

Hakim Crampton Podcast

Link to the Podcast: <https://soundcloud.com/okori-christopher/reentry-week-podcast-hakim-1/s-5JdYffbUcDp?in=okori-christopher/sets/2021-reentry-talks/s-R6PAmH6jR5B>

Simon Gonsoulin

Hello, and welcome to today's reentry week podcast that will focus on the topic of young adults or transition age.

I'm Simon Gonsoulin, employed by the American Institutes for Research, and joining me today is Hakim Crampton from Just Leadership USA.

Hakim is an individual with lived experience and he will respond to a series of questions we have generated pertaining to today's topic. Hakim, thank you for joining us today, we certainly do appreciate it.

Without further delay, Hakim, the first question is, when you think of young adults to transition age, can you tell us how you define that term "young adults transition age"?

Hakim Crampton

Yes, thank you Simon, thank you for having me. When I refer to young adults, transition age, I usually think of young people between the ages of 16 and 24 years of age.

These are youth who are often not seen as children or adults by certain agencies and organizations, service providers, jurisdictions and justices. But young adults or transition age often experienced a number of challenges on their path to successful adulthood.

Simon Gonsoulin

Thank Hakim. We have a second question for you, the second one is, can you provide us with a snapshot of what justice evolved young adults experience in terms of reentry, in transition into society, post juvenile, or young adult incarceration.

Hakim Crampton

Thank you for that question. I'd say the youth and young adults, they've traditionally had a very difficult time transitioning back into family structures, as well as community normalcy post justice involvement.

So, a combination of factors contributes to this difficulty in reentering the community particularly issues arising from family and community trauma, or events experienced prior to incarceration. The lack of youth-focused wraparound services in the community during transition really contributes to the difficulty many youth and young adults, the transition age, face upon release. Access to loving support, such as an integrated family

structure, has traditionally posed one of the biggest challenges, followed by such things as effective as specific mental health and substance use treatment.

Right, so these, along with other factors such as long-standing system failures that have not adequately been remedied or reformed, they continue to slow progress towards systems change, and lastly, voices of those with lived experiences have not been included in the conversation of how to address programmatic content that will help young adults gain long term stability in spite of having past justice system contact. Persons with experience in systems like foster care for example, juvenile justice settings, and adult incarceration, have insight and they provide a perspective to service providers that are needed in addressing current policy around youth justice and effective program models.

Simon Gonsoulin

Thanks a lot for answering that question, two things that you mentioned really stood out to me. That the involvement of a loving supportive integrated family structure was so critical to these young people, you know because so many, as you said, have a foot in the juvenile system, a foot in the adult system, not quite adults not children any longer, and so the family structure oftentimes looks a little different for young adults of that age.

And then secondly. The voices of those who have lived experience are incredible messengers, right, to really address some of those needs of those young adults. It's really just engage in a conversation with them, right, to find out what's going on, what are some of their long term needs, short term needs, so I really do appreciate you sharing those two points in response to that question.

So, we do have a third question, and this third question is probably a little more complex so, if we need to go back to it in a second, happy to do that. How can the community get more engaged in supporting efforts that ensure adults experiencing system involvement successfully transition into adulthood following incarceration?

Hakim Crampton

Yes, very good question, very in depth as well. So, communities must become more loving and supportive of youth and young adults who have experienced either juvenile or adult system contact.

Welcoming communities that demonstrate genuine concern and support, it gives young adult the kind of mental and emotional encouragement and support needed to address healing and restoration during that difficult time of transitioning into adulthood, while experiencing court system contact.

Other ways communities can get involved, for example, are providing mentorship to young people early in their academic life, better known as early intervention

programming, long before troubling signs appear indicating additional support systems are needed.

young adults also need very specific supports and services in the following areas such as access to housing, access to continuing education, support in employment and the opportunity for future expungement of past criminal records.

, communities and citizens can also support young adults with past justice contact, by supporting organizations or agencies providing transition supports for youth and young adults post system involvement through monetary contributions and voluntary activities.

Simon Gonsoulin

Hakim, I think there was one point, as you started to talk about those welcoming communities, you went into this need, a welcoming community that supports housing, allowing that younger adult to continue their education, you know, try to find supportive employment and an opportunity to expunge past criminal records and I think you kind of hit the nail on the head, this is what you mean by community, you're not just talking about the township of a city, you're talking about a whole group of organizations and agencies working together for that young adult transition age. Thanks, we appreciate you giving us that perspective.

And then really to take the podcast home, today we have one final question, and it relates more to your experiences as the individual with live experience what does it look and feel like for the person going through the reentry process.

Hakim Crampton

Yes, the very bleak picture often. So being released from incarceration, it can be described as joyous relief mixed with intense fear and anxiety. Those feelings usually intensify during the initial stages of parole reporting, and then the fear of being unable to meet ones supervision requirements. Support from family, friends or network will lessen those feelings and activate the transition support system needed upon release.

So, for many persons, however, insufficient post release support has become the norm and one of the many reasons, contributing to recidivism. Reentry looks and feels like a long rollercoaster ride for far too many. Barriers closed doors and loneliness paint the vivid canvas of life for persons returning to communities who have generally not presented any meaningful measure of compassionate acceptance of persons like myself with a past criminal record.

Simon Gonsoulin

I really like the way you put that, it could be a long rollercoaster ride and in one that is ups and downs, down so you know all the barriers, it's closed doors and loneliness. And yet, there are supportive friends, families, and networks, they really help you through those times when you really facing those barriers.

To our participants, this concludes our podcast today featuring Just Leadership USA's Hakim Crampton share his thoughts on the topic of young adults and transition age, I want to thank Hakim for his insight and sharing this valuable information with us today, thank you for listening to today's podcast and happy reentry week to all of you.

Disclaimer

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Thank you.