

A CAMPAIGN OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE & DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COALITION

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Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) Recommendations and Background

The Act 4 Juvenile Justice campaign of the National Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Coalition believes that the time is right for Congress to reauthorize the JJDPA. In recent years, events across the nation have highlighted the need for juvenile justice system reform. Congress can take steps now to assist states to improve conditions many juveniles endure while detained in youth correctional institutions, boot camps and other facilities; to eliminate the placement of youth in adult jails and prisons; and to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system.

We believe JJDPA reauthorization should be grounded in recent research conducted by the Department of Justice, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other national and state organizations. We also believe that any JJDPA reauthorization should include the following recommendations, which address the most timely and critical juvenile justice reform issues:

- 1. Extend the *jail removal* and *sight and sound separation* core protections to all youth under the age of 18 held pretrial, whether charged in juvenile or adult court.
- 2. Change the definition of "adult inmate" to allow certain States to continue to place youth convicted in adult court in juvenile facilities rather than adult prisons without jeopardizing federal funding.
- 3. Strengthen the *Disproportionate Minority Contact* (DMC) core protection by requiring States to take concrete steps to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system.
- 4. Strengthen the *Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders* (DSO) core protection, which prohibits the locked detention of status offenders, by removing the Valid Court Order and Interstate Compact exceptions.
- 5. Provide safe and humane conditions of confinement for youth in state and/or local custody by restricting use of JJDPA funds for dangerous practices and encouraging States to promote adoption of best practices and standards.
- 6. Assist States in coming into compliance with the JJDPA and establish Incentive Grants to encourage States to adopt evidence-based or promising best practices that improve outcomes for youth and their communities.
- 7. Enhance the partnership between States and the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) by expanding training, technical assistance, research, and evaluation and the partnership between OJJDP and Congress by encouraging transparency, timeliness, public notice, and communication.
- 8. Expand juvenile crime prevention efforts by reauthorizing and increasing funding for JJDPA Title V and Mentoring.

JJDPA Background: The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) is a major vehicle for juvenile justice reform at the federal level. The JJDPA was first passed in 1974 and most recently reauthorized in 2002.¹

The JJDPA provides grants to States to assist with juvenile crime prevention and intervention programs. In order to be eligible for these grants, States must comply with the four core protections, which are discussed below. JJDPA grants are administered by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), which is based within the Department of Justice and coordinates and administers federal juvenile justice efforts.

<u>Recommendations – Core Protections:</u>

1. Extend the *jail removal* and *sight and sound separation* core protections to all youth under the age of 18 held pretrial, whether charged in juvenile or adult court.

Why these protections should be expanded:

- The original intent of the JJDPA was to recognize the unique needs of youth in the criminal justice system and establish a separate system to specifically address these needs. One of these unique needs for youth is protection from the dangers of adult jails. Placing youth in adult jails has dire consequences:
 - Youth placed in adult jails are at great risk of physical assault. According to the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics, in 2005 and 2006, 21 percent and 13 percent (respectively) of the victims of inmate-on-inmate sexual violence in jails were youth under the age of 18, despite the fact that only one percent of all jail inmates are juveniles.²
 - Youth have the highest suicide rates of all inmates in jails. Youth are 19 times more likely to commit suicide in jail than youth in the general population and 36 times more likely to commit suicide in an adult jail than in a juvenile detention facility.³
 - Adult jails do not offer age appropriate services for youth, such as access to education. The most recent survey of educational programs in adult jails found that 40 percent of jails provided no educational services at all, only 11 percent provided special education services, and just 7 percent provided vocational training.⁴
 - Many children held in adult jails are ultimately transferred back to juvenile court or have their cases dismissed.⁵ Yet, their experience in adult jail is likely to have long lasting negative consequences.
 - Youth involved in the adult criminal justice system are more likely to reoffend. Youth who have been previously prosecuted as adults are, on average, 34 percent more likely to commit crimes than youth retained in the juvenile justice system.⁶
- The jail removal core protection currently protects youth who are under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system by prohibiting these youth from being held in adult jails and lock-ups except in very limited circumstances, such as while waiting for transport to appropriate juvenile facilities. In these limited circumstances where youth are placed in adult jails and

lock-ups, the sight and sound core protection limits the contact these youth have with adult inmates.

While these core protections have worked to keep most children out of adult jails for 30 years, the JJDPA does not apply to youth under the jurisdiction of the adult criminal court. In fact, on any given day, 7,500 children are locked up in adult jails before they are tried.⁷ Nearly 40 States have laws that allow children prosecuted in adult courts to be placed in adult jails, prior to their first court hearing.⁸

Request: Congress should amend the JJDPA to extend the jail removal and sight and sound protections of the Act to all youth, regardless of whether they are awaiting trial in juvenile or adult court. In the limited exceptions allowed under the JJDPA where youth can be held in adult facilities, they should have no sight or sound contact with adult inmates.

2. Change the definition of "adult inmate" to allow States to continue to place youth convicted in adult court in juvenile facilities rather than adult prisons without jeopardizing federal funding.

Why this definition should be changed:

- Many States currently allow youth who are convicted in adult court to serve their sentence in juvenile facilities until they reach the maximum age of extended juvenile jurisdiction. However, the 2002 JJDPA reauthorization and subsequent guidance by OJJDP requires States to separate youth prosecuted as adults from other youth in juvenile facilities. This change penalizes States that utilize more appropriate and humane placements for youth.
- If this change is not enacted soon, States that continue to choose the more humane option of keeping youth out of adult prisons could face the withholding of federal JJDPA funds for non-compliance with the JJDPA. Based on our estimates, this could affect 40 States, many of which are likely to choose not to accept federal JJDPA funds in order to keep youth in juvenile facilities rather than move them into adult prisons.
- States should be allowed to retain youth in the juvenile system for as long as the State deems appropriate. Given the significantly higher rate of re-offending by youth held in adult jails and prisons, this makes good financial sense and better serves communities.
- On any given day, more than 2,000 youth are locked up in adult prisons following their conviction in adult court.⁹
- Adult prisons do not offer age appropriate services for youth, limiting their educational opportunities and preventing them from receiving the rehabilitative services that may keep them from re-offending. In fact, despite high rates of mental illness, children in adult facilities are less likely to receive counseling or therapy.¹⁰
- According to a 2007 nationwide poll commissioned by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 89 percent of Americans believe that rehabilitative services and treatment for incarcerated youth can help prevent future crime.¹¹ Youth who are detained in the juvenile system are more likely to receive the rehabilitative services necessary to help them turn their

lives around and are not subject to the risks involved in being held with adult inmates discussed above.

Request: Revise the definition of "adult inmate" to exclude youth who, at the time of the offense, were younger than 18 and who are younger than the maximum age a youth can be held at a juvenile facility under state law.

3. Strengthen the *Disproportionate Minority Contact* (DMC) core protection by requiring States to take concrete steps to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system.

Why this core protection should be strengthened:

- The JJDPA currently requires States to "address" disproportionate minority contact (DMC) with the juvenile justice system. This vague requirement has left state and local officials without clear guidance on how to reduce racial and ethnic disparities. Jurisdictions need to approach this work with focused, informed, and data-driven strategies.¹²
- Youth of color are significantly over-represented in the juvenile justice system:
 - Latino youth are incarcerated in local detention and state correctional facilities nearly 2 times more frequently than White youth.¹³
 - African-American youth are 16 percent of the adolescents in this country, but are 38 percent of the youth incarcerated in local detention and state correctional facilities.¹⁴
- Research demonstrates that youth of color are treated more harshly than white youth, even when charged with the same category of offense:
 - White youth are much more likely to be placed on probation for drug offenses than African-American youth. In contrast, African-American youth are also twice as likely to be sent to locked facilities away from home for drug offenses than White youth.¹⁵
 - Latino youth are incarcerated twice as long for drug offenses and are one and a half times more likely to be admitted to adult prison than their White counterparts.¹⁶
- In many parts of the country there are no accurate data on the number of Latino youth in the juvenile justice system. Instead, Latino youth are counted as "white" or "black" resulting in significant undercounting of how many Latino youth are really in the juvenile justice system.¹⁷ Although some data on Latino youth is available, this data may not represent the full extent of disparate treatment for Latino youth in the juvenile justice system.¹⁸ Without accurate data, it is difficult for communities to plan and coordinate effective and culturally and linguistically appropriate services for youth and their families.¹⁹
- It has been proven that jurisdictions can achieve measurable reductions in racial and ethnic disparities when they have implemented data-driven strategies that are guided by collaborative groups of stakeholders. Multnomah County, Oregon reduced its disproportionate confinement of youth of color by establishing alternatives to detention such

as shelter care, foster homes, home detention and a day reporting center.²⁰ Peoria County, Illinois reduced disproportionate referrals of youth of color to the juvenile justice system by working with the school system to strengthen school-based discipline protocols.²¹ Travis County, Texas reduced its disproportionate incarceration of youth who violated probation by establishing a Sanction Supervision Program, which provides more intensive case management and probation services to youth and their families.²² Pennsylvania has recently implemented a system of statewide juvenile justice data collection that captures ethnicity separately from race.

Request: Strengthen the requirement that States reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system by requiring States to 1) establish coordinating bodies to oversee efforts to reduce disparities; 2) identify key decision points in the system and the criteria by which decisions are made; 3) create systems to collect local data at every point of contact youth have with the juvenile justice system (disaggregated by descriptors such as race, ethnicity and offense) to identify where disparities exist; 4) develop and implement plans to address disparities that include measurable objectives for change; 5) publicly report findings; and 6) evaluate progress toward reducing disparities.

4. Strengthen the *Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO)* core protection, which prohibits the locked detention of status offenders, by removing the Valid Court Order and Interstate Compact exceptions.

Why this core protection should be strengthened:

- In establishing that status offenders (truants, curfew violators, runaways, youth who disobey their parents) should not be detained in the original 1974 JJDPA, Congress recognized that status offenses are non-delinquent and non-criminal and, therefore, detention was not appropriate for the following reasons:
 - Detention does not resolve the factors that lead to a status offense. Instead detention often aggravates these factors because children held in secure facilities are exposed to negative influences and subject to social stigma. The detention of status offenders (DSO) provision was put into place to ensure that status offenders, who often have unmet mental health or education needs, receive the services they need through the appropriate human services agency rather than the justice system.²³ This also allows the juvenile justice system to focus more on children who are charged with delinquent offenses.
 - Detention of status offenders is also more costly and less effective than home and community-based responses. It interrupts education and detained youth often fail to return to school after release – which can lead to further status offenses.²⁴
 - Girls are disproportionally affected by the DSO exceptions they are 170 percent more likely to be arrested for status offenses than boys and receive more severe punishment than boys.²⁵
- However, the Valid Court Order (VCO) exception allows status offenders to be locked up for their second and subsequent status offenses, i.e., for violating the court's order not to commit another status offense.

• Many States no longer allow the incarceration of status offenders under the Valid Court Order (VCO) exception.²⁶ In those States, judges are able to effectively and proactively manage status offenders without resorting to detention.

Request: Remove the Valid Court Order and Interstate Compact exceptions from the detention of status offenders core requirement.

Recommendations – Conditions of Confinement:

5. Provide safe and humane conditions of confinement for youth in state and/or local custody by restricting use of JJDPA funds for dangerous practices and encouraging States to promote adoption of best practices and standards.

Why this provision should be added to the current law:

- The JJDPA currently does not address abusive conditions and practices in juvenile facilities. Traditionally, States have been responsible for conditions of confinement for youth incarcerated in state and local juvenile facilities.
- Reports of widespread abuses in institutions in California,²⁷ Indiana,²⁸ Mississippi,²⁹ Ohio,³⁰ Texas,³¹ and other states since the last reauthorization of the JJDPA demonstrate the importance of updating the law to ensure the safety of children in custody. Abuses have included frequent use of pepper spray, sexual assaults by staff, hog-tying, and shackling youth.
- Correctional officers should be trained on effective behavior-management techniques to respond to dangerous or threatening situations. However, certain activities that create an unreasonable risk of physical injury, pain or psychological harm to juveniles should not be used in juvenile facilities. These activities include using chemical agents, restraints to fixed objects, choking, and psychotropic medications for purposes of coercion, punishment or convenience of staff.

Request: Restrict the use of federal funds for dangerous practices such as hog-tying, fixed restraints, and pepper spray that create an unreasonable risk of physical injury, pain, or psychological harm. Make best practices and standards available nationwide through the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Encourage States to provide necessary training for facility staff and to adopt evidence-based best practices in programming, behavior management, and security.

<u>Recommendations – Assisting Compliance and Promoting Evidence-Based or Promising Best</u> <u>Practices:</u>

6. Assist States in coming into compliance with the JJDPA and establish Incentive Grants to encourage States to adopt evidence-based or promising best practices that improve outcomes for youth and their communities.

Why best practices in juvenile justice should be promoted:

- Reauthorization of the JJDPA is an opportunity to strengthen accountability for federal spending on juvenile justice systems and measure state systems' effectiveness in protecting the public, holding delinquent youth accountable and providing rehabilitation services that prevent future crime.
- States need additional guidance and resources to ensure that they are adhering to the core protections and utilizing best practices. Adoption of best practices will also strengthen accountability for federal spending and result in a greater ability to assess and potentially replicate effective programs.
- Compliance determinations should not be used as a way to exclude States from positive and effective juvenile justice reforms. Rather, the compliance process should support States in being forthright about their compliance challenges, and should provide States with the accountability and assistance they need to overcome those challenges.
- States should also be given incentives for demonstrating progress toward adopting best practices. Incentive grants would encourage States to adopt best practices in juvenile justice reform and develop outcome data on program effectiveness.
- According to a 2007 nationwide poll commissioned by the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 89 percent of Americans believe that rehabilitative services and treatment for incarcerated youth can help prevent future crime.³²

Request: For States not in compliance with the core protections, allow any JJDPA funds that would have been withheld for non-compliance to be used by the States as improvement grants to regain compliance. Establish an Incentive Grant program to be awarded to States that: 1) adopt evidence-based or promising approaches to juvenile justice reform and 2) can demonstrate results or show progress toward implementing best practices, such as effective community-based alternatives to incarceration.

Recommendations – Improve State and Federal Relationships:

7. Enhance the partnership between States and the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) by expanding training, technical assistance, research, and evaluation and the partnership between OJJDP and Congress by encouraging transparency, timeliness, public notice, and communication.

Why the Federal/State partnership should be strengthened:

- It is critical that juvenile justice have a dedicated focus and a "home" within the federal government for purposes of developing national policies, objectives, priorities and plans, and for providing guidance, support and oversight to States and territories implementing the JJDPA.
- OJJDP is the agency charged with responsibility for juvenile justice at the U.S. Department of Justice. OJJDP carries out its purposes through research, policies and grants to States and

localities to assist them in planning, establishing, operating, and evaluating effective projects. OJJDP is also tasked with the development of more effective education, research, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation programs for the juvenile justice systems.

• Similarly, it is imperative that the States remain in contact with the federal government to coordinate effective strategies, meet local needs and learn about the best and most promising practices for children, youth and communities across the nation. The 56 State Advisory Groups on Juvenile Justice (SAGs) fulfill this role, individually and collectively, by: 1) supporting models for collaborative systems change; 2) providing real-world advice and counsel to their respective Governors, state legislatures, and the federal government; and 3) serving as incubators for cost-effective innovations that create optimal outcomes for the prevention of delinquency.

Request: Require the OJJDP Administrator to conduct research and provide training and technical assistance to States, which are currently discretionary functions. Require greater transparency and accountability by having States make state plans and reports on compliance with the core protections publicly available. Require the OJJDP Administrator to investigate, issue a report, and make the report publicly available if OJJDP receives information that a State may be out of compliance with the core protections. Ensure technical and financial support for a national nonprofit association to represent the nation's 56 SAGs.

Recommendations – Strengthen Prevention Efforts:

8. Expand juvenile crime prevention efforts by reauthorizing and increasing funding for JJDPA Title V Grants and Mentoring.

Why this recommendation should be enacted:

- Created in 1992 and reauthorized in 2002 as part of the JJDPA, the Title V grant program funds collaborative, comprehensive, community-based delinquency prevention efforts.
- The Title V Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs are the <u>only</u> federal funding source dedicated solely to the prevention of youth crime and violence. These small grants fund a range of innovative and effective programs from home visitation by nurses and preschool/parent training programs to youth development initiatives involving the use of mentoring, after-school activities, tutoring, truancy prevention, and dropout reduction strategies.
- Research has shown that every dollar spent on evidence-based programs can yield up to \$13 in cost savings.³³
- Each child prevented from engaging in repeat criminal offenses can save the community \$2.6 to \$4.4 million.³⁴
- Model programs funded by Title V include after school programs that connect children to caring adults and provide constructive activities during the "prime time for juvenile crime."

Request: Increase authorization levels for prevention programs. Create an incentive grant program to encourage States to use more evidence-based prevention programs.

Endnotes

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Task Force Recommends Against Policies and Laws Facilitating Transfer of

Youth to the Adult Justice System to Reduce Violence among Transferred Youth," Guide to Community Preventive Services, available at

http://www.thecommunityguide.org/violence/Violence-YouthTransfer_rev.pdf. (April 13, 2007)

⁸ Id. at 24.

⁹ Harrison, Paige and Beck, Allen J., Prison and jail inmates at midyear 2005, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin, p. 1, available at <u>http://www.oip.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/pjim05.pdf</u>. (May 2006) ¹⁰ Juskiewicz, Jolanta, "Youth Crime/Adult Time: Is Justice Served?," Building Blocks for Youth, p. 18, available at http://www.oup.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/pjim05.pdf. (May 2006)
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¹¹ Krisberg Barry and Marchivers Summer Adult Time: Adult Time:

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http://www.burnsinstitute.org/reducing.html.

National Council on Crime and Delinquency, And Justice for Some: Differential Treatment of Youth of Color in the Justice System, p.2, available at http://www.nccd-crc.org/nccd/pubs/2007jan_justice_for_some.pdf. (January 2007).

Id. at p. 2.

¹⁵ *Id.* at p. 21.

¹⁶ *Id* at pp. 29 and 34.

¹⁷ Id. at p. 1.

¹⁸ Villarruel, Francisco A.; Walker, Nancy; et al., ¿Dónde Está la Justicia? A call to action on behalf of Latino and Latina youth in the U.S. justice system, p. 42-44, available at <u>http://www.buildingblocksforyouth.org/Full%20Report%20English.pdf</u>. (July 2002) ¹⁹ Id.

²⁰ Hoytt, Eleanor Hinton; Schiraldi, Vincent; Smith, Brenda V.; Ziedenberg, Jason, 8. Pathways to Juvenile Detention Reform: Reducing Racial Disparities in Juvenile Detention, Annie E. Casey Foundation, p. 54-62, available at http://www.aecf.org/upload/publicationfiles/reducing%20racial%20disparities.pdf. (2001) ²¹ Conversation with Laurie Brown, Peoria County Site Coordinator, August 6, 2007.

²² Conversation with Britt Canary, Travis County Juvenile Probation Department, April 4, 2008.

²³ Senate Report Number 93-1011, at 5287-88 (1974).

²⁴ Holman, Barry and Ziedenberg, Jason, *The Dangers of Detention; The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and Other Secure Facilities*, Justice Policy Institute, p. 9, available at http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/06-11_REP_DangersOfDetention_JJ.pdf. (November, 2006)

25 Zawacki, Susanna, Girls Involvement in Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System, Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Statistical Bulletin p. 1. (October 2005) ²⁶ 42 U.S.C. § 5633 (a)(11)(A) 2006.

²⁷ In California, authorities failed to provide adequate medical and mental health treatment and facility staff regularly used pepper spray on youth. Rothfeld, Michael, "Juvenile Prison System Needs Reform Lawyers Say," Los Angeles Times, available at http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-meyouth18feb18.0,5845357 (February, 18, 2008); Boyd, Ralph, Investigative Findings Letter, U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, available at

http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/split/documents/la_county_juvenile_findlet.pdf (April 9, 2003). ²⁸ In Indiana, staff sexually assaulted youth in one facility, and failed to protect youth from violence in several juvenile facilities. Kim, Wan, Investigative

Findings Letter, U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division available at http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/split/documents/marion_juve_ind_findlet_8-6-07.pdf (August 6, 2007); "Justice Department Reaches Settlement Regarding Conditions at Two Indiana Juvenile Justice Facilities," U.S. Fed. News Service available at http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2006/February/06_crt_066.html (February 8, 2006); Schlozman, Bradley, Investigative Findings Letter, U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, available at http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/split/documents/split_indiana_plainfield_juv_findlet_9-9-05.pdf (September 9, 2005),.

²⁹ In Mississippi, staff in state facilities hog-tied youth, put them in shackles, and stripped youth and put them in dark rooms for 12 hours a day for up to one month at a time. Nossiter, Adam, "Lawsuit Filed Over Treatment of Girls at State Reform School in Mississippi," New York Times, available at http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/12/us/12prison.html (July 12, 2007); "Mississippi Center Accused of Abuse," Associated Press, available at http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2007-07-12-mississippi N.htm (July 12, 2007); Mohr, Holbrook, "Youth Prisons Get Scrutiny," Associated Press, available at http://www.mercurynews.com/crime/ci_8435681 (March 3, 2008). ³⁰ In Ohio, girls in a state facility were sexually assaulted by male staff. Associated Press, "Ohio Settles Suit Over Juvenile Jails," available at

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² Attitudes of US Voters toward Youth Crime and the Justice System Council on Crime and Delinquency, p. 1.

³³ Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative, Detention Reform Brief 1: Detention Reform: A Cost-Saving Approach, Annie E. Casey Foundation, available at ttp://www.aecf.org/upload/PublicationFiles/jdai_facts1.pdf. (2007)

http://www.aecf.org/upload/PublicationFiles/jdat_tacts1.pdf. (2007) ³⁴ Cohen, Mark A. and Piquero, Alex R., *New Evidence on the Monetary Value of Saving a High Risk Youth*, Vanderbilt Law and Economics Research Paper No. 08-07, available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=1077214. (December 2007).

¹ The JJDPA was most recently authorized by the 21st Century Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act through FY2007 (P.L. 107-273).

² Jailing Juveniles: The Dangers of Incarcerating Youth in Adult Jails in America, Campaign for Youth Justice, p. 4, available at http://www.campaign4youthjustice.com/Downloads/NationalReportsArticles/CFYJ-Jailing_Juveniles_Report_2007-11-15.pdf. (November 2007) ³*Id*.at p. 10.

⁴ Harlow, Caroline Wolf, Education and Correctional Populations, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, Table 3 on p. 4, available at http://www.ojp.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/ecp.pdf. (January 2003)

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³¹ In Texas, youth filed hundreds of complaints over physical and sexual abuse and repeated use of pepper spray by staff in juvenile facilities. Swanson, Doug, "Officials Indicted in Abuse at TYC", The Dallas Morning News, available at