

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/blog/vera-joins-resource-center-partnership-to-advance-juvenile-justice-reform>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation announced today the launch of the new [Models for Change Resource Center Partnership](#), which builds on its nearly 20-year, \$150 million [national initiative](#) to guide and accelerate the nation's momentum toward a more fair, rational, effective, and developmentally appropriate approach to juvenile justice. The partnership will provide public defenders, judges, policymakers, advocates, probation officers, social service agencies, and others with much needed technical assistance, trainings, tools, and resources to help advance juvenile justice reform across the country.

As a member of the partnership, Vera's Center on Youth Justice is developing an online resource center that focuses on how jurisdictions respond to youth who commit status offenses—that is, engage in behaviors that are criminalized for those under 18, such as truancy, running away, being incorrigible, curfew and liquor law violations, and the like. In recent years, research has shown that using punitive, court-based interventions—which historically has been the norm to address the needs of these young people and families in crisis—does more harm than good. Drawing upon Vera's long-standing technical assistance in this area, the [Status Offense Reform Centers](#) aim is to help policymakers and practitioners create effective community-based alternatives that keep youth who have misbehaved, but not broken the law, out of the juvenile justice system and safely in their homes and communities.

The user-friendly, interactive website to be launched by the end of the year will include a range of resources, such as a toolkit for planning, implementing, and sustaining comprehensive status offense system reform; profiles of reform efforts occurring around the United States; research briefs on topics related to status offense behaviors; webinars and podcasts that explore the latest research as well as lessons learned from the field; and a comprehensive library highlighting related material and organizations working in the field. The site will also feature a blog and a helpdesk to respond to inquiries for additional information or assistance.

In addition to Vera's Status Offense Reform Center, the new partnership includes the following resource centers that will focus on other areas critical to continued change in juvenile justice:

To learn more about the resource center partnership and the individual resource centers, visit the Models for Change online hub at: <http://modelsforchange.net/resourcecenters>

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