



Gary Richard Herbert

Governor

Declaration

Whereas, the juvenile justice system's role is to rehabilitate offenders who are under the age of 18 in the least restrictive setting through treating all youth individually and meeting their needs while holding them accountable and maintaining public safety;

Whereas, as has been shown by research and acknowledged by the U.S. Supreme Court, adolescents are developmentally different from adults, and, consequently, many state and federal laws prohibit youth from undertaking adult responsibilities;

Whereas, a number of laws allowing the prosecution of youth as adults were enacted prior to studies, conducted by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, which demonstrate that teenagers prosecuted in the adult justice system are more likely to commit a future crime than those who are retained in the juvenile justice system;

Whereas, adolescents who are placed under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court system are entitled to competent legal counsel who specialize in representing minors and to age-appropriate services, such as education and mental health services, while remaining close to their families;

Whereas, the juvenile justice system is best equipped to work with teenagers in making meaningful changes that maximize opportunities for youth offenders to realize their full potential, thus reducing the likelihood of future and increasingly serious offenses, and mitigating barriers minors with criminal records may face with regard to attaining education and employment;

Whereas, reducing disproportionate minority contact within the juvenile justice system is a core protection of the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act and an issue the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention works proactively to combat; and

Whereas, the state of Utah applauds the work of the juvenile justice system and recognizes the valuable contributions of the thousands of professionals who serve in the juvenile justice system in Utah, enabling our youth offenders to succeed through intervention, supervision, and rehabilitation programs while ensuring public safety;

Now, therefore, I, Gary R. Herbert, governor of the state of Utah, do hereby declare October 2015 as

Juvenile Justice Awareness Month

Gary R. Herbert

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