Police Officers working with Juveniles

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# Introduction

The roles of law enforcement officers, correction officers and probation officers can be worse in difficult circumstances. Similarly, criminals with emotional or behavioural disorders require special attention and focus and such offenders make the role of police officers more demanding and stressful. The Juvenile offenders’ present similar kind of traits and it requires a special kind of person to handle juvenile offenders. That’s why the role of police officers working with Juvenile have a different and more demanding kind of a role. In many countries, police officers working with juvenile undergo special training and they employ special methods to handle juvenile offenders.

## Special skills and characteristics of officers working with Juvenile

The police officers working with juvenile must possess the qualities of a good human being. Their role requires dealing with an offender who may be under some stressful condition and could have opted much worst option like taking his/ her own life etc. This is a proven fact that the conditions under which juveniles commit crime are much different compared to those under which adults commit a crime. This suggests that the officers dealing with the juvenile offender possess attributes which can help them in decision making and getting out of the trouble more quickly. Durnescu suggests that some characteristics such as effective counselling, moral supervision, open-mindedness, team skills and assertiveness are some essential things which an officer working with Juvenile must possess (Durnescu, 2012).

As the juveniles are prosecuted for delinquent acts and not for crimes, therefore they have the right to be presented in front of special courts. Similarly, the Young Offenders Act of 1997 in Australia suggests that juvenile offenders must be kept separate from normal or habitual criminals (Newburn, 2012). Lastly, as they do not qualify for the public trials, therefore, the officers dealing with juvenile must possess the skills set different from the officers working with adults.

## The transition to a successful juvenile officer

When an individual is hired by the law enforcement authorities mainly the police, they undergo crucial training. Cunneen and White suggest that in Australia, police officers undergo different kind of training (tailored according to the law enforcement requirements) before assuming their jobs (Cunneen & White, 2011). They argue that from the day these officers assume their charge, a change in their personal nature starts developing. With time they become so hard-hearted that nothing except some exceptional circumstances can make them realize the sensitivity of the circumstance (Cunneen & White, 2011). They write that this transition is more noticeable among the officials who work with adult criminals. As they come across new kind of the criminal act with every passing day and experience new personality traits, with time they become unsuitable for placing with the juveniles. The most compelling reason for their unsuitability is the nature of their job they have spent the most time in (Cunneen & White, 2011). In light of the research mentioned above, it will be right to argue that an officer who has worked with adults for more than twenty years cannot become a successful juvenile officer

# Conclusion

The criminal justice system in the present time is much customized. This division of the legal system has many positive impacts on society. The Juvenile justice and delinquency system are one of the most impactful sources of bringing back juvenile offenders into society. Muncie and Goldson argue that the close monitoring of the environment, the presence of some well- trained juvenile officers and a separate court system for a juvenile are what assures the success of Australian Young Offenders Act (Muncie & Goldson, 2006).

# References:

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