VIEWS ON JUVENILE OFFENDING
in Barbados, Dominica and St. Lucia

Report on National Surveys conducted during August-November 2010
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This document is largely a report on national surveys dissegmented by children’s view (under 18) and adult views which was conducted by Systematic Marketing and Research Services Inc. on behalf of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). However, the views and opinions expressed in this document are not necessarily those of UNICEF.
Within recent times there has been growing concern in the Caribbean regarding negative manifestations of youth socialisation and development. Alternative youth sub-cultures, said to provide self-esteem, social standing and income for some young people, are often associated with negative consequences such as illiteracy, drugs and violence. While numbers suggest that a minority of young people are engaging in anti-social acts, this minority tends to be highly profiled, leading to fear among the general society. This in turn fuels public opinion for the use of repressive and punitive measures of criminal justice as “easy” ways to prevent violence and other anti-social behaviour among youth.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has been ratified by all Caribbean countries. It clearly forbids torture, capital punishment and life imprisonment without the possibility of release, for all persons under 18 years old. It also calls for limited use of detention and only as a measure of last resort – when all other alternative solutions do not seem possible or adequate. In those cases, when it is required, it should only be administered for the shortest period possible.

The sentiment of the Convention also suggests that juvenile justice ought not to simply cover the treatment of children in conflict with the law but should also include efforts to address the root causes of offending behaviour and implement measures to prevent such behaviour. There should additionally be a desire to reintegrate these children into society and allow them to play a constructive role.

It is within this context that the UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area Office has been advocating for diversion of children away from the criminal justice system, and where this is not possible, for alternative sentencing options for juvenile offenders instead of detention. Research from the Eastern Caribbean suggests that while detention should be used as a last resort and for the shortest period of time, some children suspected or accused of having committed an offence, are detained for periods longer than necessary.

In the face of rising crime, economic recession and seemingly negative public sentiments towards juvenile offenders, UNICEF commissioned a study to ascertain public perception of juvenile offending in the Eastern Caribbean. It is hoped that the findings would provide insight and guidance for future advocacy and behaviour change campaigns aimed at avoiding any repressive reforms within the Eastern Caribbean, that have failed to address youth crime elsewhere.
THE STUDY

The study was conducted in Barbados, Dominica and St. Lucia where UNICEF has been supporting court diversion programmes. It sought to determine public perceptions of:

- the level and nature of juvenile offending
- the perceived causes of juvenile offending
- the ways in which juvenile offending should be managed
- the current success or failure of current sentencing options available in each country
- the minimum and maximum ages at which children should be held criminally responsible
- whether parents should be held responsible for all their children’s actions
- whether corporal punishment should be allowed as a sanction in detention centres
- the level of awareness of existing systems for dealing with juvenile offending
- the efficacy of existing systems
- the role played by the following institutions in curbing or enabling juvenile offending:
  - family
  - school
  - church
  - social networking
  - community
  - peer groups

METHODOLOGY, SAMPLE DESIGN & SELECTION

A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was used where a questionnaire was developed and administered in a face-to-face interview with selected respondents. A sample of 500 respondents was targeted for each country. There was a five (5) per cent to 10 per cent validation exercise to assure the integrity of the information gathered and all the completed questionnaires were edited for consistency and completeness before being processed. The processed data was analysed by the following demographics:

- socio-economic categories
- age groups (16 to 18 years and 19 years and older)
- gender
- highest level of education achieved
- household type
- juvenile in household

For the qualitative information, focus groups and in-depth interviews were conducted to help explore perceptions and to obtain detailed feedback on the study objectives. The focus groups (two in each country) consisted of 10-12 participants each with an even distribution of gender. They were chosen using a set of determined criteria which specified that one group should be between the ages of 16-18, male and female; and that one group of adults should be 19
years and older, male and female. This was to ensure that there was enough to constitute a comparative analysis between the two age groups. Group responses were categorised as younger participants (16 to 18 years) and older participants (19 years and over).

The in-depth interviews were done with key personnel involved in the relative processes of juvenile offending and rehabilitation so that their concerns would help inform the quantitative aspect of the study.

For the purpose of the study, “juvenile” was defined as anyone under the age of 18, in keeping with the definition of “child” under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. “Juvenile offending” therefore, was the criminal and delinquent behaviour among persons under the age of 18 years.

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**KEY FINDINGS**

**The prevalence & nature of juvenile offending**

Based on survey responses to the perceived prevalence of juvenile offending in each country, indications were that it was at an average of 44 per cent in Barbados, 53 per cent in Dominica and 54 per cent in St. Lucia. It was generally believed that the incidence was much lower among females than among males, with separate indications for each country recorded as follows:

- Barbados – 40 per cent male, 19 per cent female
- Dominica – 53 per cent male, 18 per cent female
- St. Lucia – 50 per cent male, 18 per cent female

These figures, however, were generally believed to be more a situation of under-reporting than actual cases. Respondents in St. Lucia explained, for instance, that the low visibility of girls in the juvenile justice system was perhaps due to the absence of a detention facility for girls there.

The respondents from all three countries, well spread across demographic groups, also felt that even though just about a third (and in some cases, a little under) of the cases were reaching the juvenile system, they had seen an increase in offending in the past five (5) years.

This prevalence was reported to be of growing concern particularly to practitioners in the field in St. Lucia. In Dominica, the perception of prevalence was such that respondents unanimously agreed their youth were in crisis and that society was very worried about their negative socialisation and development. A general fear there and in St. Lucia was that an increasing number of girls were committing similar offences to those done by their male counterparts. Focus group participants in Barbados also believed that boys, more so than girls, were offending and that both sexes were now committing the same kinds of offences, regardless of the seriousness of the act.

**Major offences being committed**

With respect to the nature of offences committed by juveniles, respondents in the three countries mentioned stealing, drug-related offences and assault & violence as the top three most serious offences. Other infractions mentioned were:

- sexual offences
- deviant behaviour
- gang-related activities
- wandering

In Dominica, additional prominent offences listed were possession of cannabis, theft, offensive
weapons, wounding, rape and grievous bodily harm. Burglary and robbery were also considered to be common offences, but focus group participants there noted that these were usually categorised as theft in order to expedite the judicial process. The younger participants in the poll (16 to 18 year olds) suggested that physical abuse and sexual offences ought to be among the list of serious offences.

In addition, Barbados’ focus group participants mentioned some other prominent offences such as gambling and wandering, although they did not regard the latter to be a serious offence. The younger participants added vandalism/graffiti (buses and schools) to the list, while the older participants (19 years and older) felt that promiscuity and prostitution should be rated among the prominent offences.

Causes mentioned for juvenile offending

*Peer pressure, materialism, lack of parental control, unemployment, drug abuse and the absence of (positive) role models,* were chief among the reasons given by those polled as the major causes for the most serious offences committed by juveniles in their countries. Peer pressure rated highest throughout as the cause for drug-related offences and assault & violence; materialism rated highest as the cause for stealing.

Respondents in St. Lucia drew a correlation between their major offences and illegal drugs and gang activity. They reasoned that the trend of an increase in serious offences may be as a result of lack of good parenting, a decline in discipline, and children being “left to their own devices”. They felt that the dysfunction among families was influenced mostly by a number of factors such as:

- single female headed households
- absent fathers
- unsupervised children
- poor parenting techniques
- the migration of parents

Ineffective legislation, sexual abuse, the inappropriate conduct of political leaders and the advent of the notion of children’s rights, were also noted by respondents in St. Lucia as predisposing factors to juvenile offending. Related issues included domestic violence, poverty, psychological disorders, drug and alcohol abuse and the negative impact of other social ills.

These social ills, namely poverty, illiteracy and the block culture (liming on the block) were also regarded in Barbados by focus group participants, as influencing the incidence of juvenile offending there. However, they agreed that the following were additional causes for juvenile offending and therefore, ought to be areas of special concern:

- poor socialisation
- lack of values
- an outdated education system

Survey respondents in Dominica additionally cited gang association as one of the major causes for juvenile offending in that country; they felt that anger and frustration as a result of the home environment, as well as living in a vulnerable community, factored heavily in this regard.

What is impacting on the nature & prevalence of juvenile offending?

Focus groups discussions centred on a list of social ills impacting on the incidence of offending and suggested that the following were the ones likely to have the greatest effect:
• **Drug abuse** – Participants across the three countries felt that this was a most crucial factor because when children are neglected at home or in the community, they may turn to drugs as a means of getting attention and as a means of survival, mainly because there is money to be made in it.

• **Family Troubles** – Group participants in Barbados felt this was a very serious factor since the home environment was one where values had gone out the window and where parents were not setting a positive example for their children. In Dominica and St. Lucia participants were divided on how crucial this factor was, but felt that acceptance of responsibility on the part of the juvenile could make a big difference.

• **Illiteracy** – This was regarded as having a very serious impact on juvenile offending as some youth were believed to be functionally incompetent and unable to secure a good job. Participants felt that juveniles in this category also became discouraged and frustrated and could easily turn to a life of crime.

• **Unemployment** – Participants generally saw this as a very serious factor, a by-product of illiteracy and felt that the urgent wish for material things and cash made some youth prone to being led into criminal activities. They opined that the combination of illiteracy and unemployment was a most disturbing one since the “victim” would seldom be seeking a way out of that situation.

• **Immorality among youth** – In the three territories participants in general felt this was a serious factor as there was no moral code among some youth and values seemed to be no longer taught or enforced at home or in school. Of major concern was the feeling that some juveniles did not know the fundamental difference between wrong and right.

• **Too much free time** – This was an area of concern for the group participants, who felt that it was not for a lack of things to do, but rather, that some youth did not have anyone at home or a family member around to point them in the direction to get involved in wholesome activities. They suggested that the youth had a lot of time on their hands and nothing meaningful to do with it.

• **Liming on the block** – This was felt by most participants to be an issue and a growing trend which attracted persons and elements with a tendency to negative behaviour and activity.

• **Type of area lived in** – The type of area in which youth lived was believed to have a great impact on their behaviour. Participants felt that if the area had negative influences, it was difficult though not impossible, for youth to isolate themselves from the elements in the community and that without a solid support system they were more likely to fall victim to that environment. Among the younger participants in Barbados there was the feeling, and evidence to support it, that unfortunately some people who rose above these conditions in depressed areas where they grew up, moved to developed areas and never looked back, not even to offer a helping hand to improve the neighbourhood.

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**Rehabilitation & sentencing options**

Some focus group participants, especially in Barbados, felt that the authorities were doing a good job and that the process of rehabilitation seemed to be working. However, similar sentiments were not expressed in St. Lucia and Dominica. While the majority of participants in these two countries agreed that the process was important and was a good idea, they believed that it was being hampered by certain inadequacies. They expressed the views that existing services were “poor” with limited measurable success and that a lot more needed
to be done for them to be effective. Some felt that the existing services needed to be expanded and better funded.

Particular areas of concern for respondents to the survey in St. Lucia were accessibility (especially within communities); insufficient services targeted specifically for rehabilitation; an increasing need for specialist services; and a scarcity of resources. They reasoned that the level of service delivery there could be improved once legislative framework was updated, a juvenile facility was established and parenting programmes were introduced.

Respondents in Dominica, like their counterparts in St. Lucia, felt there were not many options or services available for rehabilitation and treatment in their country, but they believed that a combined approach where juveniles in need were targeted, amendments were made to existing legislation and current services were strengthened, could improve the process. Their main focus as well, was on having a rehabilitation centre established there.

Many of the other suggestions mentioned for improving existing rehabilitative services focused on implementing programmes and activities using people who were trained to develop the skills of juvenile offenders to help turn their lives around in a positive direction. Some of these suggestions were:

- make more counseling available to the youth
- put stricter laws/harsher punishment in place
- set up well equipped centres with trained staff
- make trades, skills and employment opportunities available
- establish mentorship programmes
- expose youth to Biblical teachings/prayer groups while in rehab
- ensure there is more support from families of the youth offenders

Helping to create employment opportunities for the juveniles was also considered to be a major way of improving the rehabilitation process.

### Sentencing

When it came to their opinion on the issue of sentencing, the respondents said the nature of the offence committed should heavily influence the kind of sentence imposed. There were other influences, though having a lesser impact on their views, which the respondents felt should be considered when deciding what kind of sentence to impose on juveniles found guilty of offending. These factors included:

- Christian beliefs and religious teaching
- social class
- being a victim, or having a family member or friend who is a victim
- the age of the offender

### Options for sentencing

**Incarceration** – Respondents in St. Lucia, while agreeing that incarceration had its place in addressing the incidence of juvenile offending, maintained that this form of sentencing should be circumstantial and that most importantly, if the offenders were incarcerated, it should be in a facility separate from adult offenders.

Barbados’ respondents agreed on incarceration as an option, but felt that it ought to be used sparingly, with judgment and not for what they considered to be minor offences such as wandering and refractory behaviour.

Respondents in Dominica also supported incarceration but only for such offences as murder/manslaughter, sexual offences and assault & wounding. Barbados and St. Lucia also shared this view but the level of support was significantly higher at 97 per cent and 87 per cent respectively. In Dominica there was only a 42 per cent average level of support for incarceration in these instances.

**Alternative Sentencing** – Practitioners taking part in the discussions deemed the existing sentencing options ineffective and suggested alternative options where best practices from other countries, which may include restorative justice and attendance centre orders, be adopted. Many of the survey
respondents agreed, saying they favoured alternative sentencing such as community service, (mandatory) training, and probation for less serious offences like theft, wandering and traffic offences.

Just under half of the respondents in Dominica (49 per cent) said they felt parents were the ones who should be imprisoned, especially where their minor children were charged with wandering. Other offences they felt should carry this “sentence” included drug offences; traffic offences; assault & wounding; murder/manslaughter.

Three quarters of all the respondents surveyed in Barbados were in favour of restitution, especially for theft and assault & wounding. Many of them also expressed strong support for a second chance programme, particularly for drug offences, wandering and theft, and said they preferred that a fine be charged for traffic offences, theft and some drug offences. However, they generally noted that in all spheres, proactive measures were most needed to help reduce juvenile offending in Barbados.

Criminal responsibility

There was much discussion among focus group participants as to the age at which a child should be legally responsible for acts considered criminal and the age at which he/she should be sentenced as an adult. They generally agreed that it should be from the time the child is 16 years old.

The majority of survey respondents across the three countries believed, however, that a child should be held legally responsible for criminal acts the first time he/she commits the offence. But opinions on the specific age of this responsibility varied, with Barbados indicating it should be from as early as eight (8) years old; St. Lucia from nine (9) and Dominica from 12. They felt that parents should be held responsible for the activities of their minor children, as this would ensure they made a greater effort to see that their minors did not get involved in criminal activity.

Control options for reducing juvenile offending

There were a number of control options mentioned throughout the poll, by both focus group participants and survey respondents, which they felt would help to reduce the incidence of juvenile offending. The key options agreed among the three countries were:

- more parental control & involvement
- incarceration/punishment
- rehabilitation/guidance/counseling
- improved education/employment opportunities
- institutes/outlets/activities for juveniles

Dominica added going “back to religion” to its list of key options.

Social institutions have a role to play

There was also general agreement in the countries that all major institutions played a significant role in curbing or enabling juvenile offending and that proactive measures were most needed to help in this regard. Respondents in St. Lucia specifically identified the family and peer groups as additional major contributors and felt that to a lesser extent, government, non-governmental associations and community-based organisations were all active in gainfully engaging youth. They thought these were positive initiatives but maintained that there was a possibility of this form of punishment getting out of control and leading to a worsening of the juvenile behaviour, rather than to rehabilitation. Views among focus group participants varied on this issue, with some concluding that if administered, corporal punishment should be used only as a last resort and for specific offences.
needed to be an increase in programming and resources. They commended the Centre for Adolescent Renewal and Education (CARE) in St. Lucia for the work it was doing, despite its need for resources.

Respondents in Barbados also mentioned a need in that country for more broad-based programming to help decrease the incidence of juvenile offending. They reasoned that this should make a positive impact, along with improvements in the judicial system, family interventions and specialised services.

The institutions listed below were considered by all respondents to be significant in the role they played in helping to reduce the incidence of juvenile offending; however, they gave them moderate scores in term of their effectiveness:

The family ... was not working in reducing juvenile offending; within the family unit delinquent youth were being neglected, driving them to seek solace in other less wholesome activities. There were too many broken homes and too much was being left to be dealt with at school where resources and facilities were limited.

The school ... teachers were trying their best but the system was overwhelmed and lacked enough trained teachers to help the institution play more of a role.

The church ... the problem was in reaching the youth who were most at risk; the church needed to be more proactive in its outreach programmes in order to attract those youth, as there was little structured religious instruction or encouragement for young people who did not go to church.

The community ... once a family was “okay” and their children were not known to be involved in offending, there was no consideration for other youth in the community. Those pockets of individuals who did take an interest beyond their own were often overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problems and challenges they had to face.

Peer groups ... these groups would be helpful if they were well grounded and guided by responsible adult influence. If not, they might find themselves victims to the influences of their delinquent counterparts.

Channeling youth into positive enterprise

When asked what they felt was currently being done to channel youth into positive enterprise, younger participants in Barbados mentioned a Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES); a Skills Training Programme; Love Campaign and Hush Campaign, but stressed that it was up to the youth to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by these programmes. The older participants differed in their view, noting that in reality, there was not much being done. One person did mentioned, however, that the Young Men’s Christian Fellowship (YMCA) was trying to get back on its feet, providing avenues for boys to do other things such as sports, etc.

As to what was being done in Dominica and St. Lucia, participants in Dominica mentioned sports, technical training and cultural activities, while a few participants in St. Lucia admitted that a few programmes did exist, but that they did not know much about them.
ST. LUCIA

Findings

- Many young people are offending, although more males than females
- St. Lucia does not have a detention facility for female juveniles, hence not many girls are seen in the juvenile justice system
- There is a general concern that girls are committing the same offences as their male counterparts
- Illegal drugs and gang activity are correlated to many of the offences
- There is an increasing trend of poor parenting
- The Centre for Adolescent Renewal and Education (CARE) is doing excellent work despite limited resources

Recommendations

- Strengthening the family unit would be a most urgent proactive measure
- The legislative framework needs to be modernised
- Best practices from other jurisdictions should be embraced to improve sentencing options
- Rehabilitative services are fraught with challenges of accessibility, sufficiency and lack of specialist services
- Corporal punishment is not favoured for juvenile offenders
- The family and peer groups are identified as having the greatest impact on curbing or enabling juvenile offending
VIEWS ON JUVENILE OFFENDING & JUSTICE SYSTEM - ST. LUCIA

% of young People Offending: 54%
% of Young Males Offending: 50%
% of Young Females Offending: 18%
% of cases reaching Juvenile Justice System: 26%

VIEWS ON MOST SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED BY JUVENILES - ST. LUCIA

- Stealing: 66%
- Drug related: 29%
- Assault & Violence: 55%
- Sexual offences: 5%
- Deviant behaviour: 2%
- Gang related activities: 4%
- Wandering: 3%
CAUSES FOR MOST SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED BY JUVENILES - ST. LUCIA

- Peer Pressure: 35%
- Materialism: 14%
- Lack of parental control: 36%
- Unemployment: 43%
- Drug abuse: 12%
- Absence of role models: 3%
- Other unspecified: 18%

CONTROL OPTIONS FOR MOST SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED BY JUVENILES - ST. LUCIA

- More parental control & involvement: 17%
- Incarceration/Punishment: 24%
- Rehabilitation/Guidance/Counselling: 18%
- Improve education/employment opportunities: 44%
- Institutes/outlets/Activities for juveniles: 36%
- Back to religion: 2%
- Other unspecified: 13%
BARBADOS

Findings

- Many young people are offending, but many of them do not come into contact with the juvenile justice system
- There is an alarming increase in the number of girls offending
- Aggression among youth is now very evident
- There is no gender disparity in relation to offences
- Involvement with illegal drugs is a precursor to other criminal activities
- Poor parenting and poor socialisation are the main causes of juvenile offending
- Many of society’s ills have a great impact on juvenile offending

Recommendations

- Incarceration is favoured, although to be used sparingly
- More community-based approaches need to be implemented
- Duplication of services, limited resources and improvements in the judicial system are areas to be addressed
- The family is most critical in curbing or enabling juvenile offending
- There is urgent need for social workers in schools
VIEWS ON JUVENILE OFFENDING & JUSTICE SYSTEM - BARBADOS

% of young People Offending - 44%
% of Young Males Offending - 40%
% of Young Females Offending - 19%
% of cases reaching Juvenile Justice System - 33%

VIEWS ON MOST SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED BY JUVENILES - BARBADOS

Stealing - 63%
Drug related - 51%
Assault & Violence - 40%
Sexual offences - 8%
Deviant behavior - 4%
Gang related activities - 2%
Wandering - 1%
CAUSES FOR MOST SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED BY JUVENILES - BARBADOS

- Peer Pressure: 65%
- Materialism: 34%
- Lack of parental control: 26%
- Unemployment: 14%
- Drug abuse: 8%
- Absence of role models: 8%
- Block Culture: 2%
- Other unspecified: 9%

CONTROL OPTIONS FOR MOST SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED BY JUVENILES - BARBADOS

- More parental control & Involvement: 43%
- Incarceration/Punishment: 30%
- Rehabilitation/Guidance/Counselling: 26%
- Improve education/employment opportunities: 22%
- Institutes/outlets/Activities for juveniles: 14%
- Back to religion: 7%
- Other unspecified: 10%
DOMINICA

Findings

• There is an increase in female offending, although the incidence of male offending is still higher

• Many young people are offending, but many of them are not caught

• Theft-related and violent offences are most prevalent

• Youth are in crisis and society is very concerned about negative youth socialisation

• Dysfunction within families is a major cause for juvenile offending

• Incarceration is necessary for serious offences

• Administration of corporal punishment is not favoured for juvenile offenders

Recommendations

• Young people need to avail themselves of the opportunities and services that exist

• A greater effort is needed in programming and interventions appropriately designed and targeted for the youth

• Services for rehabilitation and treatment are very limited and those that exist need to be improved

• A more integrated approach is required in order to reduce the incidence of juvenile offending

• Sentencing options need to be more innovative and parents should be held responsible for the criminal acts of their children

• Being proactive is important if the institutions of society are to have a greater impact on curbing juvenile offending

• Sentencing options should include restorative justice and drug treatment services

• Urgent consideration should be given to reforming legislation
VIEWS ON VIEWS ON JUVENILE OFFENDING & JUSTICE SYSTEM - DOMINICA

- % of young People Offending: 53%
- % of Young Males Offending: 53%
- % of Young Females Offending: 18%
- % of cases reaching Juvenile Justice System: 31%

VIEWS ON MOST SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED BY JUVENILES - DOMINICA

- Stealing: 56%
- Drug related: 39%
- Assault & Violence: 57%
- Sexual offences: 10%
- Deviant behaviour: 3%
- Gang related activities: 4%
- Wandering: 2%
CAUSES FOR MOST SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED BY JUVENILES - DOMINICA

- Peer Pressure: 39%
- Materialism: 23%
- Lack of parental control: 19%
- Unemployment: 40%
- Drug abuse: 15%
- Absence of role models: 7%
- Other unspecified: 18%

CONTROL OPTIONS FOR MOST SERIOUS OFFENCES COMMITTED BY JUVENILES - DOMINICA

- More parental control & involvement: 17%
- Incarceration/Punishment: 27%
- Rehabilitation/Guidance/Counselling: 26%
- Improve education/employment opportunities: 53%
- Institutes/outlets/Activities for juveniles: 21%
- Other unspecified: 20%
- Back to religion: 3%
CONCLUSIONS & KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

There was a clear pattern of similarities in the opinions expressed by the sample polled in each of the three countries. The improvements which respondents said they wished to see and the measures they would like to have implemented were also similar. Some suggestions made included:

- having more disciplined and accountable institutions
- curbing the early signs of deviant behaviour
- making more opportunities available in the arts and culture instead of the heavy focus on academics
- getting parents involved in instilling proper values at home
- insisting on disciplined behaviour in school at all times

Recommendations from 19 years and over age group

Participants in the 19 years and over age group felt that responsible adults and communities “need to take back our communities and stand up to those elements that are responsible for the moral decay”.

They also suggested that the private sector needed to be involved and partner with government in providing opportunities for youth to develop life skills and prepare them for the world of work. Some indicated that “the private sector, instead of investing in the development of youth so they could be gainfully employed, they invest in technology to counteract criminal activity of the offending juveniles”.

Recommendations from persons in 16 -18 years age group

Participants in the 16 to 18 years age group felt that:

- Adults in society needed to lead by example and that
- There needed to have institutions at the community level which would attract youth away from deviant behaviour towards more positive achievements.
- Alternative sentencing options to incarceration for different offences were needed
- More humane forms of punishment with a built-in component for rehabilitation so that juvenile offenders have more positive outcomes from the experience were needed.

Some offences committed by juveniles which should not be considered offences. The question of wandering was most prominent, with others such as certain drug offences and theft gaining support for classification as lesser offences, thereby meriting alternative sentencing options to incarceration.

Additional concerns and recommendations

Respondents suggested that there were too many agencies/entities with widely differing approaches working on their own to achieve the same objectives, with little or no success. They recommended that some key partnerships be formed so there can be meaningful attempts at achieving a successful reduction in juvenile offending. Some of the partners mentioned were:

- **GOVERNMENT** – Providing an enabling framework to facilitate other players by assisting with appropriate policy directions and concessions to those agencies advocating for changes in the various systems.
- **UNICEF** – Providing through its international image and interaction with other agencies and governments, the ability to lobby on behalf of agencies and NGOs in their efforts at advocacy and interventions.
• **PRIVATE SECTOR** – Collaborating, as part of their corporate social responsibility, to give back to the communities in which they operate; partnering with governmental and non-governmental organisations in their efforts at developing youth in the various communities where they can value the contributions being made by the private sector.

• **PARENTS/ADULTS** – Fulfilling their roles and obligations as examples and molders of the youth in their care who look up to them so that the youth may no longer be considered liabilities and threats to society.

• **CHILDREN** – Tackling the concept of responsibility and learning that some level of responsibility must go hand in hand with the rights of which they are becoming more and more aware.

• **AGENCIES & NGOs** – Being more accountable and working together in facilitating advocacy objectives to achieve their common goals rather than competing for funding and losing the focus of the people they are mandated to help.

• **INSTITUTIONS** – Redoubling their efforts to perform the roles expected of them by modifying their approach to issues involving juveniles and to structure their outreach programmes so that measurable results can be achieved.

• **MEDIA** – Balancing the varied roles of information, education and entertainment by having less focus on sensationalism and the highlighting of negative influences through music and the print media. The media entities should forge meaningful relationships with all of the other agencies so that there could be greater facilitation of outreach efforts between other agencies and the youth giving them a chance to be seen as both current and future assets in society.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

DISCUSSION GUIDE - FOCUS GROUP/IN-DEPTH

Discuss Prevalence:
- How many young people are offending
- What is the relative gender ratio
- What is the nature of offences
- Which offences feature more prominently
- Which are more serious
- Trend over past five years

Discuss Societal Construct:
- Are youth in crisis
- Are the majority of young people offending
- What is being done to channel youth in positive enterprise
- Who is spearheading such activities
- Is society in panic about the negative youth socialisation and development
- Has society given up

Discuss Causes of juvenile delinquency/correlations:
- What are the main predisposing factors/major causes
- What is the impact of social ills such as
  - drug abuse
  - family troubles
  - illiteracy
  - unemployment
  - immorality among youth
  - too much free time
  - liming on the block
  - type of area lived in
  - other factors
- Possible solutions options
- What is the typical profile of a juvenile offender

Discuss Services/Management:
- Opinions on rehabilitation of juveniles
- Are these services deemed effective
- What other avenues can be explored in treatment and management
- How best can existing services become more efficient
- Opinion on incarceration; for which offences
- What are the alternative sentencing options, and for which offences

Discuss role played by some institutions/technology in curbing/enabling juvenile offending:
- The Family
- The School
- The Church
- The Community
- Peer groups
- Cell phones
- Social Networking

General:
- At what age should a child be legally responsible for acts considered criminal (stealing/drugs etc.)
- From what age should someone be considered criminally responsible as an adult
- Should parents be held responsible; if so, what should be the repercussions
- Should corporal punishment be administered in detention centres; for what offences
- What is being done at local level and by whom
- What is being done at regional level and by whom
- What measures should be taken by the following to reduce juvenile offending to a minimum:
  - juveniles
  - family
  - church
  - peer groups
  - government
  - judiciary/legal system
QUESTIONNAIRE – HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

Good morning/evening, I am a representative of SYSTEMATIC MARKETING. We are conducting an opinion survey among households in this area on Juvenile Offending and Rehabilitation. **By juvenile offending we mean criminal and delinquent behaviour among persons under the age of 18 years.**

We would be grateful if you could assist us by answering a few questions. The results of this survey will help UNICEF to support Governments to develop or modify relevant policies, strategies, programmes and projects to respond to the challenges that youths are facing in our society. Without this information Government responses will not be successful and scarce resources will be wasted. We are counting on your support in making Barbados a better place for everyone. There are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers, just your honest opinion. The information gathered in this survey is for statistical purposes and will be kept strictly confidential. Can we proceed?

IF RESPONDENT REFUSES TO CO-OPERATE, TERMINATE AND RECORD, OTHERWISE PROCEED WITH SELECTION ACCORDING TO QUOTA SHEET

101. In terms of proportions overall, what percentage of young people under 18 years (juveniles) do you think are involved in juvenile offending? _____%

102. And what percentage of young males do you think are offenders? _____%

103. And what percentage of young females do you think are offenders? _____%

104. And what percentage of juvenile offending cases do you think reach the juvenile justice system (e.g. Probation, Law courts, Juvenile liaison scheme, Government industrial school) _____%

105. Over the past 5 years (between 2005 and now) would you say the incidence of juvenile offending has increased, decreased, or remained the same?
   1. Increased ( ), 2. Decreased ( ), 3. Remained same ( )

[RECORD IN GRIDS BELOW]

106. What do you think are the most serious offences committed by juveniles?

107. FOR EACH ITEM MENTIONED ASK What do you think is the major cause of the offences

108. FOR EACH ITEM MENTIONED ASK What do you think should be done to control it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>106. Offence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>107. Cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108. Control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

109. What is your opinion on the rehabilitation of juveniles in conflict with the law?

110. And what more do you think should be done to improve the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders?

111. Several factors could influence your views on how juvenile offenders should be sentenced. Using a scale of one (1) to ten (10) where one (1) is low influence and ten (10) is high influence, please score each of the following factors according to their influence on your views regarding how juvenile offenders should be sentenced:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of offenders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship of offender to you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You/family/friend being a victim of juvenile crime etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian beliefs and religious teachings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The view of your close friends and associates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The age of the juvenile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
112. Do you believe that most, some, just a few or none of the people you associate with share similar opinions to you on how juveniles should be sentenced? 1. Most ( ), 2. some ( ), 3. few ( ), 4. none ( )

113. In some countries once a child is charged with an offence, that child is suspended from school until the case comes before the law courts. Are you in support of suspension or of the child continuing his/her education? 1. Suspension ( ), 2. Continuing education ( )

114. There are several offences and sentencing options for juveniles who come in conflict with the law. Do you think that juveniles who come in conflict with the law should be incarcerated/locked up? 1. Yes ( ), 2. No ( ), 3. Don’t Know ( ), 4. It depends ( )

114.a. Which of the following sentencing options would you support for juveniles, and for which offences?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SENTENCING OPTIONS</th>
<th>OFFENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Incarceration/lock-up</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Repaying victim for harm caused</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community Service</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Second chance programs</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Probation</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Fine</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reprimand &amp; Discharge</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Other</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
114.a. Do you think that wandering and being beyond the care and control of one’s parent/guardian should be a criminal offence?

115. Do you think that parents should be held responsible for All, Some, or None of the actions of their children under 18 years?
   1. All ( ), 2. Some ( ), 3. None ( ), 4. Not sure ( )

116. Do you think that if parents were held responsible for their child’s delinquent activity, and had to suffer consequences, they would make a greater effort to reduce delinquency in their children?

117. At what age do you think a child should legally be responsible for acts considered criminal? (e.g. stealing, using drugs etc)? ________years

118. And from what age do you think someone should be considered criminally responsible as an adult, and no longer as a child? ________years

119. Do you think corporal punishment should be administered to juveniles in detention centres?
   1. Yes ( ), 2. No ( ), 3. Not Sure ( ), 4. Don’t know ( )

   [IF YES ABOVE] For which offences? __________________________________________

120. Do you think corporal punishment should be administered in schools?
    1. Yes ( ), 2. No ( ), 3. Not Sure ( ), 4. Don’t know ( )

121. Some institutions/entities through their actions may play a crucial role in reducing juvenile offending. Using a scale of one (1) to ten (10) where one (1) is a low score and ten (10) is a high score, what score out of ten would you give to each of the following institutions/entities for its effectiveness in helping to reduce juvenile offending?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Church</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
122. There are several factors and social ills that people identify as major causes for juvenile offending. Please give a score between one (1) and ten (10) to indicate your perception of how serious each of the following factors affects juvenile offending; the higher the score the more serious you think it is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug abuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiteracy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Family troubles</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Liming on the block</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of area you live in</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cell phones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Networking (Facebook etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

123. How safe do you feel in the community where you live? [READ RESPONSE OPTIONS]

124. Have you or your immediate family been a victim of crime committed by a juvenile offender within the past three years (since 2007)?
   1. Yes ( ), 2. No ( )

125. [IF YES] Was the crime reported to the police?
   1. Yes ( ), 2. No ( )

126. [IF NO] What was the main reason for not reporting the crime to the police?
**DEMOGRAPHICS**
WE HAVE JUST A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU/ HOUSEHOLD TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

i. **Sex:** 1. Male ( ), 2. Female ( )

ii. **Age:** 1. 16-18 ( ), 2. 19-30 ( ), 3. 31-54 ( ), 4. 55+ ( )

iii. **Besides you how many other persons live in this household?** ________

   Please give their sex, age, and relationship to you__________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex &amp; age</th>
<th>Relationship (Is my ……)</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Relationship (Is my ……)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. m     f   ____</td>
<td>6. m     f   ____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. m     f   ____</td>
<td>7. m     f   ____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. m     f   ____</td>
<td>8. m     f   ____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. m     f   ____</td>
<td>9. m     f   ____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. m     f   ____</td>
<td>10 m     f   ____</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iv. **Are you:** 1. Student ( ), 2. Employed ( ), 3. Unemployed ( ), 4. Homemaker ( ), 5. Retired ( )

   Other: __________________ Occupation (respondent or head of household) __________________________

v. **Education:** What is the highest level of education completed? ____________________________

vi. **What is your religion?** _________________________________

viii. **Do you use the INTERNET?**
   1. Yes ( ), 2. No ( )

ix. **Which of the following do you have in your household?**

Name _________________________________

Address________________________________________________________ Tel: _______________

**THANK RESPONDENT**