

investment decisions that result in moving capital all over the world but eliminate jobs at home. Education is the key here. However, as Colvin notes, education must be more than what the term has traditionally meant—namely, formalized public schooling leading to a diploma. Education should be a comprehensive policy that includes families, schools, workplaces, and communities working to reduce the marginalization of young people. “For youth, who often feel the effects of social exclusion, social capital can be as simple as a positive relationship or affiliation with neighborhood and community associations. Thus, collective as well as personal efficacy can be achieved through volunteerism and political participation” (Colvin, 1991: 26).

Another national strategy that has attracted attention is positive youth development (PYD). For most of the twentieth century, adolescence was viewed as a period of turmoil. The deficit-based approach to adolescence focused on what could go wrong in a young person’s development. The individual treatment philosophy of the original juvenile court movement was based on this approach. Studies, however, noted that most youth succeed even in the presence of multiple risk factors and applied the label “resilience” to describe qualities that promote healthy development in the face of adversity. Youth advocates began to see adolescence as a process of positive opportunities for youth to learn, serve, and benefit from interactions with pro-social adults and communities.

The strength-based, resilience-oriented perspective on adolescence of PYD is “a comprehensive way of thinking about the development of adolescents and the factors that facilitate their successful transition from adolescence to adulthood” (Butts et al., 2010: 9):

The basic premise of PYD is that even the most disadvantaged young person can develop positively when connected to the right mix of opportunities, supports, positive roles, and relationships. Having a wide range of pro-social experiences during adolescence allows a young person to practice and demonstrate competency and to embrace his or her responsibilities and value to the larger community. The central purpose of PYD is action. Communities are encouraged to break down barriers to opportunity, and provide positive roles and relationships for all youth, including the most disadvantaged and disconnected. (2010)

PYD involves building connections, valuing community, and emphasizing learning/doing and attaching/belonging. A key concept involves changing the frame—looking at youth as resources rather than as victims of villains. People are beginning to question the rationale for interventions based solely on the punishment or individual treatment model:

- If delinquent behavior stems from a lack of integration and habilitation, why do correctional strategies focus on isolation of offenders?
- If the goal is to make offenders more responsible and accountable, why do we place them in positions (e.g., in most treatment programs) where others assume responsibility for their activities and behaviors?

3. *Family support programs*—Programs should be designed to address child abuse and other forms of domestic violence. Abused children are far more likely than nonabused children to become abusers themselves. Some recent research indicates that the majority of prison inmates, especially violent ones, experienced severe physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or some combination of all three.
4. *Reentry programs*—There should be careful planning for helping offenders after they have broken the law, rather than merely warehousing them in a correctional setting. The key ingredient in virtually all successful rehabilitation programs is improving skills—work skills, reading and verbal skills, problem-solving skills, and so on.

5. *Drug and alcohol abuse treatment programs*—The war on drugs targets the manufacturing and distribution (the supply side) of drugs, rather than the use (the demand side). The nation needs to emphasize treatment of addictions.

About the same time Currie wrote his proposals, sociologist Mark Colvin (1991) also wrote about the need for national strategies. He focuses on the concept of social reproduction—the process through which institutions (primarily families and schools) prepare children for productive roles in society. His main thesis is that these institutions have largely failed to establish the necessary social bonds to link young people to legitimate avenues to adulthood. The result is that many are becoming marginal to the country’s economic institutions. This has been caused by a failure to invest in human development and human capital. This failure has resulted in a growing crime rate and increasing expenditures for welfare and prisons. There is a need for a “national comprehensive program aimed at spurring economic growth, human development, and grass-roots, democratic participation in the major institutions affecting our lives and those of our children” (Colvin, 1991: 437).

Crime may be less likely to occur in communities with stronger social capital. Higher levels of community participation create social networks, consensus, and an environment of mutual support and trust.

Improving social capital through volunteerism and political activism could alter the social norms surrounding crime and a community’s reaction to crime. Civic engagement seems to mitigate those cultural norms that allow violence and crime to take root. Increasing youth participation in community activities could be an important tool in stemming the adverse effects of crime, as well as keeping individual youth more bonded to conventional social norms. (Butts et al., 2010: 27)

A comprehensive approach must aim at broader economic and human-development programs that affect large segments of the population (e.g., the Social Security system versus welfare for the poor). The country must do what other industrialized nations do and consider seriously the need to develop human capital for the continued overall well-being of society. In the United States, the system is so privatized that public or social needs are often undermined by private