The Arts & Juvenile Justice

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Statement of Concern: Arts & Juvenile Justice

Statement of Concern vs. Issue Brief

• Statement of Concern is intended to initiate conversation in Congress and among advocates.

• Does not advocate for a specific policy action or legislation, but provides a number of juvenile justice issue areas where the arts could be better engaged.

• Calls on the arts to be utilized as a tool for working collaboratively across sectors to improve outcomes for youth.
Build upon the successfully reauthorized Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) and current reform initiatives.

• Significance of JJDPAs.

• Significant unfinished reforms and necessary improvements of the juvenile justice system.

• Respectfully urge Congress to further improve our nation’s juvenile justice processes and to explicitly articulate and support the innovative role of the arts as a partner in reform efforts.
Arts & Juvenile Justice: Opportunity

Connect reform efforts with the many promising Arts & Juvenile Justice collaborations happening across the country:

- Los Angeles: AIYN – Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network
- Performing Statistics: Richmond, VA
- Philadelphia: Mural Arts
- New York City: NeON Arts
- Create Justice and Art For Justice Fund: national networks

What are the current and potential projects happening in your state?
Arts & Juvenile Justice: Recommendations

Support state and local efforts to invest in community-based alternatives to incarceration.

• Investigate model public-private partnership efforts between arts initiatives and city and state law enforcement agencies, such as those in New York City, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, and partner with national grassroots efforts.

• Connect with national community of practitioners at the intersection of arts and justice to promote collaboration and learning between the creative and public safety sectors.
Arts & Juvenile Justice: Recommendations

Improve the quality of education in the juvenile justice system through the inclusion of the arts.

- Poor access to education has a high negative impact on the development of youth in the juvenile justice systems.
- Extend equitable access to the arts for incarcerated youth through the Well-Rounded Education provisions of the ESSA.
- Make explicit the opportunities for the arts to help achieve Title I objectives and provide guidance to states on how ESSA Title I, Part D funding can be used to support arts education.
Arts & Juvenile Justice: Recommendations

Reformulate federal grant requirements to reward the inclusion of creative youth development principles and strengths-based strategies in programs that serve youth in the juvenile justice system.

• Target funding toward effective community-based alternatives to detention and incarceration that are framed and evaluated in terms of the positive assets they seek to encourage in youth.

• Shift focus from recidivism rates as primary measure of program success.
Arts & Juvenile Justice: Recommendations

Support arts-focused interagency collaboration.

• Build upon OJJDP’s interest in arts-based practices and past collaborations with NEA.

• Urge appropriation of funding to explore other interagency creative collaborations with Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs and Task Force on the Arts and Human Development.

• Identify and disseminate promising cross-sector strategies through these networks.
Build the evidentiary base for arts-based programs and art therapy practices through federally-funded research.

- OJJDP/NEA’s 2016 literature review identified positive correlations between arts participation and outcomes for youths, but noted that the quantity and quality of the research is limited and suffers from methodological deficiencies.

- Lack of causal evidence is often a barrier to funding support at federal, state, and local levels.

- Support federal funding through NIJ for more rigorous, longitudinal evaluations of long-term arts/juvenile justice projects.
Art for Justice Fund: [https://artforjusticefund.org/](https://artforjusticefund.org/)
Create Justice: [http://www.createjustice.org/](http://www.createjustice.org/)
Social Impact of the Arts Project: [https://repository.upenn.edu/siap/](https://repository.upenn.edu/siap/)
Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network: [http://aiynetwork.org/](http://aiynetwork.org/)
Arts & Juvenile Justice: Resources

• **Justice Arts: Making the arts accessible to people in the juvenile and adult criminal justice system** (California Lawyers for the Arts, 2016)

• **Arts-Based Programs and Art Therapies for At-Risk, Justice-Involved, and Traumatized Youths** (2016 OJJDP/NEA literature review)

• **The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies** (NEA, 2012)

• **Our Voices Count: The Potential Impact of Strength-Based Music Programs in Juvenile Justice Settings** (2014 NEA-funded report, commissioned by Carnegie Hall)