

Health care utilization barriers for youth post-detention

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AIM: Adolescents in the juvenile justice system are particularly susceptible to high rates of co-occurring health-risk behaviors, while at the same time lacking access to the healthcare system.

METHODS: A verbal questionnaire was administered from December 2009 to June 2010 to youth between the ages of 13-17 years old, who had previously been detained in an urban juvenile detention facility in California.

RESULTS: A total of 50 participants were enrolled in the study (40% female, 60% male, 16 years mean age, 80% Black, 18% Latino, 2% White). The mean time post-detention was 15 months, and the mean time in detention was 4 months. Our study provides evidence that adolescents exiting juvenile detention in the United States are interested in gaining access to healthcare providers but perceive lack of insurance and transportation as barriers to care. These barriers need to be addressed in order to facilitate access to healthcare services for this underserved and at-risk population of youth.

Journal:

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