Assignment 3

Your Name (First M. Last)

School or Institution Name (University at Place or Town, State)

**Introduction**

American juvenile justice is the system that is used for handling cases that involve youth, convicted for of criminal offense. Police come across many children and youth showing a wide range of delinquent and deviant behavior. This behavior ranges from minor to serious crimes. Police are called the gatekeepers that ensure the safety of the community. The response of police towards youth also plays an important role in controlling the ratio of the crimes committed by the youngsters

**Discussion**

Police uses both formal and informal programs and methods for keeping the youth on the right track and away from crimes. In formal methods, when a juvenile commits an offense, police takes them to the legal authorities (district attorneys and court judges, etc.). Informal method concerning juveniles involves an out of court settlement. Advantages of formal methods adopted by police are that juveniles are being treated as per the constitution that gives them a life lesson (Harris and Mooney,2019). The disadvantage of using a formal method is, juveniles if being punished may take that punishment from a negative perspective and may develop negativity against the state. Advantage of the informal method is, youth is being given a chance for making reforms in their behavior. The disadvantage of informal methods used by police is that it may encourage juveniles to commit the same crime. Formal methods should be used when juveniles are involved in major crimes i.e. drug trafficking and murder (Wilford, et, al,2019,266). On the hand, informal methods should be used when juveniles are involved in minor crimes i.e. robbery, burglary, and first-time offenses.

There are various policies used by the police for the prevention and deterrence of juvenile offenses. Police are using policy of reducing group violence as youngsters commit most of the crimes in groups. Police are also implementing a policy of social awareness by arranging seminars at educational institutes for educating children to stay away from crimes. Another policy used by police in the United State is Hot Spots policing that focuses on a demographically small place where crime ratio is high. There are two types of interventions, i.e. community based and gang-based and both work against each other. In gang based intervention, issues arise in the implementation of social policies (Walsh, et, al,2019, 1-14). Many community-based programs are working effectively for reducing the activities and intervention of gangs. Gangs intervene in other's affair and incorporate feelings of hatred among juvenile. Police are intervening and discouraging the youngster’s involvement in gangs and criminal activities by making strict policies against young criminals.

There are five main phases of the juvenile court process. First is the filing of the petition which means, a written application given to some authority for asking a grant, favor or relief. The second main phase is a referral to intake, which means a process of intake which defines how a case would be handled. The third is the witness hearing which means juvenile courts take a look at the case to know whether it should be transferred to courts dealing with adult criminals where juvenile would be treated as an adult. The fourth phase is adjudication which means that authorities i.e. judge review arguments and reasoning proposed by opposing parties for determining the obligations between two parties. Last main phase in juvenile courts is disposition which consists of sentencing (Love & Morris,2019, 33-44). At each stage, case approaches towards ending when the judges give their final verdict. One who is under eighteen can meet the legal limit to file a petition. The legal team carries on to the second phase and at the third phase, judges hear both parties for making a final decision. The fourth and fifth phase also involves a judge. Intake process involves a person who complains to the juvenile court against untruly act committed by a juvenile. The outcome would be not good for a juvenile in the intake process.

A plea bargain is a kind of agreement between the prosecutor and the defendant. In Plea bargaining, the defendants plead for having no contest also he/she feels guilty of the charges put against them. There could be various pros and cons of plea bargaining. Its most obvious advantage is that it reduces uncertainty in the legal case. The second advantage is, it reduces the population in jails. On the other hand, there are few disadvantages as well of plea bargaining. One disadvantage is it takes back the right of the jury to give a decision on a trial (Henderson and Levett,2019, pp. 73-100). Secondly, it affects the quality of investigatory procedures. Taking a look at both advantages and disadvantages, I would oppose plea bargaining. I would not support this kind of agreement as it questions the whole legal proceedings by letting the criminal free without any solid punishment. Consequently, the crime ratio would increase.

**Conclusion**

Taking a look at the Juvenile justice system, it could be promulgated that various figures need to play an important role for keeping youngsters away from crimes. Especially police could play a significant role for creating awareness among youth by arranging seminars and sessions. It is necessary to make a distinction between minor and major crimes committed by juveniles before giving a final verdict. So as a whole, it could be concluded that the American juvenile justice system is trying its best to save youngsters by making them aware that their involvement in criminal activities would destroy their bright future. There is a need to educate the young generation that how important is to obey the state's law and constitution for keeping life on the right track.

References

Harris, D., & Mooney, C. (2019). *The Juvenile Justice System*. Essential Library.

Henderson, K. S., & Levett, L. M. (2019). Plea Bargaining: The Influence of Counsel. In *Advances in Psychology and Law* (pp. 73-100). Springer, Cham.

Love, T. P., & Morris, E. W. (2019). Opportunities Diverted: Intake Diversion and Institutionalized Racial Disadvantage in the Juvenile Justice System. *Race and Social Problems*, *11*(1), 33-44.

Walsh, H., Myers, T. D. W., Ray, J. V., Frick, P. J., Thornton, L. C., Steinberg, L., & Cauffman, E. (2019). Perceptions of police-juvenile contact predict self-reported offending in adolescent males. *Psychology, Crime & Law*, 1-14.

Wilford, M. M., Shestak, A., & Wells, G. L. (2019). Plea Bargaining. *Psychological Science and the Law*, 266.