

Project Reset

Project Reset offers meaningful diversion opportunities to young adults at the point of arrest. The program seeks to create a proportionate response to low-level crime, holding young people accountable for their actions and connecting them with needed social services while avoiding the use of incarceration and the potential harms associated with standard case processing. The goal is to restore confidence in justice and bolster the legitimacy of law enforcement in the eyes of the public, helping to mend relations between the community and the justice system.

Concept

Every year, thousands of 16- and 17-year-olds in New York City are apprehended for low-level crimes. Police and prosecutors have traditionally had limited options for responding to these cases. They could either formally process these young people—which means arrest, prosecution, and in some cases, a jail sentence—or just let them off entirely. Instead, Project Reset offers a menu of robust alternatives designed to be restorative both for young people and their communities.

Eligibility

Project Reset serves 16- and 17-year-olds who have been arrested for low-level, non-violent crimes. They must be first-time offenders with no involvement in any other ongoing investigations or cases. The program handles cases involving charges of drug possession, trespassing, and shoplifting, among other low-level offenses.

How It Works

At the point of arrest, police alert young people they may be eligible for participation in Project Reset. Prosecutors review each case in consultation with the defense bar and refer eligible cases to the Center for Court Innovation, which provides restorative interventions for participants. Participants who successfully complete a two-session intervention will

subsequently have their cases dismissed. They do not have to go to court and no record of their engagement with the justice system is retained.

Restorative Justice

Restorative interventions offered by Project Reset include counseling sessions, letters of apology, community service, and group workshops with other teens.

Evaluation

The Center for Court Innovation is planning a qualitative and quantitative assessment of Project Reset to analyze its impact on recidivism and procedural justice.

Partnership

Project Reset is a collaboration among the Center for Court Innovation, New York City Police Department, New York County District Attorney's Office, Kings County District Attorney's Office, New York State Office of Court Administration, the Legal Aid Society, Brooklyn Defender Services, New York County Defender Services, and Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem.

For More Information

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