal offense children were held, tried, and sometimes executed in the same manner as adults.⁴⁸ Reformation of juvenile justice began in the early nineteenth century, but was limited to only a few jurisdictions. The separation of juveniles from adults in trial proceedings first occurred in Chicago in 1861, and marked the beginning of widespread reform.⁴⁹ This interest in the reformation of juvenile justice coincided with a growing awareness in the U.S. of the influence that culture and environment can have on individual behavior, preceding the rise of the progressive movement and growth in the fields of psychology and sociology.⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Inciardi, 554.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 554.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 555.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 555.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 555.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 555.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 556.

Early juvenile justice reform efforts were heavily promoted by philanthropists, penologists, and women's organizations.⁵¹ Those who sought to reform juvenile justice recognized a correspondence between juvenile offenders and parental neglect and abuse. Thus, the juvenile justice reformers adopted a new philosophy based on the concept of *parens patriae*, meaning "the state as parent."⁵² This essentially meant that under U.S. jurisdiction, the courts had a right to intervene in property matters to protect the rights of children who were not being appropriately taken care of by their parents or guardians. Under the belief that the parents had failed, the courts could take over the role of parent, diagnose the problem of what caused a child to go astray, and then prescribe the appropriate treatment.⁵³ With children in the custody of the state, actions taken in juvenile courts were thought to be in the best interest of the child, under the assumption that judicial actions would result in positive behavioral changes and total rehabilitation of young offenders. This entire movement crystallized in 1899 with the passage of the Illinois Juvenile Court Act, establishing the first statewide juvenile court system that would eventually be adopted in every state of the U.S.⁵⁴

Modern juvenile courts have slightly different procedures within different jurisdictions, and they vary in terms of their sophistication and organization. However, the system of processing juvenile offenders works similarly from state to state. Every year more than a million juveniles are arrested for offenses ranging from murder to curfew violations.⁵⁵ A third of these offenses result in release with a warning, but when a teen is brought to the attention of the courts, a petition is filed specifying the alleged offense or delinquency which initiates the judicial

⁵¹ Inciardi, 555.

⁵² Ibid, 555.

⁵³ Ibid, 556.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 556.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 557.

process.⁵⁶

After the petition is filed, an intake hearing is held as a preliminary examination of the case in order to determine whether or not the case is worth the time and expense of a formal court processing.⁵⁷ When the intake decision recommends a hearing before a juvenile court judge, most states require a detention hearing to determine whether the child should be released to a parent or guardian or retained in custody.⁵⁸ If the child is not released through bail, an adjudication inquiry will follow which is similar to an intake hearing except that a magistrate oversees the process.

At this point, a youth can be given the option of being diverted to a community agency for counseling and treatment rather than proceed with official adjudication.⁵⁹ If they refuse, then they go on to an adjudication hearing, which is legally classified as a civil rather than a criminal proceeding.⁶⁰ The presiding judge can determine to dismiss the case or schedule a disposition hearing. At disposition hearings, the juvenile court judges can choose from a wide range of actions to conclude the case. They have the authority to dismiss, offer a warning, impose a fine, order payment of restitution, order community service, refer the youth to a community agency or treatment facility, or place the child on probation under the supervision of a court officer.⁶¹ However, they may also have the youth committed to a juvenile institution, which is one of the most common dispositions.⁶²

Despite the reformatory roots of the juvenile justice system in America, this system has drawn criticism about the efficacy and fairness of the process, as well as questions about whether

⁵⁶ Inciardi, 557.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 560.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 560.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 562.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 562.

⁶¹ Ibid, 563.

⁶² Ibid, 563.

or not the system is truly structured to handle children in their best interests. One controversial issue is the disparity in which certain demographics of juveniles are arrested and detained, as well as the discrepancy in the way different courts around the country handle juvenile cases. Since the U.S. lacks a federal juvenile justice system, state jurisdictions are left to dictate how to prosecute juvenile offenders, having the power to decide if an offender should be tried in an adult court in order to commit a harsher sentence. Some jurisdictions around the country have lowered the age limit for trying criminal offenses to age 16 or 17, and there are others that will try juveniles for serious and violent crimes in the same manner as adults no matter how young the perpetrator.

Another issue is that despite efforts to decriminalize status offenders, in some jurisdictions kids who are runaways, truants, curfew violators, etc. are still given the same delinquent status and are incarcerated in the same facilities with hard-core offenders.⁶³ Aside from the dangerous implications this can have for status offenders (which will be discussed further) this can also lead to overcrowding in detention centers, and highlights the significant problem of juvenile courts dealing with incredibly high numbers of status offenders--when many of their offenses could be properly handled by social service agencies instead--taking away time and resources that courts need to effectively deal with more serious criminal offences.⁶⁴

The temporary detention of juvenile offenders pending court action presents more significant problems for both juvenile justice officials and youths held in custody. Preventative detention for juvenile arrestees was first sanctioned by the Supreme Court's ruling in *Schall v. Martin*, which held that detention of an accused juvenile delinquent was permissible when there was evidence

⁶³ Inciardi, 567.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 568.

that the youth presented a risk of committing a crime before the adjudication of the case.⁶⁵

Although juvenile detention is upheld as a form of community protection, and youths are only held for a limited amount of time, most detention centers are condemned as being depressing and dangerous places for kids. Youths--including those who are status offenders or dependent, neglected, and abused children-- often find themselves held in relatively close contact with juvenile and adult jail populations while they are in detention. In some jurisdictions, youths are even held in adult facilities. As such, youthful offenders are often at risk of being assaulted and victimized while in detention, but the exact figures of these incidents are unknown since most go unreported.⁶⁶

The high reliance on incarcerating offenders in juvenile correction facilities is also called into question in regards to the safety of the environment for juveniles, and the whether or not these facilities actually instigate rehabilitation and encourage reform. Although youth incarceration rates have dropped 46 percent around the country in the last 15 years, and there are now more juvenile offenders being sentenced to community-based treatment programs (e.g. probation, drug abuse programs, remedial education, foster homes, and counseling facilities) many are still sent to correctional institutions for their crimes.⁶⁷

There are two main types of correctional institutions for juveniles. There are the cottage systems which have dormitory rooms rather than cells, and work around a more campus-like environment. Then there are the secure training and industrial schools for serious offenders which closely resemble medium-security penitentiaries for adults.⁶⁸ One of the criticisms over the wide use of these facilities is that they are costly for taxpayers across the states. Taxpayers

⁶⁵ Inciardi, 573.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 573.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 573.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 573.

spend hundreds of dollars a day, and in some places hundreds of thousands of dollars a year, on the confinement of youths. In a survey of state expenditures on confinement in 46 states, the Justice Policy Institute (JPI) found that the average costs of the most expensive confinement option for a young person was \$407.58 per day, \$36,682 per three months, \$73,364 per six months, and \$148,767 per year.⁶⁹ In addition, taxpayers incur substantial expenses associated with processing young offenders through the juvenile justice system, lost tax revenues, and additional public assistance spending associated with lost earning capacity of young people who do not successfully transition into adulthood and obtain jobs.⁷⁰

There is also a growing concern that confining high numbers of youths in juvenile correction facilities can negatively impact individuals and communities. This is in part due to the emotional toll placed on the youths and their families during the incarceration period. Separating youths from their families can increase anxiety and stress for all who are involved, and if the adolescents have pre-existing mental conditions then the new and sometimes harsh environment of the correction facilities can exacerbate their condition.⁷¹ When juvenile offenders are incarcerated they are also at a higher risk of experiencing physical or sexual assault by staff or other inmates. Exact numbers of how often this happens are difficult to determine since not all incidents of abuse are reported, but according to one victimization survey done in 2012 about 4.8 percent of incarcerated youth admitted to being forced to engage in sexual acts with either staff or other youths.⁷² Those juveniles who are tried as adults and then sent to adult facilities are more than five times as likely to experience sexual assault, adding to the earlier issue presented over some

⁶⁹ “Sticker Shock: Calculating the Full Price Tag for Youth Incarceration,” *Justice Policy Institute* 4, 2014, http://www.justicepolicy.org/uploads/justicepolicy/documents/sticker_shock_final_v2.pdf.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 19.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 30.

⁷² *Ibid*, 31.

jurisdictions trying adolescents as adults.⁷³ Understandably, those adolescents who are victims of traumatic experiences are likely to suffer from physical and psychological issues as a result of violence and rape, leading to long-term effects well into adulthood.

There is also evidence that sentencing juveniles to spend time in correction facilities can often result in high recidivism rates. Findings from three different studies done from 2007 to 2013 found that on average juvenile incarceration increases the likelihood of youths re-offending and returning to facilities again in the future by up to about 26 percent.⁷⁴ Studies have shown that while youths are in correction facilities, they can sometimes form themselves into gangs, and become more prone to deviant and criminal behavior due to the environment and people around them while they are confined. There is also strong evidence that incarceration impedes on youth education and their transition into adulthood. Going through the juvenile justice system can disrupt a youth's normal education and school routine, and if they do get sent to correction facilities they are likely to fall behind in their education. Those who are arrested and sentenced while in high school are more than twice as likely to drop out of high school. One summary of research found that less than 20 percent of incarcerated youth finish high school or go on to receive a GED.⁷⁵ Failure to complete high school can have long-term consequences on future job prospects, lowering the chances for former juvenile offenders to make living wages. This can also increase the chance of juvenile offenders engaging in more criminal activity as they go on into adulthood.

Not all juvenile correction facilities are the same, and there are many correctional facilities around the U.S. that provide a variety of educational and treatment programs for juveniles.

However, despite the quality of the settings and the services available, all correctional facilities

⁷³ "Sticker Shock", 35.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 23.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 29.

are still places of confinement that can work against true rehabilitation.⁷⁶ Essentially, these facilities are still prisons, which at times can subject adolescents to demeaning and harsh treatment, and can only provide temporary programs and services while juveniles are contained there. Considering the various criticisms of juvenile detention and incarceration, recent studies suggest that a broad range of community-based treatment initiatives and alternative sentencing is favored rather than imprisonment as a response to juvenile crime. Instead of trying children in adult courts and sending the majority of them to detention centers and correction facilities where they receive, at best, only temporary care and education--and where they are often at risk of assault--an alternative solution that can address their specific needs and provide them greater opportunities would be a preferable circumstance in the long term.

⁷⁶ Inciardi, 574.

Chapter 3: Who Are Juvenile Offenders? Needs and Identifiers

When considering how to be more socially responsible and how to engage more with communities, museums need to understand the groups of people living in their community who are typically underserved and could benefit the most from what museums have to offer. As stated earlier, one such group to consider are juvenile offenders; adolescents who are detained and convicted of committing crimes. The purpose of this chapter will be to first identify common characteristics and behavioral patterns of adolescent children, and will go on to explain the general needs and common identifiers of adolescent children labeled as juvenile offenders.

Adolescent Children: Characteristics and Behaviors

Most contemporary psychologists and developmental theorists identify the period of adolescence as when children are between the ages of 10 and 18 years of age (sometimes breaking this period into early and late adolescence). Adolescence is characterized as a time of dramatic physical growth and equally dramatic reorganizations of learning processes and relationships.⁷⁷ The physical changes that boys and girls experience, resulting from the onset of puberty, can oftentimes be disconcerting or awkward, and can contribute to feelings of insecurity and a heightened sensitivity to how others perceive them.⁷⁸ Along with outward changes, adolescent children also experience dramatic changes in the brain, with synaptic pruning and myelination making the brain more efficient in transmitting neurons.⁷⁹ The tremendous release of hormones and the dramatic changes that occur in the brain and physique has a direct correlation to the cognitive, emotional, social, and moral development of children in early and late adolescence.

Cognitive development primarily refers to how children develop intellectually and how they

⁷⁷ T. McDevitt & J. Ormond, *Child Development and Education* (New York: Pearson, 2013), 23.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 24.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 159.

process information as they learn new concepts and grow towards maturity.⁸⁰ The stage theorist Jean Piaget believed that children in early adolescence fall into the formal operations period of development. This means that as children are maturing into adulthood, they develop a greater capacity to think systematically on a more abstract plane of thought.⁸¹ Physically, this theory relates to the continuing development of the cortex in the adolescent brain and the maturation of synaptic connections.⁸² As their brain matures this also means that children develop more sophisticated cognitive processes, such as focusing their attention to single tasks for lengthy periods of time, being able to draw upon their long-term memory and current knowledge base to apply to newly learned concepts, and engaging in symbolic reasoning.⁸³ Current cognitive theorists now agree that Piaget's theories should be looked at as gradual trends rather than distinct stages, and that children's cognitive abilities actually develop at a more uneven pace with some appearing earlier or later depending on the child and that child's experiences and cultural context.⁸⁴ In looking at this from a more sociocultural perspective, the way in which adults and educators can help children make sense of their experiences can greatly enhance their education.⁸⁵

Along with the changes that happen with teenager's cognitive abilities, many transformations also take place in regards to their emotional development. Erik Erikson, a psychodynamic theorist who believed that people grow emotionally from challenges they face in life, suggested that people go through eight psychosocial stages in which people grow and learn

⁸⁰ A. Grinder & S. McCoy, *How People Learn. The Good Guide: A Sourcebook for Interpreters, Docents, and Tour Guides* (Scottsdale: Ironwood Publishers, 1985), 28.

⁸¹ W. Crain, (2000). *Theories of Development* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2000), 113.

⁸² McDevitt & Ormord, 167.

⁸³ Ibid, 256.

⁸⁴ Ibid, 206.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 216.

as they address certain challenges associated with each stage.⁸⁶ According to Erikson, adolescent children are in the identity versus role confusion stage, meaning they “wrestle with questions about who they are and how they fit into the adult world.”⁸⁷ This preoccupation with identity and the search for where they fit in will often mean that children will experiment with a variety of actions, behaviors, and attitudes in order to help them achieve a sense of identity.⁸⁸ In some cases, this identity challenge will lead kids to engage in more risky behavior. In part due to chemical imbalances in the brain, as well as more preoccupation with wanting to be accepted by peers, these risks can take the form of criminal misconduct, experimentation with drugs or alcohol, or unprotected sex.⁸⁹

Also stemming from their growing experiences and their search for identity, adolescents learn new ways to emotionally respond to certain events, and how they do so is strongly tied to various biological and environmental factors. Biologically speaking, rising hormone levels in children at this age can cause an increase in moodiness and sensitivity in girls, while rising testosterone levels in boys can manifest in more aggressive and rebellious behavior.⁹⁰ Adolescents will often express their changing emotions in different ways depending on what their cultural background and socioeconomic status is like. Different families often have a large influence on how they socialize their children to express emotion, with some families being more open to emotional displays than others.⁹¹ If a family is experiencing economic hardship, that can also reflect in the emotional behavior of children. While it is not always the case, oftentimes children from impoverished circumstances feel more anxiety, depression, and anger, and may be

⁸⁶ McDevitt & Ormord, 418.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 419.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 419.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 168.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 438.

⁹¹ Ibid, 439.

exposed to more violence depending on where they live and what their neighborhoods are like.⁹² Combined with the increase of extreme emotions due to puberty, and depending on what the culture and family life is like, children who come from tough backgrounds may be prone to more behavioral issues and disruptions in class. Academic problems often become more pronounced during adolescence, and can lead some children to disengage from school activities if they encounter frequent failure and little support.⁹³

Other studies show that as children in this age group are developing a deeper sense of self, they are also more conscientious of other people's perspectives.⁹⁴ As children enter into early adolescence, their sense of self-worth depends more on their peers' opinions of them. This relates to Erikson's belief that in order for children to establish a healthy sense of identity, they need to form significant and trusting bonds throughout their life. This need for relatedness is manifested in early childhood through attachments between children and caregivers. As children grow into adolescence and experience more routine separations from family members, they look to establish stronger attachments with their peers, and are more preoccupied by establishing romantic relationships, as a way of solidifying their sense of self.⁹⁵ The approval of family members and educators is still important, but typically teenagers will place more value on being popular and will follow the behaviors of their peers to become so.⁹⁶ This contingent self-worth is also often a factor in the emotional behaviors of children, for by relying so heavily on what others think of them children can vacillate between elation and devastation very quickly depending on how classmates have treated them at any given time.⁹⁷ In addition to this, many

⁹² McDevitt & Ormord, 439.

⁹³ Ibid, 27.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 458.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 424.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 462.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 462.

teenagers will adopt an imaginary audience, where they believe they are the center of attention and will be so preoccupied with how they appear that they will change the way they speak and act according to who they are interacting with at a particular moment.⁹⁸ A healthy sense of self can be significantly impacted if social attachments between adolescents and their friends and families are disrupted in any way, having serious implications since those with a favorable sense of who they are respond more positively to the things that happen to them.⁹⁹

Along with their developing sense of self, research shows that children's social cognition and their ability to interpret what other people think and feel is highly dependent on their various cognitive and emotional skills.¹⁰⁰ This is because perceiving information about the social world is acquired through observation and the ability to interpret what was observed. Psychoanalyst Robert Selman developed a five-stage model of children's social-cognitive development, and it was his belief that children starting around 12-years of age acquire more self-reflective thinking and perspective skills.¹⁰¹ This means that children can understand that other people have different values, feelings, and thoughts from their own, and they can make inferences about the perspectives of other people while thinking subjectively about their own behavior. Children are also in the beginning stages of gaining mutual perspective at this age, where they can think of multiple and neutral perspectives and generalize concepts in a larger social picture.¹⁰²

However, for children in early adolescence it is easier for them to consider the perspectives of people they know and like, since they likely share similar thoughts and experiences, so there is still room for developing broader and more subjective perspectives.¹⁰³ Because of this

⁹⁸ McDevitt & Ormord, 465.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 458.

¹⁰⁰ Grinder & McCoy, 32.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 34.

¹⁰² Ibid, 34.

¹⁰³ McDevitt & Ormord, 482.

inclination to affiliate more closely with people they share similarities with, many adolescents tend to categorize other people into specific niches. This tendency to pigeonhole peers into groups, such as jocks or junkies, is a way in which children can better make sense of who they are and where they want to fit in.¹⁰⁴ This means friendships amongst peers will intensify, but this can also mean that children will become increasingly jealous and clingy to the friends they make. This development also accounts for why children in this age group more often than not think in terms of having an imaginary audience, and are more self-conscious, but it also highlights the importance of peer relationships to children in early adolescence.¹⁰⁵ While their preoccupation with peer acceptance can sometimes have negative consequences for kids who feel pressured into engaging in bad behavior, this period of intense peer bonding can also help children refine their social skills, as they become more perceptive to other people's needs and discover what it takes to establish long-lasting relationships in the future.¹⁰⁶

As children grow and develop more advanced cognitive, emotional, and social abilities, they also develop morally and gain more mature understandings of good and bad behavior.¹⁰⁷ For children who are entering adolescence, their decisions on how to behave morally often reflect their developing social perspective skills and their changing emotions. Their growing cognitive development helps them to reasonably consider various moral issues, while their developing sense of self can include an integration of moral values that they've gleaned from parents, peers, educators, religion, and cultural traditions.¹⁰⁸ While their moral reasoning can vary depending on different outside factors, most children in early adolescence will probably think of moral rules as standards that should be followed for their own sake, and tend to believe that those who

¹⁰⁴ McDevitt & Ormord, 575.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 581.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 571.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 534.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 543.

experience harsh and troubling situations are somehow responsible for it.¹⁰⁹ Those in late adolescence are more likely to exhibit high moral values and understand that conventions help society run more smoothly. Their stringency on moral rules can become more flexible, and in some cases adolescents are more apt to challenge certain rules if they go against what they think is fair or if it does not serve their particular needs.¹¹⁰

While their views on rules may be stringent at this age, adolescent children do tend to exhibit more sympathy and empathy for others as they grow older and experience more stressful situations.¹¹¹ This is important for educators and adults to foster since growing sympathy and empathy can help promote more prosocial behavior in children and can help curb aggression. By early adolescence, acts of physical aggression are less common in children, but relational aggression can be quite prevalent, particularly among girls, where aggression is manifested through name-calling, rumor spreading, online bullying, and ostracizing peers from social groups.¹¹² Prosocial behavior and aggression seen in children are often the result of environmental influences. While some children may be more biologically disposed towards aggression than others, and as stated before boys will often show more aggression due to their higher levels of testosterone, moral tendencies to restrain or exhibit aggression largely depend on the kind of care kids received from their parents and caregivers.¹¹³ Peer groups, culture, and socioeconomic influences also have a hand in either promoting or discouraging aggression or compassion in children, and similarly, the advancements that children make in their cognitive, emotional, and social development will also greatly influence how they perceive and react to

¹⁰⁹ McDevitt & Ormord, 542.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 542.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 549.

¹¹² Ibid, 549.

¹¹³ Ibid, 554.

what is right and wrong.¹¹⁴

There is no exact science for determining how and why adolescents think and behave in certain ways, but it is clear that the period of adolescent growth is one of profound change which can greatly influence the ways in which children develop cognitively, emotionally, and morally. By understanding some of the general characteristics of teenagers, and why they think and act in certain ways, museum educators can more easily understand the development of juvenile offenders and understand their particular needs.

Identifying Juvenile Offenders

It is a fact that the period of adolescence is one of dramatic change that can present new and challenging developmental experiences for children. For many teenagers today, this challenging period is compounded by problems that are the products of multiple and sometimes complex causes. In a sense, all adolescent children are more or less at risk of engaging in deviant and criminal behavior. Therefore it is not easy to generally classify and define those who are arrested and sentenced for juvenile offenses. However, crime statistics and literature regarding at-risk youth often identify common markers of juvenile offenders. These risk factors can correlate juvenile offenders with specific behavioral characteristics, as well as general environmental backgrounds.

Literature regarding juvenile offenders identifies observable and quantifiable risk factors to compare adolescents when establishing those who have committed crimes. When describing the status of “at-risk” youth, the article “Addressing the Needs of At-Risk and Adjudicated Youth,” by Scott, et al., outlines specific and observable environmental and behavioral risk factors for youths likely to become involved in the juvenile justice system. The authors identify the following factors;

¹¹⁴ McDevitt & Ormord, 555.

“Ethnic minority status;
 Aggressive, antisocial behavior;
 Difficulties in school and school failure (including educational disabilities);
 Family stresses, including: poverty; single parent home; inadequate parental supervision,
 and lax or inconsistent parental discipline; coercive family interactions; physical abuse;
 substance abuse (self or family); living in a high crime community; and criminal or
 delinquent relatives or peers.”¹¹⁵

When looking at who is most at risk for becoming involved in the juvenile justice system, in terms of gender, adolescent boys are far more likely to be arrested and sentenced for juvenile offenses. On average, boys represent about 70 percent of all juvenile arrests, and make up nearly 83 percent of arrests for violent crime.¹¹⁶ Adolescent girls are most often arrested for status offenses rather than criminal offenses, which also means girls are less often seen in residential placement and correction facilities.¹¹⁷ Although the demographic of juvenile arrests is dependent upon the overall population in a given area, generally juveniles who are arrested and sentenced are disproportionately black or Hispanic.¹¹⁸ The authors of the article quoted above listed ethnicity status as an identifier for at-risk youth, and indeed there is strong evidence of ethnic disparity within the juvenile justice system. In 2010, a study showed that white youths under the age of 18 made up 79 percent of the whole juvenile population in America. In comparison, black youths made up only 16 percent of the juvenile population, but almost 30 percent of the juvenile delinquency caseload.¹¹⁹ In some states, such as California, Hispanic youths make up for as much as 56 percent of all juvenile arrests. What is also interesting to note is that while 70 percent of juveniles arrested nationally are white youths, only 30 percent of them are sent to juvenile

¹¹⁵ Terrance Scott, C. Michael Nelson, Carl Liaupsin, Kristine Jolivette, Christine Christie, Mackenzie Riney, “Assessing the Needs of At-Risk and Adjudicated Youth through Positive Behavior Support: Effective Prevention Practices,” *Education and Treatment of Children* 25 no.5 (August 2002): 3.

¹¹⁶ “What Challenges Are Boys Facing, and What Opportunities Exist to Address Those Challenges?” *US Department of Health and Human Services Fact Sheet*, <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/08/boys/factsheets/jd/report.pdf>.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, 2.

¹¹⁸ Inciardi, 576.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, 576.

correction facilities, and only 20 percent are sent to adult prisons. In contrast, of the 30 percent of black youths who are arrested for juvenile crimes, 40 percent are placed in juvenile correction facilities and almost 60 percent are sent to adult prisons.¹²⁰ Although these gender and ethnicity statistics highlight who is most likely to go through the juvenile justice system and be sentenced to correction facilities, they are not indicators in of themselves for the potential for these youths to someday commit crimes. While statistics often show a correlation between juvenile crime and certain groups of people, these factors are not predictors of whether or not a person will engage in criminal activity. Rather, it is the environmental factors underlying the lives of individual juvenile offenders that should be analyzed in order to identify potential risk-factors.

In order to compare and measure various environmental factors, sources such as the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) can be consulted for quantifiable data. The OJJDP compiles arrest information provided by law enforcement agencies each year and creates reports examining the trends, rates and statistics of juvenile criminal activity. Every four years the OJJDP publishes a comprehensive study as part of its *Juvenile Offenders and Victims National Report Series*.¹²¹ The arrest statistics found in these studies can be useful when comparing general trends and factors of teenagers who go through the juvenile justice system. The areas that provide the most compelling correlation to juvenile crimes include family structure, child maltreatment, and economic poverty.

One of the biggest environmental risk-factors that is often traced back to juvenile crime is the family structure. The OJJDP found that adolescents ages 12–17 who lived in families with both biological parents were, in general, less likely than youth in other families to report a variety of problem behaviors, such as running away from home, sexual activity, major theft,

¹²⁰ Inciardi, 576.

¹²¹ “Juvenile Crime Statistics,” *Juvenile Crime*, 2014, <http://www.lawyershop.com/practice-areas/criminal-law/juvenile-law/crimes>.

assault, and arrest.¹²² The family structure effect was seen within groups defined by age, gender, or race/ethnicity. In fact, this study found that family structure was a better predictor of these problem behaviors than gender or ethnicity. The family structure effect emerged among both youth who lived in neighborhoods described as “well kept” and those in neighborhoods described as “fairly well kept” or “poorly kept.”¹²³ However, it is important to note that family structure itself may not be the proximate cause of problem behaviors. Rather, conditions within the family, such as poor supervision and low levels of parental involvement, are more likely risk factors.¹²⁴

A common trend found in the background of juvenile offenders is the lack of nurturing and authoritative figures involved in their socialization. Socialization refers to the systemic efforts of people and institutions to prepare children for entering society and behaving in ways that are deemed appropriate.¹²⁵ Studies show that when parents or other caregivers consistently combine affection with an appropriate amount of discipline, children develop stronger cognitive skills and engage in greater self-regulation.¹²⁶ However, when parents are too authoritarian, permissive, or negligent with their parenting styles, children tend to exhibit greater struggles in school, have less emotional control, and are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior.¹²⁷

Research also shows that child maltreatment within the home or community is linked to problematic and criminal behavior later in life. Maltreatment can refer to instances of neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse.¹²⁸ In 2008, an estimated 60 percent of children

¹²² Melissa Sickmund and Charles Puzanchera, ed, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2014 National Report*, (Pittsburgh: National Center for Juvenile Justice and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2014), <http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/nr2014/downloads/NR2014.pdf>.

¹²³ Ibid, 22.

¹²⁴ Ibid, 22.

¹²⁵ McDevitt 68.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 79.

¹²⁷ Ibid, 80.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 84.

in the United States were exposed to violence, crime, or abuse in their homes, schools, and communities within the one year.¹²⁹ Approximately 46 percent were assaulted at least once during the year and 10 percent were injured in an assault. The victimization rate for black youth in 2011 was more than twice the rate for white youth, and juvenile males reported higher victimization rates than juvenile females.¹³⁰ Typically, cases of child maltreatment are related to family structures, with higher rates of maltreatment occurring in single parent homes and in homes of low socioeconomic status.¹³¹ Studies show that children who have been maltreated are at a much higher risk of becoming aggressive, withdrawn, depressed, and for developing maladaptive ways of coping which can often take the form of criminal and deviant behavior.¹³² Research also shows that about 6 in 10 juveniles referred as first-time offenders had at least some history of child welfare involvement, and of the juvenile offenders who have gone through child welfare there are usually signs of earlier onset of delinquent behavior, poor permanency outcomes, substantially higher out-of-home placement rates, more detention stays and frequent placement changes, and overall higher offending rates.¹³³

Along with family structure and breakdown, economic poverty is a strong risk-factor for potential juvenile delinquency. Over the past decade, the proportion of American juveniles living under the poverty line increased to 22 percent.¹³⁴ Although socioeconomic status alone is not a predictor of whether or not a child will engage in crime, there is evidence that the problems associated with low socioeconomic status can increase the risk of kids committing offenses. These problems are listed in McDevitt and Ormord's text on child development, and include:

¹²⁹ Sickmund and Puzzanchera, 32.

¹³⁰ Ibid, 33.

¹³¹ Ibid, 34.

¹³² McDevitt, 84.

¹³³ Sickmund and Puzzanchera, 48.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 7.

poor nutrition and health, inadequate housing, unhealthy and toxic living environments, gaps in education and background knowledge, increased probability of disabling conditions, emotional stress, lower quality schools, and public misconceptions.¹³⁵ The OJJDP cites that black and Hispanic juveniles are three times more likely to live below the poverty line than white juveniles, and are more likely to experience the myriad of challenges listed above.¹³⁶ Many teenagers who do experience these trials will often do well and accomplish much despite their environmental conditions. Others react adversely to these situations by exhibiting aggressive or withdrawn behavior, dropping out of school, abusing drugs and alcohol, or by engaging in criminal activities.¹³⁷

The behavioral risk factors and characteristics of juvenile offenders is harder to measure and define. Some sources cite that early aggressive behavior can be an indicator of future delinquency, although there is a stronger correlation between crime and the way in which aggressive behavior is addressed rather than the behavior itself.¹³⁸ Many juvenile offenders exhibit problems with attention span and concentration, which is sometimes attributed to unaddressed learning disabilities, and many have problems in school resulting in truancy, poor grades, and overall disinterest, which often accounts for the high drop-out rates amongst juvenile offenders.¹³⁹ It is also common for juvenile offenders to associate with peers who exhibit antisocial behavior, and many also have a history of engaging in drugs and alcohol.¹⁴⁰

Some authors identify struggling adolescents and potential offenders by the social and developmental pressures they may be feeling. For example, in her article “Museums and Healthy

¹³⁵ McDevitt & Ormord, 105.

¹³⁶ Sickmund and Puzanchera, 20.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 19.

¹³⁸ “What Challenges Are Boys Facing, and What Opportunities Exist to Address Those Challenges?” *US Department of Health and Human Services Fact Sheet*, <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/08/boys/factsheets/jd/report.pdf>.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

Adolescent Development,” Deanna Beane highlights adolescents whose sense of identity and place within their communities and broader society is challenged as those most ‘at-risk’ for deviant behavior. She states; “While biology has programmed all children for the developmental process ignited by the onset of puberty, adolescents of color are confronted with the additional challenge of developing self-defined identity in the face of racial or ethnic stereotypes.”¹⁴¹ She further cites the five year study by Heath & McLaughlin’s on identity development in urban youth, which describes the challenges “urban adolescents” face;

“A youth’s sense of personhood, self, and future results from the interplay of the multiple contexts in which he or she moves: community, neighborhood, family, peer group, social institutions, and labels of ethnic membership defined by larger society. These give multiple dimensions -- son, Latino, student, Baptist, younger sister, gangbanger, athlete, immigrant, mother -- and situate meaning and circumstance.”¹⁴²

Beane further explains that such adolescents “are at moderate to serious risk of not achieving productive adulthood largely because in the midst of their quest for identity they become the victims of unhealthy or negative behaviors like substance abuse, pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, and school failure or dropping out.”¹⁴³ For Beane, then, adolescents are more prone to delinquency due to identity struggles in the absence of guidance.

What all this information reveals is that adolescents who face problems associated with negative environmental influences (e.g. family breakdown, poverty, lack of academic support) and who encounter negative pressures (e.g. peer and drug influences, identity struggles) are at much greater risk for developing unhealthy behaviors and engaging in criminal acts. All children are different and will react to negative circumstances in different ways, but by establishing

¹⁴¹ Deanna Banks Beane, “Museums and Healthy Adolescent Development: What We Are Learning from Research and Practice,” *Journal of Museum Education* 25, no. 3 (2000): 4.

¹⁴² Shirley Brice Heath and Milbrey McLaughlin, “Identity and Inner-City Youth: Beyond Ethnicity and Gender,” (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993),213.

¹⁴³ Beane, 5.

common risk-factors for juvenile offenders, educators and caregivers can better understand the particular needs of these adolescents and how best to meet them.

Needs of Juvenile Offenders

Having explored some of the defining characteristics of adolescents and juvenile offenders, how then does one determine what these adolescents need in order to become healthy and successful adults? In looking at the previous section of risk-factors for juvenile delinquents, one of the most obvious needs is positive adult role-modeling. Jane Tuttle in “Positive Adolescent Life Skills Training for High-Risk Teens” in the *Journal of Pediatric Health Care* explains;

“Healthy adolescent development and the avoidance of risk-taking behavior are enhanced by attachment with caring adults. Most teens look to their families to provide them with resiliency factors such as support, positive role modeling, and a sense of themselves as worthy of care... A teen’s positive connectedness with the family, social, and community environment is protective against substance abuse.”¹⁴⁴

The importance of responsive and responsible adult role-modeling, as well as other significant adolescent needs, is highlighted in the “Forty Developmental Assets for Adolescents,” a list compiled by the Search Institute. Developmental assets are described as “the building blocks...that help young children grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.”¹⁴⁵ The Search Institute breaks its Developmental Assets down into External and Internal assets, which youth gain through interactions with their schools, community, parents, and leaders.¹⁴⁶ According to the Search Institute, the more assets adolescents have, the less likely they are to engage in negative and high-risk behaviors such as delinquency.¹⁴⁷ The full list of the Developmental Assets are as follows;

¹⁴⁴ Jane Tuttle, Nancy Campbell-Heider, Tamala David, “Positive Adolescent Life Skills Training for High-Risk Teens: Results of a Group Intervention Study,” *Journal of Pediatric Health Care* 20, no. 3 (2006): 184.

¹⁴⁵ The Search Institute, *Developmental Assets*, 2012, http://www.search-institute.org/system/files/a/40AssetsList_12-18_Eng.pdf.

¹⁴⁶ “40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents,” *The Search Institute*, 2012, <http://www.search-institute.org/content/40-developmental-assets-adolescents-ages-12-18>.

¹⁴⁷ Beane, 5.

The Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents¹⁴⁸

External Assets

SUPPORT

1. Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. Positive family communication—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.
3. Other adult relationships—Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.
4. Caring neighborhood—Young person experiences caring neighbors.
5. Caring school climate—School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
6. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.

EMPOWERMENT

7. Community values youth—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
8. Youth as resources—Young people are given useful roles in the community.
9. Service to others—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
10. Safety—Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.

BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS

11. Family boundaries—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
12. School Boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences.
13. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.
14. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. Positive peer influence—Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.
16. High expectations—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME

17. Creative activities—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.
18. Youth programs—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.
19. Religious community—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.
20. Time at home—Young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week.

¹⁴⁸ The Search Institute, *Developmental Assets*, 2012, http://www.search-institute.org/system/files/a/40AssetsList_12-18_Eng.pdf.

Internal Assets

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

21. Achievement Motivation—Young person is motivated to do well in school.
22. School Engagement—Young person is actively engaged in learning.
23. Homework—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
24. Bonding to school—Young person cares about her or his school.
25. Reading for Pleasure—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

POSITIVE VALUES

26. Caring—Young person places high value on helping other people.
27. Equality and social justice—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
28. Integrity—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
29. Honesty—Young person “tells the truth even when it is not easy.”
30. Responsibility—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
31. Restraint—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

32. Planning and decision making—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
33. Interpersonal Competence—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.
34. Cultural Competence—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
35. Resistance skills—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
36. Peaceful conflict resolution—Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

POSITIVE IDENTITY

37. Personal power—Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.”
38. Self-esteem—Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
39. Sense of purpose—Young person reports that “my life has a purpose.”
40. Positive view of personal future—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

The Search Institute’s Developmental Assets tool is applicable for identifying the needs of all adolescents, but it is particularly instrumental to consider when looking to address the needs of juvenile offenders who more than likely are missing most, if not all, of these assets in their lives. By becoming familiar with adolescent needs and assets, individuals and groups (including museums) can identify which needs juvenile offenders are missing and can develop ways to address those needs. Museums as community institutions are highly qualified to fulfill these developmental assets, which will be explored further in subsequent chapters and case studies.

Chapter 4: Benefits of Alternative Sentencing and Museum Programming for Youthful

Offenders

As the previous chapters have shown, juvenile offenders as individuals and as a group have a unique set of needs as adolescents who often come from difficult socioeconomic circumstances with the added challenges of going through the juvenile justice system. Museums have the potential to provide programming that can meet their needs and help prevent future criminal behavior. By looking at how museums can serve juvenile offenders through the unique resources that museums provide, it is apparent that museums can affect juvenile offenders and their communities in positive ways.

Benefits of Alternative Sentencing

Chapter two highlighted some of the issues associated with the wide-spread incarceration of youth, such as high use of taxpayer dollars, high rates of recidivism, and high risk of abuse to youths while incarcerated. In light of these concerns, there are some juvenile court systems around the country that are looking into alternative sentencing as a more appropriate course of action to take for certain juvenile offenders, particularly if they are convicted for non-violent status offenses.¹⁴⁹ An alternative sentence can take many forms, such as probation, fines, community service, deferred adjudication programs, and community-based treatment programs.¹⁵⁰ This latter option of community-based programs, is particularly worth noting due to its focus on rehabilitation of juvenile offenders rather than punishment.

Different community-based treatment programs will address the problem of juvenile crime in different ways, but they all share a commonality in that they seek a way to rehabilitate youth

¹⁴⁹ Inciardi, 574

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 575.

and lower recidivism rates within their community.¹⁵¹ Studies of successful programs show that they are developed with the knowledge that adolescents are in a dramatic stage of development, are predisposed to taking risks and making impulsive decisions, and are highly influenced by the environment in which they grew up.¹⁵² As such, these programs will hold youths accountable for their actions and will teach them about the consequences of breaking the law, while at the same time provide them with guidance, structure, encouragement, and productive activities meant to deliver healing and learning tools to help youths transition into adulthood.¹⁵³

One example of an alternative sentencing program, which was highlighted in Kimberly Flash's article "Treatment Strategies for Juvenile Delinquency: Alternative Solutions," is mediation between youth offenders and their victims, called Victim-Offender Reconciliation Programs.¹⁵⁴ This program allows the victim and the offender to participate in the justice process by having them meet (under the mediation of a social worker) to discuss and ask questions of each other, and by the end come up with a plan of retribution that both agree to.¹⁵⁵ Inherent in this program is the idea that mediation promotes the involvement of all parties, helping the victims feel a sense of empowerment over what happened to them, and allows the offenders to take ownership of what they did but also express their point of view about the situation.¹⁵⁶ This face-to-face mediation also challenges stereotypes and prejudices that the two groups may have of each other, for when people are faced with another human being and are able to communicate successfully, these misconceptions begin to erode.¹⁵⁷ Although personal reviews from victims

¹⁵¹ Kimberly Flash, "Treatment Strategies for Juvenile Delinquency: Alternative Solutions," *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal* 20, 2003, *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost: 511.

¹⁵² Marc A. Levin and Bart Lubow, "Juvenile Rehabilitation Versus Incarceration," *Corrections Today*, 2012, *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost: 10.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, 10.

¹⁵⁴ Flash, 511.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 513.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 514.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 514.

and offenders who participated in programs like this have been mostly positive, it is harder to measure whether or not this program has decreased rates of recidivism. One study that Flash cited--done in Minneapolis around 1990--examined 903 cases of juvenile offenders sentenced to mediation programs.¹⁵⁸ Of those who participated and of those who didn't, the study did show that juveniles who participated in mediation committed fewer post-mediation crimes within one year following mediation.¹⁵⁹ The study did note that the percentage difference was not particularly significant, but with further work and study programs like mediation and other similar community-based ones have the potential of providing rehabilitation for juvenile offenders and lowering their chances of reoffending in the future.¹⁶⁰

Overall, alternative sentencing makes more sense than incarceration for most juvenile offenders and for the public in general. Alternative sentences to community-based treatment programs are less expensive than incarceration, less likely to produce recidivism, can allow offenders to maintain contact with family members, and avoids all the negative consequences of incarceration (i.e., abuse, lack of treatment, loss of family and discrimination upon release). As part of community-based treatment, some court systems are looking to incorporate the arts and culture into certain programs to further the benefits of alternative sentencing for youthful offenders. As community-based institutions, museums have a prime opportunity to collaborate with juvenile courts, utilizing their resources for the purpose of education and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders.

Benefits of Museum Programming

In order to develop programming suitable for adolescents who are juvenile offenders, museums need to actively learn and understand the needs of juvenile offenders within their

¹⁵⁸ Flash, 515.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 515.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 515.

communities, and develop productive programs (contingent with the museum's mission and collections) that will meet their particular interests, needs, and developmental assets.

A good example of this type of enterprise took the form of the YouthALIVE (Youth Achievement through Learning, Involvement, Volunteering, and Employment) program, an initiative of the Association of Science and Technology Centers and the DeWitt-Wallace Reader's Digest Fund. As part of the initiative's national professional development network, the YouthALIVE program helped over 72 institutions (including science centers, children's museums, zoos, aquariums and botanical gardens) in 56 cities around the U.S. develop programs for and with adolescents, and purposefully trained museum staff to work with youths, particularly those who were classified as at-risk.¹⁶¹ In her article, Deanna Banks Beane assessed YouthALIVE, which established museum programs from 1991 to 2001, through the lens of the Search Institute's Developmental Assets;

“YouthALIVE programs have demonstrated that science centers and museums can be excellent resources for bringing a number of developmental assets into the lives of young people whose lives and communities are limited in what they can provide. Through these kinds of long-term programs, adolescents are finding adult support, empowerment (feeling valued and safe), boundaries (adult role models), high expectations (from staff, peers, visitors), constructive use of time, creative activities, commitment to learning (achievement motivation), positive values (helping others, equality and social justice, integrity, honesty, and responsibility), and social competencies (planning and decision making, interpersonal skills, intercultural skills, conflict resolution.)”¹⁶²

By exploring ways of translating adolescent development into programs and practices that would work within their institutions, museums working with YouthALIVE established educational enrichment and work-based learning programs, which between 1991 and 1999 more than 7,000 youths participated in around the country. In addition, a study on YouthALIVE found that in 1999, more than 70 percent of the participating teenagers were from low-income communities

¹⁶¹ Beane, 3.

¹⁶² Ibid, 5.

and fit the profile of being at-risk youth.¹⁶³ According to Beane, the most successful and enduring programs developed through the YouthALIVE initiative were those with strong community partnerships, a skilled and dedicated staff, and an institutional commitment to supporting underserved youth.¹⁶⁴

These same assets and initiatives are just as important to cultivate in museum programs for juvenile offenders as they are for at-risk youth. By seeking out community partnerships, training staff members, and addressing the social and personal developmental assets that all teenagers need to thrive (and that most juvenile offenders lack in their daily lives) museum programming can help provide juvenile offenders opportunities for healthy growth and a more enriching educational experience.

Being an integral part of a museum program and engaging in meaningful and goal-oriented activities can also help youthful offenders develop a healthy sense of identity. This is particularly important for kids who come from low-income or working class families, who may receive devaluing messages from outside sources about who they are and what they can become.¹⁶⁵ As stated in the previous chapter, adolescents of color also have an additional challenge in their quest to figure out who they are, as they often have to reconcile and develop a positive orientation with two cultures; their background culture and that of the “white” macro culture.¹⁶⁶ Museum programming can address this need for identity by providing programs that offer a creative and emotional outlet for the participants, as well as skill building activities, that will help foster communication of their life experiences and who they are, while building connections to the larger community.

¹⁶³ Beane, 3.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 5.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 5.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, 4

One such organization that provides an example of this kind of programming is Artistic Noise, which is an arts and entrepreneurship organization for youth involved in the juvenile justice system.¹⁶⁷ Founded in Boston in 2001, the program was originally created to work only with young women in juvenile detention facilities, but by 2008 it had had developed a New York chapter and branched out to include both young men and women.¹⁶⁸ Today, Artistic Noise continues to build partnerships with juvenile courts by offering art programs and services both inside and outside juvenile detention facilities. In doing so, it provides an opportunity for participants to process and document their lives using the visual arts while learning transferable life and job skills from entrepreneurial projects and exhibit planning.¹⁶⁹ Through the creation of artwork participants explore issues such as;

“self-identity, hope, incarceration, and dreams- along with the exhibition and marketing of their artwork -- the young people involved are empowered by - 1) following a complex project through to fruition; 2) having their voices heard through a visual medium; 3) participating in a collaborative project with their peers and facilitators.”¹⁷⁰

By working with youth offenders inside detention facilities and back in the community, Artistic Noise provides continuity and structure, while also giving job training for youth who often lack the skills, experience and maturity needed to succeed in standard employment training or job situations.¹⁷¹ Artistic Noise is comprised of four core components that work to accomplish these initiatives: Studio Art Workshops in Residential Settings; Art Therapy Workshops; Art, Entrepreneurship and Curatorial Programs in Community Settings; and Youth Leadership Development.¹⁷²

The Studio Art Workshops are weekly programs that bring art-based activities to juvenile

¹⁶⁷ “History and Mission,” ArtisticNoise: From the Juvenile Justice System and Beyond, 2014, <http://www.artisticnoise.org/about.php#program>.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

detention centers and involve a variety of traditional and digital media projects. Along with teaching participants various art techniques, the themes of these activities are chosen to maximize the youth's interest and involvement over time, and allow them to creatively express their feelings and stories.¹⁷³

The second component, the Art Therapy Workshops, provides group and individual art therapy sessions for youth on probation by working in partnership with The New York City Department of Probation and The Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College.¹⁷⁴ These sessions allow youth to communicate their thoughts and experiences through art with the help of a certified art therapist, and are conducted with the philosophy that “both process and imagery lead to new insights and understanding.”¹⁷⁵ In addition to offering youth emotional support and working with them towards deeper self-awareness, these workshops also give participants opportunities to apply for employment through the Community Arts, Entrepreneurship, and Curatorial Program.¹⁷⁶

This third component of ArtisticNoise gives youthful offenders a chance to work collaboratively with their peers, curate art shows, and market and sell original artwork and products they have designed.¹⁷⁷ Before joining this program, the teens must complete a training phase which tests their readiness to work with peers and staff in a structured work environment. Once they pass this training, youths work with peers and staff in order to develop their creative skills as individual artists, as well as their “business skills as paid artists, entrepreneurs and curators...”¹⁷⁸ When describing this program on the Artistic Noise website, facilitators state;

¹⁷³ ArtisticNoise, <http://www.artisticnoise.org/about.php#program>.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

“In addition to creating their own works of art, our young curators also study contemporary art through fieldtrips to both city’s cultural attractions. As curators, they must select pieces for Artistic Noise’s annual gallery shows, mount the shows and be prepared to explain each piece to the public. As entrepreneurs, the teens are responsible for identifying and creating artwork for use in marketable products, including holiday cards, hand silkscreened t-shirts, and prints. The teens, under our staff’s supervision, price the items, develop marketing plans and then sell the items at venues across the cities. The proceeds from the sale of their artwork and products benefit the artists and program.”¹⁷⁹

Incorporating all of the artistic, curatorial, and business skills that the youths learned, the program culminates with a yearly exhibit of the participant’s artwork. The planning and implementation of a gallery exhibit helps these teens gain a sense of job professionalism and teaches them the importance of working towards long-term goals, while also providing them with a way to display their artistic achievements.¹⁸⁰

The Youth Leadership Development Program, which is the final component of Artistic Noise, works expressly to encourage and train participants who graduated from the previously explained programs in order to become leaders of Artistic Noise. After completing the training process, the participants can then work as mentors, assistant teachers, and advocates for teens going through the juvenile justice system.¹⁸¹

Along with the art and job training skills that youths develop through these various programs, students are also able to reflect on their own experiences through different lenses using object-based discussion and critical viewing of contemporary art. Through the use of a variety of artistic mediums, participants explore themes such as identity, friendship, loss, sexual violence, community, freedom and their dreams for the future.¹⁸² While describing this program, the facilitators explain a part of the philosophy behind their teaching;

“We do not avoid dealing with sensitive issues (such as racism, abuse, love, violence,

¹⁷⁹ ArtisticNoise, <http://www.artisticnoise.org/about.php#program>.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

identity, anger, or depression), understanding the participants' need to express difficult emotions in a safe, constructive context. We believe structured art making fosters critical thinking and problem solving -- skills that are beneficial to the teens' healthy psychological development. We believe in the strength of both individual projects, which value the unique voice of each participant, and group projects and critiques which develop skills of cooperation, negotiation, and leadership."¹⁸³

Museums can take away from the example provided by Artistic Noise, and apply the same philosophy and principles to their own educational programming for juvenile offenders. In doing so, museums can use their resources to help make a difference in young people's lives, and help forge a path for juvenile offenders towards a more promising future. The next chapter will highlight two museums who have developed and instigated such programs for their communities.

¹⁸³ ArtisticNoise, <http://www.artisticnoise.org/about.php#program>.

Chapter 5: The Case Studies

Case Studies: Introduction

Educational programs designed for juvenile offenders at two different museums were studied and observed for the purpose of this thesis. The RAISE program at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA, and the San Diego Museum of Art were participants in this study. These particular museums were chosen due to their unique locations, the differences of their visitor demographics, and due to their active collaboration with their local juvenile justice courts in order to implement programming for juvenile delinquents. Case studies are presented via the history and mission of the hosting museums, the current museum operations, the program descriptions, and a program analysis (results of program evaluations/ outcomes of the programs).

CASE STUDY #1:

The Sterling and Francine Clark Institute

History and Mission

The Clark Art Institute, located in Williamstown, Massachusetts, was founded in 1955 by private collectors, Sterling and Francine Clark. Amassing a collection consisting largely of American and European artworks, most notably French Impressionist masterworks, the Clarks were intent on building a gallery space for their collection and chose the Berkshire county area of western Massachusetts due to their strong ties to Williams College.¹⁸⁴ In addition to its reputable collection, the Clark is also renowned for being one of the few institutions in the U.S. to combine an art museum with research and academic programs, and is considered a leading international

¹⁸⁴ "History," *About The Clark*, 2015. <http://www.clarkart.edu/about/history>.

center for research and discussion on the nature of art and art history. Within its mission statement the Clark states that it is;

“...one of only a handful of institutions globally with a dual mission as an art museum and a distinguished center for research and higher education, dedicated to advancing and extending the public understanding of art...The Clark’s mission and its geographical location define three essential aspects of its character and identity: the quality of its art, the beauty of its pastoral setting, and the depth of its commitment to the generation of ideas”¹⁸⁵

The Clark’s goal of offering imaginative public education in the arts is manifested through its current activities and programs.

Current Operations

With its dedication to the advancement of higher education in the arts, The Clark has done much to establish itself as a center of scholarship in the visual arts and art history. This focus on education harkens back to the beginnings of the museum in the 1950s, and continued to expand over the last few decades with the introduction of the Clark Library and the Graduate Program in Art History which the Clark runs jointly with Williams College.¹⁸⁶ With its renowned collection of more than 8,000 objects—including paintings, sculptures, works on paper, and decorative arts—the Clark offers a full series of educational programming for adults, children and scholars, allowing audiences to explore and understand the collection while helping “people realize that engaging with art can enhance their lives.”¹⁸⁷

In helping to advance its mission of engaging a wide range of audiences with art, the Clark has instituted special initiative programming that opens the museum to those who may not have many opportunities to visit the museum, or become acquainted with art in general. One example is the creation of the Head Start with Art at the Clark program, which was developed as a direct response to the impact of federal budget cuts to Head Start funding (a federal program that

¹⁸⁵ “Mission.” *About The Clark*, 2015, <http://www.clarkart.edu/About/about-clark>.

¹⁸⁶ “History of the RAP.” *Research and Academic*, 2015, <http://www.clarkart.edu/rap/about>.

¹⁸⁷ “Our Programs.” *Education*, 2015, <http://www.clarkart.edu/museum/education/Education-Overview>.

provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families).¹⁸⁸ The Clark designed this program for students to learn about museums and art through guided discussions and gallery explorations, which supports the development of language, literacy, and kindergarten readiness skills.¹⁸⁹ In another effort to engage underserved audiences, the Clark developed a program specifically for juvenile offenders, called the RAISE program.

Program Description: The Responding to Art Involves Self Expression (RAISE) Program

The RAISE program officially began in 2006 as a collaboration with the Berkshire County Juvenile Court (BCJC) and the Clark and is the first alternative sentencing program in the country that takes place in an art museum and that involves looking at the art.¹⁹⁰ The Berkshire Juvenile County Court has been a known leader in alternative sentencing plans, going beyond the educational model to a more enhancement type model, by reaching out to local cultural institutions in order to develop art and cultural programs for youthful offenders.¹⁹¹ One of the local juvenile court judges, Judge Judith Locke, approached the Clark's Director of Adult, School and Community Programs, Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, about developing an alternative sentencing program with the Clark Art Institute for juvenile offenders.¹⁹² The idea was met with some mixed reviews when Ronna first proposed it at the museum, however the Clark's Director, Michael Conforti, fully supported the idea and greenlighted its development.¹⁹³ From there Ronna, along with other Clark educators, worked closely with court personnel to develop a program that would engage juvenile offenders with the art in the Clark galleries.

¹⁸⁸ "Head Start with Art at the Clark," *Special Initiatives*, 2015, <http://www.clarkart.edu/museum/education/initiatives>.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ "Raise," *Special Initiatives*, 2015, <http://www.clarkart.edu/museum/education/initiatives>.

¹⁹¹ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, "Building Audience: Juvenile Delinquents at the Clark," in *Inspiring Action: Museums and Social Change*, ed. Carol Brown (Edinburgh: MuseumsEtc, 2009): 245.

¹⁹² Ibid, 246.

¹⁹³ Ibid, 246.

The goals of the program are listed in the RAISE curriculum guide and are as follows;

- Participants will expand their sense of human experience and possibility, including a more constructive sense of how they fit into the larger world.
- Participants will learn to look at, think about and talk about art in a meaningful way.
- Participants will realize that their view matters.
- Participants will consider an art museum as a place in which they belong.¹⁹⁴

The RAISE program is held twice a year, in March and in November, with 8 to 12 participants meeting at the Clark Institute for two hours, once a week for five weeks each semester.¹⁹⁵ The participants include boys and girls, ranging from 12 to 17 years of age. The majority of RAISE participants match the general identifiers of juvenile offenders in that they come from low-income households, many are substance abusers, and many are not doing well academically and are not part of any structured extracurricular activities.¹⁹⁶ Some of the teenagers involved also come from homes where the Department of Children and Families had to intervene due to abuse and neglect, and in some cases parents of the participants are substance abusers, or have had a criminal history of some kind.¹⁹⁷ Due in large part to all of these risk-factors, most of the participants in the RAISE program have had no prior exposure to arts and culture, no past experience visiting a museum, and very little knowledge of art or art history.¹⁹⁸

Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, who holds a doctorate in psychological education, besides being one of the lead instigators for the program is also one of the main educators involved in teaching the participants.¹⁹⁹ Along with her colleagues, Michael Cassin and Jessica Conz, Ronna leads the group of participants through a combination of group meetings, writing and self-awareness exercises, and gallery talks, all of which are designed for enhancement purposes such as

¹⁹⁴ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, RAISE Curriculum Guide, 2015: 4.

¹⁹⁵ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, interview by Elizabeth Sirhall, the Clark Art Institute, April 2, 2015.

¹⁹⁶ “The RAISE Program,” *Special Initiatives*, 2015. <http://www.clarkart.edu/museum/education/initiatives>.

¹⁹⁷ “The RAISE Program.” *The Clark Art Institute*. 2015.

<http://www.clarkart.edu/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=872b09ad-d702-461a-94ac-b474da47b34f> 15.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, interview.

exploring universal themes of what it means to be human, exploring various interpretations of art, and helping participants become aware of their strengths and competencies.²⁰⁰ The format and the activities of the RAISE program are provided in the RAISE curriculum guide, which is used by facilitators and can be easily adapted and transferable to other institutions. The following pages will provide a summary of each session of the five-week program.

The first session is designed first and foremost to make the participants feel welcome at the Clark and introduce them to the gallery. It's also a time for participants to talk and write about why they were sentenced to the program.²⁰¹ This latter activity was not part of the original program plan, but was added five years ago as a way to discuss "the elephant in the room."²⁰² Although the Clark didn't want to focus on their misbehavior, (because some kids do want to brag about what they did) it was something the educators felt needed to be addressed. The point of the activity is to have the kids consider their motivations for their behavior in neutral terms.²⁰³ It reinforces that what they did was wrong, but it is also helps the kids understand that their bad behavior is separate from who they are. This increases participant's ownership of their mistakes (without shaming them) by validating that they can learn from their mistakes and become more self-aware, looking at what they did through a different perspective much like you can look at works of art differently.²⁰⁴

The second session of RAISE focuses on self-presentation and getting participants to think about the image they present, how others see them, and how they would like to be perceived.²⁰⁵ The students first respond to questions posted on the agenda (referred to as Newsprint which

²⁰⁰ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, interview.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, RAISE Curriculum Guide, 2015: 14.

outlines the activities each week) in journals that they received the first week, and then discuss their answers in groups. This is followed by a gallery talk that focuses on portraits with the idea that there is usually more to the person in the portrait than what meets the eye.²⁰⁶ Their last activity in this session is a self-portrait drawing lesson, which is taught by a studio art professor from Williams College.²⁰⁷ This activity not only teaches the kids drawing skills and expands their sense of competency, but gets them to think about their self-presentation and how they are in control of the image they project.²⁰⁸

Building observational skills and validating subjective ways of thinking is the premise of the third session. The participants are given a fill-in-the-blank “I AM” poem as a way to encourage more positive ways of thinking about themselves and their relationship to the larger world.²⁰⁹ This is followed by an interpretation activity where each student is given a laminated image of paintings with strong emotional content (e.g. *The Scream* by Edvard Munch) and are asked to write about what they think the painting is about and what it represents.²¹⁰ Their interpretations are later discussed as a group, along with added lessons about the history behind each of the paintings. Their last activity is similar to the previous one, except each participant is assigned a work of art within the Clark that they are sent to go find and look at for several minutes. They then write about their interpretations of the painting in their journals, and as a group go to each participant’s picture to discuss what the work of art is about.²¹¹ The facilitators then turn the discussion towards the difference between objective and subjective knowledge, and how this awareness can extend to everyday life. This is done with the idea that art validates a subjective

²⁰⁶ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, RAISE Curriculum Guide, 2015: 15.

²⁰⁷ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, interview.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, RAISE Curriculum Guide, 2015: 19.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 21.

²¹¹ Ibid, 22.

side of thinking and living, which is especially important when we live in a world that tends to objectify people.²¹² In Ronna's words "it's actually a relief to immerse yourself in the grey area that art interpretation affords," because it validates the experiences we have as human beings.²¹³

Session four is all about the participants assessing their own potentials and encouraging them to think positively about their futures. In their first activity, entitled "What a Wonderful Life," the kids are given a worksheet to fill in answers about what they want to do and be remembered for at different stages of life. This is designed with the intent of helping the kids move past the alienation they already feel from mainstream society, and thinking in positive and realistic terms of how they can lead healthy and satisfying lives in the future.²¹⁴ Building off of this theme, the second activity has the kids writing their own obituaries. This is incorporated so the participants can do a piece of creative writing, considering what they want to accomplish and be remembered for in the world, with the rationale that "death can help people appreciate life, and a conscious awareness of one's own mortality can help one focus on their priorities."²¹⁵ For the last activity of this session, the kids are sent back to the gallery in order to write a realistic life story or an obituary about the subject or person in the image.²¹⁶ The goal of this is for the kids to expand their focus from their own greatest potential to that of the larger world, encouraging a more positive regard for other people.²¹⁷

The final session of the RAISE program is treated like a graduation celebration, marking the culmination of all that the participants did and learned, and recognizes their strengths and new competencies.²¹⁸ First, the participants gather with the facilitators to complete an "I Learned"

²¹² Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, RAISE Curriculum Guide, 2015: 23.

²¹³ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, interview.

²¹⁴ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, RAISE Curriculum Guide, 2015: 25.

²¹⁵ Ibid, 27.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 28.

²¹⁷ Ibid, 28.

²¹⁸ Ibid, 29.

worksheet which they share as a group, followed by the facilitators sharing their feelings about the ending of the program and their positive views of each of the participants.²¹⁹ For the second activity, each participant is responsible for leading a small group of adults (made up of parents, family members, RAISE staff, and court personnel) throughout the galleries, explaining the works of art, and answering questions about the museum and its collection. This is done to show participants that they are capable of meaningfully engaging with a fine art museum, and that they have the skills to accomplish much more than they might have previously thought before the program.²²⁰ The final component is the graduation ceremony which celebrates each participant as a valuable member of the group. Each facilitator reads out loud their own carefully crafted letters validating each participant's strengths and contributions, and then the participants and their adults fill out program evaluations around a table supplied with refreshments.²²¹

RAISE Program Analysis

There is an overwhelming amount of evidence showing that the RAISE program has had a positive impact on the Berkshire community and has strengthened the Clark's profile. First, there are the reports from the Berkshire County Juvenile Court personnel, who have praised the program as "one of the most effective and uplifting programs offered through the Berkshire County Juvenile Probation Department" and "a revelation of emotion."²²² Court personnel have also reported to the Clark facilitators that the recidivism rates for the kids who do the RAISE program is next to nothing, and just by observing the participants in the program they can see a difference in their body posture and confidence over the course of five weeks.²²³

²¹⁹ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, RAISE Curriculum Guide, 2015: 31.

²²⁰ Ibid, 32.

²²¹ Ibid, 33.

²²² "The RAISE Program." *The Clark Art Institute*. 2015.

<http://www.clarkart.edu/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=872b09ad-d702-461a-94ac-b474da47b34f> 15.

²²³ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, interview.

Another indicator of the program's success is found in a formal evaluation done over the course of three years by members of Williams College. In the official report, the researchers explain that for the evaluation procedure they turned the program's goals into measurable outcomes. To do this they developed the following measures:

“1) A measure of students' views about art and about themselves, completed pre- and post-program. This measure includes four items tapping students' opinions on art and how it fit into their lives (e.g., “I can talk about art in a meaningful way”) and four items tapping their opinions about themselves (e.g., “I have something to contribute to others,” “I take a positive attitude toward myself”). The items are rated on a Likert scale from 0 “not at all” to 5 “completely,” allowing for quantitative pre- vs. post- program comparisons. By design the measures also use qualitative formats, as students' and parents' own words can be revealing.

2) A rating scale for assessing each student's behavior during each of the 5 classes. This measure contains 5 subscales that tap important dimensions of attitudes and behaviors during the classes: *Engagement* in sessions (comprised of active participation and contemplation/self-awareness); *authenticity* (the extent to which the student connects with art, comprised of learning visual analysis and showing an emotional response to the art), the extent to which his/her behavior indicates that his/her *point of view matters*, and *appropriate social interaction* during the classes. Each is rated on a Likert scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much) by at least two raters. The raters were program teaching assistants who were present during the classes. Each student is rated after each class, and their behavior was graphed over time on each of these dimensions. Interrater reliabilities were modest, $r = .67$ for the fall 2011, $.59$ for the spring 2012, and $.69$ for the fall 2013 programs, respectively. (There was only 1 rater for the spring 2013 program). Following standard practice, one rater's data were randomly chosen for the analyses.

3) An open-ended self-report measure of students' opinions about the program and an open-ended measure of their parents' opinions about the program, including what they liked, what they didn't like, what they believe they (or their teen) got out of it.”²²⁴

In their executive summary of the results, the researchers reported that the “subjective experiences of the student participants and their parents were overwhelmingly positive.”²²⁵

There were statistically significant increases shown in the students' pre- and post-program self-reported ratings of their opinions about art and their opinions about themselves, as well as in

²²⁴ Laurie Heatherington, PhD., Jennifer Oswald, BA., & Marissa Lowe, *RAISE Evaluation Report #1*, The Clark Art Institute, February 18, 2014: 1.

²²⁵ *Ibid*, 5.

the outside observers' ratings of the students behavior during the classes (engagement, participation, socially appropriate behavior, connecting with the art, etc.) from the first to the last session. The report concluded that "in all, the findings suggest that the RAISE program is working to accomplish its stated goals."²²⁶

The most important feedback that the Clark has taken into account in regards to the RAISE program has come from the participants themselves. According to reports that the kids give to court personnel, most of the participants comment that they were affected by viewing the works of art and that the experience gave inner meaning to their personal struggles.²²⁷ Many participants report that they felt accepted and cared about without being judged, and found the museum to be a peaceful and comfortable place to be.²²⁸ In the student's reviews of RAISE done as part of the Williams College evaluation, one participant wrote, "I liked learning about all the art and talking about it and just overall understanding it. The RAISE program helped me really open up and want to continue painting"²²⁹ Another teen commented, "I got so many things out of this program...life-long lessons and skills I will never forget."²³⁰ The majority of the participant's comments from this study were similar in their positive reviews, and when asked about what they didn't like about the program, the typical answer was nothing.²³¹

One of the most dramatic stories about a participant's experience is recorded in the RAISE Program Information report that is provided on their museum website. Allegedly, one of the participants of the program later enrolled in Berkshire Community College and was studying to

²²⁶ Heatherington, Oswald, and Lowe, 5.

²²⁷ "RAISE Program Information," *The Clark Art Institute*, 2015, <http://www.clarkart.edu/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=872b09ad-d702-461a-94ac-b474da47b34f>.

²²⁸ Ibid

²²⁹ Heatherington, Oswald, and Lowe, 21.

²³⁰ Ibid, 22.

²³¹ Ibid, 22.

become a parole officer.²³² According to her probation officer, she reported that the RAISE program gave her renewed confidence in herself, and taught her that there were more options available for her life. It was her belief that early intervention with troubled teens can make a big difference, and she wanted to share her experience with other teens through the juvenile court system.²³³

With programs like RAISE, the Clark has reinforced its position that museums have the power to make a difference in their communities, and should be exercising their responsibility to serve audiences who are typically underserved. With the idea that viewing art is restorative and can expand our understanding of the human experience, the goal of RAISE is to instill the idea in youthful offenders that they are capable, valuable, and in control of what they want to make out of their lives. A summation of the importance of museum programming like RAISE for juvenile offenders was perhaps stated best by Ronna Ostheimer:

“In some ways they (juvenile offenders) have more potential to make a difference in the world because of where they came from, and what they have experienced, and the challenges they’ve already faced. Many have not grown up with a lot of opportunities and healthy experiences, and they deserve a chance... the program looks at what they might be and what they can do. There are many more things they can be than the types of things they might imagine just from what they’ve heard or experienced growing up the way that they have. Our goal is to open their eyes to their potential, and to the idea that they do count.”²³⁴

CASE STUDY #2:

The San Diego Museum of Art

History and Mission

Built in San Diego’s beautiful Balboa Park, the San Diego Museum of Art was originally inspired by the Panama-California International Exposition of 1915-16 which was organized to

²³² “RAISE Program Information,” *The Clark Art Institute*, 2015, <http://www.clarkart.edu/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=872b09ad-d702-461a-94ac-b474da47b34f>.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ronna Tulgan Ostheimer, interview.

celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal and to promote San Diego as a seaport, and to showcase San Diego as a growing cultural center.²³⁵ Among its numerous displays representing various industries and products was a prominent exhibition of fine arts featuring European old masters, American art, and works by California and San Diego artists. The public response to the art exhibition convinced civic leaders and prominent local artists that San Diego needed its own fine arts gallery and collection.²³⁶

Building began in the 1920's, and the Fine Arts Gallery of San Diego officially opened in 1926. Under the direction of Dr. Reginald Poland, programs were instituted in the gallery to foster appreciation of the arts for both children and adults through free artistic demonstrations by local artists and a series of free Sunday lectures given by critics, historians, and artists.²³⁷ After World War II ended, during which time the museum was converted into a military hospital, the gallery experienced several years of expansion in regards to the physical building space and to the art collection. From 2004 until 2009, the museum saw further improvements in its programs, including expansion of the Museum's outreach efforts into the community, its bilingual initiatives, and publications program.²³⁸ Under the current directorship of Dr. Roxana Velásquez Martinez del Campo, the mission of The San Diego Museum of Art states that it "is to collect, preserve, interpret and display the finest works of art that men and women have created throughout time for the benefit of the broadest conceivable audience."²³⁹

Current Operations

Today, the San Diego Museum of Art continues to expand its community outreach regionally, nationally, and internationally through the use of its collections. Its renowned permanent

²³⁵ The San Diego Museum of Art, *Mission and History*, 2015, <http://www.sdmart.org/about/mission-history>

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

collection includes Spanish and Italian old masters, South Asian paintings, and 19th- and 20th-century American paintings and sculptures.²⁴⁰ The Museum regularly features major exhibitions from around the world, as well as an extensive year-round schedule of supporting cultural and educational programs for children and adults. The programs are designed to enhance the ideas behind the artwork as a way to connect the artwork to history, other art forms, and the present-day culture.²⁴¹

In conjunction with its educational goals, the San Diego Art Museum partners with various individuals and foundations in order to bring art and art history to underserved audiences. Many of these programs work with different schools around San Diego in order to provide programs for at-risk youth. Two programs however, are designed and tailored specifically for juvenile offenders.

Program Description: Teen Art Programs for Juvenile Offenders

The San Diego Art Museum collaborates with the Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility and with Juvenile Court and Community Schools in order to introduce art history to juvenile offenders and to provide a cathartic way for these adolescents to express their emotions and communicate about their lives.²⁴² These programs were developed several years ago in response to budget cuts that occurred within the County of San Diego Probation Department's school system which greatly diminished education in the arts for detained offenders.²⁴³ During an interview with the lead Museum and Outreach Educator of the San Diego Art Museum, Rogelio Casas explained that during this time his predecessor approached the juvenile facilities affected by these budget cuts, established a rapport with the teachers there, and initiated the plans for the

²⁴⁰ The San Diego Art Museum, *The Permanent Collection*, 2015, <http://www.sdmart.org/art/our-collection>.

²⁴¹ The San Diego Art Museum, *Programs and Events*, 2015, <http://www.sdmart.org/programs-events>.

²⁴² The San Diego Art Museum, *Community Partnerships*, 2015, <http://www.sdmart.org/education/community-partnerships>.

²⁴³ Rogelio Casas, telephone interview, March 26, 2015.

Museum to step in and provide art education utilizing the Museum's resources.²⁴⁴

The Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Center, where one of the teen art programs takes place, is one of two 24-hour, maximum-security juvenile detention facilities operated by the County of San Diego Probation Department.²⁴⁵ Offenders who are held here are typically sentenced for status offenses, and are usually sentenced to 60 days incarceration, although that sentence can be reduced for good behavior.²⁴⁶ The East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility (the second facility operated by the County of San Diego Probation Department) was recently the recipient of a pilot program similar to the one at Kearny. This facility is designed more like an adult prison, holding juveniles sentenced for more serious criminal offenses, and holds them for longer periods of time.²⁴⁷ Both of these facilities house male and female offenders awaiting Juvenile Court, and range in age from 10 through 19.²⁴⁸ The majority of the juvenile offenders in both of these facilities fit the identifiers and risk-factors explained in Chapter 3. Most come from low-income/poverty threshold households, many are lacking healthy and supportive adult role models, most are struggling in school, and those held in the facilities are disproportionately black or Hispanic.²⁴⁹ What these juvenile offenders also have in common is that most of them have had little to no experience in museums and have little knowledge regarding art and art history.²⁵⁰

Currently, the Teen Art Program at the Kearny Mesa Facility is led by Rogelio Casas, who travels to the facility in order to conduct each lesson along with a probation officer and the facility's teachers and helpers. The participants in the program are juveniles who have had their

²⁴⁴ Rogelio Casas, interview.

²⁴⁵ "Juvenile Detention," *Probation Department*, 2015, http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/probation/juvenile_information_detained.html.

²⁴⁶ Rogelio Casas, interview.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ "Juvenile Detention," *Probation Department*, 2015, http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/probation/juvenile_information_detained.html.

²⁴⁹ Rogelio Casas, interview.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

sentences reduced from 60 to 21 days for good behavior.²⁵¹ The program is treated as a reward for their conduct, and works in conjunction with the Short Term Offender Program (STOP) which is an alternative sentencing program, and one of a series of graduated sanctions providing behavior modification activities for first time offenders, including counseling, sports, and education.²⁵²

The Teen Art Program at Kearny Mesa provides lessons in art history, teaches artist techniques, and encourages participants to express themselves through art and reflection.²⁵³ Each year, the program is spread out from the fall until the spring, so that participants ultimately spend 75 hours within this program.²⁵⁴ Using the art from the San Diego Art Museum, Rogelio Casas chooses themes for each week of the program, correlating art and technique to a philosophy related to behavior modification and enhancement. As an example, for one week the participants learned about Japanese brush painting (studying paintings found in the Museum's collection) and were taught how virtues such as patience, concentration, and delicacy—essential to the application of Japanese brush painting—can be exercised in other areas of life.²⁵⁵ The participants explore other ideas and themes using different mediums (e.g. pastels, watercolors, clay sculpting, print-making) all with the goal that exposing these kids to different kinds of art and art techniques will influence their future interests and endeavors, giving them the confidence and support they need to work towards their own goals.²⁵⁶

The Teen Art Program at the San Diego Juvenile Court and Community Schools is somewhat different from the Kearny programs because the participants are not held in detention

²⁵¹ Rogelio Casas, interview.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

facilities. Rather, the Community School acts as an alternative school for the duration of a sentencing period for minor infractions.²⁵⁷ This means that the students are allowed to return to their families and homes at the end of the day, and that their work at the Community Schools helps them to earn credits that apply towards their high school graduation.²⁵⁸ The lessons involved for the Teen Art Program at these schools applies the same methods and principles as the Kearny program, giving the participants outlets for self-expression and the support perhaps not found in their normal school settings, while helping them gain art credits needed for their high school diploma.²⁵⁹

Teen Art Program Analysis

A formal evaluation of the Teen Art Programs at Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility and the Community Schools is unfortunately unavailable. According to Rogelio Casas, the San Diego Art Museum is looking to institute more evaluations in order to measure the results of these programs but currently lacks the time and resources needed to put the plan into action.²⁶⁰ However, much has been garnered about the program's success from positive feedback Casas has received from the court facilitators, the facility's teachers, and from the students who participated in the programs.²⁶¹ Letters sent to the San Diego Art Museum by the courts will often note the degree of progress shown by the students throughout the program, and in a couple of instances participants have come to visit the museum after they have been released from the facilities.²⁶²

There is also clear indication that a number of developmental assets (such as those listed by the Search Institute cited in Chapter three) have been incorporated into the Teen Art Programs.

²⁵⁷ Rogelio Casas, interview.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid.

Through the instruction and interest shown by museum educator, Rogelio Casas, and the teachers at the juvenile detention facilities, the adolescents are finding much needed adult support and encouragement, as well as high expectations about what they can achieve. In relation to this, they also acquire a sense of empowerment (feeling valued and safe), while working within the boundaries the adult role models set in place. The activities involved in the program gives them something constructive and creative to do with their time, while instilling positive values through the ideas and themes presented within the lessons.

Through his own observations, Rogelio Casas also notes the degree of progress he sees from the students throughout the duration of the programs he teaches. He indicates that usually at the beginning of each program there are a number of kids who don't want to be there and will rarely participate.²⁶³ There are however, some who are willing to give the lessons a chance, and by the end of the program most, if not all, of the students progress in terms of their participation and skill sets.²⁶⁴ Knowing that they worked through challenges and accomplished something through their artwork helps give them a sense of pride, and their confidence and self-esteem visibly improves. The program also allows them to express feelings and thoughts they might not have been comfortable sharing in other settings, and helps them to see their experiences and past decisions through different perspectives.²⁶⁵

Although there is currently no method to track the student's progress after they are released from the facilities, as Casas stated, the importance of having these types of programs available to juvenile offenders is undoubtable.²⁶⁶ The San Diego Art Museum is very much aware of its position and potential influence within the community, and as such is takes its responsibility

²⁶³ Rogelio Casas, interview.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

towards underserved members of the community seriously. Teaching these programs has shown Casas the high degree of talent and potential in his students, and knowing that the Museum and its programs could help ignite a flame of interest in these young offenders towards either the Museum or their own future endeavors, makes it all the more important to continue and develop these and other such programs.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁷ Rogelio Casas, interview.

Conclusion: Building Museum Programs for Youthful Offenders

As it has been demonstrated, juvenile offenders not only benefit from the knowledge and skill-sets they learn through museum education, but also through the social and personal assets found in programming developed by such institutions. The usefulness and benefits of museum programming for juvenile offenders can be tangibly assessed through examples shown with such museums like the Clark Art Institute and the San Diego Art Museum who successfully implemented programs designed for these adolescents, and have shown positive results with the participants.

Alternative sentencing in the forms of education and enhancement programs has been shown to be a more appropriate and beneficial solution for adolescents who have gone through the juvenile justice system, rather than relying strictly on methods of punishment and incarceration. Museums can take this opportunity to provide their services for juvenile offenders, thereby effecting a positive influence within their communities. By welcoming these underserved youths through their doors and by addressing the specific needs of struggling adolescents, museums can develop effective programming that can have possible long-term benefits.

In order to accomplish this, museums need to be responsive to the changing needs of youths in their community, and be aware of the needs specific to kids who are labeled as juvenile offenders. In looking to the Clark and the San Diego Art Museum as examples, it is essential that museums form relationships with their local juvenile court systems in order to garner support and collaboration in the development of such programs. As for the programs themselves, by applying child development theories and incorporating components found in the Search Institute's Developmental Assets for Adolescents, museums can create programs and activities that will provide juvenile offenders with essential assets they may otherwise be missing in their lives (e.g

adult support, empowerment, positive values, social competencies, positive identities, etc.). It is also vitally important for museums to remember that juvenile offenders should not be viewed as kids who are deficient and who need to be fixed. Rather, museums need to treat these adolescents with respect and care. The museum environment and the nature of its programs should reflect that these youths are valued as unique individuals with room for further growth, and that they have great potential to offer their communities and to themselves.

As social institutions, museums are in a unique position to use their collections and educational resources to serve the needs of their communities. This responsibility extends most especially to those who are typically underserved in the community and in larger society. In many ways, adolescent offenders (most of whom are at a vulnerable stage of development and lack many necessary opportunities and assets for healthy growth) can benefit the most from what museums can provide for them. Museums have the potential to offer these kids a chance to experience opportunities through programming they may otherwise miss in their lives. It is up to museums then, to implement programs for juvenile offenders that can support their strengths and encourage them with a sense of purpose towards their futures.

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