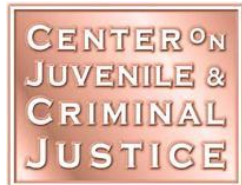


How does California compare to other states?



Juvenile Justice, Nationally

New [video](#) highlights the disturbing history of Hawaii's youth correctional facility.

The video documents appalling conditions and systemic shortcomings in Hawaii's juvenile justice system from 1986 to 2006 that parallel California's Youth Authority.

This recently released video was written and produced by CJCJ intern Arrah-Louise Ibale, and outlines decades of malpractice by Hawaii's youth correctional system including staff-on-ward abuse and a severe lack of services, health care, and education. The situation it depicts is ominously familiar for those who have worked in California's juvenile justice system. CJCJ's Juvenile Justice Services Director, [Kimo Uila](#), reflects on his experience as a teen in his native Hawaii:

"In the late 1980's, I knew a family of brothers that all had contact with the justice system in Hawaii. It was a common thing for multi-generational interaction with the system because in those small communities families could be stigmatized by law enforcement. The brothers were not sophisticated criminals and would be arrested for minor crimes; however, upon arrival to the facility it was a different world. The system was designed to punish you and throw you back out. There was a huge disconnect between the system and the people; there was no programming, follow up, or attempt to relate to the cultures there. The juvenile justice system ruined that family. That's how I got exposed to the juvenile justice system in Hawaii."

Plagued with decades of the same bureaucratic and systemic problems, Hawaii and California stand as warnings against institutional congregate approaches to juvenile justice and rehabilitation. The full video can be viewed on our [website](#), [YouTube channel](#), and [Facebook page](#) under the videos tab.

[*Is your state pursuing best practices?*](#)

States begin closing youth correctional facilities in favor of more appropriate and fiscally resourceful local alternatives.

Many states have begun reforming their juvenile justice systems through realignment and reinvestment in community-based alternatives. The Juvenile Justice Information Exchange published an excellent [review](#) by Benjamin Chambers earlier this month documenting three strategies employed across at least 24 states for reducing state incarceration of young people. CJCJ has been following the latest updates, noting that among others, [Illinois](#) is planning to close a juvenile prison, and [New York](#) is reevaluating the age at which a young person can be sent to the adult system.

So where does California stand?

California

- Currently operating 4 youth state prisons and 2 fire camps
- 1 youth prison scheduled to close by December 31, 2011
- Youth prisons housed 1, 207 wards as of August 31, 2011
 - 189 wards were sentenced by adult court
 - 35 wards are female
- Current annual cost per ward = \$224,712 (Revised CA budget 2010-11).

California considered realignment of all juvenile offenders to the county level earlier this year. In the budget discussions the issue of juvenile realignment was removed due to concerns that some counties were not equipped to serve all juvenile offenders. However, California's youth prisons are decrepit and dysfunctional, and are already failing its wards. Best practices recommend local non-institutional services for youth works better. Given that many states are branching out and realigning their juvenile justice systems to the local level, isn't it time California followed suit?

Want to learn more about best juvenile justice practices?

You can read [Renewing Juvenile Justice](#) which details a model approach to juvenile realignment, or attend [OJJDP's 2011 National Conference](#) where Deputy Director Dinky Enty will be presenting together with Sierra Health Foundation's Matt Cervantes on the publication's findings.

CORRECTION: Please note after the release of CJCJ's recent publication, [What has been the effect of Proposition 21?](#) Ventura County Probation Agency acknowledged providing incorrect statistics to the State of California for 2003. CJCJ will be revising its publication's tables, discussion, and findings as soon as the corrected data becomes available.

Do you know CJCJ's Senior Research Fellows? Read their latest blogs:

[Mike A. Males, Ph.D.: No-one can explain California's astonishing youth crime plunge](#)
[Randall G. Shelden, Ph.D.: Give me that old time religion, Part I; Part II; Part III](#)

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