

Physical Custody of Justice- Involved Girls

Training Curriculum



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for the

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Overview



- Characteristics of J-I Girls
- Common Complaints
- Underlying Issues
- Strategies to Resolve Issues and Improve Outcomes

Characteristics of Justice-Involved Girls



- Patterns of delinquency and offending
- Violence
- Mental health and substance use
- Relationships and styles of interactions

Common Complaints

- Girls are difficult to manage
- They don't follow orders or instructions
- They don't follow through on appointments/
court dates
- They overreact
- They are emotional timebombs

Underlying Issues



- Developmental gender differences
- The importance of relationships to family, boyfriends and peers
- Mental health, trauma and triggers

Underlying Issues

Developmental Gender Differences



- Gender socialization
- Peer group organization and communication styles
- Gender bias and sexual discrimination
- Adolescence and silencing

Underlying Issues

Importance of Family, Boyfriends, and Peers

- Family pressures
 - responsibilities, freedom and exploitation
 - removal from home/loss of custody
- Pressures from boyfriends and peers
 - criminal involvement
 - protection
 - meaning of identity and respect

Underlying Issues

Mental Health, Trauma and Triggers

- Violence and trauma responses
 - delinquency (e.g., running away, early sexuality)
 - mental health symptoms (e.g., dissociation)
 - substance use
- Custody procedures and triggers
 - Typical practices
 - Imitation of abuse
 - Cycle of re-traumatization

Strategies to Resolve Issues and Improve Outcomes



- Information
- Staffing and communication
- De-escalation techniques

Strategies to Resolve Issues

Information



- Openly communicate what happens next
- Distribute information booklet*
- Acknowledge their fears and answer girls' questions

* an information booklet is a useful tool and should be a priority for development

Strategies to Resolve Issues

Staffing and Communication

- Staffing
 - Female staff for searches and close monitoring
 - Security when boys and girls are present
- Communication
 - Respectful, non-patronizing language
 - Clear boundaries
 - Legitimacy and validity of experience

Strategies to Resolve Issues

De-escalation Techniques

- Know triggers and typical trauma response behaviors
- Avoid escalating the situation
- State institutional practices if girl is a threat to self or others
- Use least force techniques
- After safety of girl, staff and others is assured, identify stress reduction responses