

Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

No Place for Kids: The Case for Reducing Juvenile Incarceration. By Richard A. Mendel. Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2011. 51 p.

http://www.aecf.org/OurWork/JuvenileJustice/~/_media/Pubs/Topics/Juvenile%20Justice/Detention%20Ref orm/NoPlaceForKids/JJ_NoPlaceForKids_Full.pdf

“Incarcerating kids doesn't work: youth prisons do not reduce future offending, they waste taxpayer dollars, and they frequently expose youth to dangerous and abusive conditions. The report also shows that many states have substantially reduced their juvenile correctional facility populations in recent years, and it finds that these states have seen no resulting increase in juvenile crime or violence. Finally, the report highlights successful reform efforts from several states and provides recommendations for how states can reduce juvenile incarceration rates and redesign their juvenile correction systems to better serve young people and the public.”

ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT

Hard Times, College Majors, Unemployment and Earnings: Not All College Degrees are Created Equal. By Anthony P. Carnevale, et al. Georgetown University, Center of Education and the Workforce. Jan. 2012. 20 p.

<http://www9.georgetown.edu/grad/gppi/hpi/cew/pdfs/Unemployment.Final.pdf>

“Unemployment figures show the jobless rate for recent college graduates with Bachelor’s Degrees has been running at an unacceptable 8.9%. But, a new study from the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce finds that unemployment among job seekers with no better than a high school diploma is a catastrophic 22.9% – and an almost unthinkable 31.5% among high school dropouts. So, is college still worth it? A major conclusion of the new report is that it all depends on your major. And while a college degree gives job seekers a formidable advantage over those without, the study points out, not all degrees are created equal, and there are a number of factors that prospective students should consider before sending off their college applications.”

State Reforms Promoting Employment of People with Criminal Records: 2010-11 Legislative Round-Up. By Michelle Natividad Rodriguez, et al. National Employment Law Project, The Sentencing Project, National HIRE Network. Dec. 2011. 23 p.

<http://www.nelp.org/page/-/SCLP/2011/PromotingEmploymentofPeoplewithCriminalRecords.pdf?nocdn=1>

States are looking for alternative models to incarceration. Employing people with criminal records provides a socially beneficial alternative to incarceration or using social safety net programs to support formerly incarcerated individuals. However, collectively the states have adopted more than 30,000 laws prohibiting former inmates from holding various jobs. Many of these laws fail to improve public safety. State legislatures are now employing “new model policies that allow qualified people with criminal records to compete more fairly for employment. This paper highlights these laws enacted in 2010 and 2011 and reports on state trends of concern that broadly restrict employment based on a criminal record.”

EDUCATION

Profiles of For-Profit and Nonprofit Educational Management Organizations. By Gary Miron, et al. National Education Policy Center. Jan. 2012. 288 p.

http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/EMO-profiles-10-11_0.pdf

“About 116,000 students were educated in 93 virtual schools – those where instruction is entirely or mainly provided over the Internet – run by private management companies in the 2010-11 school year, up 43% from the previous year.... About 27% of these schools achieved “adequate yearly progress,” the key federal standard set forth under the No Child Left Behind Act to measure academic progress. By comparison, nearly 52% of all privately managed brick-and-mortar schools reached that goal, a figure comparable to all public schools nationally.”

ENERGY

Renewable Fuel Standard: Potential Economic and Environmental Effects of U.S. Biofuel Policy. National Research Council, National Academies of Science. Dec. 2011. 424 p.

Free download at: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13105

“*Renewable Fuel Standard* evaluates the economic and environmental consequences of increasing biofuels production as a result of the Renewable Fuels Standard, as amended by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. The report describes biofuels produced in 2010 and those projected to be produced and consumed by 2022, reviews model projections and other estimates of the

relative impact on the prices of land, and discusses the potential environmental harm and benefits of biofuels production and the barriers to achieving the RFS2 consumption mandate.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Managing for Results: Opportunities for Congress to Address Government Performance Issues. General Accountability Office. Dec. 2011. 63 p.
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d12215r.pdf>

“The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRAMA) calls for a more coordinated and crosscutting approach to achieve meaningful results in collaborative, cross-agency efforts.... GPRAMA provides Congress with opportunities for involvement in agency performance planning by significantly enhancing requirements for agencies to consult with Congress when establishing or adjusting government-wide and agency goals.... Beyond providing input to the agencies and OMB during the consultations to shape their performance goals, Congress can foster results-oriented cultures in the federal government by using performance information in its decision-making processes.” The report includes three case studies.

HEALTH

Child and Youth Deaths in California. Lucile Packard Foundation for Children’s Health. Jan. 2012. 2 p.
http://www.kidsdata.org/cache/pdfs/Kidsdata-Overview_Deaths.pdf

In California, the rate of deaths among children and youth ages 1-24 declined from 41.1 per 100,000 in 1996-98 to 33.8 in 2007-09. This trend was echoed in county-level data; between 1996-98 and 2007-09, child/youth death rates declined in 33 of the 41 counties with available data. Child/youth death rates vary widely among counties, ranging from 19.1 (in Marin and Yolo counties) to 53.6 (in Mendocino County) per 100,000 in 2007-09. Variation also exists among age and racial/ethnic groups. Over the last decade, the leading cause of death for all children/youth ages 1-24 has been unintentional injury (accidents at 15.6 per 100,000), followed by homicide (12.0) and suicide (4.4).

Homicide in California 2010. California Department of Justice. Dec. 2011. 52 p.
http://ag.ca.gov/cms_attachments/press/pdfs/n2587_homicide_in_ca_2010_.pdf

In 2010, California’s homicide crime rate decreased for the fifth consecutive year to its lowest level since 1966. The homicide clearance rate – the percentage of crimes reported that have been “solved” – increased for the fifth consecutive year to a high of 63.8%. Among California’s 35 most populous counties, Monterey County and Merced County experienced the highest homicide rate (10.0 each); Placer County experienced the lowest (0.6). Females were more likely to be killed in their residence, while males were more likely to be killed on streets or sidewalks. The majority (71.2%) of homicides involved a firearm.

HOUSING

The U.S. Housing Market: Current Conditions and Policy Considerations. Federal Reserve Board. Jan. 4, 2012. 28 p.
<http://www.federalreserve.gov/publications/other-reports/files/housing-white-paper-20120104.pdf>

The Federal Reserve Board suggests three policies that may help alleviate the high inventory of homes that are causing a sluggish housing market and impeding the growth of the economy: creating a government-assisted real estate-owned-to-rental property program, loosening up recently tightened credit

standards to aid credit worthy homebuyers, and promoting more loan modification programs to prevent additional foreclosures.

HUMAN SERVICES

Illegal Immigration: Gaps Between and Within Parties. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. Dec. 6, 2011. 8 p.

<http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/12-6-11%20Immigration%20Release.pdf>

The public continues to support tough measures to crack down on illegal immigration, but also a path to citizenship for those in the country illegally. A plurality (43%) says the priority should be better border security and enforcement, as well as creating a way for illegal immigrants to become citizens if they meet certain requirements. Americans are evenly split over whether illegal immigrants who graduate from high school in their state should be eligible for in-state college tuition: 48% say they should be eligible for the in-state tuition rate, while 46% say they should not.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

77 Percent of Americans Oppose Raising the Gas Tax, Reason-Rupe Transportation Poll Finds. Reason Foundation. Dec. 2011. 19 p.

<http://reason.org/news/show/reason-rupe-transportation-infrastr>

A majority of Americans polled in this survey believe new transportation projects should be paid for with user fees instead of tax increases. The poll finds broad opposition to federal gas tax increases (56% of respondents "strongly opposed" and 21% "somewhat opposed" to increasing the federal, 18.4 cent/gallon tax). Respondents favored paying for highway system expansions through tolls by 58% to 28% over increased taxes. Similarly, 57% favor converting carpool lanes, or high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, into high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes. Voters are less supportive of variably-priced toll lanes, however. Half of those surveyed oppose, and 39% favor, variably-priced tolls that rise and fall with traffic levels.

About *Studies in the News*

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