



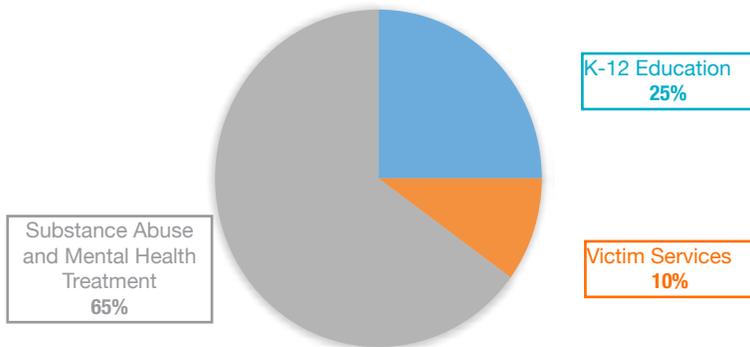
PROPOSITION 47: INVESTING IN CALIFORNIA'S CHILDREN

Our state's future prosperity depends on all our children having the opportunity to grow into a healthy, productive adulthood. Yet, each year, California squanders hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars incarcerating children and adults for minor, non-violent offenses - instead of investing in their success. Far from keeping us safer, these unfair sentencing policies only perpetuate the crisis of poverty and violence that push young people out of school and into the criminal justice system.

Proposition 47, or the Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act, will help get California back on the right track by investing more resources into education, rehabilitation, and treatment - and less into prisons. Specifically, Proposition 47 reclassifies six low-level drug possession and petty theft-related offenses from felonies to misdemeanors, potentially saving the state and county governments up to \$1 billion over the next five years.ⁱ

Proposition 47 Invests in Children and Families

Savings from Proposition would go to: K-12 school programs to improve outcomes for public school students, victims' trauma and recovery services, and mental health and drug treatment.



Keeps children in schools

According to a sample of California school districts, over 250,000 elementary school students were chronically absent or missed 18 or more school days in 2013-14.ⁱⁱ Children who are chronically absent are more likely to drop out of school. Proposition 47 provides funds to K-12 schools for positive and supportive programs that have been shown to increase student attendance and reverse the negative impacts of absenteeism.ⁱⁱⁱ

Strengthens families

Children of incarcerated parents are more likely to suffer from psychological trauma, perform poorer in the classroom, and be placed into the foster care system.^{iv} Proposition 47 will help keep families together by reducing the penalties on adults who commit non-violent minor offenses. The measure would reunite thousands of children and parents in the state by permitting anyone unfairly incarcerated for a non-violent offense to be re-sentenced for less prison time.

Stops the overcriminalization of youth

Over seven percent of those arrested for the six felonies Proposition 47 would impact are youth.^v Proposition 47 will protect youth from facing harsher penalties associated with felonies and serving more time for low level offenses, which damages them developmentally. Additionally, the measure will help fund the community-based programs and services that reduce recidivism and help incarcerated youth overcome past trauma and return to their communities - where they belong.^{vi}

Addresses the root causes of trauma

Over one-third of all children in the United States have experienced at least one traumatic event in their lives - and the rates are substantially higher for youth incarcerated in the juvenile justice system.^{vii} Children who have undergone traumatic experiences are more likely to develop learning disabilities, face expulsion from school, or become addicted to drugs and alcohol.^{viii} Proposition 47 will help youth overcome past trauma and develop a healthy outlook on life by dedicating funds for the establishment of trauma recovery treatment centers.

ⁱ Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO). (2014). Proposition 47: Criminal Sentences, Misdemeanor Penalties. Initiative Statute. At: <http://www.lao.ca.gov/ballot/2014/prop-47-110414.pdf>; Mike Males & Lizzie Buchen, The Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, "Proposition 47: Estimating Local Savings and Jail Population Reductions," September 2014, Research Brief, page 1.

ⁱⁱ Harris, Kamala D. "In School and On Track, Attorney General's 2014 Report On California's Elementary School Truancy and Absenteeism Crisis." Office of the Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General, California Department of Justice, 2014. Web. 15 Oct. 2014. <<http://oag.ca.gov/truancy/2014>>

ⁱⁱⁱ Attendance Works. (2014). The Power of Positive Connections, Reducing Chronic Absence through PEOPLE: Priority Early Outreach for Positive Linkages and Engagement, available at http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Positive-Priority-Outreach-Toolkit_081914.pdf; Ballanz, Robert and Byrnes, Vaughan (2013), Meeting the Challenge of Combating Chronic Absenteeism, Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University School of Education.

^{iv} Teji, Selena. "Parental Incarceration Is Bad for Children's Health." *California Budget Bites*. The California Budget Project, 23 Sept. 2014. Web. <<http://californiabudgetbites.org/2014/09/23/parental-incarceration-is-bad-for-childrens-health/>>.

^v Mike Males & Lizzie Buchen, The Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, "Proposition 47: Estimating Local Savings and Jail Population Reductions," September 2014, Research Brief, page 1.

^{vi} Austin, James, Kelly D. Johnson, and Ronald Weitzer. "Alternatives to the Secure Detention and Confinement of Juvenile Offenders." *National Criminal Justice Reference Service*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Sept. 2005. Web. 14 Oct. 2014. <<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/208804.pdf>>.

^{vii} Washburn, J. J., L. A. Teplin, L. S. Voss, C. D. Simon, K. M. Abram, and G. M. McClelland. "Psychiatric Disorders Among Detained Youths: A Comparison of Youths Processed in Juvenile Court and Adult Criminal Court." *Psychiatric Services* 59.9 (2008): 965-73. Web.

^{viii} Adams, Eric J., MD. "Healing Invisible Wounds: Why Investing in Trauma-informed Care for Children Makes Sense." (n.d.). 2. *Justice Policy Institute*. July 2010. Web. <http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/10-07_REP_HealingInvisibleWounds_JJ-PS.pdf>.