A Decade of Progress: Promising Models for Children Found in the Turkish Juvenile Justice System

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A DECADE OF PROGRESS: PROMISING MODELS FOR CHILDREN IN THE TURKISH JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

By Brenda McKinney* & Lauren Salins**

ABSTRACT

Turkey has improved its approach to interacting with children in conflict with the law over the past decade, moving closer to a system that ensures its children the opportunity to strive for a better future. This Article focuses on two promising Turkish reforms that hold potential to improve juvenile justice systems internationally, namely: open model incarceration and Turkey’s approach to diversion. This Article demonstrates how a child-centered juvenile justice system can improve public safety and outcomes for youth. It also addresses potential challenges to each model and identifies broader issues that may require reform.

“Mankind is a single body and each nation a part of that body. We must never say ‘What does it matter to me if some part of the world is ailing?’ If there is such an illness, we must concern ourselves with it as though we were having that illness.”¹

- Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

I. INTRODUCTION

Modern Turkey is a country with a vibrant legacy and a promising future. As Turkey strives to increase its profile as a political leader in the Middle East and positions itself to join the European Union (“EU”),² the issue of how this country responds to children—especially those in

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¹ This quote is from the “father” of modern Turkey, Mustafa Atatürk, on the importance of public interest work and caring for vulnerable populations, such as youth. Paul Wolfowitz in an address to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Washington, D.C. (13 March 2002).


³ Children under the age of 18 make up the largest demographic group in Turkey, a nation of 79 million people. Children’s Day, celebrated each year on April 23, is a National holiday commemorating the establishment of the Turkish Grand National Assembly. The holiday is
conflict with the law—has become an important topic of national dialogue.\(^4\) Children are responsible for 15 percent of all crimes in Turkey and make up nearly 25 percent of suspects in crimes against property.\(^5\) Although Turkey signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (“CRC”)\(^6\) as early as 1990 and ratified it in 1994,\(^7\) the most significant changes affecting the youth population in Turkey have occurred more recently.\(^8\) Over the last decade in particular, Turkey has successfully improved its juvenile justice system to ensure that its children have the opportunities they deserve and to bring the system in conformity with international standards.\(^9\)

Accordingly, this Article focuses on Turkey’s development and innovation in the area of youth justice over the last ten years. More narrowly, this Article posits that Turkey’s implementation of open model incarceration and its distinctive diversionary approach serve as illustrations of the country’s improved commitment to juveniles and as promising models of juvenile justice for nations that aim to better promote their children’s best interests.\(^10\) Part II begins with an


\(^6\) *See infra* ILB (detailing the contents of the CRC).


\(^8\) This Article will address ways in which the system has improved. To evidence the changing attitude towards children’s issues and rights, however, in 2000, Turkey launched an anonymous hotline “Alo SOS” for people to anonymously make reports concerning children subjected to violence. Before this...

\(^9\) Ministry of Justice Report, Development of Work With Juveniles And Victims by Turkish Probation Service, http://www.justice.gov.tr/projects/projects.html (hereinafter Turkish Probation Service) (explaining that in 2005 alone, they amended the Turkish Penal Code, the Penal Procedures Code, the Law on the Enforcement of Penal and Security Measures, the Juvenile Code, in addition to introducing a new system for enforcement procedures.); See Say Yes – Quarterly Newsletter of UNICEF Turkey, Winter 2008 (explaining that the changes have resulted in a more rehabilitative than retributive system.)

\(^10\) This Article provides comparisons to various international legal systems—both in its footnotes and text—to provide a multi-national context. This Article relies on the American definition of
overview and history of the juvenile justice system in Turkey. This includes a description of the current process of adjudication. Part III then focuses on the two most promising aspects of Turkey’s juvenile justice model, open model incarceration and diversion. In isolating each model, this Part begins with a description of each juvenile justice practice, analyzes the models’ implications for youth, and then addresses common critiques of each model. Finally, Part IV provides practical recommendations for legal practitioners and policy-makers, with particular focus on tactics to overcome potential challenges posed by each model. Further, this Part also suggests proposals for improving Turkey’s overall juvenile justice system.

It should be noted that this Article does not endeavor to argue that Turkey’s juvenile justice system is wholly and consistently commendable. There remain elements inherent in Turkey’s juvenile justice system that demand reform to meet international protection standards, including the need to demonstrate a genuine and realistic commitment to protecting Kurdish youth.11 This Article does, however, highlight recent and exemplary changes to Turkey’s juvenile justice system that demonstrate progress, serve as illustrations of Turkey’s commitment to the best interests12 and rehabilitation13 of children, and preference as a measurement based on whichever model would maximize the best interest of the child and society, a primary and common standard in cases involving children. See, e.g., In re Daily, WL 368105 (2003) (“The best interests and welfare of the child is a primary consideration in all children’s cases, regardless of the court or parties that are involved.”); McDermott v. Dougherty, 869 A.2d 751 (2005) (explaining that the best interests of the child standard is a non-constitutional but widely recognized standard in child custody and other cases that concern minors).

While beyond the scope of this Article, the reader should be aware of this controversy and debate addressing the treatment of Kurdish children in Turkey. Juveniles accused of crimes in violation of the Anti-Terror Law and the Turkish Penal Code (TCK) in Turkey are tried as adults, irrespective of age. In other words, while the juvenile code addresses persons under 18 in Turkey, those children charged with terrorist activities fall under the jurisdiction of the Anti-Terror Law, not the juvenile court. Most youth arrested under the Anti-Terror Law are of Kurdish ethnicity and are detained or arrested while participating in demonstrations or rallies in southeastern and eastern Anatolia. Some of them face prison sentences of up to 25 years for throwing stones at security forces; see also Omer Taspinar, Turkey’s Kurdish Predicament, Today’s Zaman (Apr. 22, 2012), available at http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist-278257--turkeys-kurdish-predicament.html.

Used more broadly here, it should be noted that the “best interests” of the child is the preeminent standard for a variety of family law issues, including adoption, placements, and child custody determinations in the United States. See U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Determining the Best Interests of the Child: Summary of State Laws, (March 2010), available at http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/best_interest.cfm

11 See BLACK’S LAW DICTIONARY 1, 594 (Bryan A. Garner, ed., 2002) (defining rehabilitation in criminal law as the “process of seeking to improve a criminal’s character and outlook so that he or she can function in society without committing other crimes.”); Experts generally recognize three models that inspire global juvenile courts’ systems: 1) the Welfare Model, 2) the Justice Model, and 3) the Restorative (Justice) Model; Turkey’s current system is moving towards the latter, which includes more rehabilitative practices. See, e.g. Greg Mantle, et al., Restorative
provide progressive models for countries to consider in reforming their own juvenile justice systems.

II. BACKGROUND: TURKEY’S JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Turkey has not always been at the forefront of youth justice. In fact, the country did not adopt a separate justice system for youth until the late 1980s. Prior to this division, children in conflict with the law were processed through the adult criminal system, without courts accounting for any developmental differences between children and adults. Accordingly, this section details the evolution of Turkey’s juvenile justice system.

A. From the Beginning: Early Motivations for the Protection of Children

Modern Turkey has been a country for little less than a century. After Mustafa Kemal Atatürk formed the secular Turkish Republic in 1923, his government aimed to implement social and political reforms to modernize the former Ottoman Empire. Perhaps surprisingly, the restructuring of Turkey’s child welfare system was among primary reforms. The republican government’s motivation for protecting children was twofold: first, as a budding state, Turkey’s leaders saw political value in complying with the international standards for social

Justice and Three Individual Theories of Crime, INTERNET J. OF CRIM. (2005), available at http://www.internetjournalofcriminology.com/Mantle,%20Fox%20&%20Dhami%20-Restorative%20Justice.pdf (stating that the promotion of the rehabilitation of juveniles falls under a human rights framework where respecting the human dignity of each and every citizen, including children requires advocacy and promoting individuals to fulfill their human potential).


15 See Interview with Zeynep Esmez, Social Worker with the Youth Re-Autonomy Foundation of Turkey (TCYOV), Istanbul, Turkey (Mar. 6, 2012); see also Fréderike Geerdink, The Anger of the Juvenile Judge, WORDT VERWOLGD (Nov. 12, 2008), available at http://www.journalistinturkey.com/stories/human-rights/the-anger-of-the-juvenile-judge_329/ (noting that before the implementation of a juvenile justice system, judges generally had to sentence children for small offenses like stealing candy).

16 Atatürk is seen as the “George Washington” of Turkey. See History, Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938), BBC.COM, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/ataturk_kemal.shtml (last visited Apr. 16, 2012). See ANDREW MANGO, ATATURK: THE BIOGRAPHY OF THE FOUNDER OF MODERN TURKEY, PREFACE (1999) (noting that Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, is generally seen as a radical modernizer and “westernizer” and stating that he is arguably one of the most important statesman of the twentieth century).

justice, which included children’s welfare; and second, many leaders saw children as a vehicle for modernization and change. This impetus was accelerated after World War II, when the vulnerability of the many displaced and homeless children threatened to showcase “the possibility of danger, of futures not attained.” However, even with this political attention and early, vocal desire to protect juveniles from poverty, homelessness, and crime, the country did not witness a formalized commitment to protecting youth until much later in the 20th century.

B. Turkey’s Adoption of the Juvenile Court Law and the CRC

The first recognized outward display of progress in the area of juvenile protection was the adoption of the Juvenile Court Law in 1979, which established a separate juvenile justice system in Turkey. While the Law was ratified in 1979, it did not come into force until 1982 or see implementation until 1987. Further, despite progress in recognizing a distinct juvenile justice system, the Juvenile Court Law was ultimately unsuccessful because it resulted in the establishment of a single juvenile court yet lacked the legal or social infrastructure to support it.

The next major development in Turkey’s juvenile justice system came in 1994 when Turkey ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (“CRC”). This treaty outlined rights and

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18 One indication of Turkey’s desire to comply with national standards of law and policy is its entry into the League of Nations, the precursor to the United Nations, in 1923. See Yücel Güçlü, Turkey’s Entrance into the League of Nations, 39 MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES 186, 186 (Jan. 2003) (providing a more thorough history of Turkey’s entry into the League of Nations); see also Michelle Domke, Turkey’s Human Rights Record Impedes European Integration, THE HUMAN RIGHTS BRIEF (1997), available at http://www.wcl.american.edu/hrbrief/v4i3/turkey43.htm (stating that the Turkish republic based its secular legal code on other European civil code systems).
19 See Libal, supra note 23, at 3, 4 (“The generative process of growing up [through childhood] was figuratively associated with the development of the Turkish nation-state. In the child resided the possibility of reform, of regeneration, of rebirth for the state and society”).
20 Id. at 4. (noting that writings of republican leaders indicated a dual image of the child in the early Turkish republic: a source of national strength and a threat of weakness due to the socioeconomic reality of juveniles after the war).
21 Programs that officials discussed included creating financial allowances for low-income families, creating and managing more orphanages, enacting labor reform laws, and creating a juvenile justice system. Id. at 12-13.
22 Id.
24 The CRC is the first legally binding international instrument to grant children a broad range of human rights. It sets out rights and standards granted to all children. General Assembly,
provisions for children, thereby urging Turkey to commit to a separate and sustainable youth justice system. While the CRC displays recognition for rehabilitation and diversion—over punishment and incarceration—for youth, a foreshadow to more recent advancements, scholars agree that actual reform did not take place until Turkey adopted the Juvenile Protection Law in 2005.

C. Real Progress: The Juvenile Protection Law of 2005

The Juvenile Protection Law, established in July 2005, replaced the Juvenile Court Law and laid the foundation for development and greater protection of children’s rights in Turkey. For the first time in Turkey’s history, this Law set out the rights of the accused child and delineated details of the adjudicatory process. The Juvenile Protection Law passed in tandem with reforms to the Turkish Penal Code and led to further gains for youth rights, including: raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility from 11 to 12, adding a provision of free legal assistance, introducing a probation system as an alternative to depriving a youth their liberty, increasing remission of sentences for children, encouraging more sensitive treatment of child victims, increasing protection for child victims, creating more juvenile courts, and adding a provision of protection for children generally by civil society.

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28 Additional fundamental principles outlined by the CRC include: a) safeguarding the interest and well-being of juveniles; b) ensuring the participation of the juvenile and his/her family in the process via keeping them informed; c) following a procedure that is based on human rights, fair, effective and swift; d) employing special care appropriate to the situation of the juvenile throughout the investigation or prosecution process; and e) penalty of imprisonment and measures that restrict liberty shall be the last resort for juveniles.
29 In 2005 the government also introduced special provisions to the Law on the Enforcement of Penalties and Security Measures. Id. at 7.
30 Id. at 5.
31 In 2005 the government also introduced special provisions to the Law on the Enforcement of Penalties and Security Measures. Id. at 7.
i. Progressive Language in the Juvenile Protection Act

While the changes in the Juvenile Protection Law more appropriately accounted for the rights of Turkish juveniles in criminal proceedings, the progressive language used in the Law itself is also significant. Article 1(1) of the Juvenile Protection Law reads:

\[ T \]he purpose of this Law is to regulate the procedures and principles with regard to protecting juveniles who are in need of protection or who are pushed to crime, and ensuring their rights and well-being.\[34\]

Depicting children as victims of circumstance who are pushed to crime—as opposed to viewing them as delinquent and uncontrollable young individuals—helped dispel the notion that severe punishment for youth delinquency will remedy the underlying causes of their behavior. Further, viewing children as pushed to crime more accurately reflects the sobering reality surrounding the quality of life for many juveniles in Turkey and therefore more directly addresses their needs.

According to UNICEF, 80,000 children in Turkey currently live on the streets and have limited access to healthcare, education, and social welfare programs. Despite impressive economic progress in the past decade and the enactment of earlier juvenile justice reforms, Turkey's youth still face poverty, homelessness, and social exclusion at staggering rates. Further, almost 18,000 children live in institutions; half of who are “economic orphans,” meaning their parents are alive but cannot financially support them. The Juvenile Protection Law was progressive in that it more appropriately addressed the realities of these children and of youth involved in the criminal system, many of whom come from poor or excluded urban communities, including migrant communities.\[38\]

\[33\] See Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20 (noting that the progressive language of the Juvenile Protection Law had contributed to more appropriate juvenile proceedings. In addition to incorporating the notion of juveniles “pushed to crime” into the language of the law, the Juvenile Protection Law also makes the first real distinction between juveniles that are accused from juveniles that are convicted).


\[36\] As a result of these socioeconomic realities, juveniles often suffer illness at a higher rate than children in other countries. Progress for Children, supra note 44.

\[37\] Id.

\[38\] See, e.g., Gülümser Gültekin Akduman, Barış Akduman, & Gürol Cantürk, Investigation of Some Personal and Familial Characteristics of Juvenile Delinquency, TURKISH ARCHIVES OF PEDIATRICS 42 (2007); Unite for Children, Justice for Children, UNICEF (last visited May 1,
In addition to socioeconomic circumstances, the concept of “pushed to crime” reflects the highly researched idea that juveniles’ brains are less developed than the brains of adults, leading children to experience higher instances of poor decision-making, peer pressure, misdirected aggression, irresponsibility, and insufficient impulse control. These salient characteristics mean that it is difficult, even for expert psychologists, to differentiate between juvenile delinquency resulting from transient immaturity and crimes that reflect individuals of “irreparable corruption.” Thus, juveniles are additionally pushed to crime by the impulsive nature of their age as opposed to underlying elements of their personal character.

Since the implementation of the Juvenile Protection Law, Turkey’s juvenile justice system has rapidly expanded and improved. While only one juvenile court existed in the country in 1989, the government established 83 courts in 25 different provinces by 2009. Additionally, Turkey continued to further display its commitment and development to juvenile justice through its various United Nations-sponsored reforms, including the Country Program Action Plan (“CPAP”). CPAP involves UNICEF and the Turkish government partnering to promote child welfare through various education, healthcare, and juvenile justice reforms. Example initiatives include enhanced training for child court prosecutors and judges in addition to active promotion of inter-agency coordination within the juvenile justice system.

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41 Turkey has 81 provinces in total. *UNICEF 08*, supra note 31, at 5.
42 While beyond the scope of this Article, it should be mentioned that while recent efforts on behalf of the Turkish state to improve the system have been encouraged by response to Turkey’s collaboration with UNICEF, they have additionally been motivated by efforts to qualify for entry into the European Union. Interview with Zeynep Eşmez, *supra* note 20.
43 See *Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP)*, UNICEF (last visited Apr. 26, 2012), available at http://www.unicef.org/turkey/gl/gl1.html#pcp (“The CPAP runs in five-year cycles and have so far included the Good Governance, Protection and Justice for Children in Turkey (2005), Children First (2008), and Justice For Children (2013). The latter is a project currently implemented by Council of Europe in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, as a follow up to two previous assessments and with the financial support of EU. Furthermore, in order to ensure more effective implementation of these plans, a series of workshops and trainings were conducted with child court judges, prosecutors and social workers between 2005-2008.”).
44 A coordination strategy has been developed within the framework of the “Children First: Modeling Child Protection Mechanisms at Provincial Level” Project. See *JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN, PROJECT FICHE 1*, available at http://www.justice.gov.tr/projects/94.pdf (explaining the goals of current “Justice for Children” project, including a focus on the existing situation of juvenile justice system in Turkey. Furthermore, techniques of awareness are described in the following sections: 2.1.1: An international symposium on juvenile justice is conducted; 2.1.2: Printed and visual materials are developed to share the results of the symposium and raise
D. The Turkish Juvenile Justice System Today

1. Jurisdiction and Pre-Adjudication

In Turkey, juveniles between the ages of 12 and 18 are subject to adjudication in the juvenile justice system. Children under the age of 12 are not subject to penal proceedings. Instead, these children are accommodated by the social service system or placed in youth homes. In the case of children between the ages of 12 and 15, the first step in the adjudication process is to transfer the youth’s case to a forensic specialist to determine whether the child understood the criminal nature of his or her activity and its consequences. If the specialist answers in the affirmative, determining that the juvenile is “capable of understanding the integral meaning of [his or her] act,” the government will then prosecute the child. If the youth is not prosecuted, the
government will generally place the child within the social service system.  

Finally, juveniles between the ages of 15 and 18 are held criminally accountable for their acts. Unlike in the United States, however, juveniles are rarely transferred to adult court for trial and sentencing. Youth are instead adjudicated in the juvenile system and receive a reduced sentence compared to what an adult would receive for a similar crime. One exception to this framework, however, is if a child is charged with the crime of terrorism. In such a case, he or she will be tried in the adult criminal justice system and receive an adult sentence if convicted. Additionally, youth who commit crimes jointly with adults are held jointly and severally liable under the regular penal code.

i. Apprehension and Investigation

In Turkey, public prosecutors, not the police, carry out all investigations related to alleged youth offending. When a police

Sharing Legal Advocacy and Strategies,” Meeting at Legal Assistance Foundation, Chicago, IL (Apr. 12, 2012); Francis Bailleau & Dominique de Fraene, The Criminalization of Minors and its Evolution: The Interplay of Sanctions (Spain, Turkey, Portugal, England/Wales), CRIMPREV (May 1, 2009); It is also notable that in practice, the vast majority of adolescents between the ages of 12 and 15 are “judagable,” so some scholars critique this practice, thinking that it unnecessarily delays and lengthens the judgment process.  

51 Interview with Zeynep Emez, supra note 20.  
52 Id.; Geerdink, supra note 20.  
53 See Richard E. Redding, Juvenile Transfer Laws: An Effective Deterrent to Delinquency?, U.S. DEP’T OF JUST., JUV. JUST. BULLETIN (Jun. 2010), available at https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/220595.pdf (explaining that in the 1980’s, many states enacted various transfer mechanisms that would transfer juveniles to adult court jurisdiction. These policies came about as a result of a “tough on crime” mentality that swept the nation in the 1980s. These reforms “lowered the minimum age for transfer, increased the number of transfer-eligible offenses, or expanded prosecutorial discretion and reduced judicial discretion in transfer decision-making.” Many states still require juveniles to transfer to the adult criminal justice system based on the aforementioned factors).  
54 Interview with Zeynep Emez, supra note 20.  
55 Id. See infra notes 97-101 and accompanying text (describing juvenile sentencing procedures).  
56 See Ayse Karabat, Experts Call on Gov’t to Fix Juvenile Justice System, TODAY’S ZAMAN, Feb. 3, 2010 (“In 2006 amendments to Article 9 of the Anti-Terror Law allowed minors between the ages of 16 and 18 to be tried as adults in high criminal courts. Another amendment to Article 13 of the Anti-Terror Law made it impossible for these children’s sentences to be postponed or commuted to another form of punishment). See infra notes 352-356 and accompanying text (describing the ongoing evolution of Turkey’s anti-terror laws in relation to its effect on juveniles).  
57 Some juveniles face up to 25 years in an adult prison for seemingly minor infractions, such as stone-throwing. Id.  
58 See Juvenile Protection Law, supra note 46, at art.17 (stating that in the case of juveniles who commit crimes with adults, “the investigation and prosecution shall be carried out separately” and “the joint cases shall be administered and general courts.”).  
59 UNICEF08, supra note 31, at 8. But see PROFESSOR FERIDUN YENISEY, AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY IN TERMS OF COMPARATIVE LAW AND ALTERNATIVE SANCTIONS FOR
officer arrests a child, the officer must immediately inform the Office of the Prosecutor as to the offender’s identity and the crime in order to enable the court to make a decision for temporary injunction. Thus, police may establish the identity of a child, but they hold no authority to take evidence from them. The Chief Prosecutor or an assigned public prosecutor will conduct an investigation and can issue orders for the police to assist in the process. Because Turkish law mandates that the government may only question a child under oath if an attorney is present, it is at this stage that the court also appoints a public attorney for each juvenile suspect who has not retained private counsel, even if the child does not request one. Additionally, parents or guardians may be present during the initial examination.

Juveniles who have been apprehended and are awaiting their sentence will often face detention in a pretrial detention facility. The occurrence of pretrial juvenile detention in Turkey is significantly greater than that of post-adjudicative incarceration. In January 2011, 2,168 delinquent juveniles throughout Turkey experienced a deprivation of liberty in a corrections setting, 90 percent of whom were in pretrial detention centers. There are three detention facilities in Turkey dedicated entirely to housing accused but not-yet-convicted juveniles. Additionally, children can be held in pretrial detention in a separate wing of an adult detention center. Pretrial detention centers also house


60 Interview with Zeynep Emez, supra note 20. This can only occur once the police officer determines that the juvenile falls within the 12-18 age range of culpability. Id.
61 Police are also required to notify the child’s parents or guardian, the Social Services and Child Protection Agency (SHÇEK), and the local bar association when they begin to investigate a case. Justice for Children, supra note 50.
62 Juvenile Protection Law, supra note 46, at art. 15 (“Investigations related to juveniles pushed to crime shall be carried out personally by the Public prosecutor assigned at the juvenile bureau.”); AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY, supra note 75, at 12-13.
63 Justice for Children, supra note 50.
64 Juvenile Protection Law, supra note 46, at art. 22. This law notes that in addition to the presence of the family, the court will allow an assigned-social worker to remain present for the duration of the juvenile’s preliminary examination or hearing. Id.
65 UNICEF ‘08, supra note 31, at 5.
66 Justice for Children, supra note 50
67 Id. Furthermore, juveniles face pre-trial detention for “unnecessarily” long lengths of time. See id. (stating the average duration of pre-trial detention was 414 days, but this was limited to three years in total).
68 Id.
69 See UNICEF ‘08, supra note 31, at 5. It is notable that the practice of accommodating juveniles with adult detainees counters the recommendations of the CRC, which state that juveniles must be housed independently of adults. Justice for Children, supra note 50. Generally, in these adult institutions where many children face detention, “there is a high rotation of personnel and the personnel are not specifically dedicated to working solely for the care and protection of children.”
juveniles that escaped from a post-trial prison facility, although for a limited period of time only.\textsuperscript{70}

\section*{2. The Adjudication Process}

The juvenile justice adjudication process in Turkey has evolved in the past decade into a system that respects and reflects the attitude that juveniles are different than their adult counterparts and that they require specialized criminal proceedings.\textsuperscript{71} Although many Turkish scholars contend that flaws still exist in this adjudication process,\textsuperscript{72} the overall structure accounts for age-specific differences and demands competency in juvenile development.\textsuperscript{73}

One example of these youth-specific practices can be found in the juvenile specialized training court prosecutors are required to receive on topics relating to adolescent development and mental health\textsuperscript{74} while judges also undergo highly specialized instruction.\textsuperscript{75} These juvenile court judges also enter an early judicial professional track after completing their law degree and specialize in juvenile law specifically.\textsuperscript{76} Juvenile judges generally serve in the juvenile court system for the duration of their tenure.\textsuperscript{77}

In addition to specialized prosecutors and judges, the court must assign a social worker to each child entering the juvenile justice system.\textsuperscript{78} In fact, the Juvenile Protection Law allows social workers to assess mental health capacities and possibly redirect the child to social

\textsuperscript{70} Id. The maximum holding time in a detention facility before returning the juvenile to the open model prison in six months. Interview with Zeynep Emek, supra note 20.

\textsuperscript{71} Id.

\textsuperscript{72} Id; Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, Kocaeli University School of Health, in Kocaeli, Turkey (Mar. 9, 2012).

\textsuperscript{73} Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.

\textsuperscript{74} See Juvenile Protection Law, supra note 46, at art. 32 (“Judges and Public prosecutors to be assigned at the courts, and the social workers and probation officers appointed at probation and assistance centre directorates shall be provided with training on subjects such as juvenile law, social service, child development and psychology in line with the principles set forth by the Ministry of Justice during candidateship periods.”); see also AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY, supra note 75, at 30-31 (stating that during the prosecutorial investigation of the juvenile, the social examination must account for information surrounding the child’s social, spiritual, and mental development, and the child’s education or training level must be noted).

\textsuperscript{75} Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.

\textsuperscript{76} Metin Uracin, Istanbul Barosu, Informal Meeting with the Istanbul Bar Association and German Law Students regarding the Turkish Legal Profession, in Istanbul, Turkey (Mar. 8, 2010).

\textsuperscript{77} Id.

\textsuperscript{78} See Juvenile Protection Law, supra note 47, at art. 15 (“During interrogation and other procedures related to the juvenile, the juvenile may be accompanied by a social worker.”). The Juvenile Protection Law defines the term “social” worker as such: members of the profession graduated from institutions that provide education in the fields of psychological consulting and guidance, psychology, and social services. Id. at 3(e).
services if they deem them unfit to stand trial. Moreover, a social worker can recommend various forms of diversion as alternatives to detention, including requesting court-mandated treatment programs.

The Juvenile Protection Law guides juvenile sentencing guidelines in Turkey. The judge bases his or her sentence on the corresponding adult sentence for a particular crime, then reduces the sentence for juveniles by one third if the offender is between 15 and 18, and by one half if the offender is between the ages of 12 and 15. Further, for juveniles aged 15 to 18 years, the maximum sentence is no more than 18 to 24 years of imprisonment. For those aged 12 to 15 years, the maximum sentence is 12 to 15 years.

3. Post-Adjudication

The incidence of incarceration in juvenile proceedings is not nearly as high as that in many other countries. The number of juveniles sentenced to juvenile facilities reached 706 in 1998 and dropped to only 78 in 2006. By contrast, the United States incarcerated nearly 100,000 youth in 2008. In 2011, Turkey maintained a juvenile incarceration rate of 11 prisoners per 100,000 juveniles, which is significantly less than the rate of juvenile incarceration in many other countries.

79 Id.; Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
80 See Juvenile Protection Law, supra note 47, at art. 34 (detailing the duties of court-appointed social workers to also include: a) carry[ing] out enquiries, immediately, about the juvenile with which they are assigned, to submit the reports they prepare to the assignor authorities, b) be[ing] present next to the juvenile during interrogation or cross-examination, and c) carry[ing] out the other duties assigned by the courts and juvenile judges under this Law).
81 Id.
82 Id.
83 Id.; AGE OF CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY, supra note 76, at 30-31
84 Id. When a youth is sentenced for more than one offense, sentences are always consecutive. UNICEF 08, supra note 31, at 21-22. While this can lead to life imprisonment for juveniles who are found guilty of multiple offenses—which some call a “de facto” life sentence—it is notable that Turkey does prohibit the death penalty for children. In fact, the country completely banned capital punishment for all of its citizens in 2002. Turkey Abolishes Death Penalty, CNN WORLD (Aug. 3, 2002).
85 This number was calculated based on statistics provided by the International Centre for Prison Studies. In 2011, the total number of prisoners (adult and juvenile) was 132,369. International
Despite an increase in juvenile crime rates in Turkey over the past decade, the decline in the number of incarcerated children is largely attributed to government efforts to divert juveniles from prison.\textsuperscript{88}

In fact, the three juvenile prisons in Turkey—located in Ankara, Izmir and Elazig\textsuperscript{89}—rarely reach capacity.\textsuperscript{90} All three juvenile-specific facilities are “open model” facilities\textsuperscript{91} and can house up 400 juveniles in total.\textsuperscript{92} Youth can be detained until the age of 21.\textsuperscript{93} Those who reach this age without completing his or her sentence will be transferred to an adult prison to serve the remainder of the sentence.\textsuperscript{94}

### III. Open Model Prisons

It is important to recognize that not all adjudicated youth in Turkey are incarcerated.\textsuperscript{95} They often receive less severe sanctions, including restitution to the victim, community service, or probation.\textsuperscript{96} Those children that commit more serious offenses, on the other hand, are generally sentenced to a term of confinement in an open model facility, which varies from traditional penal institutions in several ways.\textsuperscript{97} This Part will discuss the intricacies of the “open” prison model and demonstrates that the use of these facilities embodies a best practice related to juvenile incarceration. Additionally, this Part also notes challenges to the use of open model incarceration, including the fact that Kurdish children are generally not welcomed into the open model.
prison system and instead serve long sentences in closed adult institutions.\(^98\)

1. Description of Open Model Prisons

In contrast to the more “typical” juvenile correctional facilities found across the globe,\(^99\) there are no wire fences surrounding Turkey’s open model prisons.\(^100\) In fact, there is no containment of any type guarding the perimeters of these facilities.\(^101\) In fact, the juveniles held at these facilities could technically—albeit unlawfully—enter and exit open model prisons as they please.\(^102\) Yet these “inmates” very rarely “go on the run” or leave without permission.\(^103\)

i. Life in an Open Model Prison

During the day, juveniles in open model prisons attend school, training sessions, or jobs within the community.\(^104\) Children that exit the prison grounds during the day must return to their rooms, which generally resemble a dormitory, and report to administrative staff upon their return.\(^105\) If a juvenile does not check in by the evening or if officials discover him or her running away, the child is sentenced to six months in one of Turkey’s pretrial closed detention centers.\(^106\) After completing this punishment, the juvenile will resume carrying out his or her original sentence in the open model prison.\(^107\) In addition to being able to work or go to school within the host community, children sentenced to open model prisons are also granted the opportunity to return home to visit their families for an afternoon or weekend during their sentenced time, with written permission from the prison.\(^108\)

\(^98\) See infra notes 352-356 and accompanying text (describing Turkey’s anti-terror laws that have contributed to ongoing legal discrimination against Kurdish youth).

\(^99\) See, e.g., States Closing Youth Prisons, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS (Jun. 6, 2010) (noting that juveniles in the United States are often “treated” in “razor-wire ringed” institutions); Kids Behind Bars, supra note 111 (explaining that youth in Georgia can face incarceration in a remote and isolated “prison school” that is protected by a chain-link fence).

\(^100\) See, e.g., Kids Behind Bars, supra note 111 (stating in a visit to Turkey’s juvenile prison that it lacks bars, fences or locks and explaining that this is one of the most liberal prisons in the world with lowest recidivism rates in the world.)

\(^101\) Id.

\(^102\) Id.

\(^103\) The narrator of Kids Behind Bars notes that many children do not escape these open model facilities in Turkey because the conditions of these facilities are often better than the conditions the children face at their homes. Id.

\(^104\) Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.

\(^105\) Id.

\(^106\) Justice for Children, supra note 50.

\(^107\) Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.

\(^108\) Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
The daily routine of a youth at an open model prison resembles that which one might find at a typical boarding school in the United States far more than it would resemble a prison. As stated above, open model prisons require incarcerated youth to be actively involved in their own development by way of attending school, training programs, or working within the community five full days each week. The educational institutions at each prison employ extensive faculty, often recruiting instructors from Turkey’s Public Education Centers and the Ministry of Health.

There are a broad array of classroom and training opportunities available to youth at open model prisons. Available educational programs include first and second grade literacy courses, supportive courses for elementary education, high school education, computer operation courses, garden design courses, and business courses. The training courses offered at these institutions are also diverse in scope and include programs on barbering, ceramics, copper design, and tourism. Further, students that have completed high school may—with permission from prison administrators—work within the community. As juveniles prepare to complete their sentences, prison administrators help them find permanent job placements near the facility or the youths’ hometowns. These administrators can also offer juveniles university exam preparation.

In addition to receiving classroom, training, and work experience, Turkey’s open model prisons also allow and encourage

109 Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
110 Soner Mehmet Ozdemir, An Examination of the Educational Programs Held for Juvenile Delinquents in Turkey, BUS. LIBRARY (Spring 2010), available at http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3673/is_3_130/ai_n52943089/pg_2/?tag=content;coll1
111 Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
112 Ozdemir, supra note 125, at 2.
113 Id.
114 Nisrine Abiad & Farkhanda Zia Mansoor, Criminal Law and the Rights of the Child in Muslim States: a Comparative and Analytical Perspective 1, 291 (2010) (“According to new regulations, children older than 15 years of age for whom it is impossible to attend formal education are guided towards an appropriate occupation taking into consideration their wishes, abilities as well as the availability of vocational training centres and employment opportunities in their future place of residence.”).
115 Furthermore, the availability of post-educational programs, such as employment opportunities, to incarcerated juveniles has been commended by other nations. See, e.g., U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT, 2007 REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES (Mar. 11, 2008), available at http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100589.htm (explaining alternative educational solutions like training systems that provide work for young boys. Participants of these programs are placed in enterprises such as auto repair shops, where they can earn wages and gain practical experience and training. This program also introduces these youth to opportunities for future employment in the fields within which they are placed and provides for them a network of role models. The authors of this report advocate for such educational solutions)
116 Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
117 Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
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children to participate in extracurricular activities. According to the Youth Re-Autonomy Foundation of Turkey (“TCYOV”), juvenile prison administrators encourage youth to leave their living quarters after they complete school for the day to participate in the variety of social opportunities available on the prison “campus”. These activities range from sports leagues and art classes to literature clubs, chess groups, and cinema projects. Furthermore, these extracurricular opportunities capitalize on instruction of real-world skills, including health and hygiene workshops as well as HIV/AIDS information sessions.

2. An Assessment of Open Model Prisons

The open model prison structure has been called the best model of juvenile incarceration in the world, and rightfully so. The set-up of these prisons allows for juveniles to experience more successful rehabilitation than they might otherwise receive in closed facilities. Accordingly, statistics indicate that children encountering these Turkish open model institutions recidivate less than their foreign counterparts.


118 Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.

119 BEST PRACTICES, supra note 133, at 13; Ozdemir, supra note 125, at 2.

120 Ozdemir, supra note 125, at 2.

121 Kids Behind Bars, supra note 111.

122 See infra notes 141-181 and accompanying text (explaining that open model prisons lead to better educated and more socialized children, and allows juveniles to remain in better contact with their families, all of which leads to better rehabilitated youth); see also United Nations General Assembly, United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty: Resolution/Adopted by the General Assembly (Dec. 14, 1990), available at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3b00f18628.html [hereinafter “GA Resolution”] (advocating for the establishment of open model prisons).

For instance, in Illinois, a U.S. state that primarily employs closed-model approach to juvenile correctional facilities, the recidivism rate was as high as 50 percent in 2009. By contrast, the recidivism rate for youth in Turkey was only 35 percent that same year.

This Article posits that the reasons for the open model prison system’s ability to effectively rehabilitate youth are tri-fold, in that this system of incarceration leads to: 1) better educated juveniles, 2) more socialized juveniles, and 3) the facilitation of familial or community relationships. These factors are examined more closely in the paragraphs below.

i. Quality Education

One element of open model prisons that leads to successful rehabilitation of juveniles is a commitment to providing a quality education through a rigorous, boarding school-like education regime. Open model prisons not only offer students a quality, daily educational opportunities within the prison and host communities, but also address the particularized needs of youth by providing extensive training and professional opportunities. By contrast, there are significant limitations to the successful education of youth in closed prisons. Closed facilities cannot as wholly draw on the resources of the community and often do not structure daily routines around school. In some countries, closed prisons consistently fail to provide basic education services and sufficient instructional time.

In adopting open model incarceration, Turkey drew upon the importance of education in its Juvenile Protection Law, which mandates that all juveniles receive a quality education. In fact, this law highlights the importance of educating juveniles over ten times
throughout its text.\textsuperscript{131} Notably, one of the core principles of the Juvenile Protection Law is to “support[] the juvenile in developing his/her personality, social responsibility, and education as appropriate for his/her age and development . . .”\textsuperscript{132} Turkey supports this vision by structuring its prisons in such a way as to ensure the education of all committed youth.\textsuperscript{133}

Evidencing the success of his model, experts throughout the country have affirmed the quality of education in Turkey’s open model prisons. In addition to positive descriptions of juvenile prison education by TCYOV\textsuperscript{134} and Dr. Hakan Acar, Department Head of Social Services at Koaceli University,\textsuperscript{135} two Turkish authors published an extensive report commending the instruction provided by these facilities.\textsuperscript{136} These authors distributed questionnaires and interviewed young men living at the open model prison in Ankara.\textsuperscript{137} They found that the vast majority of youth attending elementary education and high school supplementary courses rated their education as “highly satisfactory” and maintained extremely positive attitudes toward the sufficie ncy of their training courses.\textsuperscript{138}

The authors of this report emphasized that through education, juveniles “are given a chance for resocialization, are trained for solving . . . problems without violence, and are [aided] . . . with find[ing] a job after being released from such facilities.”\textsuperscript{139} The authors of this study concluded that considering the rehabilitative goals of correctional centers, education in Turkey’s open model prison succeeds in maintaining the “physical and psychological well-being of the prisoners” and “are quite important for [committed] individuals.”\textsuperscript{140}

A quality education is significant because additional studies show a direct correlation between the education and the rehabilitation of

\textsuperscript{131} Id. at arts. 4-h, 5-a, 5-b, 6, 7, 23-d, 30, 38-a, 38-b, 38-d, 45-a, 45-b, 45-d.
\textsuperscript{132} Id. at art. 4-h.
\textsuperscript{133} See supra notes 124-131 and accompanying text (illustrating the extensive and particularized educational and training programs offered in Turkey’s open model prisons).
\textsuperscript{134} Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
\textsuperscript{135} Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
\textsuperscript{136} Ozdemir, supra note 125.
\textsuperscript{137} Id. at 3.
\textsuperscript{138} Id. Specifically, one juvenile stated: I was illiterate before, because I stopped going to school. But I could learn how to read and write thanks to the literacy courses run in the prison. Now I can read newspapers and write letters to my friends and family. Moreover, I suppose that I will be able to manage myself better thanks to the anger management courses. Id. at 4.
\textsuperscript{139} Id. at 5. It is notable, however, that despite the author’s discovery of data proving that education provided in this open model prison increases post-release career prospects, juveniles living in the facility did not think that their education would help them find a job after their release.
\textsuperscript{140} Id.
One theory behind this phenomenon is that education imparts juveniles with a stronger sense of accountability and awareness, thus contributing to behavioral reform. According to one theorist, education “nurtures pro-social norms and supports rule-abiding behavior.” Accordingly, this author posits that education within prison has a “normalizing” effect on the child in the sense of positively recalibrating his or her standard of behavior, thus reducing that child’s likelihood of recidivism. Further, students attending school or training programs in a correctional setting have an increased likelihood of continuing their education or finding a training position upon release. In turn, educated juveniles face a likelier possibility of exiting the cycle of poverty and insufficient education, which are two contributors to criminal behavior.

_ii. Social Opportunities through Healthy Mediums_

In closed prisons, juveniles remain in their cells—or worse, end up in solitary confinement—for a majority of the day. By contrast, open model prisons allow juveniles to positively interact with other adjudicated youth on a daily basis. In addition to attending school with peers, juveniles in Turkey’s open model prisons also have the opportunity to form relationships with each other through extracurricular programs. These activities enforce teamwork,
socialization, and creativity, all of which are valuable with regards to behavioral development and future career-related success.\textsuperscript{149} Notably, incarcerated youth interviewed at Ankara’s open model juvenile facility expressed the belief that these social opportunities will ultimately improve their lives, help them develop personally and socially, and contribute to success in future employment.\textsuperscript{150}

Through these recreational opportunities, open model prisons encourage children to build healthy relationships, which can reinforce good behavior and allow them to better appreciate social responsibilities.\textsuperscript{151} Many juveniles that enter into the criminal system often lack meaningful or healthy relationships in their lives.\textsuperscript{152} By forming bonds with other children, juveniles learn the elements of working companionships, and these lessons allow incarcerated youth to more efficiently reform behavioral and social deficiencies.\textsuperscript{153} Accordingly, many professionals involved in the juvenile justice system advocate for sport and recreation opportunities in tandem with treatment programs as part of a structured rehabilitation regime.\textsuperscript{154}

\section*{iii. Family Ties}

Many leading experts in the field of juvenile justice posit that the maintenance of family ties throughout the adjudication and post-adjudication process is critical to the rehabilitation of juveniles.\textsuperscript{155} By allowing committed youth to return to their homes with written permission once a month, open model prisons in Turkey allow

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{149} See U.S. DEP’T OF JUSTICE, GANG SUPPRESSION AND INTERVENTION: COMMUNITY MODELS 22 (Oct. 1994), available at https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/gangcorr.pdf (“Team sports and social activities may be important especially . . . when they facilitate relationships . . .”).
\item \textsuperscript{150} Ozdemir, supra note 125, at 5.
\item \textsuperscript{151} See Positive Behavior Support Youth At-Risk and Involved in Juvenile Corrections, POSITIVE BEHAV. INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (last visited Apr. 21, 2012), available at http://www.pbis.org/community/juvenile_justice/default.aspx [hereinafter “Positive Behavior Support’] (stating that exposing at-risk individuals to “exclusionary discipline practices” can lead to academic and social failure, anti-social behavior, negative peer associations, and criminal tendencies).
\item \textsuperscript{152} See Wang Ning Bao et al., Life Strain, Negative Emotions, and Delinquency: An Empirical Test of General Strain Theory in the People’s Republic of China, 48 INT’L J. OF OFFENDER THERAPY & COMP. CRIM. 281, 282-284 (explaining that the majority of youth who exhibit criminal tendencies do not have positive relationships in their lives including relationships with their families, teachers and peers).
\item \textsuperscript{153} Positive Behavior Support, supra note 166.
\item \textsuperscript{154} D.J. Williams, W.B. Strean & E.G. Bengoechea, Understanding Recreation and Sport as a Rehabilitative Tool Within in the Juvenile Justice Programs, 53 FAM. CT. J. 31, 31 (Apr. 2002). This Article argues that offering team sports in juvenile correctional facilities can lead to rehabilitation.
\item \textsuperscript{155} See, e.g., Janet Gilbert et al., Applying Therapeutic Principles to a Family-Focused Juvenile Justice Model, 52 ALA. L. R. 1153 (2000) (noting the importance of familial involvement in the juvenile justice process).
\end{itemize}
incarcerated children to continue familial contact. These children can return home for an evening or weekend pending good behavior while at the facility. The importance of continued familial contact is inherent in the Juvenile Protection Law, which stresses “the participation of the juvenile’s family [throughout] the [justice] process.” Additionally, the CRC states that family life is “fundamental.”

Allowing children to nurture meaningful relationships with their families is invaluable both for the juvenile and his or her family. In regards to the juvenile, relying on the support of loved ones can contribute to feelings of support, security, and guidance. For families, the maintenance of ongoing relationships allows parents to understand the evolving needs of the juvenile and create sustainable connections with their children. Further, the benefits of continued familial contact are cyclical. When families experience positive involvement and systemic transparency, they have the ability to better communicate with the juvenile justice system. Considering that families are often the most reliable source information for articulating their children’s strengths and needs, they may assist prison administrators with tailoring effective and individualized treatment and

156 Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
157 Id.
158 Juvenile Protection Law, supra note 47, at art. 4. The Juvenile Protection Law stresses the importance of keeping families informed throughout the adjudication process; Id. at art. 4-d.
159 Convention on the Rights of the Child, supra note 13, at prmbl. (“Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community”).
160 Lili Gafinkel, Improving Family Involvement for Juvenile Offenders with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders and Related Disabilities, 36 BEHAV. DISORDERS 52, 52 (Nov. 2010), available at http://www.cebd.net/sites/default/files/beds-36-01-52.pdf (“The importance of family involvement cannot be underestimated in addressing the needs of youth with emotional and behavioral disorders who are referred to juvenile courts, adjudicated, or incarcerated . . . . [r]esearch in best practices in the areas of prevention, intervention, and aftercare in juvenile justice identifies the need for parent participation, education, and supports to ensure that families remain engaged in the process.”). Comparatively, closed correctional facilities often allow visitation within the correctional facility for a limited time each week and families involved in this process often report instances of isolation and confusion. See, e.g., MODELS FOR CHANGE, FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA’S JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM 10 (2009), available at http://www.pachiefprobationofficers.org/docs/Family%20Involvement%20Monograph.pdf [hereinafter “MODELS FOR CHANGE”] (stating that honest and transparent communication, or their perceived absence, was the predominant issue raised by families and juvenile justice administrators in a focus group regarding familial involvement in the juvenile justice system).
161 Id.
163 MODELS FOR CHANGE, supra note 175, at 10.
164 Id.
rehabilitation programs for their children. Thus, it is not surprising that those children who regularly maintain healthy relationships with their families often recidivate less than those who do not.

3. Challenges to the Open Model Prison Scheme

Although the structure of open model prisons allows for the successful rehabilitation of juveniles placed in them, nations adopting this system of juvenile incarceration should be aware of challenges inherent in this model. First, juveniles in Turkey enter one of only three open model prisons primarily based on geographical convenience. Since youth are not separated based on the varying degree of their crime, it is possible that open model facilities, which are designed to encourage socialization amongst youth, will ineffectively protect low-level offenders from the influence of juveniles displaying more blatant criminal predispositions. There is therefore a general concern surrounding the possibility that prison administrators will not effectively segregate juveniles based on the seriousness of the offense and their potential to negatively influence other young individuals.

Some experts describe the aforementioned notion as the “criminogenic effect” of prison, which draws on the fact that exposure to negative interpersonal influences in prison can actually reinforce criminal tendencies. Compounding this phenomenon in juvenile prisons is the fact that youth lack complete brain maturity and have an underdeveloped sense of responsibility. Youth are more vulnerable or susceptible to negative influences and outside pressures, including peer pressure. As a result, encouraging juveniles to participate in daily educational and extracurricular activities with other children—particularly those that display more apparent criminal tendencies—can lead to negative socialization and enforced criminal behavior.

165 Gafinkel, supra note 175, at 52.
166 Id. at 52.
167 Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
168 UNICEF 08, supra note 31, at 25.
169 See UNICEF 08, supra note 31, at 25 (noting that the Director of the open model facility in Ankara stated that this was a particularly important problem).
171 See Ritter, supra note 51 (detailing the immature nature of juveniles’ brains).
172 Id.
173 See Camp & Gaes, supra note 186, at 147-148 (noting that although there is not strong empirical evidence pointing to negative socialization leading to increased criminal tendencies, there is evidence that would support that conclusion).
A further criticism of open model prisons is based on the premise that the maintenance of familial ties is not a “cure” for future criminal behavior. First, not all children entering the juvenile justice system in Turkey or other countries have the ability to maintain any relationship with their families. Some juveniles do not have relatives that are willing or able to maintain communication. A common example demonstrating this situation stems from the large population of institutionalized “economic orphans” in Turkey. 

Even more concerning, however, is the fact that consistent and ongoing exposure to one’s family can effectively aggravate criminal tendencies in some youth by way of parental or familial abuse, neglect, or exposure to criminal activity. In fact, studies have linked 30-50 percent of early criminal tendencies to unstable or ineffective parenting. Although the definitions of “bad parenting” can vary by culture, it is clear that a juvenile’s familial relationships affect the outcome of his or her behavior, at least to some degree. Therefore, it is a possibility that encouraging ongoing contact amongst certain families, which is a prominent feature in Turkey’s open model prisons, can exacerbate criminal tendencies. With these challenges in mind, Part IV of this Article recommends tactics by which nations can overcome potential troubles and successfully implement open model prisons.

IV. DIVERSION

In addition to the maintenance of an open model prison system, Turkey has made a concentrated effort in the last decade to more fully direct youth away from the formal criminal justice system—and into community-based and restorative processes—before they even get involved. The formal term for this process is diversion and the
Juvenile Protection Law first formally introduced it into Turkey’s juvenile justice system. This Law established effective diversionary tactics that include a formal probation system and increased remission of sentences for children.

The benefits of diversion lie in its ability to shield youth from the otherwise harmful effects of involvement in the criminal justice system and while replacing those negative effects with constructive services and interventions that promote healthy and positive outcomes for juveniles. Diversion also reduces the risk of potential intra-prison abuse, lessens the stigmatization of juveniles with a criminal record, and promotes judicial economy.

Turkey has adopted three model approaches to diversion of justice-involved youth: 1) preventative techniques that aim to divert children away from crime before it happens, including the use of a Children’s Police Unit within the crime prevention and protection framework, 2) diversion from formal proceedings, including mediation

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179 See supra Part II.A.3. It should be noted that diversion it is a contemporary phenomenon in criminal justice systems around the world. Several terms are often used interchangeably to refer to describe criminal diversion programs. See BLACK’S LAW DICTIONARY, supra note 18, at 213-4 (defining diversion as a “program that refers certain criminal defendants before trial to community programs on ob training, education, and the like, which, if successfully completed, may lead to the dismissal of the charges [or in matters of juvenile delinquency may refer to] a community-based program or set of services designed to prevent the need for court intervention in matters of child neglect”); See Asan Kasingye, Commissioner of Police/Community Affairs in Uganda, UNICEF Report: The Role of the Police Under Diversion: An Assessment of Successes and Failures, UNICEF (Oct. 17, 2011), available at http://www.createsolutions.org/unicef/Documents/resources/country/africa/ugandapoliceroleindiversion.pdf.

180 As mentioned in Part II, the government also introduced special provisions to the Juvenile Protection Law, Criminal Procedures Law, and Law on the Enforcement of Penalties and Security Measures in 2005; See Progress for Children 2006, supra note 44.

181 UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States, Assessment of Juvenile Justice Reform Achievements in Turkey, UNICEF (July 2009), available at http://panel.unicef.org.tr/vera/app/var/files/a/n/annex-2-unicef-jtturkey08-review-by-dan-odonnell.pdf; See Justice for Children, supra note 50 (explaining that diversion is the process of diverting children alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law away from formal adjudication or introducing measures to discipline and rehabilitate them without resorting to judicial proceedings.); See H.J. Steadman and M. Naples, Assessing the Effectiveness of Jail Diversion Programs for Persons with Serious Mental Illness and Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorders, 23(2) BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES AND THE LAW 163, 165 (2005) (describing diversion programs and explaining that the most common terms used for Diversion in the United States are pre-booking and post-booking); United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Country of Origin Information Report, UNHCR (Mar. 13, 2009), available at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/49c366252.pdf. See also Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88 (explaining that arrest is not an uncommon experience among certain populations of Turkish youth, especially street children and youth in poverty-stricken urban areas and explaining that while youth in every culture engage in risky behaviors, act thoughtlessly, and make regrettable decisions at some point, these populations are at greater risk for confrontation with the law in Turkey).
and the suspension of prosecution, and 3) alternative sentencing, including the practice of diverting juveniles that commit less serious offenses from jail or prison after adjudication.\textsuperscript{182}

A. Preventative Diversion Techniques

Perhaps the most important stage of diversion in the juvenile justice system is the one that precludes any interaction with the formal justice system at all. In Turkey, prevention is most often accomplished by placing members of the Children’s Police Unit in high-crime and at risk neighborhoods,\textsuperscript{183} promoting and investing in education for all youth, and continually implementing programs that allow street children to invest their time in positive outlets that promote growth and limit factors in their lives that can lead to crime.

1. The Children’s Police Unit

Arguably the most central and significant source for prevention of juvenile criminal behavior in Turkey is the Children’s Police Unit.\textsuperscript{184} The Children’s Police Unit is a specialized and separate section under the General Directorate unit of the police force.\textsuperscript{185} Established in 2001, the Children’s Police have offices in every province in Turkey\textsuperscript{186} and exclusively handle law enforcement duties related to children.\textsuperscript{187} The first ranks of the Children’s Police Unit were anti-terrorist officers from within the broader Turkish police force.\textsuperscript{188} Today, however, the Children’s Police Unit recruits new officers from child-related fields, such as education and social work.\textsuperscript{189}

To uphold an approachable or less intimidating presence, Children’s Police Unit personnel wear civil or “plain-clothed” attire both on patrol and in all procedures involving children.\textsuperscript{190} Further, officers often serve as a personal resource for youth in difficult

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\textsuperscript{182} Adjudication is a term commonly used in place of the word “sentencing” for juvenile proceedings; the meaning is the same. \textit{Id.}
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\textsuperscript{183} Interview with Zeynep Emez, \textit{supra} note 20.
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\textsuperscript{184} Also known as the Juvenile Police Directorate. \textit{Id.}
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\textsuperscript{185} Children between the ages of 12 and 18. \textit{Id.}
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\textsuperscript{186} There are now approximately 35,000 Children’s Police Unit officers throughout the country. \textit{See UNICEF:08, supra} note 31.
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\textsuperscript{187} \textit{Id.}
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\textsuperscript{188} This unit is also known as the Gendarmerie. Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, \textit{supra} note 88.
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\textsuperscript{189} Training involves a minimum of 60 hours of elementary training and 90 hours of expert training. Classes cover information on child trafficking, child abuse and juvenile justice. \textit{See} Abiad, \textit{supra} note 129, at 293.
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\textsuperscript{190} Abiad, \textit{supra} note 129.
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The Children’s Police Unit requires officers to complete a minimum number of hours of specialized training to ensure that they understand and adhere to age-appropriate tactics when interacting with youth. As a result of this training and background experience, Children’s Police Unit officers are well versed on the criminal procedure relating to juveniles, including the rules and regulations specific to child apprehension. While some countries, such as New Zealand, have juvenile police units, the model largely remains unique to Turkey.

The Children’s Police Unit places a strong emphasis on the specific needs of diverse communities by stationing higher numbers of officers in at risk and urban areas. These officers also facilitate programs aimed at encouraging parental collaboration and partner with non-profit organizations. For example, Children’s Police officers in Istanbul often refer juveniles from lower income areas of the city to TCYOV, where youth can participate in a number of activities.

191 Id., see also Abiad, supra note 129 (describing the foster family program and other supports built into the juvenile police system structure).
192 All juvenile justice professionals required to receive special trainings on child law, social services, child development and psychology; See Juvenile Protection Law art. 28, 31 and 32.
193 See Abiad, supra note 129.
194 For example, under Article 19 of the Juvenile Protection Law, juveniles cannot be handcuffed and only prosecutors, not police, may interrogate juvenile offenders. Juvenile suspects are also entitled to the services of a lawyer as soon as an investigation begins, without having to request one. In addition, children under 12, and deaf or mute children under 15, must be released right after the determination of their identity, regardless of the accusation. See Also Article 19 of the Regulation on Apprehension, Arrest, and Examination (“Authorization of apprehension and examination under oath are limited so that those who have not reached their twelfth birthday on the time of the act, and the deaf and mutes who have not reached their fifteenth birthday; 1) Cannot be apprehended under an accusation of a crime and cannot be used for the ascertainment of any crime; 2) Can be apprehended for determination of identification and crime.”)
195 The United States does not employ a similar model at the federal level, but similar programs can be found in several states. They are generally run at the county-level and within the broader police system. Examples of groups include: Crime Against Children units, Child Abuse Investigation units, Child At Risk Response teams, Child Homicide Task forces, and Endangered or Exploited Child Alert systems. See B. Malcolm & B. Parsons, The Administration of Police Juvenile Services in the Metropolitan Regions of the United States, 54(1) J. CRIM. L. 1, 114-117 (1963).
196 This includes areas that are poverty-stricken and where there are a large number of street children. Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
198 Interview with Selmin Cansu Demir, an attorney with TCYOV, in Istanbul, Turkey (Mar. 6, 2012).
199 In Turkish, TÜRKİYE ÇOCUKLARA YENİDEN ÖZGÜRLÜK VAKFI (TCYOV); this is a non-profit organization aimed at promoting the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders and with whom the government has established a formal partnership. See Interview with Selmin Cansu Demir, supra note 214; see also Interview with Zeynep Emez, supra note 20.
that build their character and “keep them out of trouble.” Activities available to these youth include painting, cooking, computer classes, and art classes. Additionally, to ensure that the juvenile justice system functions appropriately, even in the event that a “regular” police officer apprehends a child, the government created a series of informational pamphlets for police to distribute to youth. These circulars explain best practices and legal requirements for situations involving children who become involved in the criminal justice system. There are four brochures in the current series, entitled: “The Use of Handcuffs,” “Protection of Minors,” “Protection of the Family,” and “The Juvenile Police.”

2. Prevention Under the Juvenile Protection Law

The Turkish government also supports prevention through a series of measures detailed in the 2005 Juvenile Protection Law, including healthcare and education measures. For example, the Juvenile Protection Law requires children to attend school as a means by which to avoid involvement in transgressions and delinquency. It requires children to attend educational institutions or vocational courses as either a day or boarding student, or to attend artistic courses that focus on teaching practical skills within a trade or vocation. Additionally, because research indicates that a high number of youth involved with crime may suffer from mental health issues or may

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200 Interview with Zeynep Emez, supra note 20.
201 During a visit to the education center, we learned that IBM had donated a small computer lab to the center, enabling further computer courses. TCYOV staff considers these programs to be successful and have keep in contact with some participants for many years. See Interview with Selmin Cansu Demir, supra note 216 (describing manifestations of the education measures and significance of this language in the law.)
202 While Turkish law demands that all matters involving children be handled by the Children’s Police Unit, it is theoretically possible that a “regular” police officer could apprehend a child. Interview with Zeynep Emez, supra note 20.
203 See Abiad, supra note 129 at 294; Id.
204 Id.
205 The Children’s Police Unit distributes these circulars. Titles are translated from Turkish. Id.
206 See Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
207 Juvenile Protection Law art. 5/1-d.
208 Id. at art. 5/1-b.
209 Id.
require medical attention, the healthcare measures also address the implications of mental health on juvenile crime.\(^{211}\)

By separating external factors in juveniles’ lives that increase their likelihood of committing crime and replacing them with positive forces—including education and healthcare-related services—the Juvenile Protection Law promotes prevention tactics that keep children out of the criminal justice system.

**B. Description of Diversion from Formal Proceedings**

In Turkey, responsibility for formal diversion lies primarily with the prosecutor.\(^{212}\) Under the Juvenile Protection Law, each prosecutor’s office must have a specialized juvenile bureau.\(^{213}\) The duties of this bureau include: 1) managing investigations of juvenile offenders when the police first receives them, 2) ensuring that courts take necessary measures without delay whenever juveniles are involved, 3) coordinating and cooperating with relevant public institutions, organizations, and non-governmental organizations for the purpose of providing the necessary support services to youth in need of assistance, and 4) referring juvenile cases to the authorized institutions and organizations who may provide alternative services.\(^{214}\) These notice or referral procedures might involve agreement by the child to participate in a program to prevent re-offending, to make certain changes to their lifestyle, or to engage in community programs.\(^{215}\)

Mediation is another method through which the juvenile justice system affords youth the opportunity to avoid formal adjudication or sentencing.\(^{216}\) Mediation is an informal process wherein a third party

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\(^{211}\) See Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20. To offer an example of this phenomenon, one study by the Justice Policy Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based group that studies adult and juvenile justice policies found that over two-thirds of incarcerated youth in the United States meet the criteria for mental disorders, which is more than double the national average for children in the United States. Barry Holman & Jason Ziedenberg, *The Dangers of Detention: The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and Other Secure Facilities*, Annie E. Casey Foundation (2006), available at http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/06-11_REP_DangersOfDetention_JJ.pdf.

\(^{212}\) The law requires that each child who comes into contact with the system meet with a social worker. This social worker can further recommend to the prosecutor or judge that the child participate in diversionary tactics, such as court-mandated treatment programs, rather than traditional punishment. See Juvenile Protection Law art. 30/1-2.

\(^{213}\) Id.; see also Abiad, supra note 129.

\(^{214}\) Id.

\(^{215}\) Since forgoing adjudication means renunciation of the legal rights of accused persons, diversion must be accepted voluntarily. See Convention on the Rights of the Child, supra note 33, at art. 40.3(b); Beijing Rule 11.3; see also Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88 (explaining that can mean the child must attend school or obtain employment).

\(^{216}\) Turkey has made positive strides in ensuring effective use of State resources. Interviews are generally conducted from a panel staffed by court personnel. Experts point to this success as a sign of progress and improvement of the juvenile justice system. Id.
helps disputants find common ground. The goal is for each party to recognize the other side’s position and work towards reconciliation without the imposition of a formal judicial solution. So far, the mediation scheme has been successful in Turkey. In 2006 alone, 3,689 juvenile cases were dismissed through a process of mediation or reconciliation between the victim and accused, as compared to 10,862 cases that ended in a verdict of conviction or acquittal.

In the Turkish juvenile justice system, mediation is available if the offense of the accused would be punishable by a sentence of two years or less. This threshold increases to a sentence of three years or less if the offender is under the age of 15. Once a case has been referred to mediation, parties have three days to decide whether to mediate before they must consider other options.

Turkish law requires that all third-party mediators be either a prosecutor or an attorney. Because juvenile prosecutors and judges receive training on child development, they are expected to be familiar with issues specific to juvenile cases and should be able to answer questions about the process. Thus, juvenile court-referred mediation mirrors the practices and principles found in many successful victim-offender juvenile mediation programs around the world, including that: the mediator is trained, sensitive and neutral, the parties can adequately prepare for the dialogue before it occurs, proceedings maintain confidentiality, and the mediation is conducted in a safe and comparatively informal environment.

218 Id.
220 UNICEF 08, supra note 31 at 40. See also UNICEF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INDICATORS ON JUVENILE JUSTICE: THEIR APPLICABILITY AND RELEVANCE IN SELECTED COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA, UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN’S FUND 5 (Jul. 2009), available at http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/UNICEF_JJIndicators08.pdf (explaining data published on the website of the Ministry of Justice indicate the number of cases dismissed by reason of mediation or reconciliation [hereinafter “UNICEF REPORT”]).
221 See Janine Gaskin, Victim/Offender Mediation in Turkey, Marquette University Law School Faculty Blog (Apr. 3, 2012) (last visited May 7, 2012) (describing a recent research trip to Istanbul, Turkey to investigate alternative sentencing options through mediation in Turkey’s juvenile justice system and the author, a law professor’s, observations from the experience).
222 Id.
223 Id. See Juvenile Protection Law art. 30/1-2.
224 Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
225 Janine Gaskin, supra note 238.
226 There is no criminal or published record as a result of resolution by mediation. Id.
227 See PROFESSOR FERIDUN YENISEY, supra at 75.
Once a youth enters the juvenile justice system, courts have additional options to help the juvenile avoid lengthy proceedings or detention while a trial is pending. Court social workers tasked with assessing the youth’s mental health capacities have authority to redirect a child to social services if they deem them unfit to stand trial. In addition, the Juvenile Protection Law allows prosecutors discretion in delaying a juvenile’s trial for up to five years. If the offender commits no other crimes during this period, the court will generally drop the case. The prosecutor may also choose not to press charges at all if the accused is a first time offender and the crime is not excessively violent. Judges may also choose to suspend formal proceedings for up to three years for first-time juvenile offenders.

C. Description of Diversion from Incarceration

Finally, if preventative and court-related diversionary efforts are unsuccessful, there are options for juvenile offenders to serve their sentences within the community rather than in prison. Most significantly, if a court sentences a juvenile to a term of imprisonment of less than one year, the court may impose an alternative sentence, including mandatory enrollment in an educational institution, restrictions on activities, and community service. Probation officers often oversee and supervise these alternatives. With probation, the adjudicated youth can serve all or part of the sentence at liberty as long as there is a minimal level of supervision by the sentencing court.

The Juvenile Protection Law established the Turkish Probation Service, which was modeled after the National Probation Service for England and Wales. Probation centers are located in every province of Turkey, and each center employs both psychologists and social

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228 See Justice for Children, supra note 50.
229 Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
230 Id.
231 Juvenile Protection Law art 19.
232 Consequently, much diversion happens between preliminary hearings and trial. See Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20 (defining “serious” as homicide, burglary, and battery).
233 Id.
234 Turkish Probation Service, supra note 178199.
235 Id.
236 Id.
237 Turkish Probation Service, supra note 193.
238 Francis Bailleau & Dominique de Fraene, supra note 58 (presenting an overview of research by experts in the Crimprev network shared at a 2008 conference on topics such as imprisonment, alternative measures and the extension of the judicial logic).
239 Turkish Probation Service, supra note 193 (explaining that the aim of this program is to develop European standards and international practice in terms of the protection of the community and prevention of crime).
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As of May 2011, the most recent data available, there were 7,179 children benefiting from the 133 probation centers across Turkey. Further, since 2005, the identification of more specific fields of probation has also led the Ministry of Justice to provide specialized training to new probation staff in addition to launching a European Union “twinning project” to develop best practices for probation and diversion in Turkey.

D. The Benefits of Diversion

1. Avoiding the Unnecessary and Improving Self-Image

Philosophically and functionally, pretrial diversion gives juvenile justice officials an opportunity to intervene before youth encounter the negative effects that can result from criminal justice system involvement. Specifically, diversion diminishes stigmatization, reduces recidivism, and provides youth with services and social support that they might not otherwise receive, including the opportunity for mentorship and personal growth. While experts describe a more “tolerant attitude” towards youth delinquency in Turkey than in other countries, involvement in the juvenile justice system can still have long-term and stigmatizing effects on Turkish youth. For example, a criminal record can hinder future professional, social or educational opportunities, including the ability to find employment.

In addition, “label theory” plays a large role in promulgating the potentially negative effects experienced by juveniles who enter the juvenile justice system. Research shows that labeling a youth as “deviant”, “delinquent” or as a “juvenile offender” can affect the way in

240 See Justice for Children, supra note 50.
241 Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
242 Turkish Probation Service, supra note 193. Twinning is a common term used for initiatives of the European Commission that involve comparing two states. Twinning projects typically set out to deliver specific, guaranteed results. See, e.g. E.U. Twinning Project (last visited on May 7, 2012), available at http://www.twinning-project.org/ (offering examples of twinning projects).
243 Id.
245 According to Professor Feridun Yenisey, while the most common forms of juvenile delinquency among Turkish youth are and have long been theft and similar “antisocial” crimes, public opinion in Turkey does not view these and most of the crimes committed by youth as “major” crime. See Feridun Yenisey, supra note 237 at 412.
246 Id.
247 Id.
248 Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
which youth define themselves. In line with social stigmatization, the negative psychological effects that “labeling” can have on a juvenile influences future behavior and dictates the social roles the youth assumes. By contrast, diversion is confidential and does not produce a public record, so outside parties will not become aware of a juvenile defender’s delinquency history once the child successfully completes the program.

In line with the aforementioned effects of diversion, community-centered programs also provide participating youth with the opportunity to learn more about their social world, to meet and form relationships with potential mentors and role models, and to build on their social intelligence in a way that would not be possible in a traditional prison setting. According to the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (“OJJDP”), youth involved in mentoring programs are also less likely to experiment with drugs, be physically aggressive, and skip school than those not involved in such programs. This information is significant in view of the fact that overwhelming empirical evidence reveals that detained youth are more likely to drop out of school and consequently experience social exclusion. By contrast, former youthful offenders who were diverted to community involvement alongside TCYOV in Istanbul often return to the program as volunteers or mentors. When asked to reflect on the impetus for success of these programs, TCYOV staff expressed that these juveniles return and do well generally as a result of their positive experience with diversion specifically.

Additionally, research shows that children in any place of detention, short term or long term, are at heightened risk for physical and mental abuse from both prison officials and other prisoners.

250 Id.
251 Id.
252 Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88; see also Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20 (describing individual cases that Children’s Police Unit officers sometimes have positive and personal relationships with the youth they interact with, serving as local role models for these juveniles).
254 Supra Part III.A.3.
255 Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
256 Id.
257 Despite numerous efforts taken to protect children from abuse, the Turkish justice system was rocked by scandal in early 2012 with the discovery that over 200 juvenile prisoners, mostly Kurdish children, were abused by prison officials and other prisoners at one detention facility in southern Turkey. Jenna Krajeski, The Story of the Kurdish Stone-Throwing Kids (Apr. 18, 2012), available at http://pulitzercenter.org/jenna-krajeski-turkey-kurdish-stone-throwing-kids-reporting.
Diversion helps avoid this risk, as well as the potential long-term mental, emotional, and physical effects of abuse, which some studies suggest can actually reverse the rehabilitative process. Avoiding these risks entirely is also in line with CRC guidelines, which state that children deprived of liberty should be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.

2. Improving Treatment Options for Youth

The recent global recession had a particularly severe impact on poor communities across the world. As a result, children of low economic social status, such as street children, were pushed to “antisocial” crime by way of their social situation and environment. As one expert put it, “desperate situations lead to desperate actions,” meaning that more children may be driven to commit petty theft for food or engage in other crimes necessary to defend themselves from violence and aggression on the streets. Prevention is, therefore, especially crucial now to address the socio-economic and psychosocial problems that often induce juveniles into coming into conflict with the law.

As touched upon earlier, in addition to socio-economic patterns, there also exist an extremely high percentage and disproportionate level...
of mental illness in juvenile justice systems across the globe.\textsuperscript{264} Studies show that abnormally high percentages of detained youth suffer from mental illnesses.\textsuperscript{265} Additionally, the expansion of mental health diversion programs in the United States and other Western countries reflect an increasingly popular view that there is a causal relationship between youth mental disorders and crime.\textsuperscript{266} The diversion system affords children the opportunity to participate in confidential and often much-needed treatment services by obtaining referrals and government-subsidization from organizations aimed at providing preventative services.\textsuperscript{267} These treatment programs are significant because juveniles predisposed to mental illness might otherwise fail to receive support due to the high cost of treatment or perhaps due to the social stigma accompanying mental health services.\textsuperscript{268}

Preventative diversionary services give children the opportunity to participate in health and counseling services in order to address the effects that accompany their socioeconomic or psychosocial situations.\textsuperscript{269} Further, diversionary techniques aimed at treatment, including court-mandated therapy,\textsuperscript{270} may provide procedures and programs that juveniles can benefit from while expediting their time in the juvenile justice system.\textsuperscript{271} Even the harshest critics of the diversion process cannot deny many of the benefits of diversion from incarceration, particularly in situations where youth cannot receive proper rehabilitation in detention.\textsuperscript{272} Finally, when prevention fails and youth commit crime, alternatives to incarceration provide opportunities for communities to treat, rather than punish, juveniles, which results in more positive long-term effects.\textsuperscript{273}

3. Improving Judicial Economy

\textsuperscript{264} Id.
\textsuperscript{265} Id.
\textsuperscript{267} The interviews we conducted with juvenile justice experts in Turkey suggested that a lack of effective mental health treatment programming is a major setback in the Turkish juvenile justice system today.
\textsuperscript{268} Id.
\textsuperscript{269} Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
\textsuperscript{270} As described above and in the Recommendations section, infra, treatment programs might include counseling, medicine, or integrative and low cost options such as Functional Family Therapy, Family Integrated Transitions, and Multisystemic Therapy.
\textsuperscript{271} Interview with Robyn Offenbach, Social Worker at Youth Service Project, Chicago, IL (Apr. 2, 2012).
\textsuperscript{272} Benedikt Fisher, et. al., The Socio-Legal Dynamics and Implications of Diversion, 2(4) CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE 385, 390 (2002).
\textsuperscript{273} Id.
Globally, it is not uncommon for governments to neglect diversion efforts at the expense of shorter-term, more politically viable and punitive approaches to “get tough on crime.” In the process, prisons can become a “dumping ground” for troubled youth. Yet research evidences the high cost of this flawed strategy. Accordingly, this section examines two economic-based aspects of the so-called “tough on crime” phenomenon and demonstrates how diversion leads to greater savings and more positive outcomes for nations that employ such practices.

Detention is a scarce resource and jails, prisons, and reformatories are expensive to operate. A 2007 Turkish parliamentary inquiry into young people and violence estimated the cost per juvenile detainee at 960 liras per month. This is around $600, which might not seem like a significant amount upon first inspection. However, when one considers that this is more than one-third of the average annual salary in Turkey, the figure demonstrates a strong financial incentive to promote alternative sentencing rather than detaining youth. Diversion programs are cost effective and can significantly reduce a nation’s overall corrections budget. Consequently, governments could reinvest funds spent on detention beds and new detention centers into community interventions empirically proven to reduce recidivism.

274 See Barry Feld, Juvenile Justice Administration 1, 587 (3d ed. 2009) [hereinafter “Feld Textbook”].
275 Id.
276 Id.
277 Diversionary techniques in other countries support the premise that an improved judicial economy lends to greater accountability for the appropriate release of children in contact with the system. The juvenile justice system in Germany, for example, applies the principle of proportionality to the arrest of children. A judge who issues an arrest warrant for a juvenile is required to explain in the grounds of the decision; “why methods for measures which limit rights less, such as temporary accommodation in the dormitory of the Juvenile Protection Organization or the like, were not applied” and “why the warrant is accepted as proportional in this particular incident. See PROFESSOR FERIDUN YENISEY, supra note 75.
278 See Justice for Children, supra note 50.
279 This is about $600 with current exchange rates. See XE Universal Currency Converter (last visited on May 9, 2012), available at http://www.xe.com.
281 See Lauren Salins & Shepard Simpson, Release or Reform: An Assessment of California’s Efforts to Fix its Broken Prison System in the Wake of Brown v. Plata, 44 Loy. U. Chi __ (forthcoming 2012) (“By some estimates, states could reduce their corrections spending by $684 million a year if they reduced prison populations through proactive reform mechanisms, such as early release programs and diversionary tactics.”).
detaining juvenile offenders generally does not make communities any safer.\textsuperscript{283}

It is clear that Turkey’s diversionary practices are successful in preventing detained youth from engaging in formal judicial proceedings or entering prison. Since 2001, the rate of juveniles charged with crimes declined, first with the introduction of the Children’s Police Unit in 2001 and again after the Juvenile Protection Law introduced further diversionary tactics (see Figure 1). Experts affirm this causal connection between diversion and a reduction in systemic involvement for youth involved with crime.\textsuperscript{284}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure1}
\caption{The Rate of ‘Detained’ Juveniles in Turkey that Received a Charge, 1997-2006}
\end{figure}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Number of Youth Detained in Turkey (27 provinces) by Year, 1997-2006}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{283} See generally Barry Holman & Jason Ziedenberg, supra note 231 (describing an interview with Bart Lubow, who is the head the Annie E. Casey Foundations’ Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative); Examples of the monetary incentive to reduce prison costs come from Cook County (Chicago) in Illinois, which plans to save approximately $240 million over 20 years by avoiding construction of a detention center. Multnomah County (Portland) in Oregon will re-deploy more than $12 million over a six-year period by doing the same); See also The Justice Policy Institute, Incarcerating Youth can Aggravate Crime and Frustrate Education, Employment and Health for Young People, Justice Policy Institute (Nov. 28, 2006), available at http://www.justicepolicy.org/news/1977.

\textsuperscript{284} Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.

\textsuperscript{285} See TURKSTAT, supra note 9.
E. Challenges Surrounding the Implementation of
Diversionary Techniques

While diversion often contributes to reduced likelihoods of juvenile abuse and promotes judicial economy, nations that wish to implement these practices should account for certain challenges inherent in this model. First, critics argue that preventative diversion extends judicial participation to youth who would have ordinarily been free of this involvement. These challengers argue that this “net-widening effect” leads to the informal treatment of youth by a juvenile justice system that the child would not have otherwise encountered.

These critics additionally note that although the percentage of juveniles charged with crimes has decreased (see Figure 1), the total number of young people in custody has increased over the past ten years. Figure 2 shows this increase in the number of youth received into custody, which supports the theory that prevention and intervention can actually expand the number of youth in the juvenile justice system. Critics argue that this sheer increase in numbers alone means that more justice-related social issues will require attention, translating to additional stresses on already limited financial resources.

FIGURE 2: Juv. Received by a Security Unit and Juv. Charged with Crime in Turkey, 1997-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Juveniles Received into Security unit</th>
<th>Juveniles Charged</th>
<th>% Detained that are Charged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>39838</td>
<td>22305</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>39838</td>
<td>26467</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>36618</td>
<td>24799</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>37685</td>
<td>25194</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>39447</td>
<td>26182</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>52064</td>
<td>32616</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>60579</td>
<td>38101</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>70920</td>
<td>45325</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>75334</td>
<td>44499</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>84110</td>
<td>46791</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data retrieved from the Turkish Statistical Agency (TURKSTAT; table designed by the authors.)

287 See Feld Textbook, supra note 312.
288 Id.
Other concerns raised about diversion programs include those related to prejudice and discrimination in preventative techniques, noting that the process to select youth eligibility for diversion may be arbitrary. Critics question whether there are sufficient efforts made to distinguish between children who are victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and those who are at risk of offending. An additional concern is that intervention, whether received in a traditional juvenile justice setting or in an alternative preventative program, will actually increase levels of perceived labeling and self-reported delinquency among youth.

Additionally, concerns exist surrounding the Children’s Police Unit. Despite the presence of the Children’s Police Unit, it is theoretically possible and potentially not uncommon for “regular” police to apprehend children that come into conflict with the law before officers from the Children’s Police Unit can become involved. This issue is significant because studies suggest that traditional police officers may be “authoritative agents of social control . . . and use their authority more often than they provide support [to juveniles].” Further, without formal training, the pattern of non-Children’s Police Unit response to juveniles might be influenced by preconceived biases of delinquent children instead of accounting for social and mental issues.

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289 See TURKSTAT, supra note 9.
290 See Feridun Yenisey, supra note 237 at 283.
291 UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS, Juvenile Justice System Reform - Assessment Guidelines (2008), available at http://www.unicef.org/tdad/unicefceejjassessmentguidelines08.pdf (providing a framework and a checklist of issues to be addressed in juvenile justice assessments planned to be undertaken by UNICEF in several countries, with reference to diversion and alternatives)
292 Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88; See U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, supra note 266.
293 See Justice for Children, supra note 50.
294 Id.
pertaining specifically to this population.\textsuperscript{295}

Additionally, without training on proper response, research also suggests that the protections required and promulgated by the Juvenile Protection Law are not always known or respected by non-Children’s Police Unit law enforcement in their dealings with Turkish youth.\textsuperscript{296} Police could bring children to stations when their identity is not known or because they appear to be in a situation of risk. Data indicates that only 64 percent of juveniles\textsuperscript{297} brought to police stations by “regular” police were suspected of an offense.\textsuperscript{298} Of the remaining individuals, 22 percent were victims of violence or abuse and the other 14 percent included children who were “lost, abandoned, foundlings, runaways, and children begging or working on the street.”\textsuperscript{299} While Turkey has made significant progress in developing a positive Children’s Police Unit model that supports diversion of youth, these efforts are useless if implementation does not translate from paper to practice.

Finally, as with many other juvenile justice programs internationally, the availability of resources allocated to diversionary tactics are also a concern.\textsuperscript{300} Part of the success of diversion in Turkey has been due to the financial resources made available to the country by the European Commission and European Union.\textsuperscript{301} The funds allocated to supporting diversionary measures in Turkey come largely from this foreign support, and no certainty exists surrounding its renewal beyond the completion of certain European Union-sponsored projects, such as the current Justice for Children project.\textsuperscript{302} While the Turkish government has made substantial investments in the improvement of the juvenile justice system, including investing resources on diversion, it is unclear the extent of commitment they are prepared to make should the European support cease.\textsuperscript{303} The next Section delineates remedies to many of the aforementioned challenges to the successful implementation of diversion practices.

\textbf{V. Recommendations}

\begin{footnotesize}
295 \textit{Id.}
296 \textit{Id.}
297 Children (under 12) and adolescents (under 18). Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
298 \textit{Id.}
299 \textit{See TURKSTAT, supra note 9; UNICEF REPORT, supra note 240.}
300 \textit{Id.}
301 The European Union and European Commission are funding 80% of the current project platform. Justice for Children, supra note 50.
302 \textit{Id.}
303 Interview with Professor Yuksel Baykara Acar, supra note 88.
\end{footnotesize}
The Turkish juvenile justice system has significantly improved its approach toward children throughout the past decade and continues to adopt practices that may serve as examples for other countries. Nonetheless, many challenges still exist in the effective implementation of these models and in the functioning of the Turkish juvenile justice system as a whole. This section provides recommendations for ways to mitigate challenges inherent in open model prisons and diversion, in addition to issuing recommendations on ways to diminish the most pressing problems of the Turkish juvenile justice system today.

A. Recommendations for Challenges in Open Model Prisons

Challenges inherent in open model prisons include the possibility of exposing children to crime-inducing influences within prisons and exposing children to negative familial influences outside of prisons. Regarding the first concern, a possible remedy is to expand the number of open model prisons in Turkey—or any nation wishing to adopt this model—which would in turn allow for the possibility of classifying incoming juveniles based on threat level instead of geographic convenience. This expansion would help children avoid the possibility of socialization into future criminal activity from higher-risk juveniles. Since this option might accordingly encourage the government to incarcerate more youth to fill an increased number of beds, governments should urge facilities to downsize before multiplying.

In regards to the concern of children experiencing negative influences from continued contact with their families, one recommendation is for prison officials to moderate these interactions in some capacity. In other words, if the prison official, perhaps a social worker, made an ultimate determination that familial communication would create an exceedingly negative stress on the child, he or she could offer facilitated interactions between the child and family. If this moderation was not possible and constant familial communication still seemed unfit for the juvenile, the social worker could locate community members or a volunteer mentor to allow the child to reap similar benefits.

Finally, all nations employing open model prisons should capitalize on the ability of juveniles to maintain contact with their families by employing effective treatment models for juveniles that require
continued familial contact. These treatment programs include Functional Family Therapy, Family Integrated Transitions, and Multisystemic Therapy. These programs all involve ongoing interactions with families and are cost-effective and widely accepted models of juvenile rehabilitation. Thus, nations that do implement open model prisons can provide juveniles the benefit of maintaining relationships with their families while improving the youths’ structured rehabilitative programming during their period of incarceration.

B. Recommendations for Challenges Inherent in Diversionary Practices

Nations looking for more appropriate ways to work with juveniles involved with crime increasingly embrace diversion and restorative, rehabilitative practices. Major challenges and concerns, however, stem from the practical implementation of this system, including avoiding unnecessary system involvement, avoiding discriminatory police practice, improving treatment options, sustaining funding, and ensuring consensus and accountability among all stakeholders, including the Children’s Police Unit officers who often serve as a first line of defense.

With respect to nations implementing Turkey’s preventative diversionary technique of instituting a separate Children’s Police Unit, we recommend a two-part strategy to overcome challenges inherent in this practice. First, all police officers should receive training on the basics of juvenile justice theory, allowing “regular” police who apprehend children to better account for variances in youths’ behavioral, social, and mental development. Second, countries can overcome repetitive instances of “regular” police apprehension by establishing a “child line,” or a national toll-free number designated to

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304 See id. (noting that treatment programs such as Functional Family Therapy, Family Integrated Transitions, and Multisystemic Therapy all involve ongoing work with families and can lead to successful rehabilitation at low costs).

305 See The Clinical Model, Family Functional Therapy (last visited May 1, 2012), available at http://www.fftinc.com/about_model.html (describing this method of therapy as “a strength-based model. At its core is a focus and assessment of those risk and protective factors that impact the adolescent and his or her environment, with specific attention paid both intrafamilial and extrafamilial factors, and how they present within and influence the therapeutic process.”); Family Integrated Transitions Interview, University of Washington Dep’t of Psychiatry and Behavioral Services (last visited May 1, 2012), available at (describing this method of therapy as “begin[ning] 2 months prior to release to ensure engagement and strengthen community supports” and noting that the first and most important task of this form of therapy is to involve family in treatment); What is Multisystemic Therapy, MST (last visited May 1, 2012), available at http://mstservices.com/ (stating that this form of therapy “is an intensive family-and community-based treatment program that focuses on the entire world of chronic and violent juvenile offenders — their homes and families, schools and teachers, neighborhoods and friends).

306 Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.
reach the Children’s Police Unit or provide tips. Volunteers rotating between police stations could staff the “child-line” and help direct the Children’s Police Unit to situations pertaining to juvenile criminal activity.\footnote{A similar model in India has been very successful, with over 70,000 calls being received over the last three years. See Childline India Foundation (last visited May 7, 2012), available at www.childlineindia.org.in/}

To combat issues surrounding a lack of mental health treatment programming during the adjudication process, Turkey should increase its commitment to screening and assessment programs for juveniles prior to their entrance into formal proceedings. This increased screening would allow children to receive mental health treatment throughout the course of adjudication, as opposed to merely after receiving a conviction. Consequently, juvenile justice systems should increase the number of mental health professionals available throughout the adjudication process and provide children not only with social workers, but psychiatric professionals as well. Furthermore, as earlier mentioned, juveniles should remain in communication with their families when necessary and appropriate throughout their court proceedings. Family members can often effectively communicate the ongoing needs of juveniles better than any other actors in the juvenile justice system.

C. Response to Concerns Surrounding Data

Critics of diversion argue that the number of juvenile received into police custody increased after the implementation of the Children’s Police Unit, effectively lending to their “net-widening” theory. While it is true that the number of arrests in Turkey has steadily increased, with peaks in 2001 and in 2005 (see Figure 2), it is foreseeable that the number of youth interacting with police officers would increase with the establishment of a new police force. Additionally, while the government provides data on juvenile justice statistics going as far back as 1996, it is not clear that the government closely monitored juvenile arrests prior to the establishment of the Children’s Police Unit. Furthermore, system involvement is not negative in all cases. It is possible that diversion programs facilitated by the Children’s Police could have had positive socialization effects on at-risk youth.

Finally, while data indicates that the number of arrested juveniles increased over the past decade, this information primarily pertains to urban communities. Figure 3 shows the rate that youth were charged in Turkey (dotted) and in Istanbul (solid). Interestingly, the rate was almost inversed up until the point at which Turkey introduced
the Children’s Police Unit. This incongruity may be due to the higher number of street children living in urban areas or the large numbers of Kurdish youth that were not accounted for outside of Istanbul and Ankara.

**FIGURE 3: Rate of ‘Detained’ Youth that were Charged in Turkey and Istanbul, 1997-2006**

![Graph showing rate of detained youth in Turkey and Istanbul from 1997 to 2006.]

*Data retrieved from the Turkish Statistical Agency (TURKSTAT); original analysis by the authors.*

**TABLE 2: Number of Youth Detained in Istanbul by Year, 1997-2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Juveniles Received into Security unit</th>
<th>Juveniles Charged</th>
<th>% Detained that are Charged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>6692</td>
<td>4171</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>7614</td>
<td>4446</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>7078</td>
<td>4129</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>7010</td>
<td>3953</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>6749</td>
<td>4504</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>10275</td>
<td>7362</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>12701</td>
<td>9288</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>13564</td>
<td>10264</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>13714</td>
<td>9482</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>12243</td>
<td>8708</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data retrieved from the Turkish Statistical Agency (TURKSTAT); table designed by the authors.*

**D. Recommendations for the Turkish**

[308] See TURKSTAT, *supra* note 8
Juvenile Justice System Generally

An ongoing and serious concern with Turkey’s juvenile justice system is its policies toward Kurdish individuals.\textsuperscript{309} Infractions by many Kurdish children are handled as terrorist threats rather than falling under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court. This phenomenon is troublesome since Turkey’s anti-terror law provides that juveniles charged with terrorism must be tried in the adult criminal justice system.\textsuperscript{310} In the past, this law covered minor or perceived “terror-related” infractions, such as stone throwing. Following a strong outcry against the anti-terror law, the Turkish government amended the law to exclude petty crimes. However, according to many journalists and Turkish human rights organizations, Kurdish youth still face discrimination and often face arrest for minor offenses.\textsuperscript{311}

Although Turkey has taken steps to revise its anti-terror laws, the country needs to improve its uniform application of the Juvenile Protection law to all Turkish children. Police and prosecutors should not be permitted to racially or ethnically profile children under the guise of claiming that certain minor crimes are linked to terrorism. According to experts, “[Turkish] children can be tried in juvenile courts, but [advances in the juvenile justice system are] useless unless [all children] are totally excluded from the scope of the anti-terror law. They should not be deemed as terrorists and they should be judged only for their actions of throwing stones.”\textsuperscript{312} Thus, we recommend that Turkey entirely eliminate Article 9 of its anti-terror law pertaining to juveniles to ensure that all children in Turkey receive legal dignity.\textsuperscript{313}

With regards to Turkey’s juvenile justice system, another general concern exists with regards to effective coordination among government institutions. Experts complain of a lack of effective coordination among government institutions.

\textsuperscript{310} A 2006 amendment to the Anti-Terrorism Law, by Law 5532 (Art. 9) stipulates that charges for offenses under the scope of the Anti-Terrorism Law will be heard by the high criminal courts stated in CPP 250/1. Charges filed against children over age 15 are also heard in these courts. See Human Rights Foundation, Submission of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey to the UN Committee Against Torture for its Consideration for the 3rd Periodic Report of Turkey 1, 5 (Oct 15, 2010), available at http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cat/docs/ngos/HRFT_Turkey45.pdf.
\textsuperscript{311} See Jenna Krajeski, \textit{supra} note 285.
\textsuperscript{312} Izgi Gungor, \textit{supra} note 334.
\textsuperscript{313} While not addressed directly, we also recommend that Article 17 of the 2005 Juvenile Protection Law, which addresses that children be tried in adult courts for crimes that they commit in tandem with adults, also be amended. In addition, Article 141 of Turkey’s Constitution, which oversees provisions for the trials of minors, should also be amended to stress equal rights for all Turkish children who are pushed to crime.
One way to improve this element of the juvenile justice system is through the use of increased interdepartmental overlap and planned, systemic communication about the state of the system. Currently, local Bar Associations have committees—larger committees generally include Child, Youth and Family, Police, Ministry of Justice personnel and the Principal Youth Court Judge—but reports suggest that these groups do not regularly meet in many provinces. This practice is positive, but only if the government properly implements them and if all stakeholders make a real commitment. We recommend that the Turkish Government should require these juvenile justice-focused groups to submit reports to a centralized consortium, which would then be published, or—alternatively—contribute to a national newsletter. These reports would not only promote accountability, but they would foster intra-province and national communication, education, and awareness of best practices. Further, the Turkish government could appoint a watchdog group that would monitor groups and information regularly pertaining to juvenile justice.

VI. CONCLUSION

Recent changes to Turkey’s juvenile justice system have moved Turkey closer to a system of juvenile justice envisioned by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and illustrate Turkey’s commitment to the well being of youth. Turkey’s widespread use of diversion and its development of open model prisons are approaches that should be considered for adoption in other parts of the world. Although neither these approaches nor Turkey’s juvenile justice system as a whole fully conform to international juvenile justice standards, they do make a positive contribution to community safety and the promotion of human rights for all children.

315 Interview with Ece Basmaci Karalar, foreign affairs specialist with the Istanbul Bar Association, in Istanbul, Turkey (March 6, 2012).
316 Interview with Zeynep Esmez, supra note 20.