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What Do Juvenile Offenders Know About Being Tried as Adults? Implications for Deterrence

Richard E. Redding*

*Villanova University School of Law, redding@chapman.edu

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Abstract

An underlying assumption in the nationwide policy shift toward transferring more juveniles to criminal court has been the belief that stricter, adult sentences will act as either a specific or general deterrent to juvenile crime. With respect to general deterrence - whether transfer laws deter would-be offenders from committing crimes - it is important to examine whether juveniles know about transfer laws, whether this knowledge deters criminal behavior, and whether juveniles believe the laws will be enforced against them. The current study is one of the first to examine juveniles' knowledge and perceptions of transfer laws and criminal sanctions. We interviewed 37 juveniles who had been transferred to criminal court in Georgia, obtaining quantitative as well as qualitative data based on structured interviewed questions. Four key findings emerged. First, juveniles were unaware of the transfer law. Second, juveniles felt that awareness of the law may have deterred them from committing the crime or may deter other juveniles from committing crimes, and they suggested practical ways to enhance juveniles' awareness of transfer laws. Third, the juveniles generally felt that it was unfair to try and sentence them as adults. Finally, the consequences of committing their crime were worse than most had imagined, and the harsh consequences of their incarceration in adult facilities may have had a brutalizing effect on some juveniles. The implications for general and specific deterrence are discussed.

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BY RICHARD E. REDDING AND ELIZABETH J. FULLER

ABSTRACT

An underlying assumption in the nationwide policy shift toward transferring more juveniles to criminal court has been the belief that stricter, adult sentences will act as either a specific or general deterrent to juvenile crime. With respect to general deterrence—whether transfer laws deter would-be offenders from committing crimes—it is important to examine whether juveniles know about transfer laws, whether this knowledge deters criminal behavior, and whether juveniles believe the laws will be enforced against them. The current study is one of the first to examine juveniles' knowledge and perceptions of transfer laws and criminal sanctions. We interviewed 37 juveniles who had been transferred to criminal court in Georgia, obtaining quantitative as well as qualitative data based on structured interviewed questions. Four key findings emerged. First, juveniles were unaware of the transfer law. Second, juveniles felt that awareness of the law may have deterred them from committing the crime or may deter other juveniles from committing crimes, and they suggested practical ways to enhance juveniles' awareness of transfer laws. Third, the juveniles generally felt that it was unfair to try and sentence them as adults. Finally, the consequences of committing their crime were worse than most had imagined, and the harsh consequences of their incarceration in adult facilities may have had a brutalizing effect on some juveniles. The implications for general and specific deterrence are discussed.

Statutes known as "transfer laws" (also called "waiver" or "certification" laws), which transfer juveniles from the juvenile court for trial and sentencing in adult criminal court, are found in every state and the District of Columbia (Griffin, 2003; Redding, 1997). Trying a juvenile in criminal court carries serious implications. Although in some states criminal courts can impose juvenile sentences, transferred juveniles are at risk of receiving criminal convictions and sentences, including lengthy incarceration in adult prisons. A felony conviction also usually results in the loss of a number of civil rights and privileges (see Redding, 2003).

In response to public concern about juvenile crime, states have expanded the reach of transfer laws to allow more juvenile offenders to be tried and sentenced in criminal court. In the last 15 years, states have revised their laws by lowering the minimum age for transfer, increasing the number of transferable offenses, and expanding prosecutorial discretion while reducing judicial discretion (Redding, 2003; see Fagan & Zimring, 2000). For example, in 1979, only 14 states had laws that automatically transfer serious juvenile offenders to the criminal court, but by 1995, 21 states had such statutes, with 31 states having these laws by 2003 (Steiner & Hemmens, 2003). In addition to transfer statutes, 13 states have lowered the age at which juvenile court jurisdiction ends, to age 15 or 16 (Sanborn, 2003).

An underlying assumption in the nationwide policy shift toward transferring more juveniles to criminal court has been the belief that the threat of stricter, adult

Richard E. Redding, J.D., Ph.D., is a Professor of Law at Villanova University School of Law, Research Professor of Psychology at Drexel University, and Director of the J.D./Ph.D. Program in Law and Psychology at Villanova and Drexel Universities. He has published nearly 100 articles and book chapters in leading scientific and legal publications and co-edited a book on juvenile delinquency to be published by Oxford University Press.

Elizabeth J. Fuller, M.P.H., is a Senior Policy Analyst at the Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University. She is a doctoral candidate in the Sociomedical Sciences Department at Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health and conducts evaluations of school- and community-based violence prevention programs.

sentences will act as either a specific or general deterrent to juvenile crime. But there is little evidence that this goal has been achieved. In terms of specific deterrence, seven recent large-scale studies in various jurisdictions have all found higher recidivism rates among juveniles tried and sentenced as adults when compared to those tried as juveniles (Redding, 2003; Redding & Mrozoski, in press). With respect to general deterrence—i.e., whether transfer laws deter would-be juvenile offenders from committing serious and violent crimes—the picture is considerably less clear, because the few research studies have produced conflicting findings (Redding, 2003; Redding, 1999; Redding & Mrozoski, in press).

Clearly, further research is needed to examine whether juvenile transfer laws have general deterrent effects by discouraging and preventing juveniles from committing crime. In particular, it is important to examine whether juveniles are aware of transfer laws, whether this awareness deters delinquent behavior, and whether they believe the laws will be enforced against them. A law cannot act as a deterrent if the targeted population is unaware that the law exists or if the population does not believe it will be enforced, which may partly explain why studies have failed to find general deterrent effects of transfer laws. The threat of criminal punishment may need to reach a minimum threshold of certainty before the threat acts as a deterrent (see Klepper & Nagin, 1989; Von Hirsch, Bottoms, Burney, & Wikstrom, 1999). "A fundamental premise of deterrence theory is that to be effective in preventing crime the threat and application of the law must be made known to the public… [T]he publicity surrounding punishment serves important educative, moralizing, normative validation, and coercive functions" (Bailey, 1990, p. 628).

Yet, the lack of attention given by researchers and policymakers to the voice of juvenile offenders is striking. Only a few studies have asked serious juvenile offenders about their knowledge and perceptions of American transfer laws or criminal sanctions. In an early article before the widespread expansion of transfer laws, Glassner, Ksander, Berg, and Johnson (1983) reported that juvenile offenders said they had decided to stop offending once they reached the age at which they knew they could be tried as adults, but this study had a rather small sample size and contained no systematic assessments of juveniles' knowledge and perceptions. In a groundbreaking study, Bishop and Frazier (2000) conducted detailed interviews with 95 juvenile offenders in Florida about their comparative experiences in the juvenile and criminal justice systems, but did not specifically ask about their knowledge of transfer laws. Similarly, Corrado, Cohen, Glackman, and Odgers (2003) interviewed 400 serious and violent juvenile offenders about their perceptions of the fairness of their sentences and intent to recidivate, but the study was conducted in Canada with youths in the juvenile justice system who had not been tried as adults.

Although an exploratory study conducted with 37 juvenile offenders in one jurisdiction (the Atlanta, Georgia area), the current study's significance is threefold. First, following recent expansions in states' transfer laws, it is the first study to examine juveniles' knowledge and perceptions of transfer laws and criminal sanctions. Second, we interviewed juvenile offenders who had been transferred to criminal court, obtaining quantitative as well as qualitative data based on structured interviewed questions.

Third, the jurisdiction where the research was conducted is of particular significance. Georgia is one of 31 states that have elected to automatically remove from juvenile court jurisdiction juveniles arrested for certain serious crimes (Steiner & Hemmens, 2003). In 1994, the Georgia legislature passed the School Safety and Juvenile Justice Act (Ga. Code Ann. Sect. 15-11-5 et seq. (Supp. 1998)), stating:

> The safety of students enrolled in schools and the citizens of Georgia will be enhanced by requiring that certain violent juvenile offenders who commit certain violent felonies be tried as adults in the superior court and sentenced directly to the custody of the Department of Corrections.

The automatic transfer law provides that juveniles between 13 and 17 who are charged with one of the so-called "seven deadly sins" (murder, voluntary manslaughter, rape, aggravated sexual battery, aggravated sodomy, aggravated child molestation, and armed robbery committed with a firearm) be tried and sentenced as adults in criminal court. Juveniles tried as adults are then sub-

ject to Georgia's mandatory minimum sentencing laws, which require 10-year minimum sentences for serious violent felonies (Ga. Code Ann. Sect. 17-10-6.1 (Supp. 1998) (see Wheeler, Worthington, McCann, & Phillips, 1999)). The number of youths affected by the law has been tremendous, and it has disproportionately affected minorities. Between 1994 and 2002, approximately 3,850 juveniles were arrested for one of the "seven deadly sins" in Georgia. Seventy-six percent of all juveniles arrested for these crimes were African-Americans, who represent only 34% of Georgia's juvenile population (Georgia Indigent Defense Council, 2002). The disproportionate representation of African-American youths transferred to the criminal justice system mirrors the overrepresentation of African-Americans in the criminal justice system generally. A recent study by the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles (1999) concluded that "four out of every ten black males (38.5%) will likely go to a Georgia state prison sometime over the course of their lives" (p. 2). In public health terms, this is an epidemic having clear racial disparities.

Importantly, Georgia had undertaken efforts to alert juveniles to its new automatic transfer law by producing a video (called "Multiple Choice") about the law. The video, which also "provides a realistic picture of conditions and life inside Georgia's adult prisons as seen through interviews with incarcerated juveniles," was distributed to schools and prevention programs around the state and was periodically aired on Georgia television. In addition, the Atlanta (DeKalb County) District Attorney's Office distributed an informational brochure about the law to local teens and their parents. Thus, interviewing juveniles in the Atlanta area allowed us to determine their knowledge of the transfer law during a time when some efforts were being made to publicize the consequences of committing serious crimes.

Method

Participants

Participants included 37 juveniles who had committed armed robbery or armed robbery and felony murder in Georgia. Under Georgia law, they are automatically tried as adults. Thirty-one juveniles were in Atlanta-area (DeKalb County) jails awaiting trial or had been convicted, and six were serving their sentences in state correctional facilities in the Atlanta area.

Ninety-two percent of participants were African-American and 8% were Hispanic or Asian. The percentage of African-Americans in the sample reflects the fact that 91% of all youths arrested in DeKalb County, Georgia, for one of the "seven deadly sins" were African-American (Georgia Indigent Defense Council, 2002). The participants ranged in age from 15 to 20 at the time of the interview (average age = 16.4). The highest grade completed in school ranged from 7th to 11th grade, with the average being 9th grade. The number of prior arrests for these juveniles ranged from 0 to 20, with an average of 4.2 prior arrests. The number of prior juvenile delinquency adjudications ranged from 0 to 6, with an average of .94. None of the juveniles had a prior adult criminal conviction.

Procedure

All juveniles who had been charged as adults in DeKalb County, Georgia, at the time of the study were identified by Atlanta-area public defenders who accompanied researchers to the facilities and introduced the research study to the juveniles. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Each juvenile was informed that his participation was strictly voluntarily, that refusal to participate would not affect his case, and that all responses would be kept anonymous and confidential. Only one juvenile refused to participate.

Participants were individually interviewed for about two hours in a private conference room. The interview protocol, part of a larger study with juvenile offenders, consisted of structured and semi-structured questions asking the juveniles about: (1) their knowledge and understanding of Georgia's transfer law and criminal sanctions for juvenile offenders; (2) perceptions of the law's fairness and whether knowledge of such laws would deter them or other juveniles from committing crimes; (3) how they acquire information about law and punishment; (4) their experiences in adult jails and prisons; and (5) their perceptions of the consequences of criminal behavior.

Results

The table on page 38 presents the findings concerning juveniles' knowledge of transfer laws, their perceptions about the fairness of such laws and their likely

JUVENILES' PERCEPTIONS OF TRANSFER LAWS AND CRIMINAL COURT SANCTIONS[1]	
Knowledge of Transfer Laws	
Percentage of juveniles who knew, before their arrest, that	
Juveniles could be tried as adults	Yes = 30.3% No = 69.7%
They could be tried as an adult for the crime	Yes = 0.0% No = 94.6%
Percentage who knew a juvenile who had been tried as an adult	= 0.0%
Perceptions of the Deterrent Effects of Transfer	**Mean (Standard Deviation)**
Knowing the possible penalty would have prevented me from committing the crime.	74.5 (37.9)*
Knowing the possible penalty would stop other juveniles from committing the same crime.	69.6 (24.2)*
What is the likelihood that being in jail/prison will make you less likely to commit crimes in the future?	Less Likely = 75.7% Just as Likely = 5.4% More Likely = 2.7%
Did you think about the possibility of getting caught when you committed the crime?	Yes = 40% No = 60%
Have your experiences in the criminal justice system changed you?	Yes = 93.9% No = 6.1%
Perceptions of the Fairness of Transfer	
The crime justifies trying me as an adult.	9.4 (16.3)*
It is fair to try me as an adult.	9.1 (15.9)*
I agree with what the justice system is trying to accomplish in trying me as an adult.	15.5 (24.4)*
I am being treated the same as other juveniles who have committed the same crime.	31.7 (33.6)*
Is the sentence you received fair?	Yes = 5.9% No = 91.2%
It is fair to try juveniles as adults for the crime of:	Rape = 50% Murder = 43.8% Armed Robbery = 6.3% Would Never Be Fair = 37.5%
Perceptions of the Consequences of Transfer	
The consequences of committing the crime have been worse than I expected.	72.5 (39.3)*
Is jail/prison better or worse than you expected?	Worse = 25.8% Same as Expected = 19.4% Better = 54.8%

1 Percentages do not always total to 100% due to instances of missing data when some participants did not answer the question.

* Answers based on a 1 to 100 response scale, with 100 representing complete agreement with the statement.

deterrent effects, and the consequences they experienced as a result of being tried as adults.

Only 30.3% knew before they committed the crime that juveniles could be tried as adults. None thought that they could or would be tried as an adult for the crime they committed. Rather, the juveniles thought they would be tried in juvenile court and receive a sanction of probation, boot camp, or a several-month stay in a juvenile detention facility. As one juvenile said, "When they caught me, I thought my momma would just come get me and I wouldn't even have to spend the night." Repeatedly, the juveniles said "I never knew" or "somebody should have told us" about being tried as adults and the 10-year mandatory minimum sentence.

Most participants felt that trying them as adults was unfair and unjustified because juveniles are immature, careless, "don't take things seriously," or deserve another chance. As one participant asserted, "If you're a juvenile, you should be tried as a juvenile." Thirty-seven percent thought that it never was fair to try juveniles as adults for any crime; only 6.3% felt it fair to try juveniles as adults for armed robbery (the offense for which many were charged). But a few juveniles felt that trying them as adults was justified. One participant said, "I just keep getting slaps on the wrist…I guess they had to do more."

About half of the juveniles understood some of the purposes of transfer laws (e.g., to punish juveniles or to prevent crime), but an equal number did not understand what the law was trying to accomplish by trying them as an adult. One juvenile, for example, thought it was only because his co-defendants were being tried as adults. Many of the juveniles were charged with armed robbery, which many did not perceive to be a violent or serious crime. Several participants commented that armed robbery was just a "scare tactic" and did not carry the intent to harm. This perception seemed to contribute to their confusion over receiving a 10-year sentence for that crime. When asked to rank the "seven deadly sins" in order of severity, half the participants ranked murder as the most serious while half ranked rape as the most serious. Many said that rape was the only crime for which it was fair to try juveniles as adults: "Rape really hurts someone and if someone does it, they know what they are doing."

Although only 40% of the participants reported considering the chances of getting caught when they committed the offense, they felt the transfer law would have deterred them had they been aware that they could be tried as an adult and receive a lengthy adult sentence. As one juvenile said, "What are you talking about? I'm not doing ten years!" Overall, they felt that the consequences of committing the crime were worse than they had expected. Seventy-six percent thought that being in jail or prison would make it less likely that they would commit crimes in the future; "I don't want to go through this again," one participant commented. In comparison to the sanctions they had received in the juvenile court (which many characterized as "a slap on the wrist"), many felt that their experiences in the criminal justice system had finally taught them that there will be serious consequences if they commit crimes:

> "This ain't no juvenile daycare—I'm facing real time now."

> "[Being tried as an adult] showed me it's not a game anymore. Before, I thought that since I'm a juvenile I could do just about anything and just get six months if I got caught. So, I didn't care and thought I could get away with anything."

The juveniles said they had offended previously in part because they perceived that the chances of getting caught and receiving a serious sanction were slim.

Juveniles whose jail or prison experiences were worse than they had expected were less likely to think it would deter them from committing future crimes ($r = -.45$, $p < .05$). Similarly, juveniles who had experienced beatings while incarcerated ($r = -.43$, $p < .05$) and those who knew youths who had been raped while incarcerated ($r = -.66$, $p < .05$), also were less likely to think that their jail or prison experience would deter them from committing crimes in the future.

Finally, participants were asked about effective ways to "get the word out" to other juveniles that they could be tried as adults and receive lengthy sentences for committing serious offenses. The responses were fairly consistent across participants, who suggested public service announcements on radio and television, advertising near nightclubs frequented by teens, and having police officers or judges give talks at boys' clubs, e.g.:

> "After TV wrestling shows would be a good time. Lots of kids watch those. Have another kid doing the ad, like a kid from prison. Then that kid can tell other kids what the deal is. If it is coming from someone who has really been in jail, it will seem real."

> "You leave a nightclub all hyped up. Sometimes when you walk out someone will say, 'Let's go hit this' .... If there was a sign right outside the club so that when someone said to go hit a place, you could look up right then and see what the punishment would be. That would make you think twice."

Discussion

Four key findings emerge from the results. First, juveniles were unaware of the transfer law. Second, they felt that awareness of these laws and the severe penalties may have prevented them from committing the crime or may prevent other juveniles from committing serious crimes, and they suggested practical ways to enhance juveniles' awareness of transfer laws. Third, the juveniles generally felt that it was unfair to try and sentence them as adults. Finally, the consequences of committing their crime were worse than most had imagined, and the harsh consequences of their incarceration in adult facilities may have had a brutalizing effect on some children. Each finding is discussed in turn.

Only a third of the juveniles were aware of the new transfer law, and their knowledge of the law was quite superficial. The video describing the new transfer law was distributed to public schools in Georgia; however, this seemingly was not the most effective strategy for reaching the population at risk. This is not surprising, as the literature is clear that school absence and truancy is very common among serious juvenile offenders (see Redding & Shalf, 2000). Indeed, in our study, many of the juveniles in the sample were not attending school (they had dropped out, were habitually truant, or had been expelled) when they committed the offense. In addition, showing the video was up to each individual teacher; so even for those few juveniles who were attending school, there was no guarantee that the video would be shown in their classes.

Even among those who knew about the law, none thought it would be enforced against them for the crime they had committed. Indeed, many thought that they would only get "slap on the wrist" sentences from the juvenile court. These results are consistent with those of a recent Canadian study (Peterson-Badali, Ruck, & Koegl, 2001) finding that many juvenile offenders did not think that they would receive a serious punishment if apprehended. Two reasons may explain these inaccurate perceptions. First, the psychosocial immaturity of juveniles, including their impulsivity, limited time perspective, and the tendency to engage in risk-taking (see Scott, Reppucci, & Woolard, 1995; Steinberg & Cauffman, 1996), may make juveniles less likely to perceive accurately the likelihood of apprehension and serious punishment. Second, the juveniles' previous experiences in the juvenile justice system may have communicated the wrong message that the consequences of committing crimes as a juvenile were insignificant. "You talk to youngsters...and they tell you, repeatedly, that they got away with so much—that they commit crimes, but aren't arrested, and if they are arrested, when they are brought into [juvenile] court, nothing happens" (Michaelis, 2001, p. 309, quoting Los Angeles Assistant District Attorney).

Clearly, the relatively mild sanctions the juveniles in our study had received from the juvenile court had not served as a deterrent, but rather as slaps on the wrist. Kleiman (1999) argues that the juvenile justice system often fails to provide meaningful sanctions until it is too late. "How is an offender supposed to judge which 'last chance to go straight' is really his last? He is likely to keep testing the system until it lands on him hard...[Thus], every detected nontrivial violation of law ought to lead to some nontrivial deprivation of liberty" (p. 13). As one juvenile explained, "[Being tried as an adult] showed me it's not a game anymore. Before, I thought that since I'm a juvenile I could do just about anything and just get six months if I got caught." Thus, juvenile offenders say that being tried as adults taught them—perhaps for the first time—that their criminal behavior has real consequences. The challenge for policymakers and juvenile justice personnel would be how to deliver this "wake-up call" without also inflicting on juveniles the "permanently disfiguring" (see Zimring, 2000) and counter-rehabilitative effects of the criminal justice system (see Redding, 2003). For example, "scared straight" programs, "shock

incarceration" programs, and boot camps have all proved ineffective in reducing recidivism in juvenile offenders (Finckenauer & Gavin, 1999).

However, most juveniles felt that knowing they could be tried and sentenced as adults may have prevented them from committing the crime, that the knowledge would deter them in the future and may prevent other juveniles from committing crimes. We cannot know whether the juveniles' introspections are accurate. However, a recent study with serious juvenile offenders found a correlation between their self-reported likelihood of committing a future offense and the number of offenses they committed after their release (Corrado et al., 2003), as did a recent study with adult offenders (Burnett, 2000). Some evidence indicates that the certainty of apprehension and punishment is important in deterring adult offenders (McCord, 1999), and the current study adds to the limited evidence that juvenile offenders may calibrate their behavior as a function of the perceived certainty of punishment (see Redding, 2003). Corrado et al.'s (2003) recent study found a negative relationship between intent to reoffend and sentence severity in a sample of serious and violent juvenile offenders.

But regardless of whether they were aware of transfer laws when they committed their crimes, the juveniles clearly did not perceive such laws as being fair and just. Despite their serious crimes, many felt that their juvenile status and immaturity dictated that they should be tried as juveniles. Many did not understand what the law was attempting to accomplish by trying them as adults and also felt that they were somehow being treated differently than other similarly-situated juveniles; both perceptions contributed to the sense of unfairness. These findings are consistent with those of Bishop and Frazier (2000), whose interviews with juveniles in the criminal justice system reveal the anger and resentment they feel about being tried and sentenced as adults. It has been suggested that juveniles' sense of injustice at criminal court processing may cause them to react defiantly through re-offending and only harden their concept of themselves as "criminals" (see Matza, 1964; Thomas & Bishop, 1984; Winner, Lanza-Kaduce, Bishop, & Frazier, 1997). "The concept of fairness appears to be an important variable in an individual's perception of sentence severity and its subsequent relationship to future recidivism" (Corrado et al., 2003, p. 183; see Morris & Giller, 1987).

Juveniles whose jail or prison experiences were worse than they had expected, and those who reported witnessing or experiencing violence while incarcerated, were less likely to say that their incarceration would deter them from committing crimes in the future. This finding raises the intriguing possibility that incarceration in adult facilities may have brutalizing effects on juveniles. The term "brutalization effect" was first coined to explain the paradoxical finding that homicide rates in a state often increase after an execution (Bowers, 1998; Bowers & Pierce, 1980; Thomson, 1997), perhaps because executions model and communicate that violence is an acceptable and psychologically cathartic alternative. Likewise, juveniles' brutal experiences in adult prison may teach the wrong lessons about the acceptability (and psychological benefits) of criminal conduct, particularly violent crime, as well as contributing to their sense of being treated unfairly. Recent large-scale studies have consistently shown that trying juveniles in criminal court or incarcerating them in adult facilities increases recidivism (Redding, 2003; Redding & Mrozoski, in press), and perhaps the brutalization effect partially explains why this is the case. Further research is needed on this important issue.

The current study has several limitations. The study was conducted only in the Atlanta area, and thus the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other jurisdictions across the country is unknown. In addition, the sample size was relatively small. The study's main strength is also a limitation—we relied on the juveniles' own self-reports. Self-report is not always reliable, even when respondents answer truthfully, since it is difficult to introspect on one's own thought processes and make predictions about one's past and future behavior (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977). But consideration of the child's perspective is essential if we are to craft humane and effective policies (Grahn-Farley, 2002), and this is the only study to do so vis-à-vis juvenile offenders' knowledge and perceptions of transfer laws. The juveniles in our study told us—loudly and clearly—that they did not know they could be tried as adults, which they perceive as being unfair, but that knowing this may have deterred some of them from committing their crime.

The results suggest the need for better designed and

targeted public awareness campaigns on the state and local levels. Policymakers should increase and improve their attempts to make would-be juvenile offenders aware of the consequences of serious and violent crime. Properly targeted public awareness campaigns have proven effective in reducing adult crime in some contexts (e.g., Johnson & Bowers, 2003), and public awareness of a law is a necessary predicate to its acting as a deterrent. There is an urgent need for rigorous public-health research to evaluate the general deterrent impact of community-wide educational campaigns that are intensive and well-targeted toward the population of potential juvenile offenders.

Public health officials can be instrumental in designing, implementing, and evaluating a social marketing campaign to increase awareness of the criminal penalties for serious crime vis-à-vis the juvenile populations most at risk. Social marketing, a technique that combines the tools of public health marketing and behavior change theory, recognizes that careful attention must be paid to the nature of the behavior to be promoted or avoided, the ways in which the message will be delivered, and the costs people perceive they will have to pay to begin or discontinue behavior. Social marketing has proven effective in other public health epidemics in reducing risky behavior and promoting behavior change (Andreasen & Andreasen, 1995). Examples can be found in reductions in teenage smoking and drunk-driving rates following such campaigns (e.g., Elder et al., 2004). An important facet of social marketing is to elicit the help of the target population in developing the message, identifying proper messengers, and pinpointing the appropriate means of distribution of the health message. The juveniles in our study provided important tips on how most effectively to increase awareness among their peers. They suggested public service announcements on TV and radio, advertising near nightclubs, and having police or judges give talks at boys' clubs. Further conversations and the development of a social marketing plan are warranted.

At the same time, however, the results also suggest the need to reconsider whether the perceived unfairness and possible brutalizing effects of transfer may have the unintended effect of decreasing specific as well as general deterrence. While the extant research (see Redding, 2003; Redding & Mrozoski, in press) strongly suggests that transfer decreases specific deterrence by increasing recidivism among juveniles tried and sentenced as adults, whether transfer laws have a general deterrent effect on other juveniles remains an open question. Answering the question correctly depends upon determining whether juveniles know about transfer laws and think they will be enforced. The current study provides a first step in that direction.

AUTHORS' ADDRESS:

Please address correspondence to:
Richard E. Redding, J.D., Ph.D.
Villanova University School of Law
299 N. Spring Mill Road
Villanova, PA 19085
E-mail: redding@law.villanova.edu

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