

Reforming Tennessee's Juvenile Justice System

Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018

Tennessee's Current Juvenile Justice System

- Due to a lack of community-based services, many youth are being confined for minor offenses or conduct that would not be a crime for adults.
- Current scarcity of placement options results in youth spending too long in juvenile detention centers.
- Minor violations of supervision conditions result in youth returning to the juvenile justice system.



Taking youth out of their homes and schools following minor offenses:

- Increases their risk for recidivism.
- Diverts resources from youth who pose a risk to the community.
- Uses taxpayer dollars unnecessarily because community-based services are often more effective and are a wiser use of resources.

Proposals of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018

Invest in Evidence-Based Programming and Community Resources

- Expand **community-based resources** across Tennessee, so that where a youth lives no longer determines what services he or she receives.
- **Reserve detention and out-of-home placement** for youth who have committed serious crimes or pose a public safety risk.
- Encourage that **youth in schools or on probation not be taken to court or detention for minor technical violations** that can be addressed by the school or probation supervisor, while leaving discretion for schools and law enforcement.
- Implement research-based **presumptive limits** on length of custody so youth are not placed into the system indefinitely.



Improve Accountability and Data Collection

- Require a comprehensive plan for **uniform data collection** from the Administrative Office of the Courts/juvenile courts, Department of Children's Services and Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth.
- Expand **performance-based metrics** for contracted providers of children's services and community-based treatment.



Provide Individualized Case Planning

- Require a **validated risk-and-needs assessment** in each case to identify the type and level of service needed for the youth.
- Based on the assessments, develop **individualized case plans** to determine the services and actions needed for rehabilitation.

