

Dependent, Delinquent & Disabled

**Honorable Richard Weiss, Presiding Judge Mohave
County Superior Court
and
Lenore Knudtson**

Welcome

**Feel free to sit back, relax, and think . . .
Questions are always welcome.**



According to the Children's Defense Fund

Every single school day in the United States, over 7,000 high-school students drop out of school - - 1.2 million per year.

President Obama, March 2010



Children in Wyoming

November 2008

- 125,365 children live in Wyoming:
- 985 are Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic
- 2,124 are Black, non-Hispanic
- 3,002 are two or more races, non-Hispanic
- 4,028 are American Indian/Alaska Native, non-Hispanic
- 13,296 are Hispanic
- 101,930 are White, non-Hispanic

In Wyoming . . .

- A child is born into poverty every 9 hours.
- A child is abused or neglected every 12 hours.
- A child dies before his or her first birthday every week.
- A child or teen is killed by gunfire every 7 weeks.

Arizona

23 minutes

2 hours

13 hours

4 days

Child Welfare in Wyoming . .

Arizona

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- Number of children who are victims of abuse and neglect = 786 4,469
- Number of children in foster care = 1,304 9,731
- Number of children adopted from foster care = 57 1,400
- Number of grandparents raising grandchildren = 63,274 4,564

Youth At Risk in Wyoming.

Arizona

- Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds not enrolled in school and not high school graduates = 7.4%
- Averaged freshman high school graduation rate = 76.1%
- Percent of 16- to 19-year-olds unemployed = 11.4%
- Number of juvenile arrests = 6,682
- Number of children and teens in juvenile residential facilities = 315
- Ratio of cost per prisoner to cost per public school pupil 4.3:1

9.9%

70.5%

14.1%

50,744

1,737

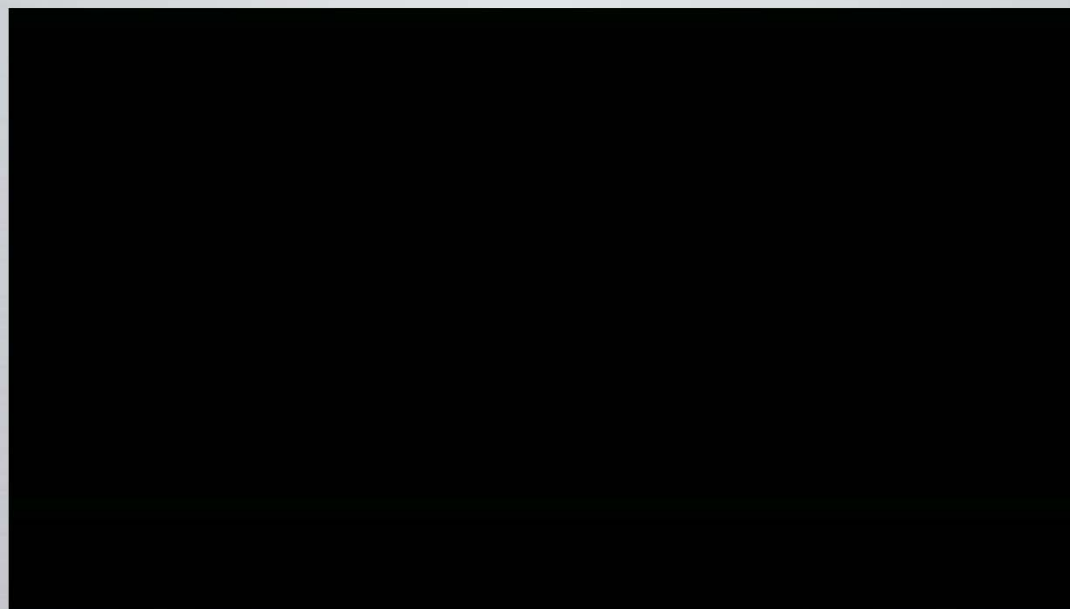
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Cradle to Prison Pipeline

Children's Defense Fund

March 2009

Attainment of a high school diploma is the single most effective preventive strategy against adult poverty. Yet a significant number of students do not graduate on time with a regular diploma.



Disabled and Delinquent

- Research estimates that up to 70% of children in correctional facilities are children with disabilities.
- Robinson, T.R., Rapport, Jane K. *Providing Special Education in the Juvenile Justice System. Remedial and Special Education 20(1) (1999).*

More Facts. . .

- Across the United States, more than 6 million children are being raised in households headed by grandparents and other relatives;
- 2.5 million children are in these households without any parents present.
- As the children's parents struggle with substance abuse, mental illness, incarceration, economic hardship, divorce, domestic violence, and other challenges, these caregivers provide a vital safety net to children inside and outside of the foster care system.
- Children's Defense Fund, May 2007

Q: Why are youth in out-of-home care more than twice as likely to drop out of high school as their peers?

- A: Youth in out of home care face a number of obstacles to graduation. One major challenge is the high rate of school mobility for youth in care, both when they are initially removed from home, and when they change living placements while in care. On average, youth in care move one or two times each year.
- Moreover, studies have shown youth in out-of-home care lose approximately **4 to 6 months** of academic progress with each change in school placement.
- Foster Care & Education, Credit Transfer and School Completion (2008).

Doing nothing is too costly.

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- Being abused or neglected as a child increases the likelihood of arrest
 - By 59% for juveniles, and
 - By 28% for adults.
- Abused or neglected children are 30% more likely to be arrested for violent crimes.

Widom and Maxfield, 2001.

- Every school,
 - Every classroom,
 - Every child

Is affected!

What Comes First?

- The dependency? (CHINS)
 - Trauma
- The disability?
 - Effects of Trauma
 - Learned Behaviors
- The delinquency?
 - The Culmination

Consequences of Child Maltreatment

- Maltreatment places children at risk
 - INFANCY & TODDLERHOOD (0-5)
 - poor attachment
 - delayed developmental milestones
 - SCHOOL AGE (6-12)
 - aggressive behavior
 - social isolation
 - learning problems
 - ADOLESCENCE (13-18)
 - school failure and school dropout
 - delinquency and later criminal behavior

Widom and Maxfield, 2001

When Does It Start?

- Infancy
 - Attachment Disorders
 - Some of the most challenging students you will face.
 - Inappropriate Caregivers
 - The impact of violent environments on very young children suggests that permanent negative changes in the child's brain and neural development can occur, such as altering the development of the central nervous system, which can lead to more impulsive, reactive and violent behavior. (Perry, 1995.)
 - System Challenges
 - Infants have the HIGHEST foster care reentry rate than any other age group. (Shaw, 2006; Courtney, 1995; Wells, 2007.)

When Does It Start?

- Elementary Years

- Academic Difficulties
- Behavioral Difficulties
- Socially Inept
- Bullies

See the RAD Fact Sheet for the Classroom.

- 40 percent of children with autism and 60 percent of children with Asperger's syndrome have been bullied, according to the National Autistic Society.
- Children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are almost 10 times more likely as others to have been regular targets of bullies, according to a report in the Journal of Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology.
- Eighty percent of children with learning disabilities are bullied at school. 60 percent of those children endured physical attacks. Mencap, 2007.

When Does It Start?

- Adolescent years
 - Depression
 - Risk-Taking
 - Self-Harm
 - Hospitalization

“Teachers should consider these children ‘wounded’
rather than stubborn, lazy or mean.”

Marilyn Gootman, University of Georgia

When do interventions work?

- When
 - You start early,
 - You make them meaningful, and
 - You involve the entire family.

We can't just “fix” the kids.

“Children learn hopefulness from a caring adult.”

Marilyn Gootman, University of Georgia



Now Open Your Mind . . .





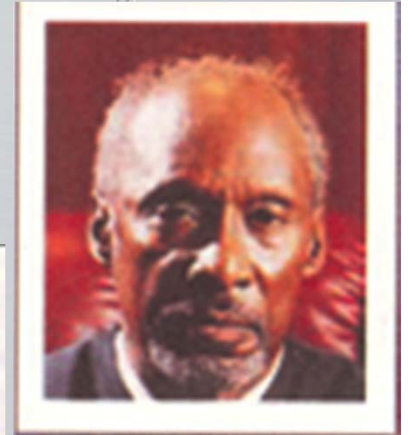




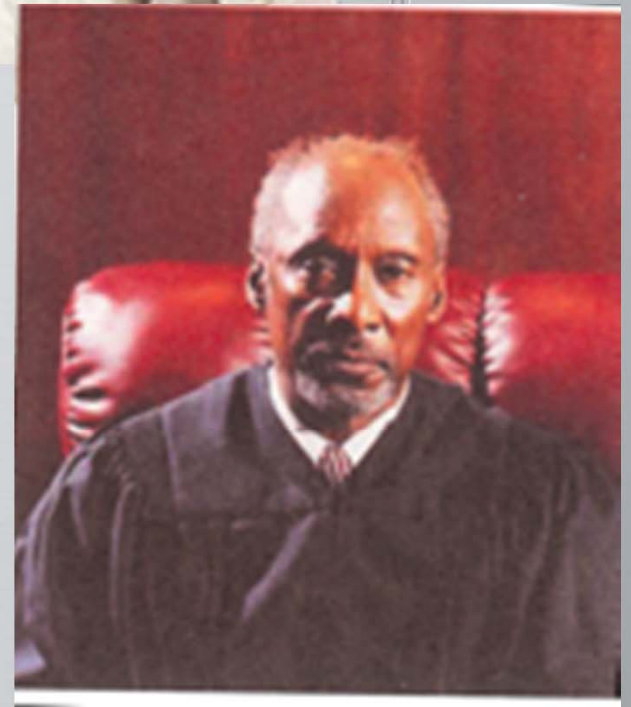
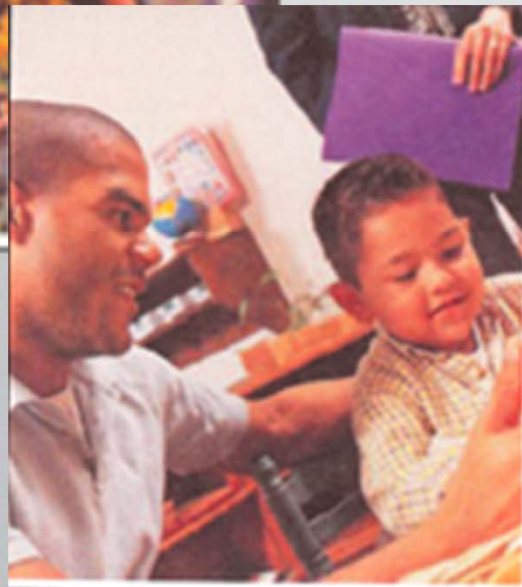


What Is My Role?

- Know who you are . . .
- What thoughts come to mind when you look at these people?
- What is the person's education level?
- What kind of neighborhood does he or she live in?
- What type of job does this person have?
- Is this person a good parent or spouse?
- Would you like this person as a friend, neighbor, or coworker?



Were You Right?



Now that we know who we're talking about, what do we do?

CARE!

- 1. Connect.**
- 2. Accept.**
- 3. Respect.**
- 4. Expect.**

CONNECT

- First, establish a link, find a connection, reach out.
- Some level of connection is critical.
- Be genuinely interested.
- The connection approaches “trust.”
- Don’t take “no” for an answer



ACCEPT

- Accept the fact that you chose this profession, it didn't choose you!
- Accept individual differences.
- Accept the monumental differences in your life experiences.
- Accept that you can't change everything.
- Accept the person before you because. . .
 - She is a child,
 - She will likely have children of her own some day.

RESPECT

- Demonstrate respect for the person, ALWAYS. Challenge yourself.
- Respect your differences.
- Respect your boundaries.
- Respect your limitations.

EXPECT



- Expect good choices, good behavior, and high standards.
- Expect individual responsibility.
- Expect accountability.
- Reward met expectations!

- Empower
- Enrich
- Enhance
- Enlighten
- Encourage



Let my inspiration flow in token rhyme
Suggesting rhythm that will not forsake me
Till my tale is told and done

The storyteller makes no choice
Soon you will not hear his voice
His job is to share light and not to master.

Since the end is never told
We paid the teller off in gold
In hopes he will come back
But he cannot be bought or sold.

Inspiration move me brightly
Hold away despair
More than this I will not ask
Faced with mysteries dark and vast.

(Robert Hunter - c 1977 / 1979 Ice Nine Publ. Co.)

