

Discussion Guide for *Incarcerated Youth*

Six incarcerated youth—Julio, Latoya, Tariq, Nicole, Joe and Daniel—discuss the life events and circumstances that led them into the juvenile justice system, and the types of interventions that might have put them on a different path.

STUDENTS AT RISK

1. What are some common risk factors between students you know and the youth in the films?
2. What were some of the earliest signs that these students were at risk of getting involved with the juvenile justice system?
3. From your experience, how does substance abuse affect a student's ability to function, and to ask for and receive help?
4. How did exposure to trauma (physical/emotional/sexual abuse, witnessing violence, etc.) contribute to the negative behaviors of these young people in and out of school?
5. What was the impact of undiagnosed or untreated mental health issues on the lives of some of these individuals?
6. Why didn't these youth feel connected to their schools?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERVENTIONS

1. What supports or interventions could schools have provided to help these young people?
2. Tariq said he only got arrested when he was drunk. Why didn't anyone notice that Tariq was coming to school drunk?
3. Like Tariq, Nicole's needs were not identified in



Scenes from *Incarcerated Youth*: Julio Panameño (top), an inmate at the NH State Prison for Men, says “I was embarrassed of being 15 in the seventh grade.” Latoya Fletcher (bottom), an inmate at the NH State Prison for Women, says “My mom was left out of the loop.”

school and she “fell through the cracks.” What are some lessons we can learn from Nicole and Tariq?

4. What did the youth in these videos say was valuable and helpful to them?
5. Teenagers can be impulsive, and act without necessarily considering the consequences. What is your school's level of awareness around the developmental stages of how teens think/process?



THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

1. How do adult/youth relationships in schools factor into the success of students? Would relationships with adults in schools have helped these youth?
2. How can a school or community proactively provide opportunities surrounding mentorship and role models to address the emotional needs of youth?
3. What is your school or community doing to promote positive connections and a sense of belonging for all kids?
4. How does a sense of purpose help kids stay out of trouble? How can schools, families and communities help instill that sense of purpose?
6. Would greater communication between families and schools have made a difference in the lives of these youth?

RESILIENCY AND EMPOWERMENT

1. How do you define resiliency? How do these young people show resiliency?



Top: Nicole Kasinskas, an inmate at the NH State Prison for Women, says "I had no hopes and dreams." Bottom: Tariq Zubhuza, an inmate at the NH State Prison for Men, says "If you're 11 years old and you're drunk, it's a problem."

2. Why is it important to learn about a youth's cultural background, strengths, goals, dreams and their vision for their future?
3. How can we ensure that youth actively participate in the key decisions about their education?
4. How can we identify our own fears, biases and weaknesses in regards to working with youth? What can we do to address these?