

Disproportionate Minority Contact

DMC

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Race and Juvenile Justice

Nation wide

- From 2002 to 2004, African Americans were:
 - 16% of youth.
 - 28% of juvenile arrests.
 - 30% of referrals to juvenile court.
 - 37% of the detained population.
 - 34% of youth formally processed by the juvenile court.
 - 30% of adjudicated youth.
 - 35% of youth judicially waived to criminal court.
 - 38% of youth in residential placement.
 - 58% of youth admitted to state adult prison.

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- Disproportionate Minority Contact Mandate (DMC) – federal mandate - juveniles

Part of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (JJDP A) and its reauthorization in the late 1980s and there after reauthorizations

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The fourth mandate, DMC

- Identification – extent of presence
- Assessment – search for causes
- Interventions – reduce DMC
- Evaluation – see if interventions working
- Monitoring – assess over time

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- To understand DMC
 - Differential offending
minorities commit more crime and more serious crime

Tracy – even studies that find evidence of bias, discover minorities commit more crime

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- Second explanation for DMC, selection bias

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- Bias has many forms

Direct = intentional, overt

Subtle = unintentional, indirect – tied to
legitimate factors but racially
tainted

e.g., family – Pope and Feyerherm

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- Zatz- indirect most common form of bias

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- Studies of Juvenile Justice System

Pope and Feyerherm (1993)

Pope and colleagues (2003)

Bishop (2005)

Engen and colleagues (2005)

Pope and Leiber (2005)

Conclude – most studies find evidence of bias even after considering influence of legal factors

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- Appears both differential offending and selection bias play roles in juvenile justice decision making

Thus, need interventions and strategies to address both differential offending and selection bias

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- If differential offending as main reason for DMC

Interventions focus on crime prevention

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- If bias accounts for DMC

Solutions:

structure decision making at detention
and intake (race neutral)
cultural sensitivity training
advocates
diversity in hiring

Iowa

- 1993- one of a few states to conduct an assessment study
- 4 jurisdictions examined
- Legal factors and race both explained juvenile justice decision making and contributed to DMC

Iowa

- Suggested recommendations:
 - Development and continued use of crime prevention programs
 - Cultural sensitivity, education
 - Community advocates

Iowa

- DMC coordinator hired
- Funding for community-based program
 - Focus more on family
 - Location of the program not in the assessment study
 - DMC subcommittee state level formed
 - DMC part of formula grants to fund discretionary grants – low number of points

Iowa

- DMC coordinator resigns
- DMC subcommittee rarely meets
- 3 years later – DMC coordinator and DMC subcommittee re-emerge
- Portion of formula grants given to local planning entities (DECAT)

Iowa

- Next year new DMC coordinator (U. Iowa – resource family center)
- DMC committee meets monthly for the year and then at least 6 times a year
- State wide DMC conference, county DMC conference

Iowa

- Money to fund detention intervention
 - One rejected
 - Another county awarded – DA resistance
 - 3 years of funding – little change

Iowa

- Change in funding – 4 areas targeted with 3 receiving funding –
 - Allows for conference and dmc coordinator

Iowa

- Data warehouse system
- Development of risk assessment at intake
- 2006 another assessment study and a detention study
- In 2007 – Governor establishes mandate and race and detention task force
- Working with Annie E. Casey – detention reform