

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/blog/new-podcasts-on-cost-benefit-analysis-and-juvenile-justice>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

Vera's Cost-Benefit Analysis Unit has released two [podcasts](#) about a cost-benefit study featured in this month's report from Governor Paterson's Task Force on Transforming Juvenile Justice. The report grabbed the attention of the media, with reporters highlighting the steep costs of New York State's juvenile facilities and the high recidivism rates among youth released from them. One of the task force's recommendations is to place more court-involved youth in evidence-based programs in the community, an approach that can be far more cost-effective than placement in juvenile facilities. For example, the cost-benefit study showed that programs such as Multisystemic Therapy, Functional Family Therapy, and Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care can reduce recidivism rates by up to 18 percent and save taxpayers and victims as much as \$96,000 per participant.

We created the two podcasts to help stakeholders better understand what cost-benefit analysis (CBA) reveals about juvenile justice policy. In the [first podcast](#), writer/editor Nicole Lemon and I talk about the role of CBA in developing juvenile justice policy, Vera's approach to conducting the analysis, and the findings from the study. In the [second podcast](#), associate research director Jennifer Fratello and I discuss the methodology used to conduct the analysis. We describe a promising cost-benefit methodology developed in the state of Washington, and how we applied it in New York State.

We hope these podcasts will be of interest to researchers and policy makers involved in juvenile justice issues. For those who would like to read about the study, check out Appendix A on page 90 of the [task force report](#).

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