

The Decrease in Crime Violence and Re-Offence Rates of Juveniles Involved in Musical Theater Arts Programs in the United States

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Abstract

This research proposal addresses the interdisciplinary gap between juvenile delinquents' crime violence and recidivism rates after participating in musical theater programs. There is a gap in the research between the reconviction and crime violence rates of juveniles ages 10 to 17 in the juvenile justice system. The research proposes the study of juveniles involved in musical theater programs in the United States and their rehabilitation through acting, singing, and dancing exposure. Previous research has shown that the juveniles not rehabilitated back into society are more susceptible to committing crimes. Without a means to encourage change, juveniles are unable to rehabilitate back into society properly. Regardless of the outcome, this study focuses on understanding the impact of musical theater on juveniles across the United States and it's potential to rehabilitate juveniles in the future. This research proposes an analysis of the potential for rehabilitation through musical theater programs in decreasing the crime violence and recidivism rates of incarcerated juveniles.



Picture 1. Theater. From PxHere, 2017, retrieved from https://pxhere.com/en/photo/9404303?utm_content=shareClip&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=pxhere

Introduction

Crime violence and re-offense rates of juveniles under the ages of 10 to 17 who are part of the juvenile justice program needs to be addressed. The gap in previous research should analyze the lack of discussion revolving around musical theater programs in the United States. The three areas of musical theater that are discussed are singing, acting, and dancing. Roughly 84% of juveniles are expected to re-offend within five years of the previous crime committed (2018). The lack of data on the involvement of juveniles in musical theater programs creates further issues by not explaining why minors re-offend. It is vital to understand the impact of musical theater in the juvenile justice system in order to not only rehabilitate delinquents, but to hopefully change the course of juveniles lives by getting them out of the system before they reach adulthood. Reducing the amount of career criminals is essential in creating a better society and helping juveniles live normal lives.

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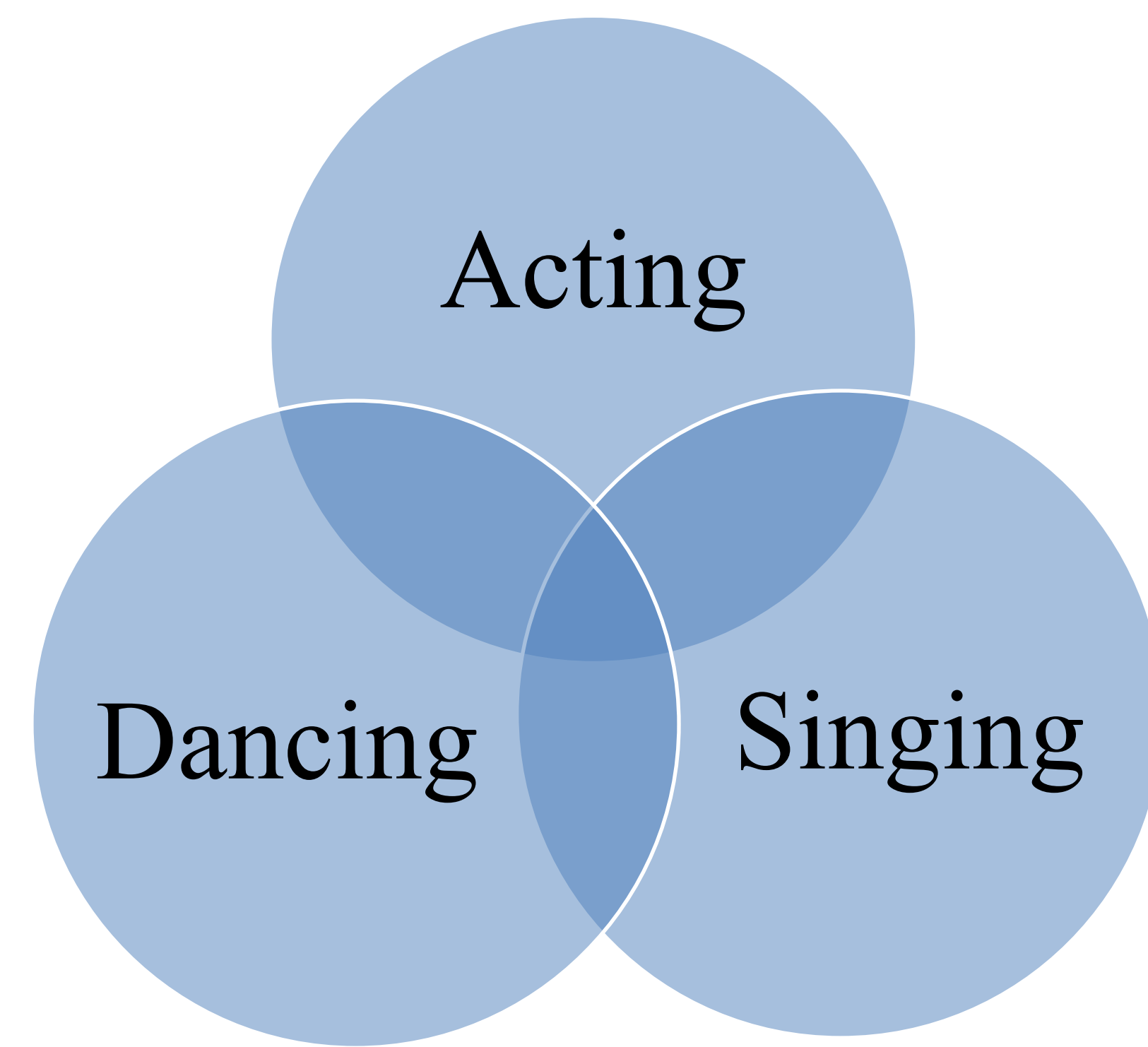


Figure 1. The three musical theater arts.

Methodology

Data will be collected from 500 juveniles ages 10 to 17 years old who are criminally active in the United States. The survey will analyze juvenile's involvement in musical theater programs while in the juvenile justice system. This proposed methodology will survey questions that further assess anticipated participation rates from juveniles willing to engage in musical theater programs. The survey from the 500 juveniles will fill the gap regardless of the results. Each survey will cover both the positive and negative aspects of musical theater. The survey will include 12 questions about how musical theater impacts each juvenile on a personal level. The goal is to analyze how musical theater has impacted them mentally, physically, and emotionally. For example, one question on the survey will be, "How has music impacted your mental health?" Another question will ask, "Has acting allowed you to express your emotions in a safe environment?" Each question will be ranked from 1-10, with the lowest at 1 and the highest at 10. This will examine each juvenile's musical theater experience and how it impacts their ability to reintegrate into society.



Picture 2. Shadow of a man. From PxHere, 2017, retrieved from https://pxhere.com/en/photo/714473?utm_content=shareClip&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=pxhere

Picture 3. Handcuffs behind back. From PxHere, 2017, retrieved from https://pxhere.com/en/photo/1379713?utm_content=shareClip&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=pxhere

Rational

The need to show the importance of the lack of research is evident throughout. It is relevant because the research addresses both the positive and negative effects of musical theater on crime violence and re-offense rates among juveniles. In addition, the new information will propel future studies on how the United States can effectively rehabilitate young criminals and rehabilitate them back into society. Previous research addresses the potential of theater in rehabilitating juveniles, "the potential positive outcomes a Shakespeare-based approach could have for the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders" (Nicklin, 2017, p. 14). If the hypothesis is correct, this could help reduce the number of incarcerated juveniles by implementing the arts into the juvenile justice system. However, if the hypothesis is incorrect, the juveniles are left without musical theater in the juvenile justice system. Regardless of the outcome, this study is focused on understanding the impact of musical theater on juveniles across the United States, and it is designed to help fill the gap for a more effective rehabilitation process in the juvenile justice system. The engagement of theater arts programs and the impact of singing, dancing, and acting allows children to develop positive emotional and social behaviors such as empathy, mood control, and sharing (Grigorenko, 2020). Without understanding and research, it is increasingly difficult to encourage change.



Picture 4. Kids in theater. From PxHere, 2017, retrieved from https://pxhere.com/en/photo/775090?utm_content=shareClip&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=pxhere

Picture 5. Kids in a circle. From PxHere, 2017, retrieved from https://pxhere.com/en/photo/1241843?utm_content=shareClip&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=pxhere

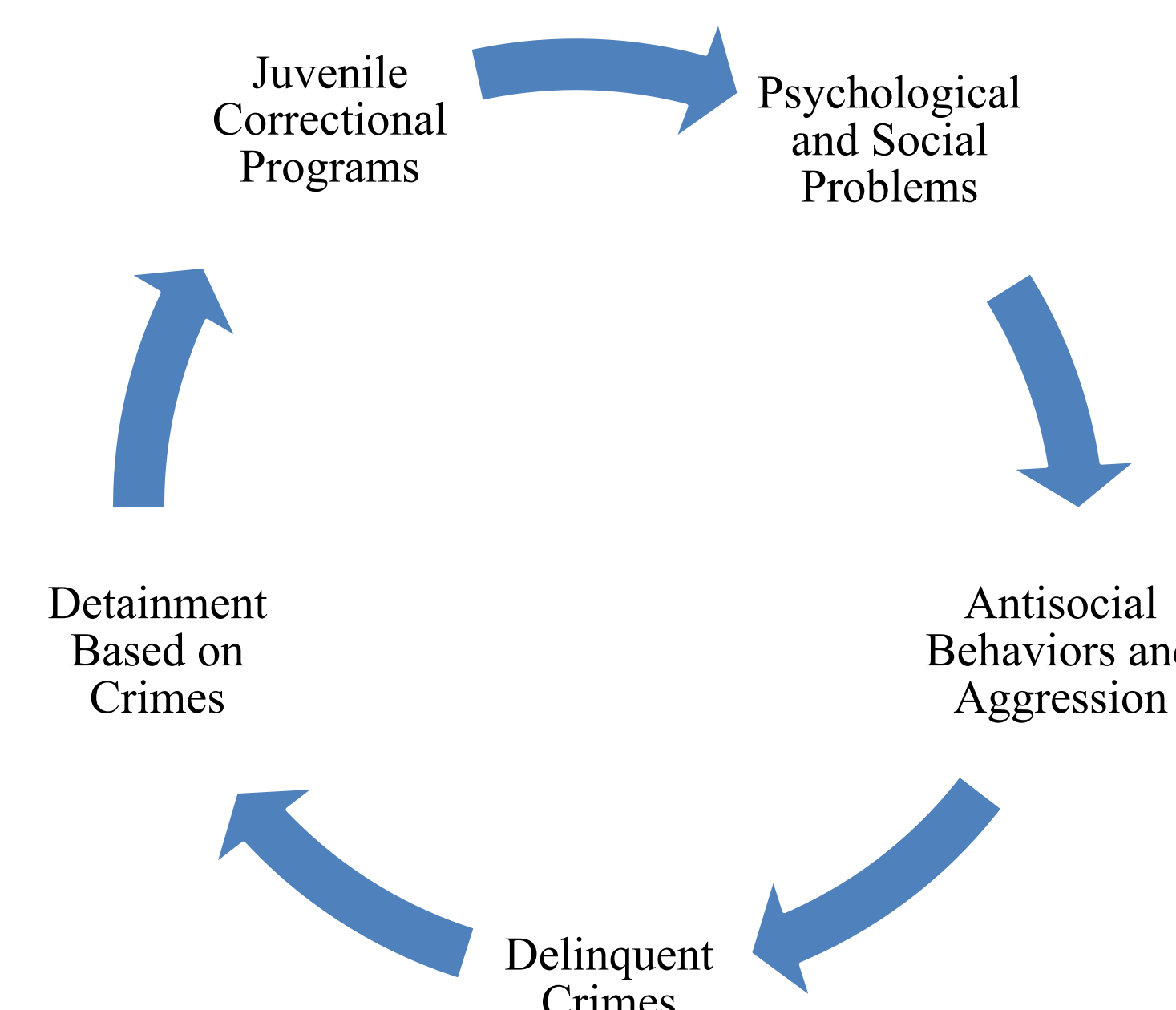


Figure 2. The cycle without proper rehabilitation.

Conclusion

The goal of this research is to fill this gap and provide more information on if musical theater is beneficial to juveniles. Over 2.1 million juveniles across the United States are arrested and put into the juvenile justice system each year (*Youth involved with the Juvenile Justice System, n.d.*). The data conducted in this proposal is essential to further understand if the juvenile justice system needs to implement theater arts programs into their rehabilitation process. This research seeks to fill the gap between re-offending rates and crime violence among juvenile delinquents across the United States by utilizing musical theater programs for rehabilitation purposes in the juvenile justice system.



Picture 6. Theater performance. From PxHere, 2017, retrieved from https://pxhere.com/en/photo/1093247?utm_content=shareClip&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=pxhere

Future Work

- After conducting the research and collecting the data, this will determine if the research explains the connection between musical theater programs and juveniles.
- The significance of this research has the potential to rehabilitate juveniles through musical theater regardless of the results.
- If this research is funded, it could mean that juveniles across the United States can become involved in musical theater.
- With funding, juveniles can express themselves through singing, dancing, and acting while also learning how these three arts can help reintegrate them back into society.

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